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United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Report of the Secretary-General

I. Introduction

1. The present report, submitted pursuant to paragraph 50 of Security Council resolution [2808 \(2025\)](#), covers major developments in the Democratic Republic of the Congo since the previous report of 1 December 2025 ([S/2025/779](#)). It describes the progress and challenges in the implementation of the mandate of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO).

II. Political developments

2. Political developments during the reporting period were marked by continued diplomatic efforts amid a rapid deterioration of the security situation in South and North Kivu, the continued restriction of political and civic space and intensified calls for an inclusive national dialogue.

3. On 4 December 2025, in Washington, D.C., the President of the United States of America hosted the signing ceremony of the Washington Accords for Peace and Prosperity between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda, signed by the President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the President of Rwanda. The Accords comprise the Declaration of Principles of 25 April 2025, the Washington Peace Agreement of 27 June 2025 and the regional economic integration framework, initialled on 7 November 2025. The ceremony was attended by regional leaders, the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, the African Union mediator for the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, members of the African Union panel of co-facilitators and the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of Qatar.

4. On 8 December 2025, the President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo delivered his annual state of the nation address, in which he denounced ceasefire violations, reaffirmed his Government's commitment to a diplomatic settlement of the conflict and underscored that the processes led by the Government of Qatar (Doha process) and the Government of the United States of America (Washington, D.C. process) were intended to safeguard national sovereignty, while reiterating that no amnesty would be granted for war crimes. On 10 December 2025, the Alliance Fleuve Congo/Mouvement du 23 mars (AFC/M23) captured Uvira, a city strategic to the



Democratic Republic of the Congo and neighbouring Burundi. Following international pressure, AFC/M23 subsequently announced its withdrawal from Uvira on 17 January while calling for the deployment of a neutral international force to allow for a credible resumption of political efforts.

5. Against this backdrop, discussions on an inclusive national dialogue resurfaced in bilateral meetings in December 2025 and January 2026 between the President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the President of Angola and outgoing Chair of the African Union. On 31 January, in his annual address to the diplomatic corps, the President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo stated that any national dialogue would be organized by Congolese institutions and held in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

6. Meanwhile, civil society and opposition figures continued to express concern that restrictions on political and civic space – including arbitrary arrests, detentions and bans of political rallies – were undermining prospects for an inclusive dialogue. On 18 January, following the arrests in December 2025 and January 2026, respectively, of the Permanent Secretary and the Vice-President of the *Parti du peuple pour la reconstruction et la démocratie* – the party of the former President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Joseph Kabila – the party called for the unconditional release of political prisoners and denounced what it described as the “criminalization of the opposition”. Several opposition leaders continued to allege that the Government had intended to delay the general elections scheduled for December 2028.

7. On 9 February, in Luanda – following engagements with the Congolese authorities, leaders of the Catholic and Protestant Churches and opposition leaders – the President of Angola received the President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the African Union mediator and a member of the African Union panel of co-facilitators, the former President of Nigeria, Olusegun Obasanjo. They reaffirmed the importance of an unconditional ceasefire and jointly mandated Angola to conduct consultations with all Congolese parties concerned to pave the way for an inclusive national dialogue. On 11 February, Angola called for a ceasefire between the parties starting on 18 February at noon, a call officially endorsed by the President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. AFC/M23, however, stated that it had not been adequately consulted but underscored its commitment to the ceasefire mechanism agreed under the Doha process.

8. As part of the Doha process, the Ceasefire Oversight and Verification Mechanism held six virtual meetings; AFC/M23 was absent from several. The parties continued to mutually accuse each other of ceasefire violations and attacks against civilians, including the use of sophisticated aerial assets. Although discussions on six of the eight protocols of the Doha Framework have yet to resume, the Prime Minister of the Democratic Republic of the Congo indicated that intergovernmental preparations had begun through sectoral-led working groups.

9. On 10 January, in Livingstone, Zambia, the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region held an extraordinary meeting of the Committee of Ministers of Defence, at which participants adopted a draft memorandum of understanding to be signed between the International Conference, the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and AFC/M23 and endorsed the appointments of the new Commander and Deputy Commander of the Expanded Joint Verification Mechanism. By consensus, it reaffirmed MONUSCO as a full participant in the Mechanism, as well as in the Expanded Joint Verification Mechanism Plus, in addition to its supporting role as an additional participant in the Ceasefire Oversight and Verification Mechanism. On 2 February, at the seventh session of the Ceasefire Oversight and Verification Mechanism, convened in Doha, the parties, as well as the African Union

Commission, the International Conference and MONUSCO, signed the terms of reference for the Expanded Joint Verification Mechanism Plus and agreed that a team would be deployed to Uvira, South Kivu, to monitor and assess the situation on the ground.

10. On 17 January, in Lomé, the African Union mediator chaired a high-level meeting on the coherence and consolidation of the peace process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Great Lakes region. The meeting brought together the African Union panel of co-facilitators, Ministers for Foreign Affairs and representatives of Angola, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, France, Qatar, Rwanda, Togo, Uganda, the United States, the African Union Commission, the East African Community, the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, the International Contact Group for the Great Lakes Region, the Southern African Development Community and the United Nations. The meeting served to reaffirm the centrality of African-led efforts and resulted in the adoption of an African Union-led mediation framework and operational work plan.

11. On 29 January, in Kinshasa, the President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo met with the African Union panel of co-facilitators, a representative of the African Union mediator and representatives of the African Union Commission to discuss ongoing diplomatic initiatives and humanitarian concerns. The President reiterated his commitment to achieving a durable and verifiable peace in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, in line with regional and international commitments. The African Union mediator and the panel of co-facilitators subsequently held consultations with government counterparts in Rwanda, Burundi and Uganda on 30 January, 31 January and 4 February, respectively.

III. Protection of civilians

12. During the reporting period, civilian fatalities increased in the Mission's area of operations. MONUSCO recorded 532 protection incidents across North Kivu and Ituri Provinces, resulting in the deaths of 468 civilians (75 women and 62 children) and 352 civilians injured, including 40 women and 94 children.

