



# Security Council

Eightieth year

**9887**<sup>th</sup> meeting  
Thursday, 27 March 2025, 10 a.m.  
New York

*Provisional*

---

<i>President:</i>	Ms. Lassen. . . . .	(Denmark)
<i>Members:</i>	Algeria. . . . .	Mr. Yahiaoui
	China. . . . .	Mr. Fu Cong
	France . . . . .	Mr. Bonnafont
	Greece . . . . .	Mr. Stamatekos
	Guyana . . . . .	Ms. Persaud
	Pakistan. . . . .	Mr. Ahmad
	Panama . . . . .	Mr. Alfaro de Alba
	Republic of Korea . . . . .	Mr. Cho
	Russian Federation . . . . .	Ms. Evstigneeva
	Sierra Leone . . . . .	Mr. Kanu
	Slovenia. . . . .	Mrs. Blokar Drobič
	Somalia . . . . .	Mr. Abdullahi Yusuf
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . .	Mr. Kariuki
	United States of America. . . . .	Ms. Shea

## Agenda

The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Organization  
Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (S/2025/176)

---

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. *Corrections* should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room AB-0928 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (<http://documents.un.org>).



*The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.*

### **Adoption of the agenda**

*The agenda was adopted.*

### **The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo**

#### **Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (S/2025/176)**

**The President:** In accordance with rule 37 of the Security Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Angola, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda to participate in this meeting.

On behalf of the Council, I welcome His Excellency Mr. Olivier Nduhungirehe, Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Rwanda.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following to participate in this meeting: Ms. Bintou Keita, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; and Ms. Charlotte Slente, Secretary General of the Danish Refugee Council.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2025/176, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

I now give the floor to Ms. Keita.

**Ms. Keita** (*spoke in French*): I thank the Security Council for this opportunity to discuss the alarming situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo and the ongoing efforts of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) to implement its mandate despite considerable challenges.

The political and security context remains tense owing to the expansion in the east of the Democratic Republic of the Congo of the Alliance Fleuve Congo (AFC) and the Mouvement du 23 mars (M23), supported by the Rwanda Defence Force. This led the Council to hold emergency meetings on 26 January (see S/PV.9849), 28 January (see S/PV.9853) and 19 February (see S/PV.9863), which culminated in the adoption of resolution 2773 (2025) on 21 February.

The Human Rights Council, for its part, convened a special session on 7 February on the human rights situation in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, resulting in Human Rights Council resolution S-37/1, which creates a newly constituted fact-finding mission and an independent commission of inquiry into serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law committed in North and South Kivu since January 2022. This initiative reinforces similar efforts undertaken by the International Criminal Court to address crimes committed in North Kivu during this period.

*(spoke in English)*

In February and March, the AFC/M23, backed by the Rwanda Defence Force, advanced further in North and South Kivu. By mid-March, it had consolidated its control over Idjwi territory and several chiefdoms in the Uvira highlands, in South Kivu, while also continuing its expansion into Walikale territory in North Kivu. Today the AFC/M23 controls large parts of both provinces, North Kivu and South Kivu, and threatens to expand into the Tshopo and Maniema provinces.

The AFC/M23 also continued installing a parallel administration, appointing most recently a governor, two vice-governors and a mayor in Bukavu, in South Kivu. In North Kivu, the AFC/M23 has appointed financial administrators and a mining delegate, echoing links between armed conflicts and the illegal exploitation of natural resources in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Despite extensive regional and international efforts, the immediate and unconditional ceasefire called for by the East African Community (EAC), the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the African Union and resolution 2773 (2025) and also, most recently, under the auspices of Qatar, is yet to materialize. It is imperative that all parties honour their stated commitment to silence the guns and pursue a peaceful solution. I would like to express my gratitude to Angolan President and African Union Chairperson, President João Lourenço, for his tireless mediation efforts aimed at restoring dialogue between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda. I encourage the swift appointment of an African Union mediator to spearhead the panel of facilitators appointed by the Joint EAC-SADC Summit of Heads of State and Government, with a view to coordinating and unifying the mediation initiatives, building on the foundations of the Luanda and Nairobi processes.

The overall security situation in the rest of North Kivu and Ituri, where more than 60 per cent of MONUSCO's forces are deployed, also remains volatile. The Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) have exploited the security vacuum created by the redeployment of the troops of the Forces armées de la République démocratique du Congo (FARDC) to launch attacks in Lubero, Beni and near Butembo, killing hundreds of civilians.

In Ituri, alongside the ADF threat, clashes between the Coopérative pour le développement du Congo (CODECO) and Zaïre armed groups have escalated, particularly in Djugu and Mahagi territories. Those groups have targeted civilians near mining areas, farmland and internally displaced persons sites. The announcement by former International Criminal Court convict Thomas Lubanga of a new politico-military movement in Ituri, the Convention pour la révolution populaire, also threatens civilians and regional security.

*(spoke in French)*

The human rights situation is seriously deteriorating. In recent months, the province of North Kivu has recorded the highest number of human rights violations and abuses. Those cases of serious abuses against civilians include the summary executions of more than 100 people, abductions and the forced recruitment of young people, including children, as well as cases of conscription and forced labour.

In Ituri, the ADF and CODECO are continuing their atrocities, worsening an already alarming human rights situation. Women and children remain the main victims in North Kivu and Ituri, with serious violations of children's rights affecting 403 children, including 90 girls, between 1 December 2024 and 28 February 2025. Those violations include abduction, murder, maiming, forced recruitment, attacks on schools and sexual violence.

The AFC/M23 offensive, through confrontations with the FARDC, and the massive displacements that followed, as well as the influx of combatants and escaped prisoners, increased the vulnerability of girls and women to conflict-related sexual violence. The United Nations Joint Human Rights Office has documented hundreds of cases in North Kivu, South Kivu and Ituri. Impunity encourages repeat offences, and so it is imperative to systematically document cases to ensure that all victims obtain justice and reparations.

The humanitarian situation in the eastern provinces remains critical, with a dramatic increase in needs. Clashes with the M23 have forced hundreds of thousands of civilians to flee. Displaced communities are often under pressure to return to their places of origin, without adequate security.

Humanitarian access remains impeded in many areas owing to insecurity and the presence of armed groups. The prolonged closure of the Goma and Kavumu airports is a major obstacle to the delivery of aid. The non-functioning of the banking sector in areas under de facto authority is also complicating the humanitarian response, but also the lives of the population in general.

In Ituri, the upsurge in attacks by armed groups and clashes between them and the deployed troops of the Ugandan People's Defence Force have exacerbated the violence against civilians, increasing humanitarian needs and complicating access. Since January, more than 100,000 people have been forced to flee in Djugu territory alone.

This worsening of the situation comes against the backdrop of an overall funding crisis. The 2025 humanitarian response plan is currently only 8.2 per cent funded, forcing humanitarian actors to prioritize only the most urgent needs.

*(spoke in English)*

In this challenging context, MONUSCO remains fully committed to implementing its mandate, as set out in resolution 2765 (2024). The Mission has intensified patrols and established mobile operating bases in Lodha and Aar. It has also been facilitating Government-led consultations with armed groups in Ituri since January 2025, leading to the surrender of 2,216 Zaïre elements and the handover of 103 weapons and ammunition, as well as a reduction in security alerts. MONUSCO continues to protect civilians, responding to attacks in Djugu territory, providing temporary shelter and assisting with medical evacuations. In North Kivu, MONUSCO has strengthened cooperation with authorities by donating vehicles and enhancing joint patrols, reducing armed criminality. The arrival of the new Force Commander on 10 February 2025 and the establishment of a temporary force headquarters in Beni have bolstered coordination with the FARDC, notably in ADF hotspot areas.

In Goma and other areas under the M23's control, MONUSCO continues to face restrictions on its freedom of movement, including roadblocks and a 48-hour notification requirement for convoys. The Mission continues to engage with the AFC/M23 on matters related to the implementation of its core mandated responsibilities, urging respect for international law, including humanitarian law, and the Security Council mandates. In recent days, some restrictions on the movement of MONUSCO in and around Goma have been eased. For instance, the M23 is temporarily allowing United Nations vehicles and equipment to cross the border into the Democratic Republic of the Congo and permitting civilian personnel to cross over, one day per week. In Goma, the Mission has been able to resupply its bases with MONUSCO military escorts.

I am concerned that the ongoing violence in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo is undermining the country's national cohesion. As more people flee its eastern provinces to Government-controlled areas in the west, disinformation labelling them as infiltrators or suspects is spreading, in particular on social media. Attacks, albeit isolated, against Tutsi and Swahili-speaking Congolese citizens, along with the resurgence of hate speech, undermine social cohesion.

I urge the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to intensify its efforts to combat hate speech by adopting the recently resubmitted law against tribalism, racism and xenophobia in order to hold accountable those responsible and to continue to affirm the diversity of its people. I reiterate the Mission's commitment

to accompany the efforts of all actors to promote social cohesion and prevent the spread of hate speech in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the wider Great Lakes region.

*(spoke in French)*

MONUSCO remains committed to supporting ongoing regional peace initiatives. I encourage all regional peace initiatives to adopt a gender-sensitive approach. I welcome the appointment of two women to the panel of facilitators for the joint SADC-EAC initiative. Furthermore, it is essential that the Nairobi process take into account the specificity of women combatants in armed groups.

In line with resolution 2746 (2024), MONUSCO has continued to support the SADC Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo troops by providing logistical assistance and facilitating medical evacuations, as well as assisting in the repatriation of fallen soldiers. The Mission also stands ready to put its capabilities to good use in the implementation of an eventual ceasefire.

The tragic deterioration of the security situation in the east of the country has had a major impact on discussions between MONUSCO and the Congolese authorities concerning the gradual and responsible disengagement of the Mission and the transition in South Kivu. The implementation of the South Kivu Government's provincial road map for transition was suspended following the AFC/M23 takeover of Bukavu. The efforts of the Joint Working Group, comprised of the Government, MONUSCO and the United Nations country team, to define the planning modalities for the Mission's disengagement from the provinces of North Kivu and Ituri have also been compromised, as several planning assumptions are now obsolete. However, the Mission reaffirms its determination to pursue disengagement and transition discussions with the Government.

*(spoke in English)*

We must direct all our efforts towards securing an unconditional ceasefire. The implementation of resolution 2773 (2025) is crucial to ease the suffering of affected populations and to maintain the Democratic Republic of the Congo's sovereignty and territorial integrity. I reiterate MONUSCO's readiness to support its implementation. I call on the Council to take concrete measures against those responsible for serious human rights violations and complicity.

Furthermore, I reiterate that lasting peace in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo can be achieved only through a political solution. I encourage all parties to recommit to dialogue within regional peace processes and to ensure women's participation in negotiations.

Lastly, I recall the necessity of the urgent reopening of Goma and Kavumu airports, which are lifelines for humanitarian efforts and key to the rotation of MONUSCO's troops.

I strongly call on all parties to respect their obligations to protect civilians, in full compliance with international humanitarian and human rights law.

**The President:** I thank Ms. Keita for her briefing.

I now give the floor to Ms. Slente.

**Ms. Slente:** The Danish Refugee Council has been working in the Democratic Republic of the Congo for over 16 years, including in the North Kivu and Ituri provinces. As a humanitarian organization that specializes in forced displacement, we are also delivering aid in neighbouring countries Burundi, Tanzania and Uganda, as well as in 40 other countries across the globe.

This year's explosion of violence in and around Goma has exacerbated the already dire humanitarian situation in the east and led to 660,000 people being forcibly displaced. That is in addition to the 6.7 million people already displaced across the country at the end of last year.

