



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

Africa
The Director (acting)

Brussels 17/07/2025
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Dear Civil Society Representatives,

Thank you for your letter dated Tuesday 4 February 2025, addressed to Ms Ursula Von Der Leyen, President of the European Commission, who asked me to reply on her behalf.

In response to your letter, I would like to reassure you that the EU has been actively engaged in diplomatic efforts aiming at the cessation of hostilities and provision of humanitarian aid to conflict affected populations in Central Africa. The EU has strongly urged Rwanda to immediately withdraw all its military personnel from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) as well as to terminate all support to and cooperation with the March 23 Movement (M23), while also strongly urging the DRC and all regional players to terminate all support to and cooperation with armed groups including the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR)¹.

The President of the European Council, the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice President of the European Commission (HRVP), Commissioners and the EU Special Representative for the Great Lakes region regularly engages with representatives from the region and beyond. They conveyed the EU's message in favour of an immediate cease fire, confidence building measures, respect of international law, and the importance of a sustained and inclusive peace process. They have expressed support to African-led diplomatic initiatives (the Nairobi process, the Lunda process, the subsequent EAC-SADC process and the AU mediation) and to other meaningful initiatives carried out by third parties (Qatar and USA). The EU's engagement focuses on the need for immediate action as well as long-term approaches to address the root causes of conflict and insecurity across the entire region.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) establishing a strategic partnership on sustainable raw material value chains between the EU and Rwanda² was signed on 19 February 2024. One of its main objectives is to support the sustainable and responsible sourcing and production as well as minerals traceability. The implementation of the MoU

¹ EU Statement of 4 March 2024: <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2024/03/04/democratic-republic-of-the-congo-drc-statement-by-the-high-representative-on-behalf-of-the-eu-on-the-escalation-of-hostilities-in-the-eastern-part-of-the-country/>

² <https://ec.europa.eu/docsroom/documents/58035>

with Rwanda did not progress for the time being towards the conclusion of a Roadmap. As announced by High Representative/Vice-President on 24 February 2025 ⁽²⁾, the MoU has been put under review.

Regarding the MoU signed the Democratic Republic of Congo³ in October 2023, a Roadmap was jointly endorsed in December 2024 by the EU and the Government of the Democratic Republic of Congo. Its implementation will allow for achieving the strategic objectives set in the MoU and will encompass measures in the fields of fighting child labour, formalising artisanal mining and increasing transparency and sustainability of the sector and developing both partners' raw materials value chains.

The EU is committed to supporting anti-corruption efforts and resource governance in the DRC and the wider region. In February 2023, the EU Member States renewed the EU Great Lakes Strategy, which focuses on promoting peace and prosperity in the region, while putting an emphasis on sustainable resource management. Besides, EU fully supports regional efforts to increase traceability and transparency and reinforce the fight against illegal trafficking of minerals, including through support to the relevant work and action of the International Conference of the Great Lakes Region of which all the countries in the region including Rwanda are members.

For an overview of our partnerships with the DRC and Rwanda, I invite you to consult our website : https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/countries/democratic-republic-congo_en / https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/countries/republic-rwanda_en

Yours sincerely,

Geza STRAMMER

³ https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/publications/memorandum-understanding-eu-democratic-republic-congo-sustainable-raw-materials_en