



By: TA | AP Brief

Congo and Rwanda-backed rebels agree to create body to oversee potential ceasefire



Congo and Rwanda -backed rebel group M23 agreed to establish an oversight body for a potential permanent ceasefire, an important step toward a peace deal, after **efforts** to end decades-long fighting in eastern Congo stalled in recent weeks.

The agreement was signed in Doha after mediation by Qatar, Congolese government spokesperson Patrick Muyaya announced on X.

M23 spokesperson Lawrence Kanyuka confirmed the signing and shared documents highlighting the terms of the agreement on X.

As part of the agreement, a ceasefire monitoring body, including representatives from Congo, M23 and the 12-country International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, will be formed, according to the documents.

The body is expected to meet within seven days of its creation, with the U.N. peacekeeping **mission** in Congo, known as MONUSCO, participating to provide logistical coordination. It will investigate alleged ceasefire violations, the documents said.

One of the most serious humanitarian crises on Earth

Backed by neighboring Rwanda, M23 is the most prominent of more than 100 armed groups fighting for control in Congo's mineral-rich east.

With 7 million people displaced in Congo, the U.N. has called the conflict "one of the most protracted, complex, serious humanitarian crises on Earth."

In a major escalation earlier this year, the rebels **seized** two key cities in eastern Congo.

In July, Congo and M23 signed a **declaration** of principles in Qatar to end the conflict and commit to a comprehensive peace agreement that would include the restoration of state authorities in key eastern cities controlled by

the insurgents and the exchange of prisoners.

The two sides agreed to finalize a peace deal no later than Aug. 18 but missed that deadline, accusing each other of violating peace terms.

In a statement on Tuesday, the Congolese army accused M23 of killing 39 civilians in eastern Congo's Rutshuru territory between Oct. 6 and 12.