JUNIOR ACADEMY MODEL UN XI

AU

TOPIC GUIDE

Shuohan Peng
Dharma Zalavadiya

TABLE OF CONTENTS

JUNIOR ACADEMY MODEL UNITED NATIONS

– Eleventh Annual Conference –

JAMUN XI SECRETARIAT

Nathan Averboukh
Director of Internal Affairs

Max Deninzon
Director of Internal Affairs

Gaelle Ngabo
Director of External Affairs

Aakrithi Ram
Director of External Affairs

Hitanshee Sheth
Director of External Affairs

Jason Goodman
Director of Operations

Guy Goren
Director of Operations

Lillian Day
Director of Logistics

Ashna Patel
Director of Logistics

FACULTY ADVISORS

Mark Kramer
Faculty Advisor

Christine Wallace
Faculty Advisor

Shuohan Peng
shupen28@bergen.org

Hey everyone!

My name is Shuohan Peng (she/her/hers), and I will be one of your chairs for this committee. I am currently a first-year at Bergen County Academies studying Technology and Computer Science. Outside of classes, I play on a club tennis team, sail for my town's varsity team, am part of the school robotics team, work on research in the nanotechnology field, and play the piano whenever I have the time. I have been engaged with MUN since the 8th grade, and this is my first time chairing. JAMUN was actually my very first conference, and I know firsthand that it can feel scary at first—raising your placard, speaking in front of a room full of people, or even just figuring out what to say. But trust me, once you take that first step, it gets easier, and you'll realize how exciting and rewarding MUN can be. Throughout your time here, I hope you'll meet amazing people, gain confidence in your public speaking, and learn a lot through debate and research. If you ever have any questions, feel free to reach out to me via email (shupen28@bergen.org). I can't wait to see you all in committee!

Regards,
Shuohan Peng
AU Co-Chair

JAMUN XI SECRETARIAT

Nathan Averboukh
Director of Internal Affairs

Max Deninzon
Director of Internal Affairs

Gaelle Ngabo
Director of External Affairs

Aakrithi Ram
Director of External Affairs

Hitanshee Sheth
Director of External Affairs

Jason Goodman
Director of Operations

Guy Goren
Director of Operations

Lillian Day
Director of Logistics

Ashna Patel
Director of Logistics

FACULTY ADVISORS

Mark Kramer
Faculty Advisor

Christine Wallace
Faculty Advisor

Dharma Zalavadiya
dhazal28@bergen.org

Hello!

My name is Dharma Zalavadiya (He/Him), and I am one of the chairs of this committee. I am a freshman at Bergen County Academies studying Technology and Computer Science. Outside of classes, I volunteer with CS Unite to teach computer science classes, play badminton, and play around with UNITY to make games. This is my first time serving as chair for JAMUN, but I participated in JAMUN last year as an eighth grader in this exact committee. I am super excited to get to experience this with you all! If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out at dhazal28@bergen.org. I can't wait to meet you all at the conference this year! As a delegate in this committee, we hope that you will be able to learn about the topic that we have prepared for you while also gaining a deeper understanding and appreciation for the AU and the United Nations as a whole. We also hope that through your interactions with other delegates, not only will you learn about the countries they represent, but you will also come to know them as individuals and potential lifelong friends.

Throughout debate, remember to remain respectful of others and genuinely listen to any ideas they may present; only in this way can proper solutions be developed for the problems you will discuss in committee. Of course, also have fun and really enjoy your time at JAMUN. If you have any questions or concerns at any point before, during, or after the conference, know that we, the JAMUN dais, are here to help. We look forward to seeing and hearing from everyone in the committee come May!

Best,
Dharma Zalavadiya
AU Co-Chair

INTRODUCTION

Tensions in the Democratic Republic of Congo are at an all-time high with the M23 rebel group and the Rwandan government constantly conflicting with Congo. [1] Through the introduction of political corruption and constant leadership changes, political instability has been on the rise in the region. The conflict began through the ethnic conflicts between the Tutsis and Hutus [2] along with the presence of militias within Congo, leading to increased tensions between the two countries and creating the initial spark for war. The African Union must put an end to the year-long pressures and to ultimately bring peace to the region. However, simple missions and peacekeeping strategies have long been useless when faced with this crisis. Prior attempts, such as the UN Stabilization Mission -set in place to protect the civilians who were affected by the Congo War and to stabilize the central Congolese government- were short-term solutions due to the lack of resources and communication between Congo and the mission [3]. With armed rebel groups stealing natural resources and constantly keeping the government's forces in check, it is close to impossible for MONUSCO to be effective. The delegates of the African Union must work together to strategize and resolve the DRC war to bring peace to Africa once more.

