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MILITARY AIRCRAFT SHOT DOWN OVER MINEMBWE, DEPLOYMENT OF FOREIGN MERCENARIES AND PROTECTION OF THE CONGOLESE POPULATION

The Front pour la Refondation de la Nation (FRN) strongly condemns the continued attacks against civilian populations using fighter jets, civilian aircraft converted for military operations and various types of drones. These attacks have reportedly caused thousands of civilian casualties and extensive destruction across eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The FRN equally condemns the recruitment and deployment of foreign mercenaries in military operations conducted by the Kinshasa regime and its allies on Congolese soil.

On Sunday, November 22, 2026, a military aircraft identified as a Cessna 208B Grand Caravan (AC-208 Eliminator), bearing registration number T9-TRB, was shot down over the Minembwe area. Originally designed for civilian use, the aircraft had been converted into a light attack aircraft and equipped with underwing hardpoints to carry and launch precision-guided bombs and missiles. Its wreckage now lies in Kalongi, about ten kilometres from Minembwe Centre. It is one of the two aircraft regularly operating from Kalemie and conducting bombing missions across the High Plateaus, resulting in loss of life and extensive damage to infrastructure.

Two of the four occupants have lost their lives. The two survivors have been identified as Alexander VILLETTE, a South African national, and Jordan MUGALYA, a Ugandan national. Both are foreign mercenaries.

In its November 23 statement, the FARDC General Staff acknowledged the disappearance of a military aircraft. Still, it provided no information on the crew members' nationalities or the circumstances of their deployment. This omission is the persistent strategy of the Kinshasa regime to mislead public opinion, both nationally and internationally, regarding the war it is imposing on the Congolese people.

The capture of these mercenaries recalls the events of January 2025, when more than 300 foreign mercenaries, most of them Romanian nationals, who had been operating alongside the FARDC, were evacuated following the liberation of Goma.

The FRN reminds that the recruitment, financing, and deployment of mercenaries run contrary to the principles and obligations established under the OAU Convention for the Elimination of Mercenarism in Africa, adopted on July 3, 1977, and ratified by the DRC on July 13, 1979, particularly Article 6. The United Nations International Convention also addresses the Recruitment, Use, Financing and Training of Mercenaries, adopted on December 4, 1989 and signed by the DRC on March 20, 1990.

It is important to emphasise that these bombings are taking place in an unprecedented humanitarian crisis ever recorded, compounded by a blockade and the continued encirclement of civilian populations imposed since mid-2025 by coalition forces of the Kinshasa regime, notably the FARDC, FDNB, FDLR, Wazalendo militias and foreign mercenaries. The objective of these measures is to inflict death through starvation, denial of medical care and deprivation of essential goods and basic necessities.

The FRN expresses its deep concern and indignation over the international community's continued silence in the face of bombing of civilians, the deployment of foreign mercenaries and the imposition of a blockade designed to weaponise starvation as a method of warfare.

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The FRN reaffirms its unwavering commitment to protecting the lives, dignity and fundamental rights of every Congolese citizen living in the liberated territories. It issues a stern warning to the Kinshasa regime and its coalition forces against any further bombardment targeting civilian areas.

The FRN makes it clear that any drone or aircraft posing a threat to civilian populations will face the same fate as the aircraft already shot down over Minembwe, which the FARDC are currently searching for.

Goma, November 24, 2026

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