The Danish Refugee Council is among the organizations racing to respond to the erratic and constant movement of internally displaced persons (IDPs) seeking safety since the end of January. IDP sites around Goma were dismantled within 72 hours, forcing IDPs to return to unsafe areas or head to Goma without shelter, food or water. With little notice, families were kicked out of their shelters and forced to leave with nothing but the clothes they were wearing. Nearly half of those newly displaced are now living in informal sites, including makeshift camps, churches and schools. Three new informal sites hosting more than 400 households have formed on the outskirts of Goma in the past three weeks. Overcrowding is an issue and living conditions are appalling. Internally displaced girls and boys are traumatized; they are not going to school and are resorting to begging or looking for odd jobs in exchange for food. We have heard reports of girls engaging in survival sex. The other half of the new IDPs live with host families in Goma, which often do not have the resources to support them. Just over two weeks ago, the Danish Refugee Council's field teams spoke to nearly 400 IDPs across 11 informal sites. Ninety-six per cent of people do not feel safe. One person told us, "there is nowhere to go. The only solution is to stay in the warehouse and wait to die."

The Democratic Republic of the Congo knows of widespread looting, shootings at night and arbitrary arrests. Many of those arrested are wrongly accused of being affiliated with armed groups. There are also reports of boys and men being forced to join armed groups. The presence of armed group members in and around Goma, as well as throughout North Kivu, is further terrorizing those displaced. One person told us that they wake each morning to find new dead bodies on the streets where they are staying, and it is never clear who the perpetrators are.

Every step is fraught with danger, as the surrounding area of Goma is extensively contaminated by unexploded ordnance, which is yet another risk to those forcibly displaced who seek safety. Sexual violence is rampant. The Danish Refugee Council provides individual case management in informal sites in and around Goma to individuals who have experienced human rights violations. Since the surge in violence in late January, 98 per cent of those cases have been for rape, including of girls younger than 5 years of age. Every single child case management involved rape, further underscoring the extreme risks faced by girls and boys in this conflict. As horrifying as these figures are, we know that they are but a fraction of the actual number, as most cases go unreported due to fear of retaliation, stigma and lack of access to specialized services.

The humanitarian response is under extreme pressure. Some humanitarian organizations fear retaliation for providing aid in areas not controlled by the Government or are unsure whether they are still able to operate there legally. We lack fuel, cash and supplies owing to looting and the closure of Goma airport, which is normally a strategic humanitarian hub in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. The situation is further complicated by political instability as local administrative offices with which humanitarian organizations engage are no longer under the control of the Congolese Government. That requires navigating new requirements and renegotiating safe access. Banks in Goma are still closed, which is leading to a lack of cash and creating an environment in which mobile money agents are exploiting the situation by arbitrarily dictating their own rates. The sudden and drastic funding cuts to humanitarian aid to the Democratic Republic of the Congo announced earlier this year as part of broader cuts have further significantly curtailed the ability of organizations to respond to the worsening humanitarian situation across the country.

We must not forget that the situation in the northern province of Ituri also remains critical, with a limited presence of non-governmental humanitarian organizations there. The Danish Refugee Council anticipates that the displacement crisis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo will only worsen. Our artificial-intelligence-driven forecasting tool, developed in collaboration with IBM, anticipates that the Democratic Republic of the Congo will be one of the biggest displacement hotspots in the year ahead. Since the escalation of violence in January, 70,000 refugees have arrived in Burundi. That influx is overwhelming existing transit centres and refugee camps in Burundi, which were already at full capacity. In late February, we conducted a rapid needs assessment along the border between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Burundi, which highlighted the urgent need for emergency assistance. Congolese people from Goma have also been fleeing to Uganda since January. The regional impact will only increase if humanitarian needs are not addressed within eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo and the conflict does not end. The Danish Refugee Council calls on members of the Security Council and the international community to take the following steps.

First, all available avenues must be used to guarantee the safe passage and protection of displaced populations in and around Goma. That includes calling for an end to the forced return of displaced people to unsafe areas and ensuring that all returns are voluntary, safe and dignified.

Secondly, it is necessary to call for unimpeded humanitarian access to displaced populations, including in areas not controlled by the Government, and for the protection of civilians to be prioritized in all response efforts.

Thirdly, all parties must be urged to find peaceful means to end the conflict, as there are no military solutions to end the violence.

Fourthly, support must be given to local peacebuilding efforts to rebuild trust and social cohesion among local communities, which have been torn apart by years of war. When conditions improve and allow displaced people to voluntarily and safely begin to return to their villages, it will be critical to help them to rebuild their lives.

For nearly all of the internally displaced people whom the Danish Refugee Council recently interviewed, only peace will make them feel safer. I want to leave Council members with the words of one internally displaced person to whom we recently spoke, and who said: “We want to go home, where we will be safe, where we can farm our lands and find enough food to eat.”

**The President:** I thank Ms. Slente for her briefing.

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements.

**Mr. Bonnafont** (France) (*spoke in French*): I thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ms. Bintou Keita, for her statement but first and foremost for her efforts and those of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO). I thank the Secretary-General of the Danish Refugee Council, Ms. Charlotte Slente, for her most compassionate and factual briefing.

Those briefings are a gauge of the gravity of the security and humanitarian situation that continues to beleaguer the communities of North Kivu and South Kivu — a situation compounded by the offensive being undertaken by the Mouvement du 23 Mars (M23) with the support and participation of the Rwanda Defence Force. Yet again, in three decades of conflict, the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo is in the grip of violence by armed groups, chronic instability and the plunder of natural resources. The situation demands our action.

One month on from the adoption of resolution 2773 (2025), the Council has a responsibility to stay engaged for peace and security in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in the region alike. The Security Council was unequivocal in demanding an immediate end to the hostilities. Resolution 2773 (2025) called on all parties to conclude an effective, unconditional and immediate ceasefire agreement. Through that resolution, the Council was unanimous in calling for the immediate withdrawal the Rwanda Defence Force from Congolese territory. The resolution further recalls the need to abide by international humanitarian law and to ensure full, secure and unimpeded humanitarian access, starting with the reopening of the airport in Goma. Those points continue to be urgent today. Urgent progress in the implementation of resolution 2773 (2025) is much awaited. Daily clashes continue along the front line. Acts of violence against civilians, human rights violations and sexual violence are on the rise. The risk of a flare-up in the Great Lakes region is ever-present. The Council cannot content itself with the current state of affairs.

The conclusion of a ceasefire by which all the parties abide is therefore the overriding priority. France supports efforts to that end, be they the calls for a ceasefire made after the meeting in Doha on 18 March or those issued as part of the Southern African Development Community-East African Community (SADC-EAC) regional process. The ceasefire must be implemented so that the fighting does not afflict the communities in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo for a single day more. The dialogue initiatives must be pursued to make tangible and visible progress towards a cessation of hostilities. In that vein, regional mediation processes can play a pivotal role in starting to find a necessary way out of the crisis. France has supported the Luanda and Nairobi processes and will continue to back all regional efforts capable of moving towards a lasting settlement of the conflict, including the SADC-EAC process. We support coordination among those initiatives, United Nations involvement, the consultation of civil society and the participation of women in the peace process. I also commend the commitment of Angola and President João Lourenço, who has striven tirelessly to promote dialogue and define the concrete parameters for a negotiated solution with a view to the full withdrawal of Rwandan forces and the neutralization of the Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda by the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It is vital to continue building on those gains.

Lastly, I underscore the importance of the role of MONUSCO, which is operating in a difficult setting and, all too often, is hindered in its work by the M23. Its protection of civilians mandate must be implemented in full and throughout its area of responsibility. MONUSCO possesses the relevant capacities to engage in ceasefire monitoring, once an agreement is concluded. That demands an end to the pressure being exerted on it. Attacks on Blue Helmets, which may constitute war crimes, cannot be countenanced. The same holds true of impediments to MONUSCO's freedom of movement and the fulfilment of its mandate.

A solution to the conflict in the Great Lakes presupposes good-faith engagement by all the parties, rooted in the belief that there is no military solution. It also requires the unremitting involvement of the Council, in close and constant liaison with regional efforts. France will continue to do its part for the sovereignty and integrity of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and for peace and stability throughout the region. France reaffirms its full support for MONUSCO and its Head, Ms. Bintou Keita.

**Mr. Kanu** (Sierra Leone): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the three African members of the Security Council plus (A3+), namely Algeria, Guyana, Somalia, and my country, Sierra Leone.

We thank Ms. Bintou Keita, Special Representative of the Secretary-General in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Head of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) for her briefing and for presenting the Secretary-General's quarterly report (S/2025/176) on



the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We also thank Ms. Charlotte Slente, Secretary General of the Danish Refugee Council, for her contribution. We welcome the participation of His Excellency Mr. Olivier Nduhungirehe, Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Rwanda, and the representatives of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Angola and Burundi in today's meeting.

The A3+ extends sincere appreciation to the men and women of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) for their dedicated service. They continue to demonstrate an unwavering commitment to protecting the lives of the Congolese people despite the challenges and risks, particularly over this quarter. In the context of the ongoing hostilities, we are encouraged by recent improvements in security and humanitarian access, which have allowed greater freedom of movement in the east. It is reassuring that evacuated MONUSCO personnel have been able to return to Goma, a positive sign of stabilization in that area. Those developments give hope that MONUSCO will be able to carry out the critical mandate entrusted to it by the Council. We affirm our full support for MONUSCO's mandate and operations.

As we look ahead, discussions about MONUSCO's activities, including plans for its future role, must be conducted in consultation with the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and reflect the priorities of the Congolese people. National ownership and partnership are essential for the successful implementation of the Mission's mandate. We also acknowledge the invaluable contributions of regional mechanisms to security efforts in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. In that regard, the A3+ deeply appreciates the sacrifice and service of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which has now concluded its mandate. We thank the SADC member States that contributed troops and resources to that operation, and we commend their continued political engagement, alongside the East African Community, in seeking a viable solution to the conflict in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The A3+ remains profoundly concerned about the dire humanitarian situation in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. The conflict continues to inflict a severe toll on the Congolese people. It has had an impact on every sector of society, exacerbating economic hardship, displacing millions and upending entire communities. Children are out of school, and women and girls are enduring increased conflict-related sexual violence, compounded by the lack of adequate support systems for survivors. The overall situation is nothing short of catastrophic. We again reiterate our urgent call for an immediate cessation of hostilities across the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. There is no justification for the continuation of this devastating conflict. Every additional day of fighting deepens the suffering and despair of the population. We must act now to silence the guns and halt the bloodshed.

The improved stability in the city of Goma is a window of calm that provides a crucial opportunity for humanitarian organizations to deliver life-saving assistance to those in need. We urge all aid agencies to seize that opportunity to reach vulnerable populations, and we call on all parties to ensure rapid, safe and unhindered access for humanitarian operations.

The A3+ welcomes recent steps towards de-escalation. In particular, we note the ceasefire announcement by the Alliance Fleuve Congo (AFC)-Mouvement du 23 mars (M23), including its commitment to withdraw from such areas as Walikale. We urge the AFC/M23 to fully honour those pledges and demonstrate restraint on the ground. All armed groups must end the violence immediately and uphold their ceasefire commitments. We call on the Council and the international community to support those efforts in order to ensure that they lead to tangible peace.

The A3+ stresses further that all parallel administrations set up in the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo must be dismantled and that the AFC/M23 must relinquish control over all territory seized. We strongly endorse the political process outlined in resolution 2773 (2025), which incorporates the regional perspective on political dialogue. Resolution 2773 (2025), which was adopted unanimously, reaffirmed the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, demanded an immediate and unconditional ceasefire by all armed groups, called for the withdrawal of any external support for those groups and urged the parties to resume dialogue under existing regional mechanisms.

The A3+ calls for the swift and full implementation of that resolution by all concerned parties. Its message is clear, and the A3+ reiterates that message: there is no military solution to this conflict. Sustainable peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo will be achieved only through inclusive dialogue and African-led solutions. In that respect, we commend the concerted diplomatic efforts by African leaders and regional organizations to resolve the conflict. We pay tribute to His Excellency President João Manuel Gonçalves Lourenço of Angola, who has tirelessly mediated between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda, in the spirit of African-led solutions to African challenges. We also recognize the important facilitating role of former President Uhuru Kenyatta of Kenya in the Nairobi process led by the East African Community (EAC). Those efforts have laid critical groundwork for peace. We welcome the recent decision by regional leaders at the joint EAC-SADC summit on 24 March 2025 to harmonize the Luanda and Nairobi peace processes. That unified approach is critical and builds upon the foundations laid by the facilitators of the Luanda and Nairobi processes. Our shared goal is to reach a lasting settlement that addresses the root causes of the conflict, meets the aspirations of the Congolese people and considers legitimate regional security concerns. We note that the African Union Peace and Security Council, at its February 2025 summit meeting, also underscored the need for a coordinated response to the crisis and endorsed those regional initiatives. EAC and SADC have showed commendable unity by adopting a joint road map to peace and appointing a high-level panel of facilitators comprised of eminent former African Heads of State to guide the peace process. The A3+ welcomes the establishment of that panel and urges all stakeholders to cooperate fully with the facilitators in the timely implementation of the road map. We also urgently call for the full, equal and meaningful involvement of women in the peace process.

The Security Council must do its part to reinforce those African-led peace efforts. We urge the Council to remain engaged and to use all available tools to support the regional road map, including by backing the joint peace process and the facilitator panel and ensuring that United Nations efforts, including those of MONUSCO, complement the regional strategy.

The A3+ gratefully acknowledges the support provided by international partners to the Democratic Republic of the Congo in the form of humanitarian aid, development assistance and diplomatic engagement. At the same time, we stress that all external efforts must be closely coordinated with the Congolese authorities and aligned with the region's peace initiatives. We welcome the outcome of the trilateral meeting hosted by the State of Qatar in Doha on 18 March 2025, which brought together His Excellency President Félix-Antoine Tshisekedi Tshilombo and His Excellency President Paul Kagame. In the light of commitments made by both leaders in Doha to remain fully engaged in the joint Luanda-Nairobi process, the A3+ stresses that all processes for peace and security in the Democratic Republic of the Congo should align with that commitment to the African-led process. The presence of external forces risks exacerbating the situation and undermining ongoing efforts. We therefore call on all actors to respect the sovereignty of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In line with resolution 2773 (2025), all uninvited foreign forces should

withdraw from Congolese territory. Neighbouring countries should ensure that they are not providing support or safe haven to any armed group.

In conclusion, the A3+ reiterates its unwavering commitment to the sovereignty, territorial integrity, peace and stability of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We commend the parties for their continued engagement and willingness to pursue dialogue in search of a peaceful resolution. Those are encouraging steps towards rebuilding trust and security in the country.

The A3+ calls on the Security Council and the international community at large to provide steadfast and meaningful support to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. That means not only bolstering MONUSCO's effort on the ground, but also fully backing the ongoing regional political initiatives that offer the best hope for a durable peace. We must all remain actively seized of the matter and be ready to assist as needed. The people of the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo have suffered for too long. They are looking to us, in Africa and around the world, to help to end their ordeal. We must not fail them.

**Mr. Stamatekos** (Greece): I would like to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ms. Bintou Keita, for briefing us today, and Ms. Charlotte Slente, Secretary General of the Danish Refugee Council, for her remarks.

Allow me to emphasize the following points.

First, the adoption of resolution 2773 (2025) was urgently needed in order to address the deteriorating crisis in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. We believe that that resolution sent a clear, strong message to the Mouvement du 23 mars (M23) to immediately cease hostilities and withdraw from Goma, Bukavu and all other controlled areas. Greece resolutely opposes any violations of international law and of the Charter of the United Nations and stresses its strong commitment to the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Secondly, we underline that there is no other solution to the conflict than a political solution, on the basis of dialogue, which remains essential. We welcome the recent meeting between President Tshisekedi Tshilombo and President Kagame in Doha, at which they reaffirmed the commitment of all parties to an immediate and unconditional ceasefire, as agreed at the Joint East African Community-Southern African Development Community Summit and endorsed by the African Union Peace and Security Council. The Rwanda Defence Force must now cease supporting the M23 and immediately withdraw from the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We call for urgent de-escalation and stress that it is more imperative than ever that Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo re-engage immediately in the political dialogue and implement all decisions and commitments agreed under the Luanda and Nairobi processes.

Thirdly, resolution 2773 (2025) reiterates with the strongest voice the Council's full support for the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), which is acting within its mandate and is doing critical work in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in particular protecting civilians, ensuring the continued implementation of the monitoring and reporting mechanism on children and armed conflict, and addressing urgent needs. The protection of civilians, as well as of humanitarian and medical personnel, must remain an absolute priority. We also emphasize our strong commitment to the safety and security of MONUSCO personnel.

Fourthly, we are deeply concerned about the grave humanitarian and security consequences of the M23 offensive, in both North and South Kivu. All parties must respect international humanitarian law and ensure unrestricted humanitarian

access. We strongly condemn all forms of human rights violations; abuses; violence against civilians, including against humanitarian and medical personnel; summary executions and maiming; sexual and gender-based violence; human trafficking; and the recruitment and use of children. All continuing grave violations and abuses committed against children must cease, and all parties must uphold their obligations under international humanitarian law and international human rights law.

Women and girls, being the main victims of the conflict, need to have unobstructed access to justice. We welcome the steps taken by the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to hold perpetrators of grave violations against children accountable. Also, we urge the Democratic Republic of the Congo to prioritize the prevention of sexual violence and all other grave violations.

Finally, a meaningful political engagement of women and their solidarity and advocacy at the regional, national and international levels are key elements for peace in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, as stressed by the Secretary-General in his report (S/2025/176).

We stand ready to support any further engagement of the Council as necessary.

**Mr. Ahmad** (Pakistan): Let me thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ms. Bintou Keita, for her detailed briefing. We have also listened carefully to the compelling statement by Ms. Charlotte Slente, of the Danish Refugee Council. Both briefings have underlined the imperative of dialogue and peace as the way forward. We also welcome the participation of the representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the distinguished Minister for Foreign Affairs of Rwanda and the representatives of Angola and Burundi in this meeting.

In recent weeks, the Council has devoted considerable time and attention to the situation in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, where the military offensive of the Mouvement du 23 mars (M23), with external support, has imperilled peace and security, upended the lives of innocent civilians, exacerbated the humanitarian situation and drastically increased the risk of a wider escalation in the Great Lakes region. After due deliberation, the Council responded, adopting resolution 2773 (2025) last month, reaffirming its strong commitment to the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Among other things, the Council strongly condemned the ongoing offensive and advances of the M23; decided that the M23 should immediately cease hostilities and withdraw from Goma, Bukavu and all controlled areas; and reiterated its urgent call for all parties to conclude an immediate and unconditional ceasefire. It also strongly urged the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda to return without preconditions to diplomatic talks as a matter of urgency to achieve a lasting and peaceful resolution of the protracted conflict in the region. As we know, and as the Special Representative has also reported, the provisions of that resolution largely are yet to be implemented. That is a cause of great concern. We believe the Council's resolution must be respected and fully implemented by all parties.

Secondly, it is evident that there is no military solution to this conflict, and the Council is not alone in promoting a peaceful resolution. There is close cooperation and synergy with the African Union and subregional efforts. In that regard we commend the tireless efforts and leadership of President João Lourenço and former President Uhuru Kenyatta in advancing the Luanda and Nairobi processes and express our support for the newly appointed facilitators of the two processes, which are now merged. All sides, in particular the M23, must engage in good faith with the facilitators. We believe that those African-led and African-facilitated processes provide the appropriate framework for comprehensively addressing the complex historic and ongoing underlying factors, including the legitimate security concerns of all sides. We also acknowledge the role of Qatar in facilitating the leadership-

level dialogue between Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which reaffirmed the commitment of all parties to an immediate and unconditional ceasefire, as agreed at the Joint East African Community (EAC)-Southern African Development Community (SADC) Summit of 8 February.

Lastly, we commend the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) peacekeepers for their efforts under extremely difficult conditions. While they are able to operate freely in 60 per cent of the territory under the MONUSCO mandate, the M23 controls the remaining 40 per cent, thereby restricting the Mission's movement. Those restrictions must be lifted fully, and those obstructing MONUSCO or endangering peacekeepers must be held accountable.

MONUSCO continues to have a critical role in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. It is time not for disengagement but for enhanced engagement. We have taken note of the Joint EAC-SADC Summit's recommendation that the Mission's capacities be reinforced to enable it to play a role in ceasefire monitoring and securitization efforts in the region. The Mission would need to be adequately strengthened and equipped to discharge its current or modified mandate in the future, in consultation with the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Given the intensive engagement of the Council, together with the African Union and other subregional mechanisms, we are of the view that it will be in the interest of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda, and in fact the wider region, to really benefit from this environment by demonstrating political will and genuine commitment and cooperation, particularly through the implementation of the Council's resolutions and the decisions of the African Union Peace and Security Council and subregional organizations, to lay the foundation of durable peace and stability in the region.

**Mr. Fu Cong** (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Special Representative Keita for her briefing. I also listened attentively to the statement by Ms. Slente. I welcome the presence of His Excellency Mr. Nduhungirehe, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Rwanda, and the Permanent Representatives of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Angola and Burundi.

Over the past two months, the situation in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo has been turbulent, with the Great Lakes region being pushed to the brink of regional conflict. Since the Security Council's unanimous adoption of resolution 2773 (2025), the situation has eased slightly, but the Mouvement du 23 mars (M23) still occupies areas such as Goma and Bukavu, making the situation on the ground complex and volatile and filling the future with uncertainty. The current round of conflict and violence has resulted in the loss of more than 7,000 lives and the forced displacement of hundreds of thousands of people, making the humanitarian situation extremely grave.

Any additional day of conflict will bring more suffering to the people and more destruction to the region. An immediate and unconditional ceasefire is a clear demand of resolution 2773 (2025), an overriding priority at this moment and the basic consensus and universal call of the international community. China urges the M23 to honour its commitment to a ceasefire, withdraw from the occupied territories and lift restrictions on humanitarian access. All parties to the conflict should effectively fulfil their obligations under international humanitarian law by taking measures to protect civilians and making every effort to ease the humanitarian crisis.

History shows that there is no military solution to the question of the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo and that dialogue and negotiation are the only ways out. We welcome the direct talks recently held in Qatar between the leaders of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda and hope that the two sides

will stay engaged to address each other's security concerns through dialogue and negotiations. China welcomes the decision of the Democratic Republic of the Congo Government to engage in direct dialogue with the M23. In return, the M23 should respond to the good offices efforts responsibly and return to the track of dialogue as soon as possible.

China always supports African countries in solving African problems in African ways. Resolution 2773 (2025) is based on support for regional processes. At the beginning of this week, the East African Community and the Southern African Development Community held their second joint summit, during which they called for the implementation of the road map adopted at the joint ministerial meeting and the appointment of a panel of facilitators to promote good offices. China welcomes those efforts. We encourage all parties to the conflict to expedite the implementation of the ceasefire plan and to support the good offices of the panel of facilitators. The Security Council and the international community should actively support regional efforts and create a favourable environment for the regional process.

