



DRC East Death Toll UNHCR 22 June 2022

22-07-2022 | Edited News

Shotlist

1. Medium shot, UN Geneva flag alley.
2. Wide shot, press room with panel of speakers.
3. **SOUNDBITE (ENGLISH): Matthew Saltmarsh, UNHCR spokesperson:** “This month, simultaneous attacks by armed groups in Ituri Province have left 11 people dead and 250 homes looted and burned. Between February and June this year, UNHCR and partners recorded over 800 deaths from firearm attacks and machete raids on local communities in Ituri.”
4. Medium shot, lateral, journalists.
5. **SOUNDBITE (ENGLISH): Matthew Saltmarsh, UNHCR spokesperson:** “In recent weeks, fighting between the Congolese Army and the M23 group in North Kivu Province has displaced more than 160,000 people across Rutshuru and Nyiragongo territories. The redeployment of government troops to this conflict has created power vacuums and a fragile security environment in both Ituri and North Kivu.”
6. Close shot of UN staff.
7. **SOUNDBITE (ENGLISH): Matthew Saltmarsh, UNHCR spokesperson:** ““lack security compounds the existing challenge of intercommunal strife, the lack of infrastructure and an absence of institutions in the region. It also fuels intensified cycles of violence, generating further instability and undermining peace and development efforts”.
8. Medium shot of journalists in the press room
9. **SOUNDBITE (ENGLISH): Matthew Saltmarsh, UNHCR spokesperson:** ““UNHCR’s operation

in DRC has received just 19 per cent of the US\$225 million required to respond to the increasing needs of refugee and displaced people with urgent and life-saving support.”

10. Various shots of press room, journalists and UN staff listening.

Story

Speaker: Matt Saltmarsh, UNHCR spokesperson

STORY: DRC Death Toll of Displaced - UNHCR

TRT: 1'47"

SOURCE: UNTV CH

RESTRICTIONS: NONE

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH/NATS

ASPECT RATIO: 16:9

DATELINE: Friday 22 July 2022, GENEVA, SWITZERLAND

UN Refugee agency alarmed by growing violence and displacement in eastern DR Congo

As conflict grows in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), the accumulating death toll and suffering of displaced civilians in brutal attacks is raising serious concerns for the UN Refugee agency, UNHCR, who appealed for fresh funds to meet "soaring needs" in the country.

“This month, simultaneous attacks by armed groups in Ituri Province have left 11 people dead and 250 homes looted and burned. Between February and June this year, UNHCR and partners recorded over 800 deaths from firearm attacks and machete raids on local communities in Ituri,” reported UNHCR spokesperson Matthew Saltmarsh at a press briefing this Friday in Geneva.

According to the UNHCR, at least 715 of the victims had been sheltering in internal displacement sites or were killed as they returned home.

In June alone, 97 people were killed in attacks that included abductions, looting, and burning of homes, UNHCR says. More than twenty thousand people have been driven from their homes by such raids, which are also fueling acute food insecurity in the eastern Ituri province, as agricultural development in this fertile region has been stymied by long-standing intercommunal clashes. In North Kivu province, a settlement for internally displaced people was torn apart last month by armed men.

“In recent weeks, fighting between the Congolese Army and the M23 group in North Kivu Province has displaced more than 160,000 people across Rutshuru and Nyiragongo territories. The redeployment of government troops to this conflict has created power vacuums and a fragile security environment in both Ituri and North Kivu,” noted the UNHCR spokesperson.

Strings of coordinated attacks by multiple militia groups are terrorizing communities in the region. The March 23 Movement, known as M23, was defeated by Congo’s army and special MONUSCO forces in

2013. But these rebel forces began to reemerge in November 2021.

“The lack of security compounds the existing challenge of intercommunal strife, the lack of infrastructure and an absence of institutions in the region. It also fuels intensified cycles of violence, generating further instability and undermining peace and development efforts,” said Mr. Saltmarsh.

"Soaring needs" of newly displaced people in an endemic conflict

The humanitarian situation in the east of the country remains extremely fluid as a result of endemic conflicts between communities and between non-state armed groups and security forces, as well as ongoing social and economic challenges and extreme weather events.

“UNHCR’s operation in DRC has received just 19 per cent of the US\$225 million required to respond to the increasing needs of refugee and displaced people with urgent and life-saving support,” said Matthew Saltmarsh. That was the budget based on the estimated needs at the beginning of the year. Additional resources are now required to match the soaring needs of newly displaced populations.

UNHCR urged all parties to immediately stop violence, and to respect international humanitarian and human rights law to protect civilians and humanitarian workers. With more than 5.6 million people displaced, the DRC has the largest number of internally displaced people on the African continent.

Ends