TOPIC: Political Instability and Peacekeeping in the ongoing DRC War

Topic History

Rwanda was inhabited primarily by two major ethnic groups, the Tutsi and the Hutu. The Tutsi were of a higher class and made up approximately 14% of the total population, while the Hutu were of a lower class, making up approximately 85% of the total population [4]. Inside these two groups also existed clan systems, with different types of clans having greater power than others. However, these two groups that once co-existed with each other would soon garner enough hate to lead to an entire massacre. As Germany, the former colonial power, lost possession of Rwanda during the First World War, Belgium took control of the territory, and the region was placed under Belgian rule. The Belgians favored the Tutsi more than the Hutu, as they were in power for centuries before the Belgians came and naturally seemed more powerful and noble [4]. The Tutsi were not only of an aristocratic class but were taller and more slender, which the Belgians deemed to be more "European-like" features, so the Belgians believed that they were biologically superior to the Hutu. This favoritism began in Europe during the colonial era through the Hamitic Hypothesis, which stated that advanced civilizations within Africa were of "Hamites," meaning that they were originally of Caucasian descent. Due to the racist nature of the colonial era, where social standing was decided within racial hierarchies, the Hamitic Hypothesis influenced the Belgians to believe that the Tutsi were more important than the Hutu and far superior. Even before colonialism, the Rwandan monarchy was already led by Tutsi kings, though this difference was more economic and social rather than racial. The Belgians exaggerated both categories and solidified racism as the key point of difference by creating ethnic identity cards that divided the three major ethnic groups in Rwanda, the Hutu, the Tutsi, and the Twa [16]. Those of Tutsi cards were given administrative jobs and education opportunities, unlike the Hutu. As the Hutu were excluded from schools, civil service jobs, and village leadership, it led the Hutus to resent not only the Belgian administration but also the Tutsi. Seemingly unjustified preferential treatment and power imbalance drove the Hutus into a corner, where they realized that they had to break the cycle of oppression. The Hutu political movement, which focused on majority rule, gained more traction, and the Tutsi resisted democratization and the loss of their privileges. This ongoing tension between the two groups finally broke out and led to the first-ever major genocide. In November 1959, many Hutu rose and killed hundreds of Tutsi and forced thousands to flee to other countries. This allowed the

Topic History (con't)

Hutu to gain control and end the dominance of the Tutsi that they had so long resented[5]. The Hutu social revolution lasted for around 2 years, and Rwanda finally gained Independence in 1962 [4]. However, the conflict did not end here; in fact, it worsened over the years. Because of this, 120,000 Tutsis became refugees and fled to neighboring countries. Looking for a way to return to their former status, Tutsi refugees in Tanzania and Zaire (modern-day DRC) started planning and creating violent attacks on the Hutu and the Rwandan government. As these attacks continued from 1962 to 1967, they also led to the Hutu killing the Tutsi living in Rwanda as a form of retaliation, which led to over 480,000 Rwandans leaving the country and becoming refugees. Moving forward, in 1988, the Rwandan Patriotic Front was founded in Uganda, consisting of Tutsi refugees who aimed to reform the Rwandan government and move all the refugees back to their home [6]. On 1 October 1990, the group set off on their first mission, consisting of 7000 fighters, from Uganda to Rwanda. Their goal was to overthrow the Hutu-dominated government and secure the rights of Tutsi refugees to return home. As these fighters started pushing into areas such as Brumba and Ruhengeri, villages became battle zones. Many civilians were caught up in between heavy artillery, which caused them to flee their homes and take refuge in Uganda and camps outside Kigali. This act was taken seriously by the Hutu, and to retaliate, they alienated the Tutsi still living in Rwanda, along with all Hutus who supported the Tutsi cause. In October 1993, as a response to the rising tensions and outbreaks of violence between these two groups, the Security Council established the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR) to establish peace and stability within the region [7]. However, with the extremism of the Hutu along with the delays and disagreements with some Rwandan political parties, the mission ultimately failed. Yet, everything took a major turn on 6 April 1994, when the Rwandan and Burundi presidents were killed in a plane crash that was caused by a rocket. This fueled the Rwandan gencoide as many Hutu extremists used the death of the president as a justification for exterminating hundreds of thousands of Tutsis along with raping 150,000-250,000 woman [5]. As the Hutu extremists, fueled by resentment and anger, started killing peacekeepers and other moderate Hutu leaders, many countries that provided aid through the UNAMIR program started withdrawing their troops and removing them from Rwanda. This reduced their number from a total of 2,165 troops to a mere 270. The faltering response of the