The United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), based on the Council's mandate, has made enormous efforts and sacrifices to protect civilians under extremely difficult and dangerous circumstances. Its implementation of its peacekeeping mandate should not be impeded. The safety of peacekeepers should not be compromised, and any attack on or targeting of MONUSCO is unacceptable. All parties to the conflict should facilitate MONUSCO's performance of its duties and lift unreasonable restrictions on its freedom of movement, logistical supplies and troop rotation. China supports a bigger role for MONUSCO in the peace process in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo in the light of the changing landscape and is ready to participate actively in the Council's discussions.

At present, the question of the Democratic Republic of the Congo is at a critical juncture in its political settlement. China firmly supports the Democratic Republic of the Congo in safeguarding its sovereignty and territorial integrity and stands ready to work with all parties to play a constructive role in ending the conflict at an early date and restoring peace and tranquillity.

**Mr. Alfaro de Alba** (Panama) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me to begin by thanking Ms. Bintou Keita, Special Representative of the Secretary-General in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, for introducing the report of the Secretary-General pursuant to resolution 2765 (2024) (S/2025/176). We also welcome the participation of Ms. Charlotte Slente, Secretary General of the Danish Refugee Council. We also recognize the representatives of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, Angola and Burundi, who honour us with their presence in today's meeting.

Panama notes with deep concern the continued deterioration of the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where the population continues to fall victim to systematic human rights violations, an increase in the recruitment of children in armed conflicts and an alarming escalation of sexual and gender-based violence that disproportionately affects women and girls. Since the takeover of the city of Goma in January, reports of systematic abuses and human rights violations have increased. Recent reports document indiscriminate attacks on hospitals, where Mouvement du 23 mars (M23) fighters have abducted patients, including civilians and wounded Congolese soldiers, subjecting them to torture and inhumane treatment. In addition, atrocity crimes, including gang rape and attacks targeting human rights defenders, have been reported in North and South Kivu.

Sexual and gender-based violence has reached unacceptable levels. Humanitarian organizations have reported a significant increase in sexual assaults in these regions, with more than 38,000 cases documented in North Kivu province alone during the

first quarter of the year. Children are also among the main victims of this conflict. According to UNICEF, thousands of minors have been subjected to sexual violence, kidnappings and forced recruitment by armed groups. In addition, more than 2,500 schools have been closed, leaving almost 795,000 children without access to education, with devastating consequences for the region's development and long-term stability.

The humanitarian crisis also continues to escalate to critical levels. Almost 8 million people have been internally displaced owing to persistent violence and insecurity, while 22 million people require urgent humanitarian assistance. Those communities face extreme levels of food insecurity, limited access to clean water and essential sanitation services. That precariousness has accelerated the spread of diseases, such as cholera, measles and malaria, with unfortunate consequences, in particular for children, who are extremely vulnerable.

The international community cannot remain indifferent to this tragedy. We must strengthen humanitarian efforts, redouble support for victims and hold accountable those responsible for such atrocities. We also express our deepest appreciation for the tireless work of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) personnel, in particular the Blue Helmets, whose commitment, dedication and courage deserve the highest recognition. We vigorously reaffirm that the protection of peacekeepers is non-negotiable. In that regard, we are deeply concerned that, despite diplomatic efforts, restrictions on the Mission's movement imposed by the M23 still persist. That situation not only jeopardizes the safety and well-being of those deployed on the ground but also undermines MONUSCO's operational effectiveness.

We note the phased withdrawal of MONUSCO, which was planned prior to the recent escalation of the conflict and is now facing serious setbacks owing to the deteriorating situation. Furthermore, we regret the significant losses suffered by the peacekeepers, with the death of three Blue Helmets and 37 wounded in the fighting, which underscores the increasing risks faced by the Mission on the ground. In the face of that grave crisis, we support the Secretary-General's call for an immediate ceasefire to prevent further bloodshed.

Missions such as MONUSCO embody the international community's collective promise not to abandon peoples in situations in which peace is threatened. That promise, to be genuine, must be sustained with concrete actions and sustained commitment.

We recognize and value regional efforts to mitigate the conflict and express our concern about Angola's recent announcement that it will withdraw from its role as mediator, which is a challenge to ongoing diplomatic efforts to achieve peace in the region.

Panama appreciates the diplomatic initiatives undertaken by Qatar and other international actors; however, we underscore the importance of the region continuing to strengthen its own mechanisms for dialogue with the objective of achieving a sustainable and lasting solution to the conflict.

We reiterate that the solution in the Democratic Republic of the Congo cannot be solely a military solution. A comprehensive political approach is urgently needed, including dialogue between the Government and all actors, the strengthening of the rule of law, respect for human rights and a regional approach that effectively involves neighbouring countries in the de-escalation of the conflict.

Finally, Panama reaffirms its commitment to active diplomacy that fosters sustainable peace and the protection of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

**Ms. Shea** (United States of America): I thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Bintou Keita and Ms. Charlotte Slente for their briefings today. It is essential that the Security Council and the international community continue to receive objective, credible reporting on the dire situation affecting Congolese civilians and United Nations personnel in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The United States denounces the increasingly antagonistic rhetoric coming from Rwandan Government officials and the Rwanda-backed Mouvement du 23 mars (M23), including threats against senior leadership of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) and false claims that MONUSCO supports the Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda. Those statements are unacceptable and irresponsible, especially from Rwanda, a major contributor to United Nations peacekeeping, including through senior leadership positions.

The United States strongly condemns the continued advances by the M23 and Rwanda Defence Force throughout North and South Kivu.

We welcome all parties' engagement in the joint East African Community-Southern African Development Community process, especially the commitment to reach an unconditional and permanent ceasefire. However, signing communiqués is only a first step; following through is much more difficult. We will be watching the actions of the parties closely and remain prepared to take further measures as needed.

As the largest financial contributor to MONUSCO, the United States is deeply invested in its effectiveness. The Mission must be allowed to move freely and implement its mandate in M23-controlled areas. We demand that the M23 immediately cease its obstruction of MONUSCO and take the necessary steps to reopen the Goma airport without further delay.

We recognize the role MONUSCO could play in supporting an end to the crisis. Through its expertise, mandate and infrastructure, MONUSCO is well-equipped to support the implementation of a ceasefire or negotiated solution — as it has done many times throughout its history. However, absent a sustainable ceasefire or guarantees for MONUSCO's freedom of movement, United Nations troops are prevented from leaving their bases, all while the M23 commits human rights abuses across Goma. That situation is unsustainable. If MONUSCO can no longer carry out its mandate to protect civilians in M23-controlled areas, we as Council members should consider all options — including a re-examination of the Mission's mandate, which no longer reflects its operating environment.

Outside of M23-controlled areas, MONUSCO is making tangible, life-saving contributions to the Democratic Republic of the Congo's security, including through rapid deployments that protect civilians from armed groups. We urge the Democratic Republic of the Congo forces and Uganda to deconflict operations with MONUSCO and support its efforts to protect civilians, disrupt armed group attacks and counter any terrorist threats.

We acknowledge the decision by the Southern African Development Community to terminate the mandate of the Southern African Development Community Mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (SAMIDRC) and honour the troops that gave their lives in the service of Congolese stability. The M23 and Rwandan forces must facilitate a safe and orderly withdrawal of SAMIDRC forces and equipment.

As regional peace processes continue, we stress the need to avoid duplication of efforts and leverage the comparative advantages of viable existing forums and mechanisms, including those MONUSCO is already mandated to support. Furthermore, if regional actors envision a role for MONUSCO to support such processes, they should ensure MONUSCO has a seat at the table.



Finally, two months after the M23 and Rwandan forces seized Goma and more recently Bukavu and Walikale, we underscore the need for sustained pressure on all parties to work in good faith towards a diplomatic resolution to the conflict in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. We must abandon the fantasy of short-term military solutions in favour of a durable peace powered by regional and international investment that allows the Great Lakes region to benefit from its vast natural wealth.

**Ms. Evstigneeva** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We would like to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ms. Bintou Keita, for her briefing. We welcome the participation in this meeting of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Rwanda, Mr. Olivier Nduhungirehe, as well as the representatives of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Angola and Burundi. We listened attentively to Ms. Charlotte Slente, Secretary General of the Danish Refugee Council.

More than a month has passed since the Security Council adopted resolution 2773 (2025). Regrettably, today we are compelled to acknowledge that the Council's key demands remain unaddressed. The hostilities are ongoing, and a ceasefire has not been established. The Mouvement du 23 mars (M23) is expanding its territorial control and imposing its administrative and governance system in the areas it has taken over. The call for Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo to stop their interaction with illegal armed groups has been ignored.

We call for the swift implementation of resolution 2773 (2025), the cessation of hostilities and the withdrawal of M23 fighters from settlements they have captured and territories they have occupied. We also urge Rwanda to respond to the demands of the Security Council. That is necessary, first and foremost, for the Congolese civilian population. Since the beginning of this year, as a result of the hostilities, thousands of the Democratic Republic of the Congo citizens have died and hundreds of thousands have been internally displaced, most of them repeatedly displaced. In conflict-affected areas, human rights violations, including sexual violence and the recruitment of children into the ranks of illegal armed groups, are ubiquitous. We must not forget that behind those statistics are actual people. They are paying for the inability of politicians to settle their differences at the negotiating table with their lives and the well-being of their families. We are also disquieted by the growing trend of regionalization of the conflict and by intensifying tensions between the States of the Great Lakes region. Given these circumstances, increased regional diplomatic efforts are urgently needed.

First and foremost, such efforts should be focused on the implementation of consensus-based decisions reached at the African Union Summit and East African Community (EAC)-Southern African Development Community (SADC) Summit. That is the only path towards sustainable political formulas for resolving the crisis. There can be no military solution.

We welcome the important agreements reached following the EAC-SADC Summit on 24 March. We hope for the successful implementation of the road map containing practical steps to resolve the crisis and for the effective work of the high-level panel of facilitators made up of well-respected political leaders of the region. We support our African colleagues' focus on harmonizing the Luanda and Nairobi processes. We also welcome the Qatar-mediated meeting of the Presidents of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda that took place in Doha. We expect that this meeting will be a step on the way towards the normalization of relations between the two countries.

On a separate note, we would like to underscore that no viable political formula for ending the conflict can be found without resolving the status of the M23.

Since the very beginning of the escalation, we have been following with concern the developments surrounding the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission

in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO). Attacks on peacekeepers are unacceptable under any circumstances; the safety of peacekeepers is a priority for all of us.

The escalation of the crisis has seriously impacted the Mission's ability to effectively carry out its mandate. We stand convinced that the Council must swiftly respond to the situation as it unfolds. We should not put up with the imposed status quo, especially in areas under control of the M23 group. The situation of peacekeepers in Goma and the surrounding areas is unstable; things must not continue like this. The reputational risks to United Nations peacekeeping are too high.

What is highly dubious in our view is the hospitality extended by MONUSCO to members of European private military companies. We would like to reiterate that MONUSCO's mandate with regard to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants, bestowed upon it by the Security Council, bears no relation to the events that we witnessed recently thanks to media reporting.

Given the potential further transition of MONUSCO, the Council must first and foremost consider the situation on the ground. We must act in a timely manner while preventing the deterioration of the situation due to any changes in the configuration of the peacekeeping presence in the country. It is important for us to heed the views of our colleagues in the Secretariat in that regard. Of course, we will attach the utmost importance to the position of the host country, and we hope to be apprised of that in the very near future.

