

Statement

The EurAc network welcomes the EU's decision not to renew its support to Rwanda under the European Peace Facility

Members of the Europe–Central Africa Network (EurAc) welcome the intention of European Union (EU) Member States to end financial support to Rwanda under the European Peace Facility (EPF). This assistance carried a significant risk of being diverted to the M23 rebel group, which has been responsible for serious human rights violations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and for undermining the country's territorial integrity.

As this assistance is set to expire next May, EurAc calls on the EU and its Member States to maintain their engagement and to formally confirm that it will not be renewed.

These past years, EurAc has consistently condemned the EU Council's decision to continue financing the Rwandan armed forces through the European Peace Facility (EPF), and this despite Rwanda's documented and well-established support for the M23 rebel group. Our analysis has highlighted the detrimental impact of this support on the EU's own objectives of peace and regional stabilization in the Great Lakes region.

Following the announcement in November 2024 of a new €20 million package for Rwandan operations in Mozambique, EurAc had strongly stressed the need to establish robust monitoring mechanisms to ensure that this assistance does not, directly or indirectly, contribute to prolonging conflicts or exacerbating the suffering of civilian populations in eastern DRC¹. **To date, no transparent mechanism has been put in place to guarantee that these funds are not used to support operations on Congolese territory.** On the contrary, a report by the United Nations Group of Experts dated 3 July 2025² highlighted several links between the two theatres of operation.

The EPF is a key instrument of the EU's external action. It was designed to prevent conflicts and support long-term peace and stability in partner countries, in line with human rights and international humanitarian law. Against this backdrop, the decision not to renew support to Rwanda represents an important step towards ensuring that this instrument remains fully aligned with its original purpose. **It should also mark a turning point towards a more credible EU foreign policy in the Great Lakes region, one that is genuinely oriented towards regional peace and grounded in the principles of non-violence and respect for human rights.** Furthermore, this shift should be accompanied by additional concrete measures, including the

¹ [Communiqué du réseau EurAc en réaction à l'annonce d'un nouveau soutien financier au Rwanda dans le cadre de la Facilité Européenne pour la Paix \(FEP\)](#), EurAc, 21 novembre 2024

² [Rapport groupe d'expert des NU sur la RDC](#), UNSC, 3 juillet 2025

adoption of targeted sanctions and the suspension of the Memorandum of Understanding on critical raw materials with Rwanda.

The non-renewal of this assistance would also enhance the coherence of the international response to the crisis. The US sanctions announced in early March against the Rwandan armed forces and several senior officials have, to date, not been matched by broader alignment from other international actors, including the EU. Yet, Congolese civil society actors continue to call for stronger engagement from their European partners. Ending this support would help strengthen economic and diplomatic leverage while encouraging the resumption of a dialogue addressing the root causes of the conflict, an essential prerequisite for any sustainable peace. Conversely, a purely military approach alone cannot ensure lasting stability. In this context, the EU is called upon to continue supporting an inclusive dialogue process, involving all parties to the conflict without exception, as well as local communities, religious actors, and civil society across the region.

In the face of a persistent climate of violence and insecurity, EU Member States must more than ever speak with one voice around the EU's fundamental values, namely respect for human rights and international law.

The Europe-Central Africa network (EurAc)

About EurAc

The Europe-Central Africa Network (EurAc), created in 2003, brings together 32 non-governmental organizations active in Central Africa, with a particular focus on the Great Lakes region. EurAc carries out advocacy work to promote strong, coherent, and sustainable engagement from the European Union and its Member States to help the region build a better future.