



**Citizen Barometer on Peace, Security, and Human Rights Issue 09, Nov.
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Created and produced by the Pamoja kwa Amani Coalition¹ .

Executive summary

In the east of the Democratic Republic of Congo, the repetition of events seems inevitable: the months go by and are all the same. Despite the signing of agreements intended to bring about peace, these are never respected on the ground. Alongside these failures, civilians remain the main victims, continuing to suffer the consequences of a worrying humanitarian situation. Human rights violations persist and are spreading, affecting many areas of the country.

November and the first half of December 2025 were marked by a series of significant events. On the diplomatic front, several advances were made, notably with the signing in Doha, Qatar, of the framework agreement on November 15, 2025, between the Government of the DRC and the Alliance de la Rivière Congo/Mouvement du 23 Mars (AFC-M23). Furthermore, on December 4, the peace agreement between the DRC and Rwanda was officially ratified by the heads of state of both countries, Félix-Antoine Tshisekedi and Paul Kagame, under the sponsorship of US President Donald Trump.

At the same time, on the military front, the fighting continued unabated and the war intensified across all fronts. Paradoxically, this escalation worsened after the Washington agreement was ratified by the two heads of state, suggesting that the agreement may have contributed more to exacerbating the situation than to calming it. To date, neither agreement—the Doha agreement nor the Washington agreement—has had any concrete effect on the ground. The parties to the conflict continue to accuse each other of repeated violations of the ceasefire.

The main consequence of the ongoing clashes is that thousands of civilians have been forced to flee the war without any humanitarian assistance. This mass displacement has led to a steady increase in the number of internally displaced persons and refugees, thereby exacerbating the humanitarian crisis in the region. As always, this persistent armed violence is accompanied by numerous human rights violations and war crimes attributable to all belligerents, underscoring the gravity of the situation and the urgency of an appropriate response to protect civilian populations.

¹ PKA member organizations: Action Kesho Congo, Action for the Well-being of Women and Children in Congo, ABFEC – Action Congo asbl; Action Solidaire pour le Développement Endogène et la Paix, ASODEP; Amani na Tumaini Kwetu, ATK, asbl; Association des Femmes des Médias, AFEM; Celebrating Women's Courage, CCF; Center for Support for Education and Community Development, CEDECO; Collective of Youth Solidarity Organizations of Congo Kinshasa, COJESKI; Simama Congo Collective, COSIC; Collective 2250 (grouping of youth organizations); Congo Handicap, CH; Initiative for a Better Future, INAM asbl (Association for the Promotion and Defense of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities); La Prunelle RDC; Mama Radio Fm; New Dynamics of Civil Society, NDSCI; Radio Maendeleo; Network of Congolese Youth Associations, RACON; Health, Environment, and Well-being for All, SEBE-T; Société Civile Forces Vives – South Kivu Coordination Office, BCSC – FV; Solidarity for the Promotion of Women and Indigent Families, SOPFFI; Solidarity for the Development and Emergence of Peaceful Communities, SODECOP; Solidarity of Women for Integral Development, SWID.

