

President Paul Kagame has urged the United Nations to address what Rwanda considers the root causes of conflict in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, during talks with the new head of the UN peacekeeping mission in Congo and the UN envoy for the Great Lakes region.

Kagame met James Swan, the UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Congo and head of MONUSCO, and Huang Xia, the Secretary-General's Special Envoy for the Great Lakes region, in Kigali on Wednesday.

The meeting comes as diplomatic efforts seek to implement separate peace initiatives aimed at ending fighting in eastern Congo and easing tensions between Rwanda and its neighbour.

Rwanda's Presidency said the talks focused on the need to address the root causes of the conflict and its impact on Rwanda's security.



The issue of the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) remains central to Kigali's security concerns. Rwanda says the armed group, formed by remnants of forces and militia linked to the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi, continues to operate in eastern Congo and poses a threat to its territory.

The neutralisation of the FDLR is also part of Rwanda's commitments under the Washington peace agreement with Congo.

Kagame has repeatedly argued that efforts to end the conflict will not succeed if the underlying security and political issues are left unresolved.

Speaking to journalists on Aug. 24, he questioned attempts to portray Rwanda as the main cause of the crisis, saying the evidence about its origins was already known.

"The evidence is there, the root of the problem is known," Kagame said.

He has also said Rwanda will maintain measures it considers necessary to protect its territory from threats originating across the border.

Swan arrived in Rwanda on Tuesday, his first visit since taking over as head of MONUSCO earlier this year. He also met Foreign Minister Olivier Nduhungirehe, with

discussions focused on developments in eastern Congo and efforts to restore peace and stability in the region.

The UN mission has a supporting role in the implementation of peace arrangements in eastern Congo, while separate diplomatic tracks led by the United States and Qatar seek to address the wider conflict.

For Kigali, the priority remains ensuring that any settlement deals with the security concerns that have drawn Rwanda into repeated disputes over the conflict in its neighbour.

The meeting between Kagame and the UN officials underscores the continuing diplomatic push to translate peace commitments into action while addressing the issues that have kept eastern Congo unstable for decades.