

DECEMBER 15, 2023

# Statement from NSC Spokesperson Adrienne Watson Welcoming the Two-Week Ceasefire Extension in Eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo

The United States welcomes the two-week extension of the ceasefire in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). This additional step toward peace is a testament to the commitment by the parties to the conflict, as well as regional neighbors, to lower tensions. Further, it builds on the broad adherence to the previous 72-hour ceasefire brokered by the United States and the recent engagement by Director of National Intelligence Avril Haines with President Felix Tshisekedi of DRC and President Paul Kagame of Rwanda and her earlier travel to both capitals on 19-20 November.

The two-week ceasefire extension, which started on December 14 and will continue through December 28, commits the parties to the conflict to advance the implementation of the previous confidence-building measures, including ensuring enforcement of the DRC Government's November 21 directive against any form of support to the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) rebels as well as the continued withdrawal of forces occupying the locality of Mushaki, positions along the RP1030 road, and locations west of the N2 road.

The Governments of DRC and Rwanda affirmed the importance of the temporary deployment of inter-positional forces to help facilitate the safe return of displaced civilians to their communities. In addition, the Government of Rwanda will coordinate with regional partners to secure M23's commitment to cease its offensive operations.

The United States commends the parties to the conflict, as well as regional governments, for their support for the ceasefire's extension and will continue to use U.S. intelligence and diplomatic resources to

monitor compliance to the ceasefire by armed forces and non-state armed groups. In addition, the United States reiterates its support for the resumption of the Nairobi and Luanda processes, which seek to address the current and historic factors perpetuating this longstanding conflict.

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