



## JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ

**Tripartite High-Level Ministerial Meeting between the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), the Government of the Republic of Rwanda, and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) on the Voluntary Repatriation of Refugees**

**Addis Ababa, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia  
24 July 2025**

1. Pursuant to the **Tripartite Agreements on the Voluntary Repatriation of Congolese Refugees from the Republic of Rwanda and Rwandan Refugees from the Democratic Republic of the Congo**, signed on 17 February, 2010, and in line with the principles enshrined in the **1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees**, its **1967 Protocol**, and the **1969 OAU Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa**, the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), the Government of the Republic of Rwanda, and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) convened a **High-Level Ministerial Meeting** in Addis Ababa, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, on **24 July 2025**.
2. The Meeting was held within the framework of ongoing efforts to pursue durable solutions for refugees, and took into consideration recent political developments,



including the **Washington Peace Agreement between the Government of the DRC and the Government of Rwanda**, signed on **27 June 2025**, and the **Doha Declaration of Principles between the Government of the DRC and the Congo River Alliance (AFC)/ March 23 Movement (M23)**, signed on **19 July 2025**.

3. The Parties expressed appreciation for the continued role of the African Union and the United Nations in promoting peace, security, and dialogue across the region.
4. The Parties considered the report of the Tripartite Technical Working Group Meeting between the DRC, the Government of the Republic of Rwanda, and UNHCR on the Voluntary Repatriation of Refugees and emphasized that the sustainable returns of refugees are a vital pillar of peace and stability and are essential to advancing post-conflict recovery and reconstruction in the Great Lakes region, in particular in the DRC. In this context, the situation and the needs of internally displaced persons should also be taken into consideration.
5. The Parties reaffirmed their commitment to the voluntary, safe, dignified, and informed return of refugees as a cornerstone of durable solutions, and consider this a contribution to peacebuilding and regional stability.
6. The Parties acknowledged the role of UNHCR as a neutral, impartial, and humanitarian actor, mandated by the international community to provide international protection and seek durable solutions for refugees.
7. The Parties agreed to be guided in their actions by the following decisions:
  - (a) Reaffirm the right of all refugees to voluntarily return to their country of origin in safety and dignity without constraints;
  - (b) Ensure that returns are carried out in accordance with the Tripartite Agreements of 17 February 2010 and international protection standards;

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(c) Ensure that refugees and returnees receive timely, relevant, credible, and impartial information, and that mechanisms for community consultation and feedback are strengthened;

(d) Recognize the need to explore avenues for constructive engagement, in conformity with the Declaration of Principles between the DRC and AFC/M23 signed on 19 July 2025 in Doha, in order to guarantee that voluntary returns can be resumed in line with the Tripartite Agreements of 17 February 2010;

(e) Expedite the voluntary repatriation of 600 Rwandan refugees currently at the Transit Centre in Goma, while other avenues for durable solutions continue to be explored, with the support of the legally established administration in DRC and in coordination with UNHCR.

(f) Create enabling conditions for refugees and humanitarian agencies, where appropriate, to facilitate safe returns, respecting the principles of international laws, and without prejudice to the preservation of the sovereign authority of the two State Parties;

(g) Reaffirm the necessity of proper identity and nationality verification for refugees wishing to voluntarily return, so as to prevent the risk of statelessness;

(h) Commit to reintegration planning that is inclusive and area-based, ensuring access to housing, education, livelihoods, health care, civil documentation, and inclusion in local and national development frameworks;

(i) Strengthen cross-border coordination through virtual or in person meetings, data sharing and joint planning of voluntary repatriation activities;

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(j) Enhance outreach and communication with refugees and local communities in areas of return, including through digital tools, to build trust and transparency;

(k) Engage with donors, international financial institutions, and development partners to ensure sustained financial support for voluntary return and reintegration, as well as for post-conflict recovery and reconstruction, in support of the Washington Peace Agreement of 27 June 2025 and the Doha Declaration of Principles of 19 July 2025.

8. The Parties adopted the **2025-2026 Tripartite Technical Working Group Road Map on Voluntary Repatriation and Reintegration**, outlining operational milestones, responsibilities, and timelines for implementation, monitoring, and review.
9. The Parties agreed to convene regular follow-up technical working group meetings under the framework of the Tripartite Mechanism and affirmed their readiness to reconvene, in principle in six months' time, at the ministerial level to assess progress and provide strategic guidance as necessary.
10. The Parties expressed appreciation to the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia for hosting the Meeting.
11. The Parties expressed gratitude to the participants of the Tripartite Technical Working Group held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 22 to 23 July 2025 for the preparatory work undertaken leading up to the High-level Ministerial Meeting.

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**DONE** in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on this 24th day of July 2025 in **English and French** languages, the two texts being equally authentic.

**For the Government of the Democratic  
Republic of the Congo**

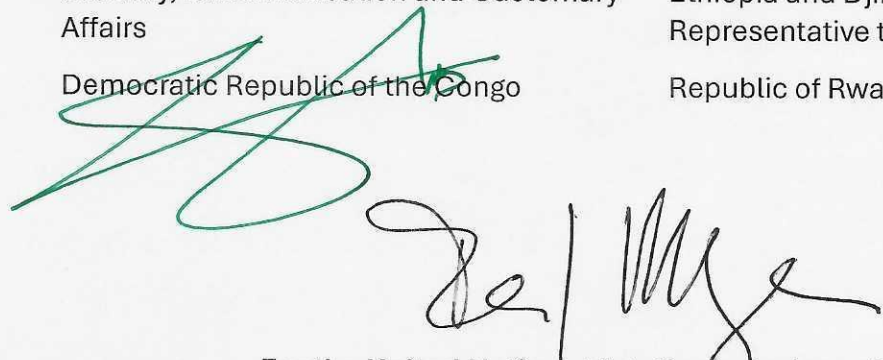
H.E. SHABANI Lukoo Bihango Jacquemain  
Vice Prime Minister, Minister of Interior,  
Security, Decentralisation and Customary  
Affairs

Democratic Republic of the Congo

  
**For the Government of the Republic of  
Rwanda**

H.E. Maj Gen (Rtd) Charles KARAMBA  
Ambassador of Republic of Rwanda to  
Ethiopia and Djibouti and Permanent  
Representative to the AU and UNECA

Republic of Rwanda

  
**For the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees**

Raouf MAZOU

Assistant High Commissioner for Operations