Highlights		
Events	Details	Consequences/Effects/Impacts
Peace Process	Doha and Washington Processes: The Framework Agreement was signed in Doha, followed by the signing of the Washington Agreement in the capital.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress on paper, but on the ground the agreements are not being respected, with the parties accusing each other of violating them. • Total lack of trust between the signatories.
Intensification of fighting	AFC-M23 offensive on several fronts: Kaziba, Mwenga, Shabunda, and Uvira	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several towns fall under AFC-M23 control: Kilungutwe, Kasika, Kaziba, Luvungi, Lubarika, Sange, Uvira, Kipupu, Makobola, etc.
Risk of more open regionalization of the conflict	Rwanda and Burundi are just a few steps away from direct confrontation on Congolese soil and/or on the territory of these two countries.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For the first time, war is at the gates of Bujumbura, as Rwandan-backed M23 rebels occupy Uvira, a border town in Burundi, creating high tension between Rwanda and Burundi. • Closure of the borders between Burundi and the DRC.
Humanitarian crisis	Massive population displacement both inside and outside the country;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tens of thousands of people have been newly displaced within the territories affected by the ongoing offensive. • More than 50,000 new Congolese refugees registered in Burundi. • Lack of humanitarian aid and risk of a humanitarian disaster in various transit camps and refugee camps in Burundi. • UNHCR-Burundi overwhelmed and lacking the necessary resources to manage the humanitarian crisis; • Populations in the middle and high plateaus of Fizi and Mwenga are under siege and deprived of all humanitarian assistance, particularly in the villages of Minembwe, Mikenge, Ndondo, and Kahololo and its surroundings.
Violation of human rights	Serious human rights violations and war crimes have been reported.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nearly a thousand unarmed civilians killed during November and the first half of December in areas hard hit by fighting and in massacres and other mass crimes recorded daily in areas plagued by armed violence; • Six motorcyclists summarily killed in the city of Bukavu by elements of the AFC-M23; • Increased risk of reprisals by AFC-M23 elements against young people in the Uvira region accused of colluding with the Wazalendo;

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 79 people killed by AFC-M23 elements in retaliation for Wazalendo attacks against AFC-M23 positions; • 57 people killed following internal clashes between Wazalendo factions and between the latter and the FARDC, • 379 cases of enforced disappearances recorded in North and South Kivu.
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² All this data is documented and recorded by Pamoja kwa Amani's branches and member organizations using rigorous procedures that comply with all relevant rules.

Citizen Barometer of Peace, Security, and Human Rights: Full Report

1. Peace Process: Before Doha and Washington Equals After Doha and Washington

For more than thirty years, the people of eastern DRC have been living in the turmoil of war. The arrival of the so-called Doha and Washington peace processes had revived hopes for an end to their suffering, suggesting that peace would finally come to the region. However, these expectations are gradually fading, giving way to disillusionment as the days go by. It should be recalled that on November 15, 2025, an important milestone was reached with the signing in Doha of the "Framework Agreement" between the Government of the DRC and the AFC-M23 Movement. This document reflects the willingness of both parties to end, through negotiation, the armed conflict currently raging in the east of the country. Through this commitment, the government and the rebel movement affirmed their determination to continue discussions with a view to concluding a comprehensive peace agreement.

This framework agreement is in line with previous commitments between the two parties, notably the declaration of principles of July 19, 2025, and the mechanism for monitoring and verifying the ceasefire in the provinces of North Kivu and South Kivu, signed in Doha on October 14, 2025.

Furthermore, as part of the Washington process, the peace agreement between the DRC and Rwanda³, validated by the foreign ministers on June 27, 2025, was ratified at an official ceremony in Washington on December 4, 2025, under the personal leadership of US President Donald Trump in the presence of several African heads of state and representatives of the African Union.

Despite the signing of several agreements, the situation on the ground continues to deteriorate, with widespread clashes along various front lines from North Kivu to South Kivu. At a time when President Trump, speaking as "President of Peace," described the event as landmark and claimed to have worked to resolve a conflict in Africa that has lasted more than thirty years, violence was simultaneously reported in the localities of Kaziba (Walungu territory), Kamanyola-Luvungi, Walikale, and Masisi, resulting in heavy losses estimated in the hundreds among civilians. Hostilities continued after the ceremony in Washington, taking a worrying turn as rebel movements closed in on the strategic town of Uvira, opposite Bujumbura, the economic capital of Burundi. The various parties involved in the conflict accused each other of violating the ceasefire and the Washington agreement.

In his State of the Nation address on December 8, President Félix-Antoine Tshisekedi publicly blamed Rwanda for violating the peace agreement, just hours after its ratification.

The city of Uvira fell under the control of AFC-M23 forces on Wednesday, December 10, 2025. This development represents a turning point in the ongoing armed conflict. Uvira occupies a strategic position militarily, politically, and economically. Located just across from Bujumbura, the capital of Burundi, the city has a land border connecting Kamvivira (on the Congolese side) and Gatumba (on the Burundian side). Cross-border trade

³<https://www.state.gov/accord-de-paix-entre-la-republique-democratique-du-congo-et-la-republique-du-rwanda>

⁴ <https://www.rfi.fr/fr/afrique/20251206-rdc-malgr%C3%A9-l-accord-de-paix-de-washington-les-combats-se-poursuivent-au-sud-kivu>

⁵<https://www.rfi.fr/fr/afrique/20251208-rdc-rwanda-security-sovereignty-tshisekedi's-determined-address-to-the-nation?dicbo=v2-rV4gJyt>

are particularly dynamic, stimulating the local economies of both countries. Still on the economic front, Uvira is home to the port of Kalundu, considered the second most important in the country after Matadi in Kongo-Central. In addition, Uvira's geographical location on Lake Tanganyika provides privileged access to the provinces of Grand-Katanga and neighboring countries such as Tanzania and Burundi.

Uvira also occupies a strategic military position, as it is an important logistical hub for the Congolese and Burundian armies during various operations. Burundi, whose troops are fighting alongside the FARDC, has deployed more than 10,000 soldiers in the high and middle plateaus of Uvira, Fizi, and Mwenga. These forces are intervening not only to support the Congolese army, but also, and above all, to fight against the Burundian rebels of Red Tabara, allied with the Congolese rebels of Twirwaneho. The latter group, which represents the self-defense militia of the Banyamulenge community (the Congolese Tutsi), is also a member of the AFC-M23.

Following the clashes in the Ruzizi plain and the capture of Uvira by the AFC-M23, many Burundian soldiers fled the fighting to return to their country. Several hundred Congolese soldiers, police officers, and officials also crossed the border to seek refuge in Burundi. However, a few thousand Burundian soldiers remain in the Democratic Republic of Congo, particularly in the high and middle plateaus of Mwenga, Fizi, and Uvira. The AFC-M23 rebels issued a statement calling on Burundi to withdraw its forces and proposing the opening of a humanitarian corridor to facilitate their return⁷.

For its part, Burundi has affirmed its desire to maintain its troops on Congolese soil and to continue operations alongside the FARDC, in accordance with the bilateral partnership between the two countries, in order to ensure the security of its own country, according to its Minister of Foreign Affairs, Édouard BIZIMANA⁸. This hardening of positions further distances any prospect of peace. In the coming weeks, the situation is likely to remain unstable, with continued clashes and a possible regionalization of the conflict.

*It should be noted that the AFC-M23 offensive currently underway and the various clashes between the warring parties are extremely violent and deadly. **Our incomplete figures so far show that several hundred civilians have been killed** exclusively in the clashes in Kaziba, Nzibira, Kiluguntwe, Sange, Kamanyola, Katogota, Luvungi, Rurambo, Lubarika, Uvira, and Makobola. This extremely heavy human toll is due to the violence of the clashes, which involve the extravagant use of sophisticated weapons, heavy artillery, kamikaze drones, combat helicopters, and other heavy equipment.*

Burundi closes its borders with the DRC and faces a humanitarian crisis following the influx of Congolese refugees

Following the capture of Uvira by Rwandan-backed AFC-M23 rebels, Burundi, a staunch ally of the Congolese government, has closed all its borders with the DRC, including the Gatumba border post on the other side of the Congolese town of Uvira⁹.

⁶ https://www.koaci.com/article/2025/02/07/congo-rdc/politique/rdc-guerre-dans-lest-10000-soldats-burundais-supplementaires-deploies-le-malawi-se-retire_184330.html

⁷ Message given by the Deputy Chief of Staff of the ARC (AFC-M23 army), General Byamungu, in a speech in Uvira.

⁸ <https://www.jeuneafrique.com/1748563/politique/le-burundi-a-le-droit-de-se-defendre-sil-est-attaque-selon-edouard-bizimana/>

⁹ <https://www.radiookapi.net/2025/12/10/actualite/securite/le-burundi-ferme-sa-frontiere-avec-la-rdc-apres-la-chute-duvira>

This closure of borders has serious economic and humanitarian consequences.

