

## **Taking Back Eastern Congo – Comprehensively Addressing the M23 and FDLR Rebel Groups**

Enough Project 28 October 2013 A [new Enough Project field report](#) analyzes the strength levels of two key rebel groups in eastern Congo and recommends political and security strategies for U.N. and U.S. leaders to pursue with the Congolese and Rwandan governments as part of a comprehensive peace process. “Taking Back Eastern Congo – Comprehensively Addressing the M23 and FDLR Rebel Groups” describes the complex relations between Congo, Rwanda, and the M23 and the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) armed groups that fuel insecurity and armed conflict in eastern Congo. Containing both groups, the report argues, will require addressing the root [security and economic issues](#)

. Envoys and policymakers should also pursue better disarmament and reintegration plans for fighters and promote better public outreach from the U.N. peacekeeping mission and new U.N. Intervention Brigade. Peacekeeping forces should pursue a broader range of intelligence sources and more thoroughly vet their military partners.

The report argues that addressing Rwanda’s concerns about the threat posed by the rebel FDLR will be a critical part of the strategy to contain the FDLR itself as well as M23 and other armed groups. Rwanda sees the extremist Hutu-led FDLR as a threat because [it has attacked Rwanda](#)

in the last year. Kigali denies allegations that it supports M23, which operates in the same region as the rival FDLR. Enough Project argues that successfully containing the FDLR through the U.N. peacekeeping mission, MONUSCO, and the U.N. Intervention Brigade can provide security assurances and diplomatic leverage in the effort to discourage support for M23.

The

[latest round of peace talks](#)

between M23 and Kinshasa were suspended this week, largely due to disagreements over amnesty for M23 rebels accused of human rights violations. Kigali must apply pressure to push M23 to sign onto a peace deal in the future by curbing support for the rebel group. Motivating Kigali to do so involves focusing future negotiations on security issues, including an M23 disarmament plan and efforts to neutralize FDLR forces, as well as on economics by incorporating a beneficial regional economic integration component. With M23 and Kinshasa agreeing to reconvene in the future, a renewed focus on security and economics in later talks will be a critical step toward ending east Congo’s worst violence.

Read the

[full report.](#)