

The former President of the Democratic Republic of Congo Joseph Kabila has taken the leadership of a new political-military front bringing together senior figures associated with the M23 rebellion, marking a more direct role for the former leader in the conflict challenging President Félix Tshisekedi's government.

The Front pour la refondation de la nation (FRN) was announced in Goma on October 12, 2026, after its founders met on October 10 and 11. The new organisation says it will unite and coordinate forces opposed to the government in Kinshasa.



Kabila was named president of the front. Bertrand Bisimwa and Corneille Nangaa were appointed vice-presidents, while Major General Sultani Makenga was named chief of staff of the Congolese Revolutionary Army (ARC), with the rank of vice-president.

Freddy Rukema Kaniki was appointed secretary-general and Benjamin Mbonimpa deputy secretary-general. Désiré Rukomera Rwigema was named permanent secretary of the founders' college, according to the coalition's founding declaration.

At the launch in Goma, coalition adviser Claude Ibalanky said the organisation intended to unite resistance forces to end what it described as tyranny, including through the use of force.

"The signatories have decided to pool their forces, resources, and means to create a framework for action through which all Congolese people, acting in unison, will undertake the task of liberating their country," Ibalanky said.

The announcement came days after Kabila issued a public address warning that Congo was in danger and urging citizens to take responsibility for the country's future. He accused Tshisekedi's government of disregarding recommendations he had made in May 2025 to help restore peace.

Kabila served as president from 2001 to 2019. His appointment places him at the head of a coalition that includes figures associated with the AFC/M23 movement, which has fought Congolese government forces and seized territory in the country's east.

Nangaa, a former head of Congo's electoral commission, established the Alliance

Fleuve Congo (AFC) in 2023. The political movement later became associated with the M23 rebellion. Bisimwa is a senior M23 figure, while Makenga is one of its principal military commanders.

The FRN's founding declaration states that it succeeds the AFC and formally ends the political organisation's existence. It does not separately spell out whether the M23 will be dissolved or how its existing military command will be organised under the new structure.

The announcement comes as diplomatic efforts continue to resolve the conflict in eastern Congo. The new front has declared its intention to pursue its objectives by all means, including force, but has not announced a specific military operation or timetable.

The Congolese government had not issued an immediate public response to the announcement, according to reports published on the day of the launch.