On the humanitarian front, many Congolese caught in the crossfire between warring factions no longer have the option of seeking refuge in Burundi. The most courageous take makeshift boats to cross Lake Tanganyika. But once they arrive on Burundian soil, none of these boats are allowed to return to Congo. Thus, on Sunday, December 14, as fighting raged on the shores of Lake Tanganyika, many Congolese found themselves crowded together at various landing stages in the villages of Swima, Mboko, Makobola, and Lweba, but without boats they were unable to travel and seek refuge in Burundi. This situation is therefore very worrying and exposes civilian populations to enormous risks and even endangers their lives, which is a violation of international humanitarian law.

At the same time, those who have arrived on Burundian soil find themselves in inhumane conditions in camps that lack everything.

Between December 9 and 10, 2025, more than 10,000 refugees from the Democratic Republic of Congo crossed the Gatumba–Kavimvira border in the province of Bujumbura¹⁰.

In Gatumba, as in Cibitoke, there is an urgent need for tents, toilets, and drinking water. Left to fend for themselves, refugees spend the night under the open sky, exposed to the cold, rain, and unsanitary conditions, with the risk of epidemics and diseases from dirty hands. Refugees need everything.

Men, women, and children, thirsty, hungry, and without assistance, are imploring the Burundian authorities and humanitarian organizations to intervene urgently. Their cry for help underscores the urgency of a rapid response to avoid a more serious health and humanitarian crisis.

The High Commissioner for Refugees in Burundi states that waves of refugees began arriving in Burundi on December 5, 2025, and that the number exceeded 40,000 in just one week. There are many children, elderly people, pregnant women, and even wounded people among them⁽¹³⁾. UNHCR-Burundi also says it lacks the resources to deal with this humanitarian crisis, given that it is the end of the year, which means the end of the budget for most organizations. **An urgent appeal is therefore being made to all humanitarian partners to mobilize to prevent this crisis from turning into a humanitarian disaster.**

Despite condemnation, the rebels supported by Rwanda are continuing their offensive.

The Security Council held an emergency meeting on Friday, December 12, in New York, and all countries condemned the offensive by the Rwandan-backed AFC-M23 and demanded not only that it be stopped, but also that Rwanda cease its support and withdraw its troops.

¹⁰ <https://www.iwacu-burundi.org/afflux-de-refugies-congolais-le-burundi-au-bord-dune-catastrophe-humanitaire/>

¹¹ <https://information.tv5monde.com/afrique/pas-de-toilettes-pas-de-nourriture-au-burundi-les-congolais-qui-ont-flee-the-m23-destitute-in-transit-camps-2801104>

¹² <https://www.iwacu-burundi.org/afflux-de-refugies-congolais-le-burundi-au-bord-dune-catastrophe-humanitaire/>

¹³ <https://www.iwacu-burundi.org/afflux-de-refugies-congolais-le-burundi-au-bord-dune-catastrophe-humanitarian/>

from Congolese territory in accordance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 2773.

The United States of America, through its representative to the United Nations, Ambassador Mike Waltz, has clearly and unequivocally pointed the finger at Rwanda, holding it responsible for the deterioration of the situation in South Kivu and affirming the US's intention to use all the leverage at its disposal to enforce the Washington Peace Agreement¹⁴.

The Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Mahmoud Ali Youssouf, also called for restraint in the face of escalating tensions in the Great Lakes region.

Germany, Belgium, Denmark, the United States of America, France, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Sweden, Switzerland, and the European Union, as members of the International Contact Group for the Great Lakes Region (ICG), chaired by Germany, issued a statement on December 9 expressing their deep concern about the renewed outbreak of violence in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and the new offensive by the March 23 Movement (M23), supported by the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) army. expressed their deep concern about the new outbreak of violence in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and the new offensive by the March 23 Movement (M23), supported by Rwanda, around Uvira (South Kivu) near the Burundi border, which risks destabilizing the entire region¹⁶.

Despite all these condemnations and threats made in clear terms against the AFC-M23 and Rwanda, the situation on the ground continues to deteriorate and the rebel units supported by the Rwandan Defense Forces (RDF) are continuing their offensive in South Kivu.

