

PRESS RELEASE

OSICR Calls for an Independent International Investigation into the FDLR Narrative and Security Dynamics in Eastern Congo

Bunia, Democratic Republic of the Congo — March 2026

The Organizations Supporting Community Initiatives and Refugees (OSICR) calls for an **independent international investigation** into the current status of the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) and the broader security narrative used to justify regional military interventions in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo.

For more than two decades, the government of Rwanda, under President Paul Kagame, has repeatedly cited the presence of the FDLR as a major threat to Rwanda's national security. This argument has been widely used to justify security concerns and military operations in the eastern provinces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

However, investigations, field observations, and historical military operations conducted over the past decade raise serious questions about the continued existence of the FDLR as a significant organized armed force.

Several military campaigns involving the Congolese armed forces FARDC, supported by the United Nations peacekeeping mission MONUSCO, significantly weakened the operational capacity of the group during the presidency of Joseph Kabila. Many fighters were neutralized, disarmed, or repatriated to Rwanda through demobilization and reintegration programs.

According to various field reports and security assessments, the FDLR no longer functions as a structured military organization capable of posing a strategic threat to Rwanda or the region.

Despite this reality, the narrative of a persistent FDLR threat continues to dominate regional security discourse. OSICR believes that this situation requires **urgent clarification through an independent and transparent international investigation**.

The continuing instability in eastern Congo — particularly in provinces such as North Kivu and South Kivu — has caused immense humanitarian suffering, including mass displacement, human rights violations, and economic exploitation.

At the same time, the region remains one of the world's richest areas in strategic minerals such as gold, coltan, cassiterite, and tungsten. Numerous international reports have linked ongoing conflict in eastern Congo to the competition for control over these valuable natural resources.

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OSICR therefore calls on the international community — including the United Nations, the African Union, and the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region — to establish an **independent fact-finding mission** to determine:

- The current operational status of the FDLR
- The number of former combatants repatriated or reintegrated
- The real drivers of insecurity in eastern Congo
- The role of regional actors in the continuation of the conflict

The people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo deserve transparency, accountability, and respect for their sovereignty.

Only a credible international investigation can establish the facts and contribute to building a durable peace in the Great Lakes region.

About OSICR

OSICR (Organisations de Soutien aux Initiatives Communautaires et aux Réfugiés) is a civil society organization based in the Democratic Republic of the Congo that works to support community initiatives, protect refugees and vulnerable populations, and promote human rights, peace, and community development.

The organization conducts documentation, advocacy, and research on humanitarian issues, conflict dynamics, and the protection of civilians, particularly in the eastern regions of the country.

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