Forty-nine Rwandan nationals—including seven former fighters of the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) and 42 of their dependents—were voluntarily repatriated to Rwanda on Monday, 10 November. The operation was facilitated by the DDRS (Disarmament, Demobilization, Reintegration and Stabilisation) section of MONUSCO, a UN Peacekeeping mission in Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

The ex-combatants surrendered to MONUSCO in response to calls for foreign armed groups operating in eastern DRC to leave the bush, lay down their weapons and return safely to their home countries. After spending three days in a transit centre, the group crossed the “Grande Barrière” (La Corniche) border from Goma (DRC) into Gisenyi (Rwanda), where they were received by Rwandan authorities and began their reintegration process.

Since January 2025, MONUSCO has already facilitated the repatriation of 149 former FDLR members—51 ex-combatants and 97 family members—as part of stabilisation efforts in eastern DRC, where foreign armed groups continue to fuel conflict.

The neutralisation of the FDLR is a sensitive issue in DRC-Rwanda relations, and features in the peace agreement signed by the two countries on 27 June 2025 in Washington D.C., United States.

The Washington agreement, brokered by the United States and Qatar, sets out several key commitments: respect for territorial integrity, prohibition of hostilities, the disengagement, disarmament and conditional integration of non-state armed groups, and the creation of a joint security coordination mechanism.

Also Read: Rwanda and DRC agree to launch joint security plan

Under the agreement’s terms, the DRC and Rwanda pledged that Rwanda would withdraw its troops from eastern DRC within 90 days, and that the DRC would halt support for militia groups such as the FDLR.

Also Read: Hundreds-of Rwandans return from DRC

This latest repatriation of ex-FDLR combatants comes amid a wider campaign by the Congolese army, after a communiqué on 10 October calling on FDLR members to surrender, signaling increasing pressure to implement the peace deal’s security provisions.