On Saturday, December 13, they took control of Kipupu, the capital of the Itombwe sector in the Mwenga highlands.

And on Sunday, December 14, they seized the village of Makobola 1^{er} about 15 km south of the town of Uvira. After Makobola, they continued their march and are approaching the town of Mboko in the Fizi territory, heading towards the town of Baraka. There is no doubt that the rebels are determined to continue their offensive and are now aiming to expand into the rich mining area of Greater Katanga, where the city of Kalemie, capital of Tanganyika Province, would be their next major target.

For their part, the FARDC continued to bomb several villages in the Fizi highlands, including Gahwera, Mikenge, Rwitsankuku, Mubavusha, and Rugezi, using combat helicopters and drones.

At the same time, soldiers who fled from the enemy in Uvira continue to retreat, with most heading towards the town of Kalemie.

2. Towards a more open regionalization of the armed conflict in the Great Lakes Region.

Through its large-scale offensive towards Uvira, the AFC-M23, with the support of the Rwandan army¹⁷, is intensifying a conflict that poses growing risks to stability

¹⁴ <https://cd.usembassy.gov/fr/declaration-lors-dune-reunion-du-conseil-de-securite-des-nations-unies-sur-la-situation-en-republique-democratique-du-congo/>

¹⁵ <https://au.int/fr/pressreleases/20251211/le-president-de-la-cua-appelle-la-retenu-face-lescalade-des-tensions>

¹⁶ <https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/fr/dossiers-pays/republique-democratique-du-congo/evenements/article/communiqu%C3%A9-du-groupe-de-contact-international-pour-la-region-des-grands-lacs-286802>

¹⁷ <https://www.jeuneafrique.com/1747233/politique/des-experts-de-lonu-accusent-larmee-rwandaise-de-graves-exactions-dans-lest-de-la-rdc/>

in the Great Lakes region. Bujumbura, located in close proximity to Uvira, is particularly vulnerable to rebel advances. Political and security tensions between Rwanda and Burundi have persisted for several years, exacerbated by the failure of the military coup in Burundi in 2015, some of whose instigators have taken refuge in Rwanda. Burundi regularly demands their extradition as a prerequisite for the normalization of bilateral relations and the reopening of the borders, which are currently closed. Furthermore, Burundi accuses Rwanda of supporting armed groups opposed to the Burundian government, such as the Red Tabara rebels, while Rwanda accuses Burundi of supporting the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR), which it describes as genocidal.

Rwanda and Burundi are now involved in the DRC: Rwanda supports the AFC-M23 rebels, while Burundi is fighting alongside the Congolese armed forces as part of bilateral cooperation.

Until now, the two countries have been fighting indirectly in battles in Goma and Kalehe, but the new offensive in the Ruzizi plain, on the border between Burundi and Rwanda, risks turning this conflict into a direct confrontation, not only on Congolese territory but also on Burundian and Rwandan territory. This conflict, previously concentrated in eastern Congo, could now spread to Rwandan and Burundian territory. Moreover, Burundi has already warned against Rwanda's belligerent attitude, according to its foreign minister, who refuses to withdraw his troops from Congolese soil.

Since Kisangani in June 2000, we have never been so close to a direct military confrontation between two foreign states on Congolese territory. The coming hours and days will be decisive for the course of events.

3. Worsening humanitarian crisis and persistent human rights violations

During the period covered by this issue of the Citizen Barometer, human rights violations have intensified, continuing the alarming trend observed in previous months. In areas directly affected by the armed conflict, daily life for residents has lost all meaning, as insecurity and violence have become permanent features.

Human rights violations committed by the Wazalendo militias

In areas officially under government administration, the massive presence of Wazalendo militias continues to cause growing concern among the population. Perceived by many citizens as a ticking time bomb, these militias impose their own law and commit acts of brutality against civilians, ranging from beatings and whippings in the form of torture and other physical abuse, to arbitrary arrests and enforced disappearances, to the killing and summary execution of civilians who have nothing to do with the armed conflict.

