

Rwanda's National Commission for Demobilization and Reintegration of ex-combatants (RDRC) said Friday that more than 200 fighters from armed groups have returned this year, and none were sent by the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

Gen. Maj. (Rtd) Jacques Nziza, vice president of the RDRC, made the announcement to military attachés from foreign embassies during a visit to the commission's Mutobo center in Musanze District on Nov. 28.

The June 27, 2025, peace agreement between Rwanda and the DRC calls for the DRC army to dismantle the FDLR armed group, based on the CONOPS plan approved during Luanda talks in October 2024. Under the plan, any offensive should be preceded by campaigns urging fighters to surrender. Those who refuse are to be targeted by the FARDC, the DRC's military.

Nziza said that while FARDC issued a statement on Oct. 10 prohibiting its soldiers from cooperating with FDLR and conducting campaigns to encourage fighters to surrender, the DRC government has shown little willingness to repatriate Rwandans in armed groups. In previous years, it regularly released fighters.

"It is important to know that before January this year, last year, and earlier, every three months here in Mutobo we received up to 30 former combatants and their families," Nziza said.

The fighters returned from North and South Kivu provinces, areas controlled by the M23 armed group, which opposes the DRC government. Returning combatants hand themselves over to the U.N. peacekeeping mission in the DRC (MONUSCO), which then transfers them to Rwanda. On Nov. 25, 15 fighters returned along with seven family members.