In conclusion, we would like once again to express our solidarity with the Government and the people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The Russian Federation insists on the need to respect the sovereignty, territorial integrity, independence and unity of that country, pursuant to the Charter of the United Nations. We will continue working to achieve that, in practice, and to ensure that the crisis is resolved diplomatically.

**Mr. Kariuki** (United Kingdom): I start by thanking Special Representative of the Secretary-General Keita and Ms. Slente for briefing us today. I pay tribute to the work of the great staff and personnel of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) operating in the most challenging environment. I welcome the participation of the representatives of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, Angola and Burundi.

I will now make four points.

First, the United Kingdom regrets that despite the clear and urgent message that the Council sent last month, with the unanimous adoption of resolution 2773 (2025), the Movement du 23 mars (M23) and the Rwandan Defence Forces have continued their territorial advances. We strongly condemn the capture of Walikale, and we reiterate that the Rwandan Defence Forces must withdraw from sovereign Congolese territory and all regional actors must cease support for armed groups. In addition, the United Kingdom condemns the M23's continued restrictions on MONUSCO, which have prevented the Mission from being able to deliver key tasks mandated by the Council.

Secondly, the United Kingdom welcomes efforts to deliver a peaceful resolution to the conflict. That includes the joint work of the East African Community (EAC) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and its creation of a panel of facilitators. The United Kingdom also recognizes the efforts of His Highness the Amir of Qatar to convene President Tshisekedi Tshilombo and President Kagame for discussions in support of regional processes. We regret that despite the commitments made, an immediate and unconditional ceasefire has not yet materialized.

In addition, the United Kingdom is grateful to Angola and President Lourenço for his exemplary leadership in securing significant agreements for sustainable peace. The Luanda process made important steps forward, including agreement on a harmonized plan for neutralizing the Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda, disengaging the Rwandan Defence Forces from the Democratic Republic of the Congo and, most recently, agreement by the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to direct talks with the M23. We regret deeply that the M23 were not willing to participate in those talks.

Thirdly, as we heard from our briefers, the humanitarian situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo remains dire. The United Kingdom supports the joint calls by EAC and SADC for the reopening of Goma airport and humanitarian supply routes. We call on all parties to protect civilians, including from sexual and gender-based violence, and to immediately end and prevent the abduction, recruitment and use of children. The United Kingdom has committed over \$18 million in humanitarian support to those in need in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Finally, the conflict in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo is undermining security across the region. We urge the parties to engage now in the regionally led peace processes to bring it to a sustainable end.

**Mr. Cho** (Republic of Korea): I thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Keita and Ms. Slente for their briefings today. I also welcome Minister Nduhungirehe of Rwanda and the representatives of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Angola and Burundi to this meeting.

The Council has met five times since the beginning of the offensive of the Movement du 23 mars (M23) in January and has adopted the strong and unanimous resolution 2773 (2025). African States, regional organizations and friendly countries have also made relentless diplomatic efforts to facilitate a political solution. Despite all those collective endeavours, it is deplorable that an immediate ceasefire has yet to be agreed upon and that conflict and violence continue to escalate in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Over the past week, we have witnessed fighting over control of Walikale, another strategic and resource-rich town west of Goma. Moreover, while attention remains focused on the Petit Nord region in North Kivu, violent attacks against civilians by the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) and the Cooperative for Development of the Congo (CODECO) have increased in Grand Nord and Ituri. Every day without a cessation of hostilities exacerbates the humanitarian crisis, displacing hundreds of thousands and leading to grave human rights regressions.

Let me emphasize three points in response to this precarious situation.

First, the Republic of Korea strongly urges the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda to swiftly agree on a political solution, as there can be no military solution to this conflict. For that to truly materialize, the M23 must immediately cease hostilities and withdraw from all occupying areas. Both Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo must refrain from escalating the conflict by supporting armed groups. The sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Democratic Republic of the Congo should be respected. We commend and support recent regional efforts led by the East African Community and the Southern African Development Community and look forward to the role of the five-member panel of facilitators, who will build on the significant contributions of President Lourenço of Angola to the peace process. We also welcome the momentous trilateral meeting hosted by Qatar, which reaffirmed the commitment to regional initiatives.

Secondly, we express our concern about the opportunistic attacks against civilians being perpetrated by the ADF and CODECO in Grand Nord and Ituri, which increased significantly in February. We urge armed groups to return to dialogue under the Disarmament, Demobilization, Community Recovery and Stabilization Programme. In that context, MONUSCO's mandate remains critical to protecting civilians from potential attacks, in particular in Djugu. We encourage strengthened coordination among the relevant authorities in that regard. MONUSCO's freedom of movement must be ensured. Attempts to hinder the implementation of its mandate must cease, and the safety and security of peacekeepers must be prioritized, as they are operating in an extremely difficult situation.

Thirdly, all parties must fulfil their obligations under international humanitarian law and human rights law to end the terrible suffering of civilians. We are deeply concerned by the alarming scale of human rights abuses and violations. Reports of sexual violence affecting more than 60 victims daily, along with the lootings, killings and forced return of internally displaced persons, are appalling. We hope that the Human Rights Council's decision to establish a fact-finding mission and an independent commission of inquiry will ensure the accountability of all those responsible. Unhindered humanitarian access and the safety of humanitarian personnel are essential to delivering life-saving aid. In that regard, we reiterate the Council's call in resolution 2773 (2025) for the urgent opening of humanitarian corridors and the Goma and Kavumu airports.

The Republic of Korea reaffirms its steadfast support for the efforts of MONUSCO, Special Representative of the Secretary-General Keita and regional and subregional organizations in addressing this grave situation.

**Mrs. Blokar Drobič** (Slovenia): I wish to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ms. Keita, for her briefing and Ms. Slente for her contribution to today's meeting.

Slovenia remains deeply concerned about the ongoing situation in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. We are particularly concerned about all the civilians, who are bearing the brunt of the conflict. As we heard again today, the current offensive by the Mouvement du 23 Mars (M23), supported by the Rwanda Defence Force, continues to destabilize the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo and the broader Great Lakes region. The region is being pushed to the brink of war. I wish to make three points in that respect.

First, we are deeply troubled by ongoing reports of persistent and serious violations of international humanitarian law and human rights violations and abuses, in particular by the reports of widespread sexual and gender-based violence. We strongly condemn any violence targeting civilians. We denounce the actions of armed groups, including the M23, the Allied Democratic Forces, the Coopération pour le développement du Congo, Zaire, the Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda (FDLR) and those operating under the Wazalendo or Volontaires pour la défense de la patrie label, and the reported violations by members of the Forces armées de la République Démocratique du Congo. Such violations are abhorrent, and all perpetrators must be held to account. We are concerned that their full extent might not yet be clear owing to significant challenges to monitoring and verification activities. We welcome and emphasize the importance of the work of the fact-finding mission and the independent commission of inquiry in that respect.

Secondly, it is deeply regrettable that calls — regional and international, including from the Council — for an immediate cessation of hostilities, the protection of civilians and a withdrawal from occupied territories have not been fully heard and respected. We wish to recall that resolutions of the Council, including resolution 2773 (2025), which calls for an immediate cessation of hostilities and a withdrawal from

occupied territories, are legally binding and must be implemented. We call on the M23 to end its advances and withdraw immediately, as the rapid advance is plunging the entire region into insecurity. We also continue to call on Rwanda to withdraw its military presence from the Democratic Republic of the Congo's territory, in line with its commitments under the concept of operations, and to cease its support for the M23. And we urge the Democratic Republic of the Congo to end its cooperation with the FDLR and any other armed group.

Thirdly, the M23's restrictions on the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) and humanitarian actors in Goma and occupied areas in North Kivu are unacceptable, as they are impeding mandated and critical operations and are causing a growing protection crisis. MONUSCO's ability to implement its mandate must be fully respected. Operational freedom for MONUSCO must be ensured. The M23 must immediately lift all restrictions affecting peacekeepers and humanitarian medical personnel. Attacks on them and threats against their safety and the safety of their facilities are inexcusable. We remind all parties of their obligations under international humanitarian law. Humanitarian workers must not be targeted and should be protected. Unconditional, safe and unhindered humanitarian access must be granted. The airports in Goma and Kavumu must be reopened and made accessible so that humanitarian assistance and the rotation of United Nations peacekeepers and other personnel can proceed.

In conclusion, as in all other situations before the Council, Slovenia will actively support all meaningful efforts towards durable peace. We welcome the recent meeting between President Tshisekedi Tshilombo and President Kagame in Doha and encourage them to build on their express commitments to a ceasefire. The crisis has no military solution; returning to negotiations in good faith without delay is the right step towards a peace agreement. Slovenia also strongly supports regional efforts through the African Union, the East African Community (EAC) and Southern African Development Community (SADC) and other bilateral engagements to ensure swift de-escalation and to pave the way for durable peace. We welcome the second joint communiqué of the EAC-SADC summit and urge a swift implementation of its conclusions. We take this opportunity to extend our appreciation to President Lourenço of Angola for his valuable contributions and stewardship.

**The President:** I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Denmark.

I will start, as others did, by thanking the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ms. Keita, and the Secretary-General of the Danish Refugee Council, Ms. Slente, for their insightful but concerning briefings.

More than five weeks have passed since the Council unanimously adopted resolution 2773 (2025), calling for an immediate and unconditional ceasefire in the Democratic Republic of the Congo under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations. Yet today civilians in the Democratic Republic of the Congo continue to live in fear of killings, sexual and gender-based violence and displacement. Allow me to make four key points.

First, a political solution must be found and supported by all stakeholders. Such a solution is the only viable path to ending the widespread human suffering in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The Council must continue to put its full weight and support behind African leadership in the region in order to resolve the crisis. We must also insist on the implementation of our own resolutions, especially resolution 2773 (2025). We note President Lourenço's decision to step down as mediator in the conflict in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo and commend him for his unrelenting efforts. We welcome the messages from the meeting of 18 March

between President Tshisekedi Tshilombo and President Kagame held in Doha. At the same time, we encourage close coordination among all mediation efforts and the ongoing regional processes and underline the importance of the participation of women.

Secondly, all parties must respect international humanitarian law. Civilians must never be a target and must be protected, including from sexual and gender-based violence. That is the responsibility of all parties. We condemn instances of looting, attacks on aid workers and blocked supply routes, as also described in the statement by the Secretary-General of the Danish Refugee Council. Such obstructions place civilians at even greater risk of violence, malnutrition and disease. As the Special Representative of the Secretary-General did, we urge the immediate reopening of the airports in Goma and Kavumu and the safe, rapid and unhindered humanitarian access to all those in need. Civilians must be able to return safely to their homes and be granted safety in internally displaced persons camps in areas controlled by the Mouvement du 23 Mars (M23). We commend local actors, especially women-led organizations, which continue to provide essential services and support at great risk to their own safety.

Thirdly, we deplore the continued threats and reprisals against human rights defenders, journalists, civil society and judicial authorities. An environment of vigilante justice and a breakdown of law and order have continued to spread in the east, with reports of widespread instances of extrajudicial killings, hate speech, sexual and gender-based violence and other human rights violations and abuses. That must end — now. All parties must immediately uphold their obligations under international human rights law, protect civic space and commit to preventing and combating the spread of misinformation and disinformation.

We reiterate our call for accountability for all those responsible for grave violations of international humanitarian law and human rights law. We support the work of the authorities of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to provide justice to the victims, and we note the recent visit by the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court to the Democratic Republic of the Congo to meet with the authorities and local stakeholders. Persistent impunity is a driver of new atrocity crimes. We must do all that we can to break that cycle.

