

URGENT ACTION

THREE MEN ABDUCTED BY M23 ARMED GROUP

Aloys Bigirumwami, Bahati Nshangalume, and Patient Basimike Bukombe Barhuze are three Congolese men from eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) who were forcibly disappeared by fighters from the armed group, the March 23 Movement (M23) in the context of the current armed conflict. Aloys Bigirumwami was last seen on May 13, 2025, Bahati Nshangalume October 26, 2025, and Patient Basimike Bukombe Barhuze on December 17, 2025. To date, the reason for their abduction and location are unknown. Amnesty International calls on M23 authorities to immediately disclose the fate and whereabouts of all three men, and if in their custody, ensure they are released immediately and unconditionally.

TAKE ACTION:

- Write a letter to the government official(s) listed. Use the sample letter below as a guide or use your own words.
- [Click here](#) to report your action(s) on **UA 3.26**. We share this number with the officials we are trying to persuade.

Political Coordinator of the Congo River Alliance / M23

Corneille Nangaa

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Send a copy of your letter to the address below

CC: Democratic Republic of Congo Embassy in the United States

Ambassador Yvette Kapinga Ngandu

1100 Connecticut Ave NW #725,

Washington, DC 20036

Email: info@ambadrcusa.org

Dear Sir,

I am concerned about the enforced disappearance in the context of the current armed conflict in DRC of **Aloys Bigirumwami, Bahati Nshangalume, and Patient Basimike Bukombe Barhuze**.

On May 13, 2025, fighters of the armed group, March 23 Movement (M23), conducted a raid in Goma, detaining hundreds of men, women, boys, and girls. The M23-appointed mayor, Julien Katembo, identified Aloys Bigirumwami, a human rights defender and member of the youth movement Lutte pour le Changement (LUCHA) in the crowd. Aloys Bigirumwami was taken away in an M23 vehicle. He has not been seen since. On October 26, 2025, Bahati Nshangalume, a businessman who works in the mining sector, went to M23's military camp in Luhwindja to discuss a mining transaction with an M23 commander. Bahati Nshangalume has not been seen since. His family members asked M23 authorities about his whereabouts but received no information. On December 17, 2025, men in military uniforms who appeared, according to witnesses, to be M23 fighters, abducted Patient Basimike Bukombe Barhuze, an employee of the Higher Institute of Medical Technology, from a primary school in Munya. He has not been seen since.

I call on you to immediately disclose the fate and whereabouts of Aloys Bigirumwami, Bahati Nshangalume, and Patient Basimike Bukombe Barhuze. If they are detained by M23, they should be immediately and unconditionally released. I also urge you to ensure that no other civilian is detained, that no detainees are tortured or ill-treated in M23 detention centers, and that they have adequate shelter, food, clean water, healthcare, and unfettered access to lawyers and family members.

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Fighters of the Rwanda-backed M23 fighters have killed, tortured, and forcibly disappeared civilians in the context of the armed conflict. Amnesty has documented cases of detainees held hostage and subjected to inhumane conditions at detention sites in Goma and Bukavu. Detainees described how they were held in overcrowded, unsanitary cells without sufficient food, water, sanitation facilities or healthcare. Most were denied access to their families and lawyers. In addition, M23 often requires families to pay large ransoms to secure the release of their family members. Ransoms range from less than 100 USD to more than 2,000 USD.

Amnesty is aware of multiple M23 detention sites in Goma (the capital of North Kivu province) and Bukavu (the largest city in South Kivu), including the office of the former intelligence service in Bukavu. One former detainee held there said he was whipped every morning by M23 fighters. Former detainees also described how M23 fighters refused to grant their families access and told their relatives that they were not there, which amounts to enforced disappearances. Amnesty International interviewed 18 former detainees who said they were either tortured or witnessed M23 fighters torture others in detention. [DRC: M23 kill, torture and hold civilians hostage at detention sites – new investigation.](#)

International humanitarian law (IHL) prohibits parties to conflict, including organized armed groups such as M23, from arbitrarily detaining civilians. Murder, cruel treatment, and torture, as well as outrages upon personal dignity, in particular humiliating and degrading treatment against detainees, as well as enforced disappearances in the context of an armed conflict, are also prohibited under IHL and may amount to war crimes. Moreover, M23's detention of civilians to compel them or their family members to pay for their release may amount to the war crime of taking hostages.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: French or your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: July 22, 2026

NAME AND PRONOUNS: Aloys Bigirumwami, Bahati Nshangalume, Patient Basimike Bukombe Barhuze (All he/him)