Topic History (con't)

international community rendered peacekeepers, already weakened due to the absence of commitment from some Rwandan parties, useless. The Security Council allowed French-led forces in a mission entitled Operation Turquoise to try to achieve peace within Rwanda [8]. Finally, the Rwandan Patriotic Front, a party of exiled Tutsi, took military control of the entire territory of Rwanda, however, some Hutu leaders escaped during the control of the Turquoise Operation as they feared their capture and punishment for their acts during the Rwandan Genocide. As the Turquoise Operation set up a humanitarian safe zone in south-western Rwanda to protect civilians from violence, it allowed for many to slip through, including soldiers and Interahamwe militia (Hutu) [17]. More than 1.4 million Hutu leaders, militias, and citizens escaped to Zaire (DRC), which led to thousands of citizens dying from waterborne diseases. This continued and eventually led to the war between Rwanda and Zaire (DRC) as former Rwandan forces and Congolese militias continued to attack and cause deaths. This led up to the initiation of the First (1996-1997) and Second Congo Wars (1998-2003). Following the Rwandan genocide, about 2 million Hutu refugees fled into eastern Zaire (which is now the DRC) and continued attacks on the Tutsi-led Rwandan government. In response, Rwanda and Uganda supported the rebel group called the "Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo", led by Joseph Kabila, with the goal of overthrowing Zaire and its government. Kabila's forces were able to capture Zaire's capital, Kinshasa, and Mobuto Sese Seko (former Zaire dictator) fled the country. The conflict between the ADFLC and Zaire government became known as the First Congo War. Kabila declared himself president and renamed Zaire as the DRC, but tensions between Kabila and his backers rose, laying the foundation for the Second Congo War. In 2006, Laurent Nkunda, who was a former Congolese army officer of Tutsi origin, established the National Congress for the Defence of the People (CNDP) to protect Tutsi refugees and communities living within Kivu, a region near the border of the DRC and Rwanda. On 23 March 2009, the DNCP fully integrated themselves within the Congolese army due to a peace deal signed by Kinshasa. Kinshasa, which is the capital of the DRC, promised ex-rebels political representation in the local government and army ranks. By May 2012, many past CNDP soldiers felt that none of these promised rewards had been given to them and felt that they had no power in the Kivu regions. Additionally, many of them were discriminated against due to their Tutsi ethnicity, didn't get paid, and

Topic History (con't)

ultimately, the attacks on the Tutsi in the Kivu region didn't stop. In frustration, they refused to follow army orders, rearmed, and renamed themselves to the March 23 Movement, symbolizing the date when Kinshasa first signed a peace deal with them [18]. Their goal was to force the government in Kinshasa to protect Tutsi communities that still felt threatened. However, after low levels of activity for years, M23 reorganized in late 2022, and by January 2025, they captured many key towns such as Goma and Bukavu, displacing tens of thousands of civilians along with putting millions under the control of M23 insurgents [19]. As the DRC produces roughly 70 percent of the world's cobalt [20], M23 saw it as an opportunity to fund their weapons. Both cobalt and coltan are essential minerals used in the production of everyday technology, making them an important source of profit for the DRC. After seizing control of the Rubaya region, which housed a series of coltan mining sites, M23 established a mining ministry that gave them the ability to impose illegal taxes and issue their export permits over these materials. Through Rwandan traders who provided cover routes and paperwork, they exported ore across the border and mixed it in with legitimate Rwandan exports [21]. A January 2025 UN report revealed that in 2024 alone, at least 150 tonnes of cobalt were illegally exported into Rwanda, making it "the largest contamination of the Great Lakes region's mineral supply chain on record."[22] It is said that M23 has netted over 800,000 dollars per month from the illegal taxes and export of cobalt [22]. Furthermore, even Rwanda has profited from the smuggled minerals from M23, as "mineral exports from Rwanda are now over a billion dollars a year. That's about double what they were two years ago. And we don't know how much, but a fair chunk of that is from the DRC." [27] As this directly finances M23's arms purchases, it also greatly affects DRC's financial situation as it loses billions of dollars in state revenues, decreases the wages of miners, and affects the global tech supply chain. Furthermore, monitoring remains weak as Rwanda has yet to participate in transparency initiatives, allowing the smuggling to not only continue the humanitarian suffering but also the regional instability [23].

Current Situation

The United Nations states that "The emergency in the DRC is one of the most complex humanitarian crises in the world" [2]. This sums up the severity of the situation in the DRC, as it has only escalated in 2025. Decades of clashes between non-state forces and the Congolese, gender-based

