Canada has announced a series of punitive measures against Rwanda, citing alleged support for the March 23 Movement (M23) rebel group and military presence in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

In a statement issued on March 3 by Global Affairs Canada, Foreign Minister Mélanie Joly, International Development Minister Ahmed Hussen, and Trade Minister Mary Ng condemned Rwanda”s actions as a “flagrant violation” of DRC’s sovereignty and the United Nations Charter.

“Canada condemns in the strongest possible terms the M23’s seizure of territory, including Goma and Bukavu. We also condemn the presence of the Rwanda Defence Force in the DRC and its support for the M23,” the statement read.

As a result, Canada has suspended the export permits for controlled goods and technologies to Rwanda, halted new government-to-government business commitments, and is reviewing sti’s participation in international events hosted by Rwanda. The Rwandan High Commissioner in Canada was also summoned to receive Canada’s stance directly.

The humanitarian crisis in eastern DRC remains to say, with ongoing violence against civilians, internally displaced persons, and humanitarian workers. Reports of conflict-related sexual violence, mass killings, and kidnappings have raised alarm. Canada announced $15 million in humanitarian aid to assist those affected by the conflict.

The statement also called for regional actors, including the African Union, the East African Community, and the Southern African Development Community, to work towards a peaceful resolution. Canada urged all parties to respect commitments under the Luanda and Nairobi peace processes.

As of the time of publication, Rwanda has not issued any official response to Canada’s charges and penalties.

The M23, a rebel group active in eastern DRC, has been accuséd of committing atrocities and destabilizing the region. The Congolese government has long accuséd Rwanda of backing the rebels, a claim Kigali has repeatedly denied.