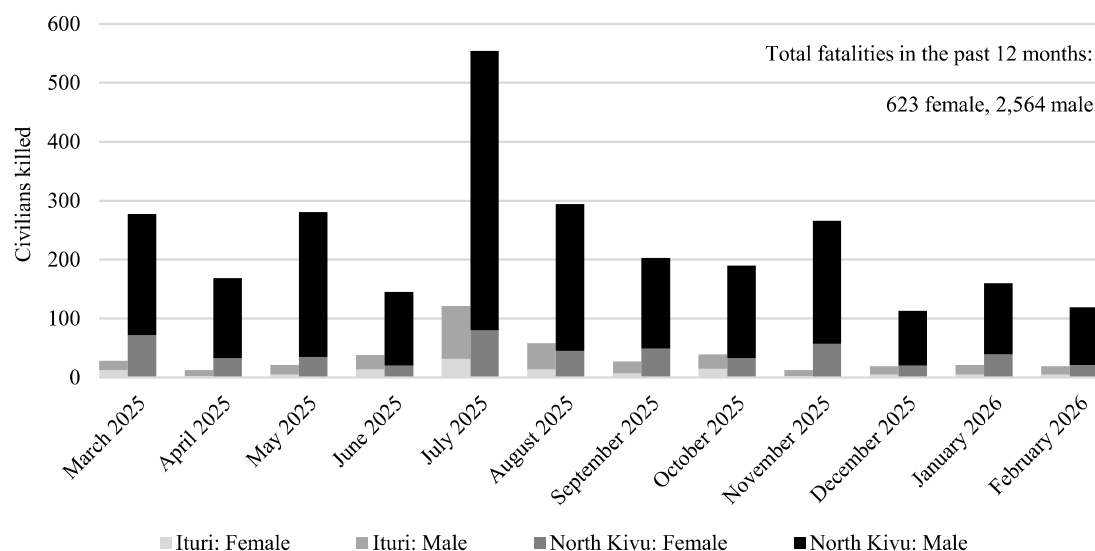
13. The renewed offensive by AFC/M23 in South Kivu, supported by the Rwanda Defence Force and culminating in the capture of Uvira, triggered significant displacement, including into neighbouring Burundi. The group's subsequent withdrawal from Uvira exposed parts of the population to retaliatory violence and other human rights abuses, despite a deployment by the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to re-establish State authority. AFC/M23 withdrew to Kabunambo in the Ruzizi Plain after 17 January, while fighting continued into the hills overlooking Uvira city. The Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, supported by Wazalendo, and the Burundi National Defence Force continued operations to deter AFC/M23 from advancing towards the capital of Fizi territory, Baraka, including through heavy and sustained drone strikes around Minembwe and Mikenge.

14. On 3 February, AFC/M23 claimed responsibility for the 1 January and 1 February suicide drone swarm attacks on Bangoka International Airport in Kisangani, Tshopo Province, marking the first AFC/M23-claimed attacks outside of North and South Kivu. Additional attempted suicide drone attacks on the airport were neutralized on 5 February and 1 March. On 11 March, an unclaimed drone attack on the Himbi neighbourhood of Goma killed a staff member of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and two other individuals. Both AFC/M23 – supported by the Rwanda Defence Force – and the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of

the Congo intensified drone strikes after 1 January, some of which resulting in civilian casualties, yet most strikes remained unclaimed by either side.

Figure I

Reported killings of civilians in armed group-related incidents in Ituri and North Kivu, March 2025–February 2026, disaggregated by sex



Source: MONUSCO/Joint Operations Centre/Situational Awareness Geospatial Enterprise.

Note: Victim counts are likely underreported due to restrictions on access in North Kivu.

15. In North Kivu, AFC/M23 continued to consolidate its parallel administration, conducting operations with support from the Rwanda Defence Force against the Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda (FDLR) and other armed groups in Rutshuru territory. AFC/M23 continued confrontations with the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and allied forces, expanding its presence in Masisi territory while maintaining pressure on Walikale territory. The Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo conducted multiple airstrikes on AFC/M23 positions and regular combat operations with Wazalendo support. In January, the FDLR and Nyatura groups intensified asymmetric attacks against the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, resulting in additional civilian casualties and population displacement. Wazalendo and Mai Mai also remained active in urban centres, such as Butembo and Sake, contributing to a prevailing sense of insecurity. On 23 February, in the town of Rubaya, a drone operated by the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo hit a M23/AFC leadership building and killed the group's military spokesperson.

16. Access restrictions in AFC/M23-controlled areas of North Kivu continued to constrain MONUSCO efforts to protect civilians. MONUSCO continued to engage with the Government and AFC/M23 to secure safe transfers for the remaining 36 individuals under MONUSCO protection in its bases in Goma and requested facilitation by the International Committee of the Red Cross.

17. From late January, near-total telecommunication blackouts in Rutshuru and Masisi and partial outages in Walikale and Lubero hindered incident monitoring and reporting and negatively affected civilian livelihoods reliant on mobile payment services, compounding the absence of a functioning banking system.

18. In Ituri, violence by the Convention pour la révolution populaire (CRP) intensified during the reporting period, with Bule and Fataki in Djugu territory remaining the epicentres of clashes with the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The fighting resulted in 19 civilian deaths and significant displacement, particularly among Hema communities, as well as one injured peacekeeper and temporary disruptions of activities at Bayoo. Although the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo regained control of Bule on 16 January, the continued presence of CRP elements across several localities, including within internally displaced persons sites, continued to pose serious protection risks.

19. From 17 January, MONUSCO provided shelter at its Fataki base to approximately 3,000 civilians, including 1,300 men, 1,000 women and 700 children, who had fled from the Djaiba internally displaced persons site and surrounding areas. Persistent allegations of exactions by the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo against Hema civilians in the Fataki and Bule areas were reported by affected internally displaced persons, who cited the incidents as a significant deterrent to returning to their homes or internally displaced persons sites. Between 5 December 2025 and 7 February 2026, MONUSCO also sheltered 159 persons at Bayoo, including 32 women, 68 children, 13 local security forces and 21 personnel of United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, providing medical assistance to 57 persons, including 15 women and 14 children, and facilitating the evacuation of 90 civilians and local security forces. The Mission facilitated community engagement efforts to reduce the likelihood of retaliatory violence, organized workshops in collaboration with local authorities and humanitarian partners to strengthen the capacity of internally displaced persons committees on protection mechanisms to uphold the humanitarian character of displacement sites, and supported ongoing initiatives under the Aru II dialogue.

20. While the number of attacks by the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) against civilians in Ituri and North Kivu decreased only marginally compared with the previous reporting period, the lethality of those attacks declined significantly, with civilian killings decreasing by 51 per cent. In Ituri, incidents were concentrated in Irumu and Mambasa territories, including the killings of at least 22 civilians on 25 January in Apakolu, Irumu. In North Kivu, ADF activity west of Lubero territory, including on 1 January in Manguredjipa, killed at least 14 civilians and two soldiers of the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo across three coordinated attacks.

21. A continued decrease in violence by the Coopérative pour le développement du Congo (CODECO) was observed in Ituri, attributed both to ongoing negotiations on its possible integration into the Réserve armée de la défense (RAD) and to local and provincial peace initiatives related to the Aru II dialogue. Other armed groups, including a faction of the Front patriotique et intégrationniste du Congo, also expressed interest in joining RAD. In parallel, a total of 363 Zaïre elements entered the Disarmament, Demobilization, Community Recovery and Stabilization Programme, while others joined CRP.

