



Empowerment Without Borders

Revitalising Dreams

EWB/Media-Release/003/BNE

PRESS STATEMENT

EMPOWERMENT WITHOUT BORDERS' CONCERNS ON THE ESCALATION OF HOSTILITIES IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

Saturday, 13 April 2024

Empowerment Without Borders Ltd (EWB) is devastated by the escalation of violence and grave violations of human rights in the eastern region of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

The escalations have led to a deeply worrisome situation and increasingly alarming displacement crisis that has exacerbated the “desperate conditions” in the severely overcrowded displacement sites and dramatic increase in cholera and sexual and gender-based violence cases.

The DRC is the scene of the world’s most neglected major war with its eastern region being one of the most dangerous places in the world for women and children.

The latest upsurge in hostilities and use of explosive weapons in populated areas has left thousands of badly wounded civilians, especially women and children with devastating consequences in the region where gender-based violence, rape and murder with impunity is immortalized.

Recent multimedia communications continue to show the worsening of the situation in the region, with one of the many cases, a media representative case of a young mother, visibly traumatized, trying to comfort her four-year-old daughter suffering from shrapnel wounds on her body and face. The young woman recounts of her horrifying experience of witnessing her other children being killed and the mass rapes in their village.

A similar story of a five-year-old girl who witnessed her mother being raped before being killed is also a harrowing example of the traumatizing impact that this war is imposing on the lives of many children escaping the war zones even when they start a new life in a different country. Many of these experiences and stories are never reported or shared by most Congolese people in their country and or other host nations for fear of stigma and reprisals.

The eastern DRC has been plagued by violence for about 30 years with more than 7.1 million people forced from their homes. That is 800,000 people more in the last three months ago. Heavy fighting between the Congolese army and armed group M23 and the presence of more than 120 active armed groups in the eastern region have intensified the ongoing humanitarian crisis, mass displacement and aid route disruption.



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While different States such as the U.S.A Department of State and international human rights and humanitarian bodies such Human Right Watch, UNICEF and International Committee of the Red Cross have condemned the violence on the civilians and expressed concerns over the impact of this escalation in the lives of innocent Congolese living in the country and those abroad, there have been limited efforts exerted to relieve the exacerbated humanitarian crisis and hostilities.

EWB stands with all the victims, children and women who have significantly been impacted and continue to encourage its members currently present in the region to cautiously continue providing support as per the limited resources at their disposal to those affected in the region.

We send our deepest condolences to the families who have lost their loved ones and our prayers to our brothers and sisters who have lost their livelihoods.

We call upon the international community and states to take the most effective actions to reduce the suffering currently experienced by millions of Congolese people who have known war all their lives as a matter of the greatest urgency.

ISSUED BY THE CHAIRMAN/PRESIDENT



Mr. Kennedy SHULI BPH, LLM (MIL), MICDA.

EMPOWERMENT WITHOUT BORDERS LTD (INTERNATIONAL).

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