# UK imposes sanctions on Rwanda over M23 rebel support



U.K. authorities announced on Tuesday that they are imposing punitive measures against Rwanda following its alleged support for the M23 rebel group, which has seized control of significant areas in eastern Congo. The announcement was made by the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, which stated that the actions include a pause on direct financial aid to Rwanda, although support for the poorest Rwandans will continue.

The U.K. government will also refrain from sending representatives to high-level events hosted by Rwanda's government and will limit trade promotion activities with the country. Additionally, there will be a suspension of future defence training assistance and a review of export licences pertaining to the Rwandan military, as noted in the government statement.

While the exact amount of financial aid provided by the U.K. to Rwanda was not disclosed, the measures indicate a significant shift in diplomatic relations between the two nations. The U.K. is also coordinating efforts with other countries on the potential introduction of new sanctions.

These developments place further pressure on Rwandan President Paul Kagame, who has remained steadfast in his country’s military involvement in eastern Congo. Reports indicate that approximately 4,000 Rwandan troops are currently engaged alongside the M23 rebels, who have notably taken control of the capitals of North Kivu and South Kivu provinces.

Congolese President Félix Tshisekedi has expressed his refusal to engage in peace talks with the M23 rebels, alleging that the group operates as a proxy force for Rwanda. Tshisekedi's accusations are linked to concerns over the exploitation of eastern Congo's abundant mineral resources.

In response to the U.K.'s decision, Rwandan authorities have characterised the measures as "punitive and regrettable." The Rwandan government released a statement on X (formerly known as Twitter), stating, “It is unreasonable to expect Rwanda to compromise its national security and the safety of Rwandans.” The statement further asserted that the U.K. measures do not contribute toward resolving the conflict in eastern Congo or aiding the Congolese people.

Additionally, the United States has imposed sanctions on a significant figure within Kagame's cabinet, citing his involvement in the M23 rebellion, highlighting that international scrutiny and measures against Rwandan leadership are intensifying as the situation evolves.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.minaffet.gov.rw/updates/news-details/rwanda-regrets-measures-by-the-uk> - This URL supports Rwanda's response to the UK's punitive measures, describing them as 'regrettable' and emphasizing that they do not contribute to resolving the conflict in eastern DRC.
* <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-statement-on-response-to-the-situation-in-eastern-drc> - This URL corroborates the UK's announcement of measures against Rwanda, including the pause on direct financial aid and suspension of defence training assistance, in response to the situation in eastern DRC.
* <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_Kingdom_sanctions> - This URL provides context on how the UK imposes sanctions, which is relevant to the potential introduction of new sanctions against Rwanda.
* <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-64811145> - This URL would typically provide news coverage on the UK's actions against Rwanda and the situation in eastern DRC, but it is not available in the search results.
* <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/12/14/us-sanctions-rwandan-official-over-m23-rebellion> - This URL would typically support the information about the U.S. imposing sanctions on a Rwandan official due to involvement in the M23 rebellion, but it is not available in the search results.