22. MONUSCO forces contributed to the creation of a protective environment in Djugu and Irumu territories, including through patrols around schools and through the deployment of 204 patrols under Operation Secure Harvest IV, protecting approximately 18,000 people and securing the harvest and transport of agricultural produce. Through Operations Nyundo 2 and Safisha, MONUSCO increased joint patrols with the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and intensified proactive, intelligence-driven operations, targeting areas commonly attacked by ADF in Ituri and the Grand Nord of North Kivu. Enhanced coordination

with the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and deconfliction mechanisms with the Uganda Peoples' Defence Forces also contributed to improving the Mission's freedom of movement in that area.

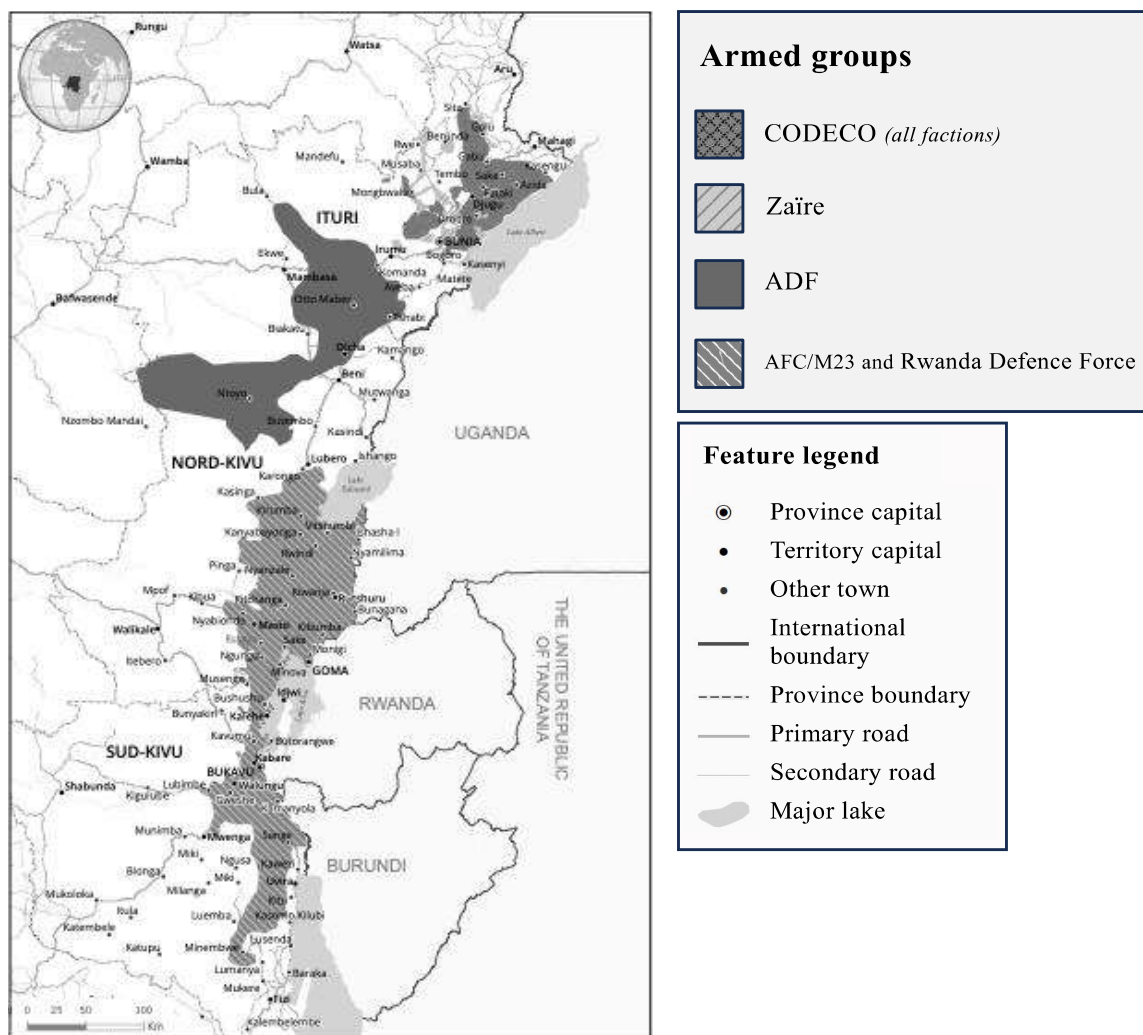
23. MONUSCO continued its political and community engagement, including in areas under AFC/M23 control. In December 2025, despite a restrictive environment for civil society organizations in areas under AFC/M23 control, MONUSCO supported the training of 121 local peace actors, including 58 women, in Goma and Nyiragongo in mediation, conflict analysis and dialogue facilitation and reinforced coordination networks among peace actors.

24. MONUSCO also facilitated engagement between civil society actors, Congolese national security forces and the Uganda Peoples' Defence Forces in the Grand Nord of North Kivu, resulting in the revitalization of community alert networks and improved early warning and response. The Mission also expanded its focal point network in remote areas and strengthened coordination with the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Congolese National Police to sustain response capacity in areas beyond the Mission's reach.

25. Regular joint patrols by MONUSCO police and the Congolese National Police contributed to maintaining a protective presence. These were complemented by specialized training on sexual and gender-based violence, conflict-related sexual violence and child protection for 39 judicial police officers and a 10-day advanced course for 20 investigators and inspectors in Kinshasa on investigations and the fight against impunity. To help strengthen State presence and improve police service delivery in strategic areas, the Mission built and equipped three police stations in Ituri Province, in Message de Graal, Nyakasanza and Marabo, with office and computer materials and solar installations. It also provided the Congolese Scientific Police and several National Police units with specialized equipment, including forensic kits and information technology materials, to strengthen their investigative and forensic capacities.

26. From 1 December 2025, the Mine Action Service conducted 340 explosive ordnance disposal tasks, directly benefiting 66,347 individuals in North Kivu and Ituri Provinces. A total of 69,226 square metres of land were cleared and released, restoring safe access to affected communities. In response to contamination affecting education facilities, the Mine Action Service and partners delivered explosive ordnance risk education at more than 20 schools in Goma, gave sensitization training to parents and teachers and advocated for the clearance of school premises prior to the resumption of classes.

Figure II
Map of estimated armed group presence, 1 March 2026



The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

Base map source: MONUSCO/Field Technology Section.

Note: Territorial control estimates by MONUSCO.