Current Situation (con't)

violence, and general violations of human rights have made the ongoing DRC war one of the most complex humanitarian crises in history. Violence in eastern DRC has escalated since the start of this year, with forces targeting displacement sites, schools, and healthcare institutions. An all-time high of 7.3 million people have been displaced, with 86,000 more seeking asylum in neighboring countries [9]. Overcrowding in countries such as Burundi, due to the number of people fleeing from the DRC conflict, has caused a lack of essential resources for all people. Additionally, DRC's humanitarian crisis has only escalated, with now 27 million people -approximately 1 in 4 Congolese citizens- in need of humanitarian aid as a result of the conflict, food shortage, climate impact, and other surfacing issues in the DRC. Recently, the M23 rebel group has launched major attacks, capturing key eastern cities such as Goma and Bukavu after heavy fighting, resulting in civilian displacement and casualties and millions of people under direct control of M23 forces [10]. Violence has also been reported in the Northern Uvira territory, where armed forces make it difficult for displaced peoples to safely return, and North and South Kivu, where active conflict has killed, injured, and displaced civilians. As the fighting continues, people are fleeing South into makeshift camps and displacement sites lacking proper shelter, food, water, and basic healthcare [24]. Almost a quarter of the DRC's total population faces acute food insecurity due to rising food prices as a direct result of the war, and while the United Nations is making every effort to support refugees and the displaced population, disease is abundant in refugee campsites and conditions remain dire due to the consistent influx of people. Peace negotiations were initially scheduled for April 9th, 2025 in Doha, but have been postponed indefinitely as well [10]. There is no projected end to the conflict anytime soon, as Joseph Kabila- former DRC president- has announced that he will return to govern, which will undoubtedly cause turmoil due to allegations of M23 corruption and his tumultuous political history. The UNHCR is prioritizing community-based protection with the aim of assisting 270,000 children and their caretakers in receiving child protection services, as well as allowing 170,000 refugees to utilize gender-based violence programmes. MONUSCO (United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo) is currently one of the largest United Nations operations in the

Current Situation (con't)

world and has increased troop deployment in eastern DRC, but faces significant challenges caused by the lack of communication from local armed troops, difficult terrain, and distrust from the citizens of the Congo [25]. Another peacekeeping attempt, from the Southern African Development Community (SADC) withdrew from Goma through airlift after making a deal with the M23 that spared their lives at the cost of a humiliating surrender. This instability, along with complex roots and militia groups operating in the same region, has brought Rwanda into focus due to its alleged involvement with the M23 group. Like the leaders of the Rwandan government, M23 is mostly Tutsis, and UN experts report that the M23 is trained under Rwandan supervision and is equipped with Rwandan weapons. Currently, Rwandan president Paul Kagame has now directed focus to justifying support rather than denying due to the overwhelming amount of evidence proving Rwanda's M23 support, releasing a statement in January 2025 stating, "'This fighting close to the Rwandan border continues to present a serious threat to Rwanda's security and territorial integrity, and necessitates Rwanda's sustained defensive posture'" [28]. The targeting of Goma by the M23, on the other hand, is believed to have been politically motivated by Rwanda, as the M23 has no need strategically for the city [28]. Countries are not imposing the same sanctions on Rwanda as they did after the Second Congo War because of Rwanda's importance internationally. Rwanda's involvement continues to cause tensions to get higher, prolonging the conflict and jeopardizing the Great Lakes region of Africa. The African Union actively calls for peace and stability in the DRC, emphasizing ceasefire and political solutions over any military action and supports the sovereignty of the Congo.

Country Positions

Democratic Republic of Congo:
The DRC is the root of the terrors that have been ongoing for years due to its many ethnic conflicts, along with political instability that has allowed for internal divisions to occur, affecting most humanitarian plans done in the past. With the presence of countless militia groups such as M23, exploitation and corruption have allowed for significant disruptions along the eastern peninsula [2]. Furthermore, clashes between the Congolese army and many armed groups have caused not only deaths but also the destruction of infrastructures such as clinics and schools, worsening the livelihood of

Country Positions (con't)

DRC (con't)

millions living there [11]. Additionally, in 4 months from January 2025, this conflict has caused around 7.3 million people to be forcefully displaced, along with 86,000 to take refuge in neighboring countries [9]. Despite UN intervention with the MONUSCO mission, tensions and violence did not stabilize but instead increased due to the logistical challenges and difficulty of navigating the terrain [12]. Therefore, the DRC believes that a remodified plan is necessary to finally put an end to the conflict. This plan emphasizes the need for cooperation within the African Union nations and neighboring regions, along with decisive action. The DRC demands that the plan must emphasize 3 essential elements. First, there should be a comprehensive remodification of peacekeeping strategies and mandates to secure vulnerable regions. Second, the establishment of initiatives that protect communities, especially within the eastern regions of Congo, where conflicts are prone to occur. Finally, the restructuring of the framework of the Congolese government was decided by all political groups, including rebel factions, to be more stable and democratic. Without these measures, the DRC believes that tensions will not only rise but also deepen this humanitarian crisis, eventually deteriorating its sovereignty.