The Wazalendo, characterized by indescribable indiscipline and a complete lack of chain of command, have become veritable executioners and violators of human rights.

Barriers are erected throughout the areas under their control. At these barriers, they charge money to anyone passing by on foot or in a vehicle. And when the passerby does not have the money, they are whipped, as in colonial times. Women are not spared from this violence by the militias. They are also publicly whipped and stripped naked. Others are raped or subjected to mass sexual violence in front of their families.

Some members of these militias even engage in cannibalism, publicly eating human flesh, certain parts of which are believed by these militiamen to have fetishistic properties. In addition to these human rights violations, repeated clashes between various factions of Wazalendo and sometimes against the FARDC have resulted in enormous civilian casualties. In November and the first half of December alone, **we documented 57 civilians killed as a result of these clashes in North Kivu and South Kivu.**

Human rights violations committed by the AFC-M23

In areas under AFC-M23 control, the human rights situation remains very worrying. Often victims of ambushes and attacks on their positions by Wazalendo militias, AFC-M23 elements engage in acts of revenge and reprisals by violently attacking civilians whom they accuse of colluding with the Wazalendo.

Young men are summarily executed solely on the grounds that they are members of Wazalendo and/or collaborate with them. These cases are very common in areas where these militias are active, particularly in Lubero, Masisi in North Kivu, and Kabare and Walungu in South Kivu. In the period covered by this issue of the Barometer alone, **79 people, all of them men, were summarily executed by rebels** on the pretext that they were Wazalendo or, at the very least, that they were working with them. These are extremely serious acts that constitute war crimes. This figure will certainly increase with the acts we are currently documenting in the areas newly conquered by the rebels in the territories of Uvira and Fizi.

Several other human rights violations are frequently reported in areas under the control of the AFC-M23. In the cities of Goma, Bukavu, and other areas, all traffic is prohibited every Saturday from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.; all residents are required to perform community service known as "SALONGO." Those who refuse to comply are arrested, whipped like animals, tortured, and crammed into dungeons in extremely inhumane conditions. To get them out, their families are forced to pay fines of up to the equivalent of \$200 to \$300 in Congolese francs. **Five (5) cases of death as a result of beatings have been documented in Goma and Bukavu.**

At the same time as residents are subjected to these manual labor duties, they are also subject to sanitation tax burdens. People are wondering what all these so-called sanitation taxes are used for.

In Uvira, a town conquered by AFC-M23 forces, our local correspondents report dozens of cases of summary executions, mainly of young people allegedly labeled as Wazalendo, and we fear that this will escalate as the rebels advance into areas known to be favorable to or strongholds of the Wazalendo.

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

a) Pamoja kwa Amani wishes to express the following:

- As long as the various agreements do not include binding mechanisms obliging the stakeholders to respect their commitments, it would be illusory to believe in the return of peace to the Great Lakes region, where leaders live in visceral hatred of one another and without any mutual trust.
- The United States of America, and President Donald Trump in particular, are at a historic turning point. They must take a firm stance against the Kigali regime, which must not only end its support for the AFC-M23 but also withdraw all its

DRC troops. Without firmness and coercive measures, Rwanda will continue to defy the entire world, including President Donald Trump, who wants to be seen as the President of Peace. His personal image is at stake.