Fourthly, let me reiterate Denmark's full support for the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo as the Mission continues to deliver on its mandate in an extremely complex situation. We demand the immediate restoration of the Mission's freedom of movement and its full ability to resupply and rotate staff in the M23-controlled areas.

As each day passes, the political crisis and its security and humanitarian consequences deepen. We call on Rwanda to end its support of the M23 and withdraw its troops from the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Moreover, the Democratic Republic of the Congo needs to sever its ties with the Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda and any other armed group. The Congolese people deserve peace. Every step taken must be to that end.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I give the floor to the representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

**Mr. Mukongo** (Democratic Republic of the Congo) (*spoke in French*): I would like to begin by extending to you, Madam President, the sincere congratulations of the delegation of the Democratic Republic of the Congo on your presidency of the Security Council for the month of March, which is nearing its end. You, Madam, have successfully steered the Council's work, thanks to your wisdom and skills and with the qualities of a good diplomat. I would also like to thank your

predecessor, Ambassador Fu Cong, who successfully led the Council's work during the previous month.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo welcomes the detailed briefing given by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ms. Bintou Keita. We also welcome the presence of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Rwanda, His Excellency Mr. Olivier Nduhungirehe, and Mrs. Charlotte Slente, of the Danish Refugee Council, who objectively detailed the ordeal and hell endured by the Congolese people in the areas under the control of the Rwandan army and their Mouvement du 23 mars (M23)/Alliance Fleuve Congo (AFC) auxiliaries.

My remarks today will focus on four points: the Secretary-General's report on the situation in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (S/2025/176), the implementation of resolution 2773 (2025), ongoing peace initiatives and the adoption of sanctions as measures to implement resolution 2773 (2025).

With thousands of dead and internally displaced and entire towns ravaged — from Walikale to Kamanyola, via Bunagana, Masisi centre, Goma, Minova, Idjwi and Bukavu — in a generally chaotic humanitarian context, the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo continues to present, even now, the image of a desolate spectacle. The Secretary-General's report under the Council's consideration demonstrates as much.

The Rwanda Defence Force (RDF) and their AFC/M23 auxiliaries, who have crossed our borders, occupied strategic localities, driven people from their homes and set up a parallel administration, continue to flagrantly violate the sovereignty of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In its communiqué of 15 March, the Ministry of the Interior, Security, Decentralization and Customary Affairs of the Democratic Republic of the Congo documented a series of atrocities committed by the Rwanda Defence Force and its M23/AFC auxiliaries in the North and South Kivu regions, in violation of the relevant provisions of resolution 2773 (2005), of 21 February 2025.

Those acts have resulted in considerable loss of life and massive destruction. The communiqué reports, for example, that between 10 and 14 March, 62 cases of targeted assassinations and summary executions were recorded in the areas under occupation. In addition, 17 cases of violations and numerous cases of looting were perpetrated by Rwandan forces and their allies. Among the most striking incidents, the Rwandan army and the M23/AFC carried out a second incursion into the CBCA Ndosho hospital on 10 March, abducting approximately 100 patients and caregivers, who were summarily executed.

The communiqué also reports the death of Mr. Fikri Mwishuko Antoine, head of the Mupfunyi-Matanda groupement, who was abducted from the CBCA Ndosho hospital on 3 March and tortured for seven days by Rwandan soldiers.

That alarming situation underscores the urgent need to fully implement the provisions of resolution 2773 (2025) in order to end the violence and protect civilians in the affected regions.

That bitter and unfortunate realization comes more than a month after the Security Council, in its resolution 2773 (2025), unanimously called on the Rwanda Defence Force to withdraw immediately and without preconditions from the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo; to stop supporting the M23, which, in turn, must withdraw from Goma, Bukavu and all areas under its control; and to dismantle in their entirety the illegitimate parallel administrations set up on the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The unanimous adoption of resolution 2773 (2025) marks a significant step forward in efforts to pacify and restore lasting peace to the eastern Democratic

Republic of the Congo. That peace will require the restoration of the Congolese State's authority throughout the occupied provinces of North and South Kivu. It constitutes a response to the security and humanitarian challenges that are severely affecting people in the eastern regions of our country, which has been plagued by violence for almost 30 years. It also reflects the international community's clear and explicit support for the efforts of the African Union, the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the East African Community (EAC). Far from hindering African initiatives, resolution 2773 (2025) strengthens and complements them.

The scale and persistence of this violence suggests that we can no longer afford to let this crisis drag on under the pretext that it is "an African problem requiring an African solution", without betraying the spirit of international solidarity that underpins the collective security system of the United Nations. This is the moment to recall that the Democratic Republic of the Congo legitimately expects the Council to complete with firmness and diligence the work it began here on 21 February to protect international peace and security, in accordance with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations. In other words, implementing resolution 2773 (2025) is a priority.

To date, no Rwandan soldiers have withdrawn from the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, no M23/AFC fighters have withdrawn from Goma or Bukavu and all the areas under their control, and no illegitimate parallel administration has been dismantled. On the contrary, every day we see the positions of the RDF/M23/AFC coalition being strengthened, as it relentlessly pursues its expansionist and criminal course in defiance of the Security Council, thereby thwarting the peacemaking efforts of the region's leaders, including those of the African Union, the EAC and SADC, as well as the entire international community.

After setting up a parallel administration in Goma in North Kivu and Bukavu in South Kivu, the RDF/AFC/M23 coalition has just extended its territorial conquests to the territory of Walikale in North Kivu and Mwenga in South Kivu, while calls for a ceasefire are multiplying, taking its brazenness to the extreme, and even violating its own ceasefires.

Worse still, the coalition is engaging in a malicious transplantation of non-native populations, under the guise of the return of refugees, thereby paving the way for future inter-ethnic tensions. It is also preparing to sell off the monetary sovereignty of the Democratic Republic of the Congo by planning to appoint an authority to regulate the banking system and the consequent establishment of a parallel Central Bank, according to statements made to the press by their leader on 22 March 2025.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo would like to thank and congratulate His Excellency Mr. João Manuel Gonçalves Lourenço, President of the Republic of Angola, for his firm commitment in his role as the appointed mediator of the African Union in the conflict between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda.

Contrary to Rwanda's reluctant attitude, the commitment of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and its Head of State, His Excellency Mr. Félix-Antoine Tshisekedi Tshilombo, to the peace initiatives of the African Union and the subregional economic communities, remains unwavering. That was the case at the Joint EAC-SADC Summit on Monday, 24 March 2025, at which the report on the conclusions of the ministerial meeting held on Monday, 17 March in Harare was adopted and the implementation of the road map ordered.

The Luanda process, designed to provide a framework for a peaceful resolution, has been sabotaged by Rwanda's intransigence. Every commitment made in Luanda was clearly trampled underfoot. As Her Excellency Ms. Thérèse Kayikwamba Wagner, Minister of State and Minister for Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation



and Francophonie of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, reminded the Council a few weeks ago,

“since the establishment of the reinforced ad hoc verification mechanism in Goma on 5 November 2024, Rwanda never sent its three military experts to supervise the implementation of the ceasefire.” (*S/PV.9849 p. 24*)

On 15 December 2024, Rwanda knowingly sabotaged the summit convened by the facilitator of the process, President Lourenço, by ignoring his invitation. And on 23 January, Rwanda surprised the whole world by requesting mediation from Türkiye, thereby departing from the principles of African solutions to African problems. Predictably, Rwanda and its supporters, who swore by direct negotiations between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the AFC/M23, were the first to boycott the Luanda meeting on 18 March.

Despite Rwanda’s blatant disregard for the peace process, the Democratic Republic of the Congo remains fully committed and reiterates its confidence in any peace process, endorsed by the African Union, for a political solution to the conflict between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda.

Two subregional organizations, SADC and the EAC, held joint meetings to adopt urgent measures, including a ceasefire. As for the African Union, its Peace and Security Council, meeting at the level of Heads of State and Government on 14 February, called for the immediate withdrawal of all uninvited foreign forces from the Democratic Republic of the Congo — in other words, Rwanda.

Rwanda and the M23 continue to respond with violence and terror. The victims of their indiscriminate and systematic violence are not related by ethnic group or political affiliation. Faced with a rapidly worsening situation, many actors reacted by doing what they do best: documenting human rights violations, opening the way for criminal prosecutions and taking strong but essentially reactive action.

On another front, we cannot lose sight of the fact that the accelerated, progressive, orderly and responsible withdrawal of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) is still in line with the sense of the disengagement plan, co-signed on 21 November 2023 by the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and MONUSCO, as validated by the Security Council in resolution 2717 (2023), of 19 December 2023. Although the disengagement momentum that began in South Kivu on 25 June 2024 was abruptly interrupted by attacks on positions of the Forces armées de la République démocratique du Congo and MONUSCO by the RDF/AFC/M23 coalition, the parties remain committed to the full implementation of the joint disengagement plan.

On the humanitarian front, paragraphs 49 to 53 of the Secretary-General’s report (S/2025/176) confirm the catastrophic situation, which has been greatly exacerbated by the RDF/M23/AFC offensives. In that context, one of the greatest challenges remains the mobilization of the remaining funds to cover the immense needs. We would like to take this opportunity to reiterate our appeal to donors to redouble their efforts to make up the 93 per cent shortfall in overall funding. The 2025 humanitarian response plan, launched jointly on 27 February by the Government and its partners, aims to assist approximately 11 million of the 21.2 million people currently in need. Only 7 per cent of the total, estimated at nearly \$2.54 billion, has so far been funded.

With regard to human rights, my Government would like to draw the Security Council’s attention to the continuing deterioration of the human rights situation in the areas under the control of the RDF/M23/AFC coalition in particular.

Some disturbing facts are also corroborated in the report of the Secretary-General.

Several other violations of human rights and international humanitarian law by the RDF/M23/AFC have been reported. They include the killing of at least 126 people in M23-controlled areas since 26 January; the abduction of civilians and the forced recruitment of young people, including children, and their forced labour in and around Goma; and the unilateral destruction and dismantling by the RDF of camps for internally displaced persons, which were sanctuaries protected by the United Nations in North and South Kivu. Several other cases are worth mentioning, in particular targeted reprisal attacks against women activists and human rights defenders, cases of gender-based and conflict-related sexual violence and attacks against MONUSCO peacekeepers.

In the light of the horror and the climate of terror that I just described, my delegation urges the Council to recognize the urgent need to move on quickly to implementing the provisions of resolution 2773 (2025). An effective cessation of hostilities and de-escalation will not be possible until there is increased pressure and more robust sanctions against Rwanda and its AFC/M23 allies.

I would be remiss if I did not remind the Council that, as we meet here today, Rwanda has more than half of its army deployed on the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, without the consent of the Congolese State. The right to self-defence cannot be invoked as a justification for an armed invasion or the establishment of parallel administrations on the territory of a sovereign State. Those facts in themselves constitute serious violations of the Charter of the United Nations, the Constitutive Act of the African Union and General Assembly resolution 3314 (XXIX), of 14 December 1974.

Neither is it my duty to recall that, when the Council unanimously adopted resolution 2773 (2025), on 21 February, a significant number of its members warned that they would see to its proper implementation and that the Council would reserve the right to consider other measures in the event that its resolution was not implemented. My delegation is of the view that the measures expected of the Security Council in such circumstances must include a series of sanctions, the most prominent of which are as follows.