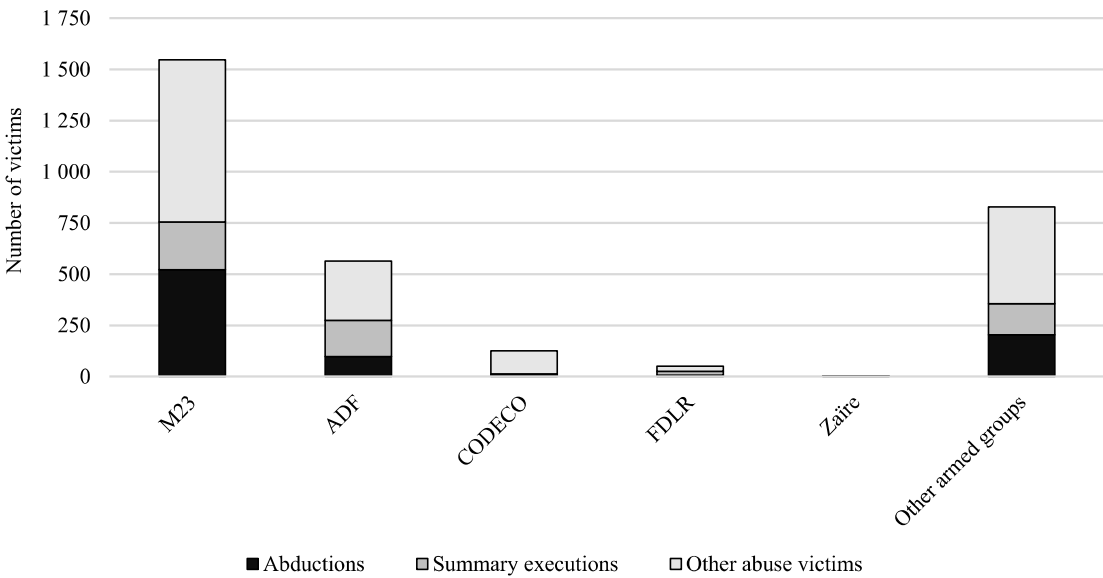
IV. Human rights situation

A. Human rights and international humanitarian law

27. The human rights situation in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo remained marked by violations and abuses in areas under AFC/M23 control in North and South Kivu, as well as by violence perpetrated by ADF, CODECO, CRP and Wazalendo elements in Ituri. The United Nations Joint Human Rights Office in the Democratic Republic of the Congo documented 1,555 human rights violations and abuses throughout the country, with 893 in North Kivu, 345 in South Kivu and 161 in Ituri, representing a 20 per cent decrease in abuses and violations compared with the previous reporting period. AFC/M23 continued to be the main perpetrator, with 503

abuses against 1,175 men, 237 women, 235 children and 1 person of unknown age and gender, followed by Wazalendo, with 221 abuses against 433 men, 80 women, 49 children and 11 persons of unidentified gender.

Figure III
Human rights abuses by alleged armed groups confirmed by MONUSCO across all provinces during the reporting period



Source: MONUSCO/Joint Human Rights Office.

Note: Victim counts are likely underreported due to restrictions on access in North Kivu.

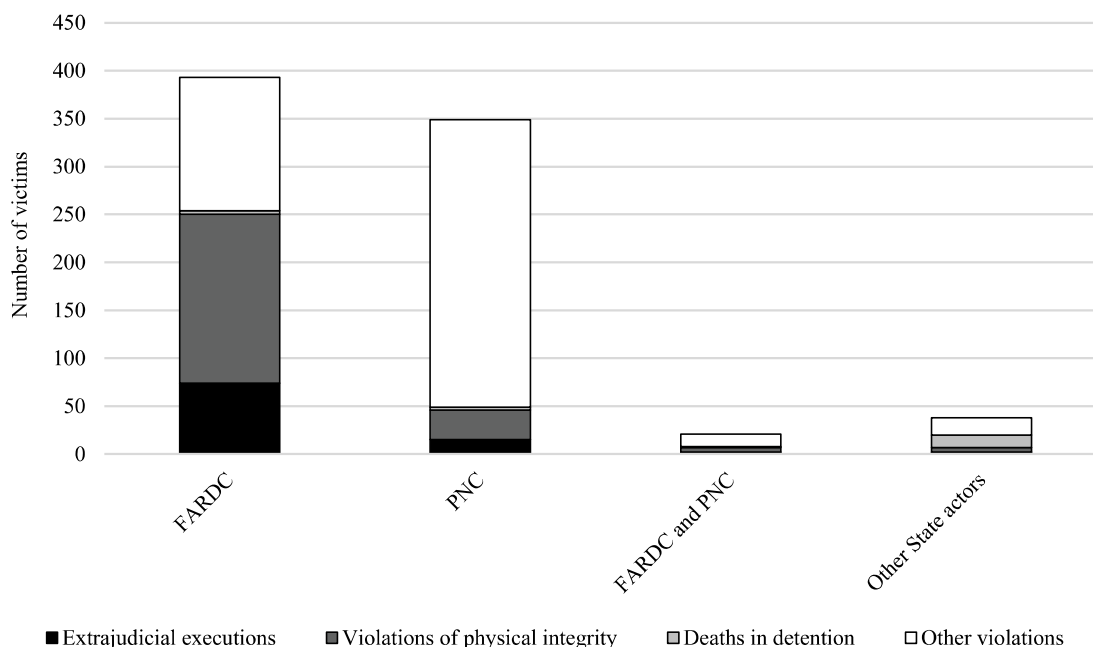
Abbreviations: ADF, Allied Democratic Forces; CODECO, Coopérative pour le développement du Congo; FDLR, Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda; M23, Mouvement du 23 mars.

28. Following a temporary lull in ADF activity in December, violence against civilians resurged in early January in Lubero territory, with ADF responsible for 145 abuses, including 49 summary executions of 133 men, 43 women and 7 children across Ituri and North Kivu Provinces. In Ituri, CODECO were responsible for 19 abuses against 112 women, 30 men and 16 children, most of whom were victims of forced labour. Summary executions remained the most documented violation by armed groups and State actors combined, with 354 cases affecting 576 men, 127 women and 76 children nationwide.

29. From late January, efforts by the Joint Human Rights Office to address underreporting by strengthening remote monitoring capacities in AFC/M23-controlled areas were significantly impeded by telecommunication network disruptions in M23-controlled areas of North and South Kivu, limiting the ability of local sources and networks to verify and transmit reliable information.

Figure IV

Human rights violations by alleged State forces confirmed by MONUSCO across all provinces during the reporting period



Source: MONUSCO/Joint Human Rights Office.

Abbreviations: FARDC, Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo; PNC, Congolese National Police.

30. State actors committed 425 documented violations affecting 700 men, 140 women and 109 children, the majority of which occurred in North Kivu (132), South Kivu (55) and Ituri (52). The Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo were responsible for the largest number of violations among State agents, with 207 cases, followed by the Congolese National Police, with 89 cases. Violations of the right to liberty and security constituted the largest category of cases (84), followed by sexual violence (66). Compared with previous reporting period, human rights violations attributed to the Congolese National Police continued to decrease, while violations by the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo remained at concerning levels, with 24 per cent constituting serious violations, including extrajudicial killings and sexual violence.