- In light of the worsening situation, it is time for the entire international community to mobilize so that emergency humanitarian aid can be delivered to all areas severely affected by the war, particularly in Uvira, where there is a shortage of essential supplies and medicines, while many wounded people are flooding in from all over following the ongoing offensive, but also in the highlands around Minembwe and Mikenge, where there are reports of a humanitarian blockade with incalculable consequences. The same applies to the humanitarian assistance that must be deployed urgently to help the many Congolese refugees who continue to arrive on Burundian territory.
- Respect for international humanitarian law and human rights is an obligation incumbent on all warring parties, and reprisals against civilians constitute mass crimes and war crimes that expose their perpetrators to prosecution before national, regional, and international courts;
- Faced with the worsening situation, with thousands of Congolese continuing to die as a result of this war, dialogue remains the only viable option for bringing a definitive end to this crisis. If the voices of civil society, including Pamoja kwa Amani and the spiritual leaders of CENCO and ECC, had been heard well before the fall of Goma and Bukavu to the Kinshasa regime, and if the regime had agreed to organize a national dialogue, the nation would have been spared all these human losses. Hence our urgent and patriotic appeal to all parties, and to President Félix-Antoine Tshisekedi in particular, to make the national dialogue advocated by CENCO and ECC a national priority in order to prevent the country from falling apart and suffering further deaths.
- As war rages in the areas of Uvira and Fizi, we call on all communities living in these areas to refrain from any suicidal acts or statements that could plunge these entities into deadly confrontations. Blind revenge and reprisals will only aggravate the situation.
- Human rights defenders and journalists remain among the main victims of this war. They are regularly targeted by the warring parties as a result of their work. Many are forced to leave their homes to seek refuge, unfortunately in very difficult conditions without the assistance they need. The relaxation of rules in emergency aid procedures for HRDs and journalists in danger should be a feature of all organizations defending HRDs and journalists: **"In such serious and special circumstances, rules should be relaxed and also special."**

b) Recommendations:

a. To the American and Qatari mediators:

- To include legally binding provisions in the agreements and a clearly defined system of sanctions against any party that fails to comply with the various commitments made;
- To promote the inclusion of local communities through civil society groups in the East in the various peace processes in order to enable public and citizen monitoring of the implementation of these agreements;
- To make every effort to obtain security guarantees and cooperation from the warring parties for the urgent delivery of humanitarian aid to alleviate the suffering of vulnerable populations severely affected in the eastern regions;

- Exert strong diplomatic pressure on the Government of the Democratic Republic of Congo to do more to ease political tensions and agree to the internal and inclusive dialogue proposed by the Bishops, an approach that Pamoja kwa Amani unequivocally supports;

b. To the Republic of Rwanda

- To immediately end its armed support for the AFC-M23 group and withdraw its troops from Congolese territory in accordance with the agreements signed and United Nations Security Council Resolution 2773 in order to contribute to the return of peace, which is an essential condition for any development in the Great Lakes sub-region;

c. To the Government of the Democratic Republic of Congo:

- To respect the laws of the Republic with regard to agreements binding on the country, which must first be submitted to the Congolese people through their representatives in Parliament;
- Work towards greater accountability and transparency in all peace processes and various mining agreements and deals;
- Take all necessary and urgent measures to bring order among its allies, the Wazalendo militias.

d. To the AFC-M23

- To put an end to its ongoing military offensive in order to give the various peace processes a better chance of success;
- To make respect for human rights and international humanitarian law its main priority;

Editorial note from Pamoja kwa Amani¹⁸

Pamoja kwa Amani wishes to remind the public, both nationally and internationally, that its publications are based on verified facts and are produced independently in accordance with established rules. It is therefore inappropriate to resort to threats or intimidation against Pamoja kwa Amani and its members in order to silence them. The organization remains committed to defending peace, security, justice, human rights, and social cohesion, while upholding the legitimate expectations of local communities.

¹⁸Produced and carried out by the Pamoja kwa Amani Consortium, C-PKA, the Citizen Barometer on Peace and Security in the DRC is intended to be an important tool in peace research and peacebuilding in the DRC. Like the rooster that crows every morning in our villages, the PKA Citizen Barometer aims to be a "whistleblower" that speaks out about what is happening on the ground, including threats and attacks on peace and security, as well as serious human rights violations. It also aims to be a means of advocacy and information with a wide range of recipients at the local, national, and international levels.

The Pamoja kwa Amani Consortium is a broad coalition of some 20 civil society organizations in North and South Kivu working for peace, human rights, justice, community recovery, and peaceful coexistence.

Thanks to the community network of its member organizations, PKA aims to make its Citizen Barometer a tool for monitoring human rights violations and all threats to peace and security. To better accomplish this mission, Pamoja kwa Amani is calling on all organizations interested in this approach to support its Citizen Barometer. Please contact us by email: pamojakwaamanioscrdc@gmail.com

We thank PAEMA for its partnership.