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Answer given by Mr Síkela
on behalf of the European Commission
(21.5.2026)

The EU continues to call for peaceful resolution to conflict in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and has also taken concrete steps in response to Rwanda's actions in eastern DRC. The EU imposed individual sanctions on Rwandan individuals involved and one company, and suspended security consultations with Rwanda.

Amidst the ongoing peace negotiations between the parties involved in the conflict, it is important for the EU to remain engaged with all parties, including Rwanda. Member States, who maintain bilateral cooperation, and multilateral development banks have ultimately taken a similar approach. The EU also intends to leverage regional integration and the momentum created by the US initiative to increase incentives for peace, by supporting initiatives that promote cooperation such as the Regional Economic Integration Framework¹, of which minerals are a core element. Both Rwanda and DRC have agreed to use the Framework to expand foreign trade and investment derived from critical mineral supply chains and introduce greater transparency. This would reduce illicit economic pathways and bring greater prosperity for the populations, from the region's natural resources through mutually beneficial partnerships and investment opportunities.

The EU-Rwanda Memorandum of Understanding on sustainable raw materials value chains² has as one of its main objectives to support the responsible sourcing of raw materials through strengthened transparency and traceability measures, in line with the EU's renewed Great Lakes Strategy³. Its objectives remain valid, but in the context of the decision of review by the Foreign Affairs Council, its implementation is subject to political conditions and guidance from the appropriate institutions. The same approach is taken across the region as illegal trafficking is an issue faced by all countries of the area.

The draft implementing decision on the financing of the annual action plan 2025 for Rwanda was submitted to the NDICI⁴ Committee on 19 November 2025 and received a positive opinion from the Member States. The annual action plan 2025 includes programmes for education and agriculture. Effective implementation will take into consideration the situation on the ground.

¹ On 1 August, the DRC and Rwanda, initialled the Regional Economic Integration Framework (REIF) Tenets foreseen in the Peace Agreement, establishing joint coordination in sectors such as energy, infrastructure, mining, park management/tourism, and public health to advance economic progress in the Great Lakes region and foster sustainable peace through economic interdependence. REIF was signed by Rwanda and DRC on 4 December in Washington.

² <https://ec.europa.eu/docsroom/documents/58035>.

³ Council Conclusions of 20 February 2023, <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-6631-2023-INIT/en/pdf>.

⁴ Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument.