

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001018/25
to the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy
Bert-Jan Ruissen (ECR), Miriam Lexmann (PPE)
(10 March 2025)

Subject: 70 Christians found beheaded in a church in the DRC — European Union's response

According to an Open Doors report from field sources ⁽¹⁾, as well as reports from media outlets such as the Dutch NOS ⁽²⁾, 70 Christians were found beheaded in a church in the territory of Lubero in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). The violence perpetrated on 13 February 2025 by suspected militants from the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) with proven ties to ISIS, serves as a clear indicator of widespread human rights violations against civilians and vulnerable communities, often targeting Christians, in a climate of impunity.

1. What is the European Union's political and practical response to this and other acts of violence perpetrated by militant groups in the DRC?
2. What measures is the European Union ready to apply to combat impunity in the DRC in relation to this attack and broader human rights abuses by groups such as the ADF?
3. On 24 February 2025, the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Kaja Kallas declared that the memorandum of understanding on minerals between the EU and Rwanda is currently under review. Will the Commission and the European External Action Service, when reconsidering the memorandum, take into account the allegation that it fuels violence, including against Christians, in the DRC?

Submitted: 10.3.2025

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Kallas on behalf of the European Commission
(25 April 2025)

The EU has condemned the actions of non-state armed groups in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and subjected several of its senior leaders to restrictive measures, namely an asset freeze, a travel ban to and through the territory of EU Member States and a ban for EU persons to make any funds or economic resources available to them. These measures complement existing United Nations sanctions.

Ending the violence and tackling the drivers of conflict in Eastern DRC which feed and are fed by these armed groups requires a holistic response to be applied to the region.

The EU is contributing by strengthening the Congolese security and law enforcement apparatus, supporting politically and materially local and regional conflict mediation initiatives as well as activities aimed at tackling hate speech and extremism.

The EU is also financing several projects to support displaced persons, stabilise border areas and improve the resilience of populations in eastern DRC.

The EU has supported the decision by the United Nations Human Rights Council of 7 February 2025 to establish a fact-finding mission on the serious human rights violations and violations of international humanitarian law committed in North Kivu and South Kivu since January 2022, to be followed by a commission of inquiry.

As announced by High Representative/Vice-President on 24 February 2025, the EU is reviewing the memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Rwanda on a strategic partnership on sustainable raw material value chains signed on 19 February 2024.

All factors are being taken into account. For the moment, the EU has no evidence the MoU has itself fuelled violence against Christians or any other group in the DRC.

¹ <https://www.opendoorsuk.org/news/latest-news/drc-attack-church/>.

² <https://nos.nl/artikel/2557307-icc-aanklager-in-congo-voor-onderzoek-naar-oorlogsmisdaden-rebellen>