First, in view of Rwanda's continued refusal to comply with resolution 2773 (2025), the Security Council should strongly condemn that manifest violation and consider requesting an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice, in accordance with the provisions of Article 96 of the Charter of the United Nations. In addition, the Council should consider the establishment of a strengthened mechanism to monitor the implementation of resolution 2773 (2025), with progressive enforcement measures in the event of continued non-compliance.

Secondly, the Council should define a sanctions regime applicable to Rwanda and its leaders.

Thirdly, it should decree an arms embargo against Rwanda until its support for the M23 is stopped and its army is completely withdrawn from the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Fourthly, the Council should ask the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1533 (2004), concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo, to refer to paragraph 9 of resolution 2773 (2025) and to put in place a range of United Nations sanctions in accordance with resolution 2293 (2016), in particular against those who would otherwise help to perpetuate the conflict in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Fifthly, it should define a much harsher sanctions regime against the AFC/M23, given the excessive human rights violations committed in the areas they occupy, and respond favourably to the letter submitted by the Democratic Republic of the Congo

to the Council and the Secretary-General (S/2025/102), in which my Government requested the outright revocation of Rwanda's status as a troop-contributing country to United Nations peacekeeping operations as it is unworthy of that status.

Lastly, the Council should denounce and sanction the involvement of the Rwandan authorities in the illegal exploitation of the Democratic Republic of the Congo's natural mineral and agricultural resources.

I cannot conclude my statement without reiterating the gratitude of my Government and the Congolese people to the States and institutions that have courageously imposed sanctions against Rwanda. That is particularly true of the United States of America, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Germany, Canada and the European Union in general and in particular France, Belgium, Slovenia and Greece.

Lastly, it should be recognized that sanctions in the case of the Great Lakes crisis are not counterproductive, which is why we encourage the Security Council and other peace-loving States to follow the example of the countries I just mentioned.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Rwanda.

**Mr. Nduhungirehe (Rwanda):** Allow me to begin by congratulating you, Madam President, on your presidency and leadership of the Security Council during the month of March. I also acknowledge the contributions of the previous speakers and briefers.

As a Member State of the United Nations and a prominent contributor to peace support missions, Rwanda stands in firm support of peacekeeping and peacekeepers wherever they serve. That is precisely why Rwanda insists on accountability and transparency for all those who are mandated by the Security Council to serve the cause of peace.

Allow me to provide more clarity on the conflict in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. The conflict was not started by Rwanda, but the burden has been placed squarely on Rwanda's shoulders. In addition, steps taken by different actors have enabled the Democratic Republic of the Congo to escape its responsibilities, particularly regarding leadership and governance failures.

First, the root causes of the conflict go back to the continued preservation of the Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda (FDLR) genocidal militia, despite its record of ethnic massacres, recruitment of child soldiers and destabilization of both Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It is unfortunate that some in the international community conveniently continue to ignore its existence. The recent capture and handover to Rwanda of FDLR members, including a senior commander, has provided even more evidence of how the Democratic Republic of the Congo Government integrated FDLR fighters into its national army. Kinshasa gave them weapons, resources and a platform to continue their genocidal ideas.

Secondly, the systematic persecution that Congolese Kinyarwanda speakers, in particular Tutsi communities, is linked to colonial legacy. That includes communities in South Kivu and Ituri provinces. Among the consequences of the discrimination, violence and ethnic cleansing in the Democratic Republic of the Congo are the hundreds of thousands of refugees in Rwanda, Uganda and other countries in our region, who have been living mostly in refugee camps, unable to safely return to their homes for many years. Given that situation, what is to be expected of Rwanda? Why is Rwanda targeted disproportionately? That is not clear. What is clear to us in Rwanda is that the defensive measures we have put in place will remain until there is a credible framework for long-term security guarantees along our border with the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The case of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) has been particularly troubling, as reflected in the report we just received (S/2025/176). There has been a recurrent pattern of MONUSCO's deliberations being used to push a narrative that fails to reflect the reality on the ground. Sadly, today's report is no exception. While it accurately cites abusive armed groups, such as the Allied Democratic Forces, the Coopérative pour le développement du Congo, the Kinshasa-backed FDLR genocidal militia and even the Democratic Republic of the Congo forces as the main perpetrators of human rights violations, the report continues to single out other actors as the primary causes of instability in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. As such, the report shows a clear pattern of bias in the reporting of the security crisis in that region. MONUSCO has long since failed to implement the mandate it was entrusted with 25 years ago, namely, the eradication of all armed groups, including the FDLR genocidal militia, which has operated with total impunity in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo for the past three decades.

We cannot hope to achieve peace if the root causes of the crisis are not addressed. I was personally sitting in the Security Council on 28 March 2013 when resolution 2098 (2013) was adopted to deploy a Force Intervention Brigade within MONUSCO with a specific mandate to neutralize all armed groups, including the FDLR. However, the operational focus was exclusively directed at the Mouvement du 23 mars (M23), and MONUSCO's Force Intervention Brigade refused to neutralize the FDLR, which has continued to create havoc in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo even today, in 2025.

In fact, since 2003, the Security Council has reiterated the need to address the threat of the FDLR through more than 20 different resolutions. Yet, after billions of dollars spent on what remains the United Nations most expensive peacekeeping mission in history, meaningful results remain elusive. As a result, Congolese civilians, especially Tutsi, have continued to be targeted for persecution, discrimination and forced displacement. In October 2023, a whole village — 300 homes of Congolese Tutsi — was burned down by Democratic Republic of the Congo-backed militias in Nturo village, in Masisi territory. Where was MONUSCO at that time? Since February, the Banyamulenge villages in Minembwe, South Kivu, have been bombed by attack drones and fighter jets from the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Where is MONUSCO? And there is an issue of governance and political inclusion that needs to be addressed by the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Since the resurgence of hostilities in October 2021, MONUSCO has failed to contribute constructively to de-escalation or to peace efforts. More alarmingly, MONUSCO provided direct support to the military operation of the Democratic Republic of the Congo coalition, placing itself in a situation of belligerence, even sometimes fighting alongside the same groups it was created to neutralize. I shall note here the presence of European mercenaries in that coalition. Those mercenaries are deployed in violation of a United Nations convention of 1989 and are working alongside the Democratic Republic of the Congo army and MONUSCO. Rwanda has raised those concerns repeatedly before the Council, but they have never been addressed.

Special Representative of the Secretary-General Bintou Keita and MONUSCO have also contributed to the distortion of facts surrounding recent developments. Wildly exaggerated claims of 3,000 civilian casualties were circulated by MONUSCO officials following the capture of Goma in January. Those figures, contested by journalists and humanitarian workers on the ground, have been weaponized by the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to call for punitive measures against Rwanda. And you just heard another sample of fabricated claims by my colleague from the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Nevertheless, Rwanda continues to believe that MONUSCO can still change its course and play a positive role, provided it abides by its mandate to protect civilians and ensure humanitarian assistance, possibly providing logistical support for the joint East African Community (EAC)-the Southern African Development Community (SADC) efforts currently under discussion.

Since the most recent briefing in December 2024 (see S/PV.9824) and the fall of Goma, there is new momentum for peace in the region. The first ever EAC-SADC summit took place on 8 February in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. At the joint summit, the outcomes of which were endorsed by the African Union, it was decided that the Luanda and Nairobi processes would be merged. It was a merger and not a harmonization, as we heard in the Council. And there was also a renewed call at the summit for a cessation of hostilities and inclusive political dialogue. That dialogue will be guided by an enlarged panel of five facilitators from across Africa, under the stewardship of the African Union Chairperson.

Rwanda welcomes and fully supports those developments. In particular, we welcome the recent decision of the Alliance Fleuve Congo/M23 to reposition its forces from Walikale, in support of peace initiatives under way, as well as the Democratic Republic of the Congo's announcement that all offensive operations by the Forces armées de la République démocratique du Congo and Wazalendo will be halted. We further urge the international community and the Security Council to support those African-led processes.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate that for the past 31 years Rwanda has worked hard to build unity, reconciliation, stability and economic growth to promote the rights of vulnerable groups across the board. A sustainable political solution with long-term security guarantees for Rwanda will allow us to get back to the serious and urgent work of developing our country and integrating our region together with our neighbours. Rwanda has always wanted a lasting political and security settlement for the region. In that regard, we are committed to working with all parties to ensure that we stick to commitments made, particularly the joint EAC-SADC summit process and other complementary confidence-building initiatives.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Angola.

**Mr. Da Cruz (Angola):** We would like, first of all, to salute you, Madam President, for organizing this debate on the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the work carried out by the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO). We welcome the presence of His Excellency Mr. Olivier Nduhungirehe, Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Republic of Rwanda, and His Excellency Mr. Zenon Ngay Mukongo, Permanent Representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to the United Nations. We also welcome Burundi's participation in this meeting. We thank the Ms. Bintou Keita, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Head of MONUSCO, for presenting the relevant report of the Secretary-General on MONUSCO (see S/2025/176). We share the concerns expressed with regard to the situation in the political, defence and security fields and with regard to the protection of civilians and human rights and take note of the observations contained in the report. We also avail ourselves of the opportunity to welcome the participation of Ms. Charlotte Slente, Secretary General of the Danish Refugee Council.

Angola remains very concerned about the situation in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo and the continued advance and consequent occupation of territories by the Mouvement du 23 mars (M23). Those actions, which are occurring despite ongoing regional and international efforts towards a political and negotiated solution to the conflict, compromise the peace and stability of the Democratic Republic of the

Congo, put its sovereignty and integrity at risk, worsen the humanitarian situation and threaten security in the Great Lakes region and on the continent.

In the meantime, the Council, on 21 February, unanimously adopted resolution 2773 (2025), which strongly condemns the offensives by the M23 in the North and South Kivu provinces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, urges it to immediately cease hostilities, withdraw from the areas it controls and fully reverse the establishment of an illegitimate parallel administration in that country's territory.

I would like to highlight two points about the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

First, in terms of the achievements of mediation mandated by the African Union (AU), in May 2022, the AU mandated His Excellency Mr. João Manuel Gonçalves Lourenço, President of the Republic of Angola, as President of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, to mediate the political crisis between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda. At the end of several rounds of negotiations, by December 2024, the Luanda process had already recorded notable progress, which must be preserved within the framework of efforts to achieve peace and stability in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo.

An Angola-Democratic Republic of the Congo-Rwanda tripartite presidential summit was scheduled for 15 December in Luanda, with the aim of finalizing and consolidating the peace agreement. However, it did not take place due to a disagreement regarding the resolution of the M23 issue, as Rwanda insisted that it be addressed while the Democratic Republic of the Congo maintained that it did not fit into the framework of the Luanda process.

It should be noted that the progress achieved under the Luanda process created a new dynamic and urgency in advancing the Nairobi process, a diplomatic mechanism responsible for addressing issues related to the various armed groups operating in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, including the M23.

Angola has always believed in the need, in parallel with efforts to normalize relations between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda, for direct negotiations between the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the M23 as part of the peace process.

With the full consent of, and in coordination with, both parties, Angolan mediation created the conditions for the first round of direct talks to take place in Luanda, on 18 March. However, at the last minute, such a meeting did not take place due to several factors, some of them external and foreign to an African solution to this conflict.

Secondly, I would like to touch upon the relevance of the Luanda and Nairobi processes. The understandings reached to date within the framework of the Luanda process constitute a solid and comprehensive political basis capable of advancing efforts to promote peace in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. The AU Commission recognizes that the Luanda process has contributed significantly to creating conditions for dialogue and regional and international engagement, offering a valuable platform for fostering mutual understanding in the pursuit of peace, security and stability in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Within that renewed attention and international engagement, which the situation requires, particularly at the level of the Council, Angola believes that it has fulfilled the essential part of the mandate conferred by the AU to facilitate the resolution of the crisis between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda. Almost two months after assuming the pro tempore presidency of the African Union, His Excellency Mr. João Manuel Gonçalves Lourenço, President of the Republic of

Angola, feels the need to dedicate himself fully to the priorities of the continental agenda, which include the issues of peace and security.

