



Democratic Republic of the Congo
Genocide Emergency Report
February 2025

By Grace Harris, Lea Gruber, and Ebonie Kibalya, Genocide Watch

M23 attacks in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) have cost over [2900 lives](#). M23 is [supported](#) by the government of Rwanda. Rwanda is tired of anti-Tutsi militias massacring Congolese Tutsis and driving them into Rwanda.

The DRC has endured constant warfare since 1996, resulting in [six million deaths](#). The First and Second Congo Wars (1996–2003) directly followed the 1994 Rwandan Genocide against the Tutsis. The Congo wars were the deadliest international wars since World War II.

The same anti-Tutsi exclusionary ideology that drove the genocide in Rwanda [persists](#). Mai mai, Lendu, Allied Democratic Forces, CODECO, FDLR and other anti-Tutsi militias have terrorized the Banyamulenge, Hema, and other Congolese Tutsis, driving them into refugee and IDP camps.

Eastern DRC is plagued by armed militias vying for control over coltan (tantalum), gold, and rare earths used to produce cellphones. Much of the Coltan from the DRC is exported through Rwanda.

The DRC has 21 million people who [need humanitarian aid](#) with 2.7 million internally displaced in North Kivu, South Kivu, and Ituri provinces.

M23 has captured Goma and Bukavu, the capitals of North and South Kivu. The fighting in Goma has claimed at least [2,900 lives](#) and left thousands wounded by bullets and shrapnel, pushing local hospitals [beyond capacity](#).

During a jailbreak in Goma, more than [160 female prisoners](#) were raped and burned, while hundreds of inmates escaped. Rampant [rape, mass murder, and other atrocities](#) occur daily. Civilians have suffered [executions](#) by M23, [mass rapes by Congolese government troops and escaped prisoners](#), and [forced labor and conscription](#) by M23, which has occupied hospitals and schools.

Internally displaced persons (IDP) camps have been [targeted](#), with [bombs striking at least two camps](#). WFP, ICRC, MSF, UNHCR, WHO, Medair, Concern, Action Against Hunger, and Oxfam warehouses were looted in late January.

The DRC-based grassroots organization, [ARSF](#) (Actions for the Social Reintegration of Women), warned in an internal report to Genocide Watch that the Eastern Congolese are enduring “a situation of ‘absolute’ precariousness” with grave threat of disease, starvation, lack of clean water, and no operating clinics or hospitals.

Kinshasa has repeatedly refused direct talks with M23, despite pressure to negotiate from Eastern African and Southern African leaders at a [crisis summit on February 8](#).

Genocide Watch considers eastern DRC to be at **Stage 7: Preparation, Stage 8: Persecution, and Stage 9: Extermination**.

Genocide Watch recommends:

- The Rwandan government should honestly admit its support for M23 and defund and disband M23.
- The African Union, UN, MONUSCO, DRC army, and M23 should negotiate a permanent ceasefire.
- The Rwandan and DRC governments must negotiate a pact to defeat anti-Tutsi militias in eastern DRC.
- Aid must be given by the EU, UN, NGOs, and businesses to rebuild Goma, Bukavu, and eastern DRC.
- Perpetrators of atrocities must be arrested and tried in Congolese and Rwandan courts.