

(English version)

**Priority question for written answer P-000489/25
to the Commission
Majdouline Sbai (Verts/ALE), Sara Matthieu (Verts/ALE), Saskia Bricmont (Verts/ALE)
(4 February 2025)**

Subject: Embargo on minerals labelled as originating from Rwanda

On 19 February 2024, the European Union and Rwanda signed a memorandum of understanding on sustainable critical raw materials value chains. The memorandum provides for measures to intercept smuggled minerals entering the country and repatriate them to their country of origin. Thus the EU has implicitly recognised the risk of being supplied, via Rwanda, with ‘blood minerals’ from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). However, in the light of the serious ongoing attacks, the memorandum’s measures are not sufficient guarantee.

In view of this state of affairs, is the Commission planning to:

1. impose an immediate embargo on minerals labelled as of Rwandan origin, with a view to putting pressure on Rwanda to ensure that the M23 Movement and the Rwandan army withdraw from the DRC and to prevent the import of minerals of that kind into the European market;
2. suspend, with immediate effect, the memorandum of understanding, the roadmap being drafted with Rwanda and all existing or future strategic projects within the framework of the Critical Raw Materials Act that involve Rwanda;
3. make continued cooperation with Rwanda on critical raw materials conditional on Rwanda joining the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative and on the withdrawal of its troops?

Supporters ⁽¹⁾

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**Answer given by Mr Sikela on behalf of the European Commission
(19 March 2025)**

The Memorandum of Understanding (‘MoU’) on a strategic partnership on sustainable raw materials value chains with Rwanda is a key tool to address illicit trafficking and to promote a sustainable and responsible sourcing and processing of raw materials. The MoU signed with Rwanda ⁽¹⁾ is in line with the EU’s renewed Great Lakes Strategy ⁽²⁾.

The MoU has provided a platform to encourage Rwandan authorities to adhere to the Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative ⁽³⁾. Its suspension would remove the basis for this engagement with Rwanda on improving transparency and traceability.

The EU is taking measures to ensure full application of the Due Diligence Directive ⁽⁴⁾ and compliance with the obligations under the Conflict Minerals Regulation ⁽⁵⁾.

The Conflict Minerals Regulation lays down supply chain due diligence obligations for importers into the EU of tin, tantalum, tungsten and gold (3TG).

The regulation has a focus on conflict-affected and high-risk areas, but regardless of the geographic location, due diligence should be carried out.

In view of the current situation, all options are up for consideration in the reflection with Member States on how the EU should respond, including on the MoU, as discussed during the Foreign Affairs Council of 24 February 2025 ⁽⁶⁾.

Any measures should be coordinated between the EU, Member States, as well as with multilateral donors.

¹ This question is supported by Members other than the authors: David Cormand (Verts/ALE), Mélissa Camara (Verts/ALE), Marie Toussaint (Verts/ALE)

⁽¹⁾ <https://ec.europa.eu/docsroom/documents/58035>

⁽²⁾ <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-6631-2023-INIT/en/pdf>

⁽³⁾ <https://eiti.org/>

⁽⁴⁾ Directive (EU) 2024/1760 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 June 2024 on corporate sustainability due diligence and amending Directive (EU) 2019/1937 and Regulation (EU) 2023/2859, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2024/1760/oj/eng>

⁽⁵⁾ Regulation (EU) 2017/821 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 May 2017 laying down supply chain due diligence obligations for Union importers of tin, tantalum and tungsten, their ores, and gold originating from conflict-affected and high-risk areas, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2017/821/oj/eng>

⁽⁶⁾ <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/meetings/fac/2025/02/24/>