

Treasury Sanctions Rwanda Officials, Condemns Blatant Violations of Washington Peace Accords

Today, the U.S. Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) imposed sanctions on the Rwanda Defence Force (RDF)—the military of Rwanda—and four of its senior officials. The RDF is actively supporting, training, and fighting alongside the March 23 Movement (M23), a U.S.- and United Nations (UN)-sanctioned armed group responsible for human rights abuses and a mass displacement crisis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). The RDF has supported M23 as it seized territory in eastern DRC, including provincial capitals Goma and Bukavu, along with strategic mining sites in eastern DRC. M23's offensives would not have been possible without the active support and complicity of the RDF and key senior officials.

“President Trump is the Peace President, and Treasury will use all tools at its disposal to ensure that the parties to the Washington Accords uphold their obligations,” said **Secretary of the Treasury Scott Bessent**. “We expect the immediate withdrawal of Rwanda Defence Force troops, weapons, and equipment.”

THE RWANDA DEFENCE FORCE: SUPPORTING ARMED REBELLION IN EASTERN DRC

The **Rwanda Defence Force** has provided direct operational support to M23 and its affiliates. The RDF has introduced advanced military equipment to the battlefield in eastern DRC, including GPS jamming systems, air defense equipment, drones, and additional materiel. Thousands of RDF troops are deployed across eastern DRC, where they actively engage in combat operations and facilitate M23's control of territory. The RDF also provides training to M23 fighters at RDF military centers and supports its recruitment efforts, including the recruitment of refugees.

With support from the RDF, M23 has engaged in extrajudicial killings, arbitrary arrests, and torture. In January 2025, the RDF carried out attacks against Congolese armed forces, the Southern African Development Community Mission in the DRC, and defensive positions of the UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the DRC. In exchange for its support for M23, Rwanda has gained access to mineral-rich areas of eastern DRC that contribute to the financing of M23's armed rebellion.

Vincent Nyakarundi (Nyakarundi), a Rwandan national, is the Army Chief of Staff of the RDF. Nyakarundi is a senior commander of the Rwandan Army's land forces, which have conducted military operations in support of M23.

Ruki Karusisi (Karusisi), a Rwandan national, is a major general and commander of the RDF's 5th Infantry Division. He was previously a Special Operations Force Commander and oversaw military operations in support of M23.

Mubarakh Muganga (Muganga), a Rwandan national, is the RDF's Chief of Defence Staff. Before being appointed to this role in June 2023, Muganga served as the RDF's Army Chief of Staff, during which time he played a key role in planning operations and commanding RDF forces in eastern DRC.

Stanislas Gashugi (Gashugi), a Rwandan national, was appointed as the RDF's Special Operations Force Commander on March 15, 2025, replacing Karusisi.

As a result of today's action, all property and interests in property of the designated or blocked persons described above that are in the United States or in the possession or control of U.S. persons are blocked and must be reported to OFAC. In addition, any entities that are owned, directly or indirectly, individually or in the aggregate, 50 percent or more by one or more blocked persons are also blocked.

Dated 2 March, 2026