Burundi & Rwanda:

The Republic of Rwanda and the Republic of Burundi are both heavily affected by the ongoing conflicts within the DRC, as they share borders. Both nations have been facing an ongoing humanitarian crisis, national security issues, along refugee problems, and together they recognize the importance of a coordinated strategy between all AU nations. Rwanda argues that its national security is being threatened by a group called the FDLR, which is a militant group in eastern Congo that is composed of those who participated in the 1994 genocide. Despite international allegations of Rwanda supporting militia groups such as the M23, it denies these claims and states that its actions are justified due to the need for self-defense and border protection [30]. Rwanda emphasizes that the root of this entire conflict lies within the DRC's negligence to disarm these militia groups and demands that any peace strategies address these concerns. Furthermore, Rwanda also calls for international support to house refugees, as the 130,000 refugees that have currently migrated to Rwanda are putting a strain on its resources. Likewise, Burundi faces various threats

Country Positions (con't)

Rwanda & Burundi (con't)
from Burundian rebel groups such as RED-Tabara, which operates across the DRC border [31]. Therefore, Burundi has taken its own steps to protect its national defenses but also remains supportive of peacekeeping approaches through the AU and MONUSCO to stabilize the region. Additionally, Burundi calls for international support to house refugees, as they too face the constraints of housing thousands of Congolese refugees. Thus, both Rwanda and Burundi propose the following: First, a redesign of the MONUSCO initiative that will focus more on border security, disarmament of armed groups, and the protection of both refugees and civilians. Second, they strongly advocate for intelligence sharing between nations and joint border patrols. Third, they strongly desire the need for humanitarian aid programs to house refugees and provide them with essentials, as they, along with many others, cannot keep up with the influx of migrants. Finally, they strongly believe that to truly end this conflict, both armed groups and government parties within the DRC should engage in some form of agreement, along with the restructuring of their government to please both parties.

Great Lakes and Affected Neighbors (Republic of Uganda, Republic of Congo, Angola, Tanzania, Zambia):
These countries have all been heavily affected by the ongoing terror within the DRC. As the conflicts have caused the migration of millions of people, countries neighboring the DRC, such as these, have been open to hundreds of thousands of refugees [12]. This influx of people has not only led to security issues but also the straining of resources, affecting both the refugees and the citizens. Additionally, the presence of various militia groups has led to security concerns, forcing these countries to heighten defenses, further forcing them to spend money and resources on this. Thus, Uganda, Congo, Angola, Tanzania, and Zambia request the African Union to do the following: First, they demand the expansion of the MONUSCO mission to disarm rebel groups and protect citizens, enabling them to use their resources for the surplus refugees from the conflict instead of defending their borders. Second, they call for international help with funding and infrastructure to house refugees and provide them with essentials such as food [2]. These groups were already struggling with keeping up with their population; however, with the introduction of refugees, they lack resources and

Country Positions (con't)

Great Lakes & Neighbors (con't): infrastructure. Third, they believe that the African Union, whether affected by this conflict or not, should effectively communicate within themselves and provide aid, along with places for refugees. With that, these countries wish to commit to cooperation and peaceful solutions that can uphold the sovereignty of all affected countries and people.

The Sahel and Vulnerable Regions (Sudan, South Sudan, Somalia, Niger, Mauritania, Mali, Burkina Faso, Chad, Central African Republic):
Even though these countries are relatively far from the DRC, they are still indirectly affected by the ongoing conflicts in the DRC. Similar to the other group, the surplus of refugees migrating away from the DRC and towards these countries has led to not only security issues but also pressure 13]. As these countries are fragile and more vulnerable than others within Africa, many armed groups have been exploiting these conditions and migrating toward these regions, worsening the security of these countries that have already been facing issues with terrorism and weak state control. Additionally, countries such as Sudan have already been facing their own refugee crisis, and with the addition of DRC refugees, it burdens the humanitarian systems. Therefore, this group is suggesting the following: First, they advocate for a coordinated response from all nations with the African Union for joint border patrols and refugee management. They demand the need to spread out refugees across multiple nations to handle the overwhelming number of migrations. Second, they strongly advocate for the need to collaboratively share information so that they can track the armed forces more easily. Finally, they demand the need for development within fragile states such as theirs. As armed groups use the vulnerability of undeveloped areas, it only leads to the creation of violence and serves as a base for terrorism. Developing these areas will not only restrict armed groups from hiding and operating within regions that are hidden, but also allow them to house the influx of refugees, removing the burden from regions.

