

## UN Security Council condemns FDLR atrocities

Members of the UN Security Council have stressed the need for regional cooperation to help uproot armed groups operating in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) that are responsible for atrocities against civilians.

In a statement on the situation in the DRC issued by Council President Li Baodong yesterday, the council expressed strong concern about the recent developments in the Kivus and the deterioration of the security and humanitarian situation resulting in significant flows of displaced persons and refugees.

Ambassador Li Baodong is President of the Security Council for the month of June and China's Permanent Representative to the United Nations.

The Council "strongly condemned the killing and abuse of civilians by armed groups, including the FDLR that mostly targets women and children,

The latest fighting, in a conflict zone notorious for brutal killings and rapes, has forced more than 100,000 people to flee their homes.

Over 10,000 have fled to Rwanda, while thousands others have also crossed to Uganda fleeing from fighting between Congolese army and a mutinous group, the M23.

The European Union (EU) and Canada also pressed 'strong concern' about the deteriorating security situation in eastern D.R. Congo and organised crime committed by the militia group.

Earlier, the United States had also urged the militia group to give themselves up to Congolese or UN authorities for disarmament.

The Security Council statement calls for "all the countries in the region to actively cooperate with the Congolese authorities in demobilising the M23 and all other armed groups."

Apart from FDLR, another terror group operating in Congo is the Lord's Resistance Army led by the Ugandan fugitive, Joseph Kony.

Kony, who faces charges of crimes against humanity, operates from D.R. Congo and the Central African Republic.

The International Criminal Court (ICC) recently rejected attempts to indict FDLR supreme commander, Sylvestre Mudacumura, as well as the group's Secretary General, Callixte Mbarushimana.

But prosecution at the ICC last week filed a new application seeking an arrest warrant against Mudacumura for crimes committed in the DRC.

FDLR is largely composed of militia and former government soldiers (ex-FAR) responsible for the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi, as well as a spate of atrocities against civilian populations in eastern DRC.