31. Restrictions on civic space increased sharply compared with the previous reporting period, with 61 per cent of related violations attributed to State actors, including arbitrary arrests and unlawful detention of opposition members and political activists attributed to the Conseil national de cybersécurité.

B. Child protection

32. During the reporting period, MONUSCO verified 212 grave violations affecting 185 children, including 44 girls and 141 boys, with 179 cases in North Kivu and 33 in Ituri. MONUSCO, through engagement with the Congolese authorities, secured the release of 24 children who had been detained for their alleged association with non-State armed groups.

33. In total, 80 per cent of the grave violations verified during the reporting period occurred in the Petit Nord area of North Kivu Province. In Goma, the Mission documented the release of 275 children from unlawful detention by AFC/M23. Most had been detained due to their alleged association with Wazalendo groups, their absence of identification documents or minor offences. All of the children were referred to medical and psychosocial partners for appropriate care and family reunification.

C. Gender- and conflict-related sexual violence

34. The Joint Human Rights Office documented 57 cases of conflict-related sexual violence affecting 111 victims, including 68 women, 42 girls and 1 man. Most cases were recorded in North Kivu (68), South Kivu (23) and Ituri (20). Conflict-related sexual violence remained highly underreported due to fear of stigma and reprisals and access constraints among victims, including in areas under AFC/M23 control, hampering the verification of cases. Armed groups were responsible for 25 cases, including 19 attributed to AFC/M23, 3 attributed to ADF and 3 attributed to Mai-Mai. Among State actors, the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo were responsible for 22 cases.

35. On 19 February 2026, in Kinshasa, the Joint Human Rights Office facilitated the official presentation of the five-year action plan of the Congolese National Police and supported the dissemination campaign of the one-year road map of the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to combat conflict-related sexual violence.

36. To strengthen capacities and awareness on gender and conflict-related sexual violence, the Mission delivered information sessions, a fair and an exhibition for women's organizations from 2 to 5 December 2025 in Kinshasa in addition to training for the Congolese National Police on international norms, legislation, investigation and forensics.

V. Humanitarian challenges and response

37. The humanitarian crisis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo remained among the most acute worldwide. As at 31 January 2026, the country had recorded 6.5 million internally displaced persons, including 1.3 million in North Kivu, 1.5 million in South Kivu and 1.3 million in Ituri, with over 361,000 newly displaced since 1 December 2025. Renewed fighting near internally displaced persons sites in Fataki and Bule, Djugu territory, forced more than 140,000 people to flee, and resulted in significant access constraints for humanitarians. In South Kivu, the expansion of AFC/M23 hostilities triggered large-scale population movements, including the arrival of approximately 100,000 Congolese refugees in Burundi and the United Republic of Tanzania. Up to 4.2 million returnees had been recorded across the country, of whom 63,000 had returned to their areas of origin since 1 December 2025, mainly in South Kivu and Tanganyika.

38. Conflict in the east continued to severely restrict humanitarian access, notably in areas under armed group control, requiring advance authorization and additional movement requirements, causing increased delays and operational costs. The sharp decline in humanitarian funding in 2025 further constrained the overall response to the crisis. The year also saw a historic high in security incidents affecting humanitarian workers, with 659 incidents reported, resulting in 13 humanitarian workers killed, 40 injured and 40 kidnapped. From 1 December, 142 incidents

affecting humanitarian actors had been reported in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

39. Food insecurity remained critical, with an estimated 26.6 million people facing crisis or worse levels (Integrated Food Security Phase Classification phase 3 and above). As at 28 January, 79,800 suspected cases of cholera and 2,225 cholera-related deaths had been reported nationwide, marking the worst outbreak in 25 years. Of those, 9,191 new cases and 196 deaths had been recorded since 1 December 2025, mainly affecting Kinshasa, South Kivu, Tanganyika and Haut-Katanga, amid mounting challenges to emergency healthcare access

40. The 2026 Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan was launched on 28 January. Costed at \$1.45 billion, the Plan aims to provide life-saving assistance and protection to 7.3 million of the 14.9 million people projected to require humanitarian assistance. At the time of writing, the 2026 Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan had received \$360 million in funding, representing only 25 per cent of the requirement.

VI. Support to peace processes

A. Support to peace efforts

41. During the reporting period, MONUSCO continued to employ its good offices and technical expertise in support of peace initiatives at the local, national, regional and international levels.

42. MONUSCO continued political engagements to promote political inclusion and mitigate risks related to hate speech, incitement and disinformation, including advocacy on the 2024 bill against tribalism, racism and xenophobia, the strengthening of regulatory bodies, including the Conseil supérieur de l'audiovisuel et de la communication and the Commission nationale des droits de l'homme, and implementation of the Digital Code and the 2023 charter for online media against hate speech.

43. On 18 and 19 December, in Kinshasa, MONUSCO, together with the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), supported a workshop organized by the Synergy of Women for Peace and Security that resulted in an agreement for the establishment of a gender observatory for the Washington, D.C. and Doha processes. From 20 to 22 December 2025, MONUSCO also supported a dialogue to review progress on the youth, peace and security agenda and to formulate recommendations to enhance youth participation in peace efforts.

44. At the regional level, MONUSCO continued engagements with the African Union mediator and panel of co-facilitators. On 1 December, the Mission facilitated a virtual consultation between two co-facilitators – the former President of Ethiopia, Sahle-Work Zewde, and the former President of the Central African Republic, Catherine Samba-Panza – as well as stakeholders from the eastern provinces, including women's and youth organizations and humanitarian actors, enabling participants to raise concerns regarding their exclusion from official delegations to the Doha and Washington, D.C. processes.

45. At the provincial and local levels, MONUSCO advocated in February for the official recognition by provincial authorities of the Réseau interconfessionnel pour la paix en Ituri, further to providing operational, technical and political support to the Réseau's conflict-resolution efforts in Djugu and Irumu territories. The Mission supported the Ituri permanent dialogue mechanism through the recruitment of 12 members of its permanent secretariat and provided financial and technical support to

the provincial directorate of the Fonds national de promotion et de service social for policy analysis and best practice advocacy in mining sector governance in Ituri.

B. Support for the implementation of a permanent ceasefire

46. Regarding the Doha process, MONUSCO continued actively to support efforts to achieve a permanent ceasefire, including through the operationalization of the Ceasefire Oversight and Verification Mechanism. The Mission participated in consultations with the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, regional partners and international interlocutors, including the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, the African Union, Qatar and the United States, to clarify the scope, modalities and sequencing of the Mission's participation in and support to the Mechanism and its operational branch, the Expanded Joint Verification Mechanism Plus.