Peacekeeping Powers and AU Leadership (Kenya, Egypt, South Africa, Algeria, Ethiopia, Morocco, Nigeria):
Although not severely affected by the conflicts, these countries are major leaders in peacekeeping within the AU. They emphasize regional stability and the protection of civilians, therefore

Country Positions (con't)

Leadership (con't):
playing a major role in this conflict. As the powerhouses in AU, they hold great importance in any peacekeeping strategy requiring militia or funding, or even diplomacy in general. As they have contributed to many UN peacekeeping operations, these countries will be the ones to handle diplomatic negotiations and truly unite the nations in the AU to combat this terror. These countries urge the following to effectively handle this conflict: First, there should be an immediate ceasefire with the DRC to prevent hostilities and protect civilians [13]. Second, they urge the DRC to mediate with the armed groups as the only way to truly stop this terror is by solving it at the root. Third, they ask neighboring nations to assist the AU and DRC in stabilizing the surrounding Great Lakes region in the East African Rift. Finally, they desire the push for humanitarian access to vulnerable regions and the support of refugees displaced by acts of terror [11].

Southern African Development Community (Zimbabwe, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Madagascar):
These countries have been actively engaged in the ongoing conflict within the DRC. Although not being regionally affected by the tensions, these groups worry about the implications of the conflict on regional stability, economic development, and humanitarian conditions. Therefore, these groups have already deployed their own initiatives in the past. For example, in December 2023, SADC established the Southern African Development Community Mission in the DRC (SAMIDRC) to support the Congolese government in combating militia groups such as M23 [32]. This mission was initiated with the support of multiple member states, including South Africa, Malawi, and Tanzania. Despite multiple efforts, the missions struggled with peacekeeping as they faced multiple casualties among peacekeepers [33]. Therefore, in March 2025, SAMIDRC decided to withdraw troops due to the ineffectiveness of the mission. However, this was not their only initiative in helping the DRC. SADC has also been involved in diplomatic efforts to resolve the conflict. In February 2025, leaders from eastern and southern Africa, which includes SADC nations, urged for an immediate ceasefire and negotiation between the DRC and M23 [34]. This summit emphasized these states' desire and need to end this conflict with dialogue between the two parties. As the SADC states recognize the grave

Country Positions (con't)

SADC (con't):
urgency of the issue within the DRC and its difficulty, they advocate for increased humanitarian assistance and communication between all AU-related nations. Furthermore, they have called for international support to rebuild crucial infrastructure such as the Goma airport, to ensure the evacuation of citizens and the delivery of humanitarian aid [34].

West African Economic Community (Ghana, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Senegal, Guinea, Côte d'Ivoire, Togo, Benin, Gambia, Burkina Faso):
Although ECOWAS nations do not share borders with the DRC, this group of nations has had a strong interest in continental stability and has even created mechanisms to prevent and respond to said conflicts. For instance, ECOWAS established the ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework (ECPF) to allow for early warning, mediation, and peace support across West Africa [35]. However, they believe that this system would also be applicable and effective against the tensions in the DRC. Furthermore, this group of nations has been regularly participating in the AU Peace and Security (PSC) session on the DRC, advocating for an immediate ceasefire and direct negotiation between the armed groups and the DRC. They advocate for expanded humanitarian initiatives and joint AU-REC actions to mitigate the tensions [36]. Additionally, with their own experience handling refugee influxes, they urge for funding and logistical support in collaboration with the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) and World Food Programme (WFP) to deliver food, shelter, and medical aid to displaced civilians in the DRC and neighboring countries. To sum up, ECOWAS emphasizes diplomacy, humanitarian aid, and regional cooperation to put an end to this conflict.

Other AU Nations:
Although these regions are not geographically close to the DRC, nor affected by the ongoing conflict, they still hold an interest in the regional stability within that region [14]. These countries understand the fact that the tensions within the DRC pose a risk to continental peace and the development goals of Africa. Many of these nations have undergone humanitarian conflicts themselves and advocate for a non-violent, diplomatic approach in solving this issue. Therefore, they support the AU and the UN initiatives that call for ceasefires between the two parties and a negotiated settlement in the DRC. Additionally, they strongly support the

Country Positions (con't)

Other AU Nations (con't):

idea of national sovereignty and oppose outside interventions. At the same time, they urge countries within the AU, along with international assistance, regarding the refugee crisis. As a multitude of displaced civilians migrate to the already heavily populated nations, it causes infrastructures and social facilities to be overwhelmed, along with food shortages. Therefore, they stress the need for investments in education, infrastructure, and economic development within these regions. These countries ultimately aim to ensure that the conflict within the DRC is not only managed but also solved in a way that fosters stability and growth.

Potential Solutions

1. Expanding peacekeeping strategies and missions already laid out by MONUSCO to effectively restrict the terror of armed groups.
2. Creating a joint program between nations to disperse refugees within overpopulated regions to nations that can host them.
3. Joint border patrols are to establish security within neighboring countries.
4. Facilitating a ceasefire treaty between nations and armed groups.
5. Establish reintegration programs for members of armed groups that will allow them to become citizens.
6. Additional humanitarian assistance through the deployment of more UN volunteers in the DRC
7. Sending additional humanitarian aid to eastern DRC to provide support with food shortages, medical aid, and refugee situations.

