

On April 17, 2025, at a UN Security Council meeting in New York, the United States urgently called for the immediate withdrawal of M23 rebels from occupied territories in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), emphasizing the need to end hostilities in the region.

Additionally, the U.S. demanded that Rwanda cease its support for the rebel group and withdraw its troops—allegations that Rwanda has denied.

In his briefing to the UN Security Council on the Great Lakes region, Acting U.S. Alternate Representative John Kelley condemned the ongoing violence and demanded accountability for human rights violations. While he welcomed the reported withdrawal of M23 and Rwandan Defence Forces from Walikale,

Kelley stressed the importance of full compliance with UN Resolution 2773. He called for respect for DRC's sovereignty and expressed support for peace talks between Kinshasa and M23, underlining the need for a coordinated African-led peace process, supported by the UN.

"Greater coordination between regional and UN mechanisms is needed to prevent forum shopping and duplication of efforts," Kelley remarked. "We reject any action by the parties to delay commitments, amass negotiating leverage, or distract the international community from further escalation." He also pointed out that, 12 years after its adoption, the Peace, Security, and Cooperation Framework has failed to stop the recurring violence in the region.

Rwanda's Deputy Permanent Representative to the UN, Robert Kayinamura, also addressed the Security Council during the session on the Peace, Security, and Cooperation Framework.

He reiterated the importance of disarming and neutralizing the FDLR and its splinter groups, condemned hate speech, xenophobia, and ethnic incitement in the DRC, and called for greater regional and international support for peace efforts.

Kayinamura also urged accountability from the DRC government, highlighting that militia-linked violations of the ceasefire by Wazalendo demonstrated a lack of political ownership by the DRC.

He emphasized, "Entertaining or legitimizing the FDLR, even tacitly, prolongs the conflict and destabilizes the region further. Rwanda looks forward to working with

all partners to transform the Great Lakes region into a zone of peace, stability, and permanently get rid of the legacy of genocide.”

Expressing the United Kingdom’s deep concern regarding the situation in eastern DRC, Ambassador James Kariuki, UK Deputy Permanent Representative to the UN, welcomed the withdrawal of M23 and Rwandan Defence Forces from Walikale, he stated that much more remains to be done.

Kariuki called on the M23 to cease hostilities, withdraw from all controlled areas, and for the Rwandan Defence Forces to cease support for the M23.

He urged all parties to engage seriously with regional peace processes and implement an immediate, unconditional ceasefire.

Ambassador Kariuki also praised regional leadership in working toward a lasting resolution, particularly the nomination of President Gnassingbé of Togo as the African Union’s mediator for the peace process.

He expressed hope that this nomination would support coordination between regional and international efforts. Furthermore, Kariuki highlighted the scale of human suffering, noting that over one million people have been displaced since the beginning of the year, and urged all parties to respect international humanitarian and human rights law, ensuring unimpeded humanitarian aid access and the reopening of key airports, including Goma and Kavumu.