47. From 23 to 27 February, MONUSCO and the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region jointly deployed an exploratory mission to Uvira to assess the conditions for the deployment of the Expanded Joint Verification Mechanism Plus. The Mission engaged in dialogue with local authorities, security actors and civil society representatives, including women and young people, to evaluate conditions for a locally anchored, credible and sustainable engagement. Political will and popular support for the Expanded Joint Verification Mechanism Plus was strong, despite polarized intercommunity relations and the presence of local and foreign armed groups.

48. From 8 to 11 February, the Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations travelled to the Democratic Republic of the Congo to engage the Congolese national authorities and other key stakeholders on the implementation of Security Council resolution [2808 \(2025\)](#), with an emphasis on the Mission's support for the implementation of a ceasefire in North and South Kivu.

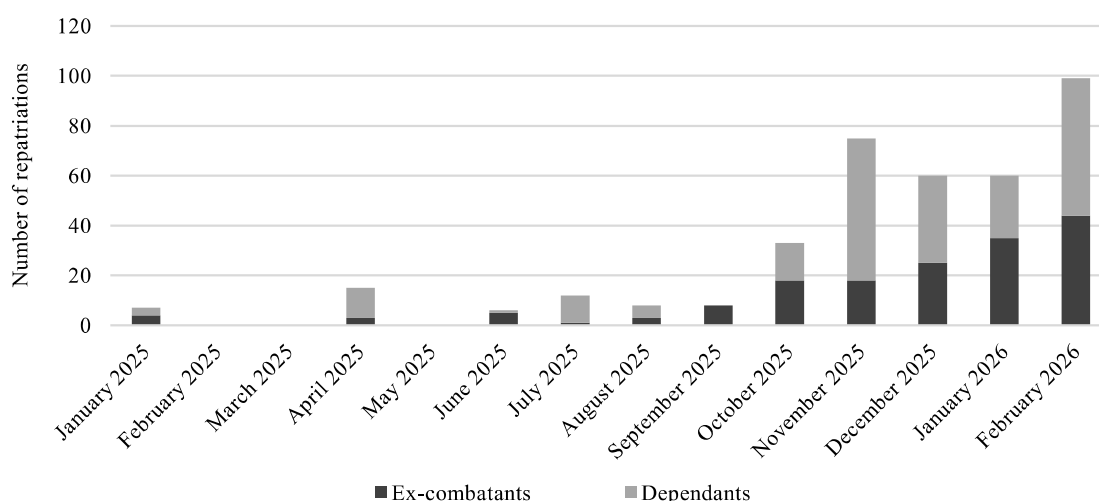
49. On 12 February, the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Protection and Operations and acting head of MONUSCO, Vivian van de Perre, landed at Goma International Airport, which had been closed since January 2025. During the visit, Ms. Van de Perre met with members of the Expanded Joint Verification Mechanism and representatives of the Joint Intelligence Fusion Centre of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region and of AFC/M23 as part of ongoing preparations for the implementation of the ceasefire monitoring mechanism.

VII. Support for the stabilization and strengthening of State institutions, key governance and security sector reforms

A. Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration

50. During the reporting period, MONUSCO, in close collaboration with the Congolese authorities and the Rwanda Demobilization and Reintegration Commission, facilitated the repatriation from Goma to Rwanda of 101 ex-combatants affiliated with FDLR and other foreign armed groups, along with 115 dependants. This upward trend reflects intensified community sensitization, strengthened context analysis and active engagement with stakeholders.

Figure V
Rwandan FDLR repatriations by type since January 2025



Source: MONUSCO/Disarmament, Demobilization, Reintegration and Stabilization.

51. In December 2025, the Mission provided technical support to the Disarmament, Demobilization, Community Recovery and Stabilization Programme for the identification, verification and orientation of ex-combatants in Beni and Lubero territories, North Kivu. As a result, 269 individuals received demobilization cards, including 156 from Lubero territory and 113 from Beni territory, enabling their enrolment in community reintegration projects implemented by the International Organization for Migration and Mercy Corps.

52. The Mission continued to engage national and local stakeholders to support the effective implementation of the national Disarmament, Demobilization, Community Recovery and Stabilization Programme, with a focus on addressing the root causes of armed violence. In January and February, MONUSCO provided psychosocial support and vocational training to 272 ex-combatants and 509 community members across Ituri and North Kivu, including 255 at-risk youth, to strengthen social cohesion and reduce the risk of recidivism.

53. On 3 February, MONUSCO, in cooperation with the United Nations country team, launched a project to support the return of internally displaced persons and the stabilization of conflict-affected areas in Ituri. The initiative aimed to create conditions for voluntary returns through an integrated approach addressing the key drivers of instability in Ituri, while enhancing transition preparedness through strengthened collaboration between MONUSCO; United Nations agencies, funds and programmes; and local authorities.

B. Security sector reform and support for the justice system and the fight against impunity

54. MONUSCO continued to support a nationally owned and inclusive security sector reform process, including through a seminar convening the National Commission on Security Sector Reform under the Office of the National Security Adviser. Discussions focused on collaborative leadership, improved reform coordination and the participation of women in security governance.

55. To advance the integration of gender perspectives into security governance, MONUSCO continued its support to the women's advisory group on security sector reform, including through dialogue platforms, periodic consultations and the annual conference on women in security sector reform. The Mission also supported the professional development of women within the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Congolese National Police through a three-month computer literacy programme, launched on 10 February, benefiting 120 women, complemented by sessions on result-based management.

56. During the reporting period, MONUSCO supported a mobile court in Aru, resulting in the conviction of 11 civilians for conflict-related sexual violence. Two investigative missions into international crimes were conducted in Ituri in December 2025 and March 2026. Electronic case management systems were deployed in Beni, Bunia and Kinshasa, improving transparency and efficiency of case tracking. The Mission further supported judicial oversight through one court inspection in Aru by the justice inspectorate.

57. MONUSCO continued to provide technical and strategic assistance to the Ministry of Justice, the central prisons administration and provincial authorities, to promote safe, secure and humane detention conditions. It provided equipment to strengthen surveillance systems in four priority prisons, commenced construction of a prisoner ward at Beni General Hospital and trained 136 personnel (including 46 women) on the prevention of violent extremism and radicalization, crowd management and video surveillance system operation.

58. MONUSCO supported preparations for the first meeting of the steering committee of the joint justice reform support programme for the period 2025–2029, to validate the programme's annual workplan. The programme will be jointly implemented by the Government, MONUSCO and six United Nations agencies, funds and programmes to strengthen the criminal justice system and support the Mission's transition and the sustainable handover of tasks to national authorities.

VIII. Gradual, responsible and sustainable withdrawal

59. MONUSCO continued to engage with the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the United Nations country team to ensure preparations for a gradual and responsible transition. Discussions are under way to pilot transition-specific protection of civilians-related initiatives in Ituri, focused on strengthening the capacity of provincial institutions in coordination with the United Nations country team.

