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### DISCLAIMER

This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Refugee Documentation Centre within time constraints. All COI Query Responses are compiled in line with the Common EU Guidelines (2008) and the EUAA Methodology (2023). This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to international protection. Please refer to all documents cited.

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### COI QUERY RESPONSE

#### DRC – M23

In September 2024 *Business Monitor Online* states that: “...M23...is now capturing towns and cities across Kivu...”<sup>1</sup>

A report released in September 2024 by the *United Kingdom Parliament House of Commons Library* notes that: “In November 2021...[m23] re-emerged and has since seized large parts of North Kivu province...”<sup>2</sup>

The *Daily Monitor* in September 2024 includes commentary on the: “...administration of the M23 rebels...in...Bunagana...”<sup>3</sup>

A report published in September 2024 by the *Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect* states that: “The security situation in North Kivu has continued to deteriorate due to recurrent clashes between M23 and the FARDC...The intense fighting has been marked by the indiscriminate use of heavy artillery, shelling and bombings in populated areas. In areas under their control, M23 has reportedly perpetrated likely war crimes...In recent months M23 has made major territorial advances...”<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Business Monitor Online (3 September 2024) DRC Long-Term Political Outlook, p.1

<sup>2</sup> United Kingdom Parliament House of Commons Library (3 September 2024) Conflict in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (September 2024), p.9

<sup>3</sup> Daily Monitor (3 September 2024) Leaders expose underbelly of Bunagana's shadow economy

<sup>4</sup> Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect (1 September 2024) Democratic Republic of the Congo, p.2

In August 2024 the *Conversation* states that: “The M23 has seized significant swathes of territory, pushing deeper into North Kivu province. It now controls at least 100 towns and villages and fighting has intensified around the provincial capital, Goma...”<sup>5</sup>

A report issued in August 2024 by *Human Rights Watch* notes that: “Since late 2022, Rwanda-backed M23 rebels have committed unlawful killings, rape, and numerous other grave abuses in eastern Congo.”<sup>6</sup>

The *World Food Programme* in August 2024 states that: “The violence in Eastern Congo remains unrelenting with continued attacks perpetrated by different non-state armed groups including the March 23 Movement (M23), the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) and the Cooperative for the Development of the Congo Union of Revolutionaries for the Defence of the Congolese People (CODECO-URPDC) among others.”<sup>7</sup>

A report published by *Deutsche Welle* in August 2024 points out that: “Instability in the eastern DRC, which started in the mid-1990s, has led to nearly six million deaths. More than 120 militia and armed rebel groups roam the provinces of Ituri, NorthKivu, South Kivu, and Tanganyika. Many of these rebels commit atrocities and violations against civilians...The UN estimates fighting has driven more than 1.7 million people from their homes in North Kivu, taking the total number of Congolese displaced by multiple conflicts to a record 7.2 million.”<sup>8</sup>

In August 2024 the *United Kingdom Foreign Office* states that: “Both the Bunagana border crossing and the Kitagoma-Buzana border crossing in Kisoro district are controlled by the M23 armed group on the DRC side of the border.”<sup>9</sup>

In August 2024 the *Africa Report* states that: “M23 first captured the Bunagana border in June 2022...”<sup>10</sup>

The *Daily Monitor* in August 2024 points out that: “The M23 rebels have gained control of the Ishasha border, forcing the Congolese government security officials to flee to the Ugandan side of the border town in Kanungu District. This becomes the third major border post to be captured by the M23 rebels from the Congolese government after Bunagana (June 2022) and Kitagoma (October 2022), all bordering Uganda's Kisoro District.”<sup>11</sup>

The *Africa Report* reports in July 2024 includes commentary on: “...Bunagana, a strategic border town now in the hands of the M23.”<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Conversation (30 August 2024) Congo-Kinshasa: Fighting With Rebels in the Country's East Has Intensified, Sparking Fears of a Wider War

<sup>6</sup> Human Rights Watch (30 August 2024) DR Congo: Little Justice for Goma Massacre Victims, p.1

<sup>7</sup> World Food Programme (28 August 2024) WFP Democratic Republic of the Congo: Situation Report #56 - 31 July 2024, p.1

<sup>8</sup> Deutsche Welle (27 August 2024) Congo-Kinshasa: DR Congo Conflict - Why Is the Ceasefire Not Holding?

<sup>9</sup> United Kingdom Foreign Office (14 August 2024) Uganda travel advice (August 2024), p.11

<sup>10</sup> Africa Report (9 August 2024) M23's latest territorial gains and the impact on southern Uganda, p.2)

<sup>11</sup> Daily Monitor (6 August 2024) UPDF deploy heavily on Congo border as M23 captures Ishasha

<sup>12</sup> Africa Report (8 July 2024) DRC-Uganda: Can Félix Tshisekedi trust Yoweri Museveni?, p.1

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