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Democratic Republic of Congo

Peace remains elusive in DRC

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The war continues despite the peace agreement between the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Rwanda, signed in Washington under the auspices of Trump.

From the outset, observers were cautious about the end of the conflict, due to the establishment of two parallel and closely linked peace processes.

Two peace agreements

The first, sponsored by the US, is an agreement between states, the DRC and Rwanda. It was signed on 27 June. According to the actors themselves, it is falling behind schedule, particularly on the issue of the withdrawal of Rwandan forces from Congolese territory. It is conditional on the DRC armed forces (FARDC) taking out the FDLR, a militia composed of former génocidaires whose danger is overestimated by Rwanda, which considers them an existential threat.

The second agreement, still under discussion, is the Doha agreement, this time between the DRC and the M23/AFC militia, which is heavily supported by Rwanda. It has conquered a large part of the eastern territory of the country by occupying the main cities of Goma and Bukavu. The talks are stalling. The Congolese authorities are demanding to regain their authority over the entire territory, while the M23/AFC is talking about co-management of the region. Although the M23 was initially a strictly military rebellion, it has transformed itself into a political force with the addition of the Alliance Fleuve Congo (AFC), led by Corneille Nangaa.

Parallel regime and rise of militias

This militia quickly set up a new administration to manage the conquered territories. Governors were appointed, courts were established and, more recently, a police force was created with the hiring of new civil servants. Traditional leaders opposed to this new power were removed and sometimes physically eliminated. The other thorny issue is the demobilisation of the M23 forces. These combatants are demanding to be integrated into the army. Tshisekedi, the president of the DRC, categorically refuses, considering that such integration would be a sword of Damocles hanging over his regime.

To wage war against the M23/AFC, the Congolese government has made extensive use of numerous militias operating in the region. They operate under the generic name of Wazalendo (patriots, in Kiswahili). Officially, their members have the status of 'armed defence reserve'. In reality, the Wazalendo enjoy a great deal of independence and consider that they are not bound by the commitments made in Doha, as they were not involved in the discussions. The latter had asked to participate in the meetings, but the refusal of both the Congolese government and the M23/AFC resulted in the demands of these armed groups being ignored. The first skirmishes between Wazalendo militias and the FARDC are already appearing. The most recent took place in Uvira, causing the deaths of a dozen people.

Contrary to Trump's claim that he has ended a thirty-year war, the conflict continues, forcing civilians, victims of abuses perpetrated on all sides, to flee into exile.

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Translated by **International Viewpoint** from [l'Anticapitaliste](#).

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