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UNHCR – UN High Commissioner for Refugees

UNHCR appalled by killings of dozens of displaced people by armed groups in eastern DRC

This is a summary of what was said by UNHCR spokesperson Boris Cheshirkov – to whom quoted text may be attributed – at today's press briefing at the Palais des Nations in Geneva.

UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, is appalled by a series of deadly attacks by armed groups on displaced people in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo.

In the latest incident, 26 people were killed on Sunday at Ndjala site in the Drodro health zone in Ituri province, according to local authorities. Ten women and nine children were among the dead and 11 people were wounded. The attackers used guns, machetes and knives.

On 21 November, a militia group attacked Drodro and Tch , another site for displaced people. Authorities said 44 people were killed at Drodro and over 1,200 shelters were destroyed. Almost 1,000 shelters were wrecked at Tch .

As many as 20,000 inhabitants sheltering in displacement sites fled to Rhoe, seeking safety near the military base of the UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO). The site doubled in size from 21,000 to 40,500 in under 48 hours, forcing the newly arrived families to sleep in the open. The main needs of the population at Rhoe site, now totaling more than 70,000 people, are food, shelter and health care, as well as psychosocial assistance.

Elsewhere in the east of the country, an armed group attacked a site for displaced people at Mikenge town in South Kivu on 14 November, killing six children and a pregnant woman. Eight others were wounded by machetes and bullets. The inhabitants fled and their shelters were destroyed.

The attacks, which stem in part from inter-communal tensions, compound problems faced by people who are internally displaced. The theft of livestock, which often accompanies the raids, deepens economic insecurity and the violence adds to the distress of people who have been forced to flee their homes at least once. It also instills fear in local populations.

A staggering 5.6 million people have been forced to flee their homes in the DRC, an increase of 400,000 people compared to early 2021. The majority live among host communities, but more than 330,000 are sheltered in displacement sites.

UNHCR calls on all parties to respect the civilian and humanitarian character of displacement sites, where both IDPs and the local population are being attacked in their homes. UNHCR also calls for parties to ensure access to the locations so that humanitarian actors can provide essential assistance.

UNHCR is seeking further financial support for its underfunded operations so that it can better support IDPs. We have received just 52 per cent of the US\$204.8 million required to provide life-saving assistance to people of concern in DRC.

ecoi.net summary:



Eastern Democratic
Republic of the Congo: Dozens
of displaced people killed in
attacks by armed groups

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Austrian Red Cross
Austrian Centre for Country of Origin and
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Wiedner Hauptstraße 32, 1041 Wien
T (Telefon) +43 1 589 00 583
F (Fax) +43 1 589 00 589
info@ecoi.net

Contact
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