For Angola, strict observance of the ceasefire agreed between the parties, the immediate cessation of all hostilities, the implementation of the concept of operations of the harmonized plan for the neutralization of the Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda and the lifting of Rwanda's defensive measures, as well as the deployment of a reinforced verification mechanism constitute fundamental steps towards a peaceful resolution of the conflict in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo.

We welcome the ongoing regional efforts at the level of the Southern African Development Community and the East African Community under diplomatic initiatives aimed at achieving lasting peace in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo.

In conclusion, Angola recognizes the importance of diplomatic initiatives by the United Nations, other international bodies and countries of goodwill that are interested in contributing to the consolidation of progress and supporting ongoing efforts for a peaceful resolution of the crisis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, as long as these are aligned and coordinated with the AU agenda, in the spirit of African solutions to African problems. In that regard, we reaffirm the position of the AU Commission — that all initiatives should be designed to complement and reinforce existing African-led mechanisms, thus ensuring coherence, ownership and effectiveness in addressing the continent's prevailing challenges.

Angola takes this opportunity to reaffirm its commitment to continue working with all stakeholders and sharing its political experience as part of regional and international efforts aimed at resolving the conflict in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo.

As the AU Champion for Peace and Reconciliation in Africa and Chair of the African Union, His Excellency Mr. João Manuel Gonçalves Lourenço, President of the Republic of Angola, remains committed to mobilizing African initiatives and international assistance in order to achieve peace and stability in Africa.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Burundi.

**Mr. Maniratanga** (Burundi) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank Denmark for organizing this important Council meeting. We would also like to congratulate the Secretary-General on the presentation of his detailed report (S/2025/176) on the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and on the work of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO). The report highlights the major challenges facing the region and is an essential tool for guiding our collective actions. We welcome the presence of Ms. Bintou Keita and underline her remarkable work, as well as that of all MONUSCO personnel, towards fulfilling the Mission's mandate. We welcome the participation in this meeting of Ms. Charlotte Slente, Secretary General of the Danish Refugee Council, for her commendable efforts to help the refugees in the Great Lakes region. We also welcome, in particular, the participation in this meeting of His Excellency Mr. Olivier Nduhungirehe, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Rwanda, and that of my colleagues from the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Angola.

My delegation welcomes the detailed briefings, which highlight the major challenges and current tensions. We reaffirm our unwavering support for MONUSCO in fulfilling its mandate, and we underscore that only a comprehensive political solution and close regional collaboration can bring an end to the current crisis and establish lasting peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

In view of the prevailing situation in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, we would like to make the following observations.

First, with regard to humanitarian concerns and human rights violations, Burundi welcomes the sustained efforts of the Secretary-General and the Security Council to maintain peace and stability in the Great Lakes region. However, the humanitarian situation in the east of the Democratic Republic of the Congo remains alarming, with the growing suffering of the civilian population calling for immediate and concrete measures. Reports from the Secretary-General and the Human Rights Council reveal alarming levels of sexual violence and serious violations of the rights of women, children and the elderly, who are the most vulnerable groups during conflicts. Burundi calls for reinforced action to protect those vulnerable communities and ensure their safety and dignity in line with the principles of international humanitarian law. The killings, abductions and sexual violence being inflicted on civilians constitute grave human rights violations that must be roundly condemned.

Secondly, with regard to support for resolution 2773 (2025), more than one month on from the adoption of that resolution, which called for an immediate end to the M23's offensive and the withdrawal of Rwandan and M23 forces from Goma, Bukavu and all areas under their control, its actual implementation is proving slow to materialize. The Security Council has a responsibility to do its utmost to ensure that resolution 2773 (2025), on the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, is implemented, since resolutions of the Council are legally binding. Non-compliance with the resolution risks undermining the power of the Council, which is enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, and perpetuating impunity in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. The Council possesses the tools and the means of enforcing its resolutions.

Burundi is also dismayed to see that the M23 offensive is ongoing despite the numerous appeals for peace from the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the East African Community (EAC), the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) and SADC-EAC over the past two months. Burundi urges all parties to honour their commitments in full, to return to the path of dialogue and to take concrete and measurable steps on the ground with a view to achieving a lasting political solution.

Thirdly, when it comes to regional initiatives, those launched by ECCAS, the EAC and SADC, which have all called for an immediate ceasefire and the reopening of humanitarian corridors and airports, are to be welcomed. Burundi also welcomes the recent report from the joint meeting of the SADC-EAC Chiefs of Staff and the proposed road map but wishes to point out that the road map should also factor in the disengagement and withdrawal of those forces that were not invited to enter the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the disarmament of armed groups. Burundi also extends its gratitude to the Angolan President for his endeavours as part of the Luanda process. It is our firm belief that African solutions and African mediation are best suited to resolving African problems. Any initiative that fosters lasting peace in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo and serves to complement the Luanda and Nairobi processes that are being merged is encouraging but should not replace existing processes. With that in mind, Burundi calls for an inclusive inter-Congolese dialogue in which all stakeholders actively engage for a genuine and lasting peace. Furthermore, we also call for all local and foreign armed groups to be disbanded and repatriated to their countries of origin.

Fourthly, the issue of the illegal exploitation of natural resources remains one of the main drivers of conflict in the region. Burundi fully supports the regional initiative of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region for combating that destructive practice and calls for greater cooperation among the States concerned so as to eradicate the phenomenon, which is fuelling violence and instability regionwide.



Fifthly, I turn to the humanitarian impact of the crisis on Burundi. Owing to its geographical proximity to the affected areas, my country, Burundi, is bearing the direct brunt of the lethal invasion. Since the joint summit on 8 February, Burundi has taken in more than 60,000 Congolese refugees seeking protection. More than 120,000 refugees are currently sheltering in camps across the country, which is straining limited resources. Burundi issues an urgent appeal for regional and international solidarity to tackle the humanitarian crisis.

Sixthly, on its commitment to a lasting political solution, Burundi reaffirms its commitment to striving for a lasting political solution to the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in line with the peace plan put forward by the Government of Burundi. We continue to be of the view that the suffering among civilians and the massive violations of international humanitarian and human rights law mean that it is high time to move from words to deeds.

In conclusion, the international community should redouble its efforts to ensure respect for the national sovereignty and the territorial integrity of the Democratic Republic of the Congo through the effective implementation of resolution 2773 (2025) and the many measures that the regional actors have already taken. Failure to respect the territorial integrity of the Democratic Republic of the Congo could set a dangerous precedent that some States could exploit to chip away at parts of the territory of other sovereign States.

**The President:** The representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo has asked for the floor to make a further statement. I now give him the floor.

**Mr. Mukongo** (Democratic Republic of the Congo) (*spoke in French*): I would not have wished to take the floor again at this point, but on hearing the statement by the representative of Rwanda, one is tempted to wonder whether everyone is on planet Earth, which we inhabit. That is because, as Council members will have noticed, Rwanda is rehashing the same, almost anachronistic line of argument about the origins of the conflict, whereas it has been established here that the conflict did not begin with the Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda (FDLR). Rwanda traces the origins of the conflict back to the FDLR. The conflict did not begin with the FDLR. The conflict began in Rwanda. It is an inter-Rwandan conflict, which predates the genocide. The genocide began with the assassination of President Habyarimana. Therein lies the origin of the current conflict; it took place in Rwanda among Rwandans. We must look at the origins of President Habyarimana's assassination, for that is when the conflict began.

Secondly, the argument related to the FDLR and the genocidal ideology is an equally outdated argument. As I said here and, as a Rwandan Ambassador clearly stated, the FDLR business no longer represents a threat to Rwanda because the FDLR has been all but eradicated. As much has been said in this forum. Nonetheless, we went along with it and said that, if it were the case, then we were contributing to the operation to eradicate the FDLR. But if that did not happen, it is Rwanda, which muddled everything, that is to blame.

With regard to the persecution of the Tutsis, we have always seen knives being twisted in the wounds. We understand very well that there is frustration because the genocide occurred in Rwanda, among the Rwandan people, but we see genocide everywhere. The Democratic Republic of the Congo is a country inhabited by 450 ethnic groups, while Rwanda only has two ethnic groups. Therefore, the Rwandan conflict cannot be transposed onto the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It is not logical for us to target a single ethnic group when we have 450. That notion is nonsensical.

However, the reason that I took the floor was to react to the insulting stance adopted by Rwanda against the United Nations and the United Nations Organization

Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO). We cannot fathom that Rwanda, as a troop-contributing country, would denigrate United Nations reports all day long — reports that establish that Rwanda invaded the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and is perpetrating grave violations of human rights there. That is what MONUSCO reported to us here. We cannot understand that Rwanda would denigrate those reports and the work of MONUSCO, while it welcomes the fact that Rwandan nationals are appointed by the Secretary-General to senior positions in the United Nations system and is also delighted to be a country that contributes troops to the United Nations, despite the fact it never accepts a single report that it issues. That is what I wanted to come back to. I will stop there.

**The President:** His Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Rwanda has asked for the floor to make a further statement. I now give him the floor.

**Mr. Nduhugirere** (Rwanda) (*spoke in French*): I would like to raise two points. First, with regard to the origins of the conflict, it is true that, in 11 days, we will be commemorating the thirty-first anniversary of the genocide perpetrated against the Tutsis in Rwanda. More than 1 million people perished, out of a total population of 7.5 million. The perpetrators of that genocide — the army and the militias that committed that genocide — sought refuge in what was then known as Zaire, which is now the Democratic Republic of the Congo. That movement and those groups, which are now called the Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda (FDLR), were maintained, supported and funded by successive Zairean and Congolese Governments. Just a few days ago, a Brigadier General named Ezekiel Gakwerere — who participated in the genocide in Rwanda, especially in the province of Butare, even participating in the assassination of the last Queen of Rwanda, Rosalie Gicanda — was wearing a Forces armées de la République démocratique du Congo uniform and collaborating with the Congolese army. Therefore, when I am told here that the FDLR no longer exists, when they are actually very active and have even been incorporated into the Congolese army, I cannot tell, to use my colleague's words, whether we are in fact on planet Earth.

With regard to territorial integrity, it is a tenet of international law. It was not invented for the Democratic Republic of the Congo; it also applies to Rwanda. Since 2018, we have seen more than 20 attacks perpetrated by the FDLR and by other groups, including the Forces armées de la République démocratique du Congo, on our territory. In 2018, there were attacks carried out by the group known as the Front de Libération Nationale, led by the famous Paul Rusesabagina, killing nine people, including a 13-year-old girl named Ornella and a 17-year-old boy named Isaac.

In October 2019, attacks were perpetrated by the FDLR, killing 15 people. The same thing happened in 2022, and during the battle for Goma, 200 houses were attacked by the Congolese army, which launched their attack from the airport in Goma. Therefore, when we talk about territorial integrity, that applies to all countries across the board. Rwanda was a victim whose sovereignty and territorial integrity were violated on numerous occasions by the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Those are the two clarifications that I wanted to make.

**The President:** I believe that the Council has now have the opportunity to hear perspectives of all participants several time. With that in mind, we now close the list of speakers.

There are no more names inscribed of the list of speakers. I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion of the subject.

*The meeting rose at 12.45 p.m.*