



OFFICE OF THE SPECIAL ENVOY OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL
FOR THE GREAT LAKES REGION

Neutralization of Armed Groups

Summary of Facts and Analysis

- The security situation in eastern DRC continues to be affected by the persistence of armed groups. While joint efforts of the GoDRC, the UN (MONUSCO and OSESG), and the region, (ICGLR/SADC) proved effective against the M23 rebel movement in 2013, in line with Security Council resolutions 2098 (2013) and 2211 (2014), the neutralization of other armed groups in eastern DRC, notably, the **Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR)**, have not yielded significant results. This is due to a number of challenges, including the suspension of joint military operations by the DRC and MONUSCO, the demand by the FDLR for political dialogue with the Government of Rwanda as a condition for voluntary surrender, and the lack of collective political occasioned by the mistrust generated by the FDLR in the region. Unilateral actions by DRC Government against the FDLR is yet to achieve the desired impact and independent means to verify the claims of neutralized FDLR are not in place. (GoDRC figures indicate 768 combatants neutralized so far). It is not known if and when joint FARDC and MONUSCO operations will commence as this is currently linked to ongoing strategic dialogue on the presence of MONUSCO in the DRC.
- However, GoDRC operations against the **Allied Democratic Forces (ADF)** which started in 2014, and the arrest in April of its leader, Jamil Mukulu, seriously weakened the ADF. Progress against the ADF was made possible with the cooperation between the GoDRC, MONUSCO and the Government of Uganda (GoU). Despite this progress, the ADF continues to carry out attacks against civilians in Beni area, with the support of local networks. Clearly, more to be done to fully neutralize the group. Uganda wishes to be involved in this regard by inserting forces on the ground, although the GoDRC is opposed to this option.
- Meanwhile, the **implementation of the Nairobi Declarations** which concluded the peace talks between the GoDRC and the M23 in December 2013 remains slow. Very few of the commitments taken by both parties have been implemented. At this stage, the amnesty provision and the repatriation process of the reportedly over 1,400 ex-M23 combatants which fled to Uganda and Rwanda in 2013 are amongst the most contentious. To date, only 182 ex-M23 combatants have been repatriated from Uganda to the DRC, while 13 have been repatriated from Rwanda. According to Ugandan sources, as of 4 August, 817 ex-M23 combatants are cantoned at the Bihanga Military Camp. About 327 residents of the camp have deserted, with no clarity on their whereabouts, 14 are admitted in hospital, 25 departed on sick leave



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	<p>and are yet to return, 4 are deceased. The presence of hundreds of ex-M23 combatants in Rwanda and Uganda remains a serious source of concern for the GoDRC and the host authorities in Uganda and Rwanda. Yet, despite several attempts by the GoDRC to expedite the repatriation of the ex-M23 combatants, in line with the Nairobi Declarations and relevant decisions of the ICGLR Summits, there has been no progress in this process due to lack of even focus in the implementation of the Nairobi Declarations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The ex-M23 leaders have always refused to send representatives in coordination meetings organised in Kinshasa by the DRC National Oversight Mechanism and the ICGLR Secretariat in the DRC due to concerns over their security, an argument they have also flagged to explain reluctance to encourage repatriation of the rank and file. Recent field visits to Uganda and Rwanda organised by the ICGLR mechanism with GoDRC, ICGLR, MONUSCO and OSESG participation, did not result in repatriations as the M23 ex-combatants informed that they had not received the green light from their leaders to do so, and referred to the outstanding issues in the implementation of Nairobi Declarations. A Task force comprising experts from Uganda, DRC, ICGLR, UN, AU and SADC to facilitate the repatriation of ex-M23 was established on 5 August. ▪ The current stalemate suggests that there is a persistent lack of trust between the GoDRC and the ex-M23 due to the status of the implementation of Nairobi Declarations. Progress in repatriation could be advanced with concomitant implementation of other aspects the said agreement. GoU is increasingly concerned with the continued presence of the ex-combatants, and GoR believes that a twin track approach that focuses on FDLR and ex-M23 stand better chances of success on both fronts.
<p>Next Steps/ Messaging</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>On FDLR</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Encourage the GoDRC to pursue cooperation with MONUSCO for early resumption of joint military operations against the FDLR; ii) Encourage the GoDRC and GoR to resume cooperation or strengthen existing channels/mechanisms to address the FDLR (on intelligence sharing, sensitization on DDRRR, agreement on benchmarks and end goals of neutralization efforts, etc.) ▪ <u>On the Nairobi Declarations</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Engage the relevant Governments in the region (GoDRC, GoR, and GoU), the ICGLR Secretariat, and the leadership of the ex-M23 to discuss progress in the



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	<p>implementation of the Nairobi Declarations as a means to advance the repatriation process.</p> <p>ii) Encourage the Government of Rwanda (GoR) to engage ICGLR and the GoDRC to discuss repatriation of ex-M23 from Rwanda. The ICGLR had requested for a meeting of the ICGLR-led implementation mechanism in Kigali on 29-30 August for this purpose.</p>	
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