

**Question for written answer E-000604/2024
to the Commission**
Rule 138
Saskia Bricmont (Verts/ALE)

Subject: Signing of a memorandum of understanding with Rwanda

On 19 February 2024, the Commission announced that it had signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Rwanda as part of the Global Gateway strategy. The MoU seeks to nurture sustainable and resilient value chains for critical raw materials, notably tantalum.

Yet according to the NGO Global Witness, 90% of the tantalum exported by Rwanda actually comes from the DRC¹, where extraction of such minerals fuels armed groups, notably M23, a movement which is seemingly backed by Rwanda, according to a UN report². In recent weeks, hundreds of thousands of people have had to flee the hostilities³.

1. Can the Commission provide the impact assessment carried out prior to the MoU, in particular the figures on the origin of the tantalum exported by Rwanda (including domestic extraction) and the quantity exported (by country)?
2. Can it clarify the link between the MoU and the Conflict Minerals Regulation?
3. What steps have been taken to ensure that the tantalum exported by Rwanda was indeed extracted in Rwanda, or legally imported into the country? Will those steps be agreed with civil society in the roadmap that will accompany the MoU?

Submitted: 23.2.2024

¹ <https://respect.international/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/THE-ITSCI-Laundromat-How-a-due-diligence-scheme-appears-to-launders-conflict-minerals.pdf>

² <https://www.rfi.fr/fr/afrique/20221222-rdc-un-rapport-d-experts-de-l-onu-met-en-cause-le-rwanda-dans-le-soutien-au-m23>

³ <https://msf-crash.org/fr/blog/camps-refugies-deplaces/les-deplaces-de-goma-une-catastrophe-pourtant-si-visible>