60. The Mission continued to hold regular meetings of the joint technical secretariat established by the United Nations and the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, including transition planning as a strategic priority. Discussions focused on the identification of joint priorities and ways to mitigate the impact of measures taken by the Mission to manage ongoing financial constraints.

IX. Mission effectiveness

A. Mission performance

61. MONUSCO continued to face operational challenges in AFC/M23-controlled areas of North Kivu, primarily due to access and movement restrictions. On 17 December, all fuel trucks that had been blocked from entering Goma were released and water and electricity were restored to MONUSCO facilities. Restrictions on the

rotation and repatriation of MONUSCO contingents were also eased, enabling the Mission to successfully complete all planned repatriations and rotations in the central sector, which falls within AFC/M23-controlled areas of North Kivu. Banking and airport operations in Goma remained suspended, affecting MONUSCO personnel and local communities.

62. Implementation of contingency measures addressing the liquidity crisis was largely completed during the reporting period. In total, 1,550 military contingent personnel, 125 military experts, 180 formed police unit personnel and 125 individual police officers were repatriated, along with their contingent-owned equipment. In addition, 694 civilian posts were affected as part of the overall downsizing measures. These reductions – representing a 23.4 per cent decrease in uniformed personnel, a 29 per cent decrease in civilian staffing and a 27 per cent decrease in operational funding – had operational impacts across protection, mobility, intelligence and coordination functions. Reduced troop and police strength, base closures and movement constraints narrowed geographic reach, diminished deterrence and affected sustained presence in high-threat areas. Reductions in intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities (including a geo-location threat assessment unit), as well as early warning, medical support and human rights monitoring capabilities, increased operational risks and limited the Mission's ability to deliver on the full scope of its mandate.

Military component

63. MONUSCO deployed 7,879 troops (598 women) and 299 United Nations military experts on mission (67 women) against an authorized strength of 11,500 troops and 600 military experts. Targeted adjustments were made to the Mission's force posture in North Kivu and Ituri to consolidate limited resources and preserve the Mission's capacity to protect civilians and secure key internally displaced persons sites following the implementation of the contingency plans. On 4 December, the temporary operating base at Amee in Ituri was handed over to the Government. On 12 December 2025 and 20 February 2026, two bases in the vicinity of Goma were also closed. MONUSCO maintained strategic positions around Goma, Kiwanja and Kitchanga to facilitate the voluntary disarmament, demobilization and repatriation of FDLR elements.

64. In line with its Action for Peacekeeping Plus commitments, MONUSCO conducted evaluations of eight military units, with tailored performance improvement plans developed for each to address identified gaps and strengthen operational effectiveness.

Police component

65. As at 20 January, the MONUSCO police component had deployed 840 personnel from 32 contributing countries, comprising 688 formed police personnel (110 women) from four formed police units deployed in Beni, Bunia, Goma and Kinshasa and 152 individual police personnel (45 women), as well as 5 professional staff (2 women). The performance rating of individual police officers increased to 73 per cent, a 2 per cent improvement compared with the previous reporting period. The performance of formed police units was deemed "satisfactory", reflecting the positive impact of targeted capacity-building measures, including continuous training in the protection of civilians, information technology, performance evaluation, leadership and management, as well as sustained efforts to enhance operational effectiveness under constrained conditions.

Civilian component

66. As at 31 January 2026, 1,555 civilian personnel (25.9 per cent women), including 200 United Nations Volunteers (51 per cent women) and 37 government-provided personnel (35.1 per cent women), were serving with MONUSCO. With the implementation of the contingency plan, the civilian workforce underwent significant downsizing, affecting encumbered and vacant positions across contract types, including 36 staff members on temporary appointments, 342 staff members on fixed-term or continuous contracts and 316 vacant posts. The overall geographical composition of the Mission's workforce, as well as the gender balance, have been negatively affected following the implementation of the contingency plan, with women representing 23 per cent of staff on 1 December 2025, compared with 22 per cent on 1 February 2026. The P-3 grade has been particularly affected, with a decrease from 36 per cent women to 29 per cent.

B. Strategic communications

67. During the reporting period, MONUSCO sustained proactive media engagement through regular interaction with more than 100 journalists and influencers and facilitated field coverage to improve understanding of the Mission's role and responsibilities and ongoing peace efforts.

68. The Mission also developed targeted multimedia content to highlight its key achievements in 2025, including human rights; protection of civilians; disarmament, demobilization and reintegration; and support of the rule of law and accountability, contributing to public awareness and trust-building.

69. Radio Okapi continued to play a key role in disseminating accurate information on MONUSCO efforts to implement its mandate, including through programming in French and national languages aimed at countering misinformation and hate speech, and shared with community radios to enhance its reach. On a weekly basis, Radio Okapi broadcast dedicated programmes to counter misinformation and disinformation with facts, featuring influential stakeholders, and a programme to educate people on preventing hate speech, complemented by digital outreach through Radio Okapi social media platforms. The Mission strengthened capacity-building initiatives with national partners on media literacy, gender-based violence and the mitigation of disinformation, reaching approximately 1,000 journalists, digital influencers, young people and community leaders. During the reporting period, a slight decrease in anti-MONUSCO digital content was observed.

C. Serious misconduct, including sexual exploitation and abuse

70. Between 1 November 2025 and 28 February, the Mission organized 160 training sessions on United Nations standards of conduct, focusing on the collective responsibility to create and maintain a Mission environment free of sexual exploitation and abuse, targeting 6,118 military, police and civilian personnel, including 5,134 men and 984 women.

71. As part of its outreach efforts, MONUSCO convened nine community events to raise awareness among local populations about the prohibition of sexual exploitation and abuse, and about the Mission's community-based complaint reception mechanisms and victim assistance. A total of 687 individuals participated, including 341 men and 346 women. MONUSCO also conducted 27 visits to police and military camps located across the Mission area to assess risks of sexual exploitation and abuse.

72. During the reporting period, nine allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse were recorded, involving eight military and one civilian personnel. The alleged incidents reportedly occurred between 2009 and 2025. The Mission developed and implemented a targeted risk-mitigation plan to address risks identified in connection with the 2025 case. In line with its victim-centred approach, the Mission continued to refer victims of sexual exploitation and abuse to the United Nations Population Fund and the United Nations Children's Fund for assistance services and facilitated educational support for children of survivors. MONUSCO also enhanced its collaboration with the Protection against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Coordinator of the United Nations country team to reinforce the prevention of sexual misconduct and to coordinate the provision of assistance to victims.

X. Safety and security of United Nations personnel

73. From 1 December 2025, 158 security incidents affecting United Nations security management system personnel, dependants and premises were recorded, affecting 108 personnel, including 7 women. The Mission strengthened movement controls, low-profile measures and continuous coordination with the relevant authorities to mitigate the risk to United Nations security management system personnel and property.

