

STATEMENT ON THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

**UNDER-SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS AND
EMERGENCY RELIEF COORDINATOR, VALERIE AMOS**

(New York, 21 November 2012) I have been shocked by the pictures I have seen of the ordinary women, men and children fleeing the violence in and around Goma, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, due to the recent escalation in fighting between the Armed Forces of the DRC and the March 23 Movement or M23.

Tens of thousands of people have been forced to leave their homes because of violence in North Kivu since 15 November, while thousands more are still on the move and have been displaced multiple times. Insecurity is preventing the delivery of the most basic humanitarian assistance that people need and many of the communities hosting them are already overstretched.

The fighting needs to stop immediately and I urge all parties to uphold their obligations under International Human Rights and Humanitarian Law. This includes prohibiting attacks against civilians and ensuring safe and unhindered humanitarian access to people in need. Despite the very challenging environment, humanitarian workers are committed to supporting those affected in the Kivus and neighbouring areas.

A political solution to the conflict in eastern DRC is of paramount importance. A further escalation of violence will have grave consequences for the people of eastern DRC and the Great Lakes region.

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