Questions to Consider

- What should African countries do to resolve the refugee and displaced peoples crisis caused by the ongoing war?
- How has the media impacted the DRC conflict?
- What measures can governing bodies execute to maintain the well-being of their citizens during an ongoing war?
- How should the safety of both peacekeepers and civilians be ensured?
- What peacekeeping strategies should be utilized in active conflict zones like the DRC to prevent both civilian harm and escalation of violence?
- Is economic aid effective in reducing poverty in countries with unstable/weak governments?
- How does the conflict affect your country's national interests?

Works Cited

[1] Rolley, Sonia. "Congo Government, M23 Rebel Delegations in Doha for Talks, Sources Say." Reuters, 10 Apr. 2025, www.reuters.com/world/africa/congo-government-m23-rebel-delegations-doha-talks-sources-say-2025-04-10/.

[2]UNHCR. "Democratic Republic of the Congo Situation." Global Focus, 2023, reporting.unhcr.org/operational/situations/democratic-republic-congo-situation.

[3]Landay, Jonathan, and Humeyra Pamuk. "Trump Administration Proposes Scrapping UN Peacekeeping Funding." Reuters, 15 Apr. 2025, www.reuters.com/world/trump-administration-proposes-scrapping-un-peacekeeping-funding-2025-04-15/.

[4] Clay, Daniel, and Rene Lemarchand. "Rwanda | History - Geography." Encyclopædia Britannica, 11 Aug. 2018, www.britannica.com/place/Rwanda.

[5]Encyclopedia Britannica. "Rwanda Genocide of 1994." Encyclopedia Britannica, 5 Aug. 2016, www.britannica.com/event/Rwanda-genocide-of-1994.

[6]McKenna, Amy. "Rwandan Patriotic Front." Encyclopedia Britannica, 28 Apr. 2023, www.britannica.com/topic/Rwandan-Patriotic-Front.

[7] "S/RES/872(1993) - E - S/RES/872(1993)." Undocs.org, 2019, undocs.org/S/RES/872(1993).

[8] RFI. "Rwanda Marks 30 Years since France's Contested Mission to Stem 1994 Genocide." RFI, 22 June 2024, www.rfi.fr/en/africa/20240622-rwanda-marks-30-years-since-operation-turquoise-france-contested-mission-to-stem-1994-genocide.

[9] “Eastern DRC Situation: Regional Update #10.” Global Focus, 2025, reporting.unhcr.org/eastern-drc-situation-regional-update-10. Accessed 17 Apr. 2025.
[10] Bashizi, Arlette, et al. “Rwandan-Backed Rebels Enter Congo’s Goma in Major Escalation.” Reuters, 27 Jan. 2025, www.reuters.com/world/africa/rebels-enter-centre-congos-goma-after-claiming-capture-city-2025-01-27/.
[11] “SADC Interventions in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.” ACCORD, 2016, www.accord.org.za/conflict-trends/sadc-interventions-democratic-republic-congo/.
[12] defenceWeb. “AU Adds Its Voice to Calls for DRC Ceasefire – DefenceWeb.” DefenceWeb, 19 Feb. 2025, www.defenceweb.co.za/african-news/au-adds-its-voice-to-calls-for-drc-ceasefire/. Accessed 17 Apr. 2025.
[13]Bariyo, Nicholas. “While War Rages, Congo’s Neighbors Smuggle out Its Gold and Mineral Wealth.” The Wall Street Journal, 7 Apr. 2025, www.wsj.com/world/africa/while-war-rages-congos-neighbors-smuggle-out-its-gold-and-mineral-wealth-8582b882. Accessed 16 Apr. 2025.
[14]Musila, Cyril . The DRC and Its Neighbourhood: The Political Economy of Peace. Oct. 2014, pp. 1–4, saiia.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Policy-Briefing-109.pdf. Accessed 16 Apr. 2025.
[15] Eltringham, Nigel. ““Invaders Who Have Stolen the Country”: The Hamitic Hypothesis, Race and the Rwandan Genocide.” Social Identities, vol. 12, no. 4, July 2006, pp. 425–446, francegenocidetutsi.org/InvadersWhoHaveStolenTheCountry.pdf,
[16]Montreal Holocaust Museum. “The Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda.” Montreal Holocaust Museum, museeholocauste.ca/en/resources-training/the-genocide-against-the-tutsi-in-rwanda/.
[17] “International Responsibility (HRW Report – Leave None to Tell the Story: Genocide in Rwanda, March 1999).” Www.hrw.org, www.hrw.org/legacy/reports/1999/rwanda/Geno1-3-05.htm.
[18]Chaggu, Brian. “The M23 Rebellion and Regional Interests: A Conflict beyond Borders – Great Lakes Crisis.” Great Lakes Crisis, 18 Feb. 2025, greatlakescrisis.org/the-m23-rebellion-and-regional-interests-a-conflict-beyond-borders/. Accessed 17 Apr. 2025.