74. On 11 March, two drone strikes were reported in the Himbi neighbourhood of Goma, one of which killed a UNICEF international staff member and two other persons. A drone-related incident had previously been recorded on 2 January near the premises of a non-governmental implementing partner, with no United Nations security management system personnel among the casualties. Due to the increased risk of aerial attacks, the United Nations security management system enhanced protective measures and early warning procedures in high-risk urban locations, including the monitoring of drone activity in coordination with the MONUSCO force and relevant authorities. The Mission had introduced bunker drills and awareness training for first responders and United Nations personnel on aerial threat response measures in collaboration with the Mine Action Service and the Physical Security Section. The prevalence of insecurity led to repeated movement suspensions. Demonstrations decreased over the reporting period, although precautionary security measures remained necessary, including during demonstrations at the MONUSCO Lava Site in Goma on 13 December 2025 and 12 March 2026. Harassment of MONUSCO personnel by AFC/M23 at the Goma border also continued, with 10 incidents recorded from 1 December 2025.

75. Throughout the reporting period, personnel were subjected to extortion at government checkpoints across Ituri and North Kivu. Other incidents recorded across North Kivu, Ituri, Kinshasa and Tanganyika included least nine cases of forced entry, attempted intrusion or searches of staff residences/compounds; four cases of harassment or coercive questioning; four cases of arrest, detention or apprehension; two assaults; six cases of robbery, burglary, theft or vandalism; and one case of telephone death threats. MONUSCO advised the suspension of activities in the affected locations and, where relevant, coordinated with local security authorities for follow-up and investigation.

XI. Observations

76. I am encouraged by ongoing diplomatic efforts to advance a lasting political solution to the conflict in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, which has uprooted the lives of millions, and I urge all actors to take immediate steps to halt the

violence. I commend Qatar and the United States, the African Union mediation, as well as Togo and Angola, for their commitment to peace and stability in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the wider Great Lakes Region. I welcome the endorsement on 4 December of the Washington Accords by the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda under the auspices of the Government of the United States.

77. From the beginning of the year, important steps were taken towards the operationalization of the ceasefire architecture. The signing of the terms of reference of the Expanded Joint Verification Mechanism Plus at the seventh meeting of the Ceasefire Oversight and Verification Mechanism in Doha on 2 February is a welcome development. The deployments of the Expanded Joint Verification Mechanism Plus missions in Uvira would provide a strong signal of the parties' intent to de-escalate tensions around this strategically sensitive location and build the foundations of a durable ceasefire.

78. The offensive launched by AFC/M23 in South Kivu in December, only days after the signing of the Washington Accords, underscored the urgent need to bridge the gap between diplomatic efforts and security dynamics on the ground. The sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Democratic Republic of the Congo must be respected at all times. Ongoing military operations by both sides, together with the increased use of drone strikes – which have resulted in civilian deaths, including the 11 March attack in Goma that killed three individuals, among them a UNICEF staff member – are deeply concerning. They also further impact efforts to create an environment conducive to effective ceasefire monitoring. MONUSCO remains committed to supporting ongoing peace efforts, including through participation in meetings of the Ceasefire Oversight and Verification Mechanism, and is ready to play its role in the progressive consolidation of the permanent ceasefire architecture as set out in my letter to the Security Council of 27 February 2026 ([S/2026/105](#)). I urge all parties to commit to a genuine and lasting ceasefire and to create the conditions necessary for MONUSCO to fully support ceasefire monitoring and implementation efforts, including through the immediate lifting of restrictions on the Mission's freedom of movement in areas controlled by AFC/M23, the reopening of Goma and Kavumu airports, the cessation of global positioning system jamming and spoofing and other hostile acts that endanger the lives of United Nations peacekeepers and all stakeholders engaged in ceasefire monitoring.

79. The unspeakable violence to which civilians are subjected every day across eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo must stop, and those responsible must be held accountable for their crimes, in line with international human rights and humanitarian law. I strongly condemn the targeting of civilians and human rights abuses committed by AFC/M23, ADF, CRP, CODECO, FDLR, Wazalendo and other armed groups. I am particularly troubled by the rise in CRP attacks, including in and around internally displaced persons' sites in Ituri, and recall that the humanitarian character of those sites must be respected. I am also deeply concerned by the significant number of violations committed by State actors and call on the authorities of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to take all measures necessary to prevent further violations, investigate all allegations and ensure accountability.

80. Despite the impact of the implementation of contingency plans, MONUSCO continues to provide physical protection to hundreds of thousands of internally displaced persons in Ituri Province and is working closely with national and provincial authorities and local communities to reduce tensions and lay the foundations for lasting reconciliation. The Mission remains determined to use the capabilities at its disposal to deter and counter armed groups in Ituri and North Kivu that pose a direct threat to the civilian population. I welcome the improved coordination between MONUSCO and the Ugandan Peoples' Defence Forces in their

shared area of operations. Further progress is essential to ensure the Mission can fully discharge its core mandated responsibilities.

81. The recent increase in the numbers of FDLR combatants and dependants repatriated to Rwanda is an encouraging development. MONUSCO, working in close coordination with the Office of the Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region, will continue to make every effort to build on those gains, including within the framework of its support for the implementation of the Washington Accords.

82. I am deeply concerned by continuing reports of restrictions on political freedoms, which risk hampering an inclusive national dialogue and preparations for peaceful, credible and representative elections in 2028.

83. Countering hate speech is equally vital to preserving national cohesion, and I encourage the Government and the Parliament to fast-track the examination and adoption of the draft law against tribalism, racism and xenophobia. The United Nations, including through the Mission's good offices, stands ready to support inclusive dialogue processes that ensure the participation of all components of Congolese society, including women and young people.

84. The Democratic Republic of the Congo continues to face immense humanitarian challenges. Funding for last year's Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan was the lowest in nearly a decade, while security incidents targeting humanitarian workers reached record levels. Access constraints persist, as needs continue to grow. I urge the Congolese authorities, Member States and strategic partners to redouble their efforts to mobilize the resources required for an effective humanitarian response. Humanitarian personnel and facilities must be protected, and all humanitarian actors must be guaranteed unimpeded access. In that regard, I strongly condemn the drone strike that killed the UNICEF staff member on 11 March and reiterate my deepest condolences to her family, friends and colleagues from UNICEF.

85. Finally, I wish to express my gratitude to the Special Representative ad interim for her determined leadership and persistent efforts, and to all MONUSCO personnel, members of the United Nations system, troop- and police-contributing countries and the Office of the Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region for their continued efforts towards lasting peace and stability in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. I call on all stakeholders to provide their full support to my new Special Representative, James Swan, who will continue my good offices with the aim of helping the country to lay the foundations for long-term peace, stability and sustainable development.