[19]Sabiti, Djaffar, and Stanis Bujakera. “Congo Rebels Seize Eastern Border Town, Army Blames Rwanda.” Reuters, 13 June 2022, www.reuters.com/world/africa/congo-rebels-seize-key-eastern-border-town-local-activists-say-2022-06-13/.
[20]“The Democratic Republic of Congo: The World’s Largest Cobalt Producer | VUKA Group.” VUKA Group, 15 Aug. 2024, wearevuka.com/insights/critical-minerals/the-democratic-republic-of-congo-the-worlds-largest-cobalt-producer/.
[21]“DRC-Rwanda: Rubaya Coltan Mine at the Heart of M23 Financing – the Africa Report.com.” The Africa Report.com, 2025, www.theafricareport.com/375904/drc-rwanda-rubaya-coltan-mine-at-the-heart-of-m23-financing/.
[22]Equipe Publication. “Coltan: Rwandan Rebel Group Facilitates Smuggling from DR Congo, New UN Report Claims.” Bankable.africa, BANKABLE, 14 Jan. 2025, bankable.africa/en/mining/1401-686-coltan-rwandan-rebel-group-facilitates-smuggling-from-dr-congo-new-un-report-claims. Accessed 17 Apr. 2025.
[23]Rolley, Sonia, and Felix Njini. “M23 Rebels in Goma: Gains to Boost Illicit Mineral Trade through Rwanda, Analysts Say.” Reuters, 28 Jan. 2025, www.reuters.com/world/africa/congo-rebel-gains-boost-illicit-mineral-trade-through-rwanda-analysts-say-2025-01-28/.
[24]MSF UK. “Democratic Republic of Congo Conflict” https://msf.org.uk/issues/democratic-republic-congo-conflict#:~:text=The%20rapidly%20evolving%20conflict%20between,many%20casualties%20and%20violent%20injuries. Accessed 17 Apr. 2025
[25]United Nations Peacekeeping. “MONUSCO Fact sheet” https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/mission/monusco. Accessed 17 Apr. 2025
[26]Global Conflict Tracker. “Conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo” https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/violence-democratic-republic-congo. Updated 20 Mar. 2025
[27]“Congo Rebel Gains to Boost Illicit Mineral Trade through Rwanda, Analysts Say.” MINING.COM, 28 Jan. 2025, www.mining.com/web/congo-rebel-gains-to-boost-illicit-mineral-trade-through-rwanda-analysts-say/.
[28]BBC News, Ian Wafula. “The evidence that shows Rwanda is backing rebels in DR Congo” https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/ckgyzl1mlkvo. Accessed 17 Apr. 2025.

[30]Wafula, Ian. “DR Congo Fighting: The Evidence That Shows Rwanda Is Backing M23 Rebels.” BBC, 29 Jan. 2025, www.bbc.com/news/articles/ckgyzl1mlkvo.
[31]Martin, Guy. “Burundi-Rwanda Rivalry: RED-Tabara Rebel Attacks Add to Regional Tensions - DefenceWeb.” DefenceWeb, 25 Apr. 2024, www.defenceweb.co.za/african-news/burundi-rwanda-rivalry-red-tabara-rebel-attacks-add-to-regional-tensions/. Accessed 17 Apr. 2025.
[32]Reuters Staff. “Southern African Bloc Extends Troop Deployment in Congo by a Year.” Reuters, 20 Nov. 2024, www.reuters.com/world/africa/southern-african-bloc-extends-troop-deployment-congo-by-year-2024-11-20/.
[33]Kabumba, Justin. “Rebels Agree to a Ceasefire with African Coalition Troops Departing from Eastern Congo.” AP News, 28 Mar. 2025, apnews.com/article/sadr-withdrawal-congo-goma-1edf202741339e425a7f8a289cdeaaf4.
[34]MUHUMUZA, RODNEY. “Leaders from Eastern and Southern Africa Call for a Ceasefire and Negotiations in Congo.” AP News, 8 Feb. 2025, apnews.com/article/congo-m23-conflict-regional-summit-cd4afd79b7d88c8bfafdfaffaa0bd818.
[35]THE ECOWAS CONFLICT PREVENTION FRAMEWORK COMMUNAUTE ECONOMIQUE DES ETATS de L’AFRIQUE de L’OUEST COMUNIDADE ECONÔMICA DOS ESTADOS DA AFRICA OCIDENTAL.
[36]“PSC Summit on the Situation in Eastern DRC – Amani Africa.” Amaniafrica-Et.org, 2025, amaniafrica-et.org/psc-summit-on-the-situation-in-eastern-drc/.