

## 2026 San Francisco International Film Festival—Part 4

# *Enough is Enough: Catastrophe in the Democratic Republic of the Congo*

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*This is the fourth in a series of articles on the 2026 San Francisco International Film Festival, April 24-May 4, which made a number of films available online. The first part was posted May 1, the second May 10 and the third May 20.*

The documentary film *Enough is Enough (Trop c'est trop)* by Elisé Sawasawa brings together footage shot in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) over several years. The film covers some of the consequences of decades of civil war, in which the imperialist powers have had a heavy, manipulative hand, resulting in utterly disastrous conditions for masses of people in the region.

The first film in this series of articles on the San Francisco film festival was shot in Tehran, the second in Beirut, the third took up the authoritarian far right in the US and the fourth is focused on the DRC, now the epicenter of the Ebola epidemic. Is the remarkable correspondence between these films and tumultuous contemporary events and “headlines” merely a coincidence? It doesn't seem likely. Immense, unavoidable events are pressing forward, pushing their way into artistic life and consciousness. Of course, if one seeks them out, there are more than enough inconsequential, self-involved works ...

The DRC, known as Zaire from 1971 to 1997, is the second-largest country in Africa by area and the eleventh-largest in the world, with a population of approximately 125 million people. Its vast natural resources have been the target of the great powers since the late 19th century. The Congo was seized by King Leopold II of Belgium in the 1880s, resulting in its rubber being looted and its people brutalized. “Between 1885 and 1908, there were between five and eight million victims of Leopold's personal rule, under a barbarous system of forced labour and systematic terror.” (WSWS) The imperialist machinations did not end with Leopold.

The martyrdom of the population has continued to the present day, as the DRC is an incredibly rich prize for the global oligarchy and transnational corporations. It is the world's largest producer of cobalt ore, it also accounts for 70 percent of the world's supply of coltan, 30 percent of global diamond reserves, 10 percent of the world's supply of copper and it has much more, including deposits of zinc, manganese, gold,

uranium, tantalum and germanium. The country has been described as the “Saudi Arabia of the electric vehicle age” because of its cobalt, essential to the production of lithium-ion batteries for many electric vehicles.

The scramble for these resources has resulted in the decades of bloody civil war and social misery, with various groups and armed bands seeking to gain control of territory and establish relations with (or already have the backing of) major powers and financial interests. It is estimated that 120 armed groups operate in the eastern DRC alone.

As one commentator notes,

Despite international regulations and ‘conflict-free mineral’ certification schemes, tracking the true sources of minerals is all but impossible in eastern Congo. The minerals are sold to middlemen, smuggled across borders where they're re-packaged as legitimate exports and sold to foreign companies. Once in global supply chains, corporations can invoke plausible deniability. This cycle creates an economy of silence, in which violence pays for everyone involved, except the Congolese people.

The DRC is one of the poorest and least developed nations in the world. Its level of “human development” was ranked 171 out of 193 countries by the Human Development Index in 2023. As of 2022, and things have only gotten much worse since then, two million children were at risk of starvation and the fighting had displaced seven million people.

The footage shot by Sawasawa only confirms the atrocious conditions facing the DRC population.

We see, in the opening sequences and throughout, displaced persons with everything in their hands and on their heads—clothing, personal belongings, furniture.

A title explains that on January 27, Goma, in eastern DRC and the capital and largest city of the North Kivu province, fell to the forces of the M23 movement, a Rwandan-backed rebel

paramilitary group. The M23 defeated a combined force from various African countries, the UN and foreign mercenaries. This is one of the central episodes in the film.

The images of those whose lives are turned upside down by the relentless violence are appalling. Someone later refers to “Fear, poverty and anger.” A woman on the radio, a poet perhaps, intones, “All we know is bullets, machetes, rape, displaced persons.” And famine, disease, schools burned down.

Crowds of youth are enraged, confused. Demagogues direct their anger toward Rwanda exclusively. There are also scenes of dancing, music, people attempting to live and express their resilience and energy.

Two women stand out in the film, although their appearance is brief. They are speaking from inside one of the camps, with rubble around them.

The first begins, “When we eat, we don’t smell the food. We eat while holding our noses. Is this a life?”

The second says, “The authorities don’t solve anything, they profit from all this. And we suffer.”

The first again, “They can move us wherever they want. They’re waiting for cholera to kill our children, so they can benefit from humanitarian aid off our backs. It’s truly terrible.”

It is truly terrible.

A voiceover comments, “I was born in 1994. After walking more than 30km to escape the horrors my mother gave birth to me in the forest. The crackle of bullets is part of the music that welcomed me to this earth. Fourteen years later I survived the Kiwanja massacre [in 2008]. My little brothers and I fled to settle in Goma.”

Crowds vent their anger against the UN “peacekeepers.” The populace attacks all the UN bases in Goma, Butembo and Beni. 17,000 UN troops, \$1.5 billion per year spent in eastern Congo, and “nothing is solved.” People shout, “20 years in the Congo and you’ve done nothing” Trop c’est trop! Enough is enough!

The narrator explains, “As the M23 enters Goma... the displaced people flee and leave their miserable camps. A provisional death toll is announced at 3,000, mostly women and infants.” The images of the abandoned camps, with mounds of rubbish, and in the rain, mud, back this up.

“Death is everywhere in the DRC.” “In Goma, peace does not exist.”

The film is not strong in its commentary or understanding. There is no historical or social context provided. It is not clear what the director makes of the situation, aside from being horrified by it. A title at the end simply reports

30 years of war  
10 million dead  
7 million displaced

is necessary to turn to articles from the Marxist WSWS, like this one:

### **Belgium’s imperialist rape of Africa**

And this:

**Rwandan-backed M23 advance into DR Congo threatens regional war,**  
which explains

The unfolding disaster is inseparable from the broader descent of African states into wars orchestrated by imperialist powers and the cliques that emerged from the post-independence processes of the 1950s and 1960s.

It is a poisoned legacy of bourgeois African nationalism, which, in its pursuit of capitalist independence, upheld the artificial colonial borders imposed during the Scramble for Africa in the 1880s...

Meanwhile, the imperialist powers have waged wars across the continent to secure control over its vast resources—an effort that has intensified with the growing competition from capitalist China, which is now the largest investor and trader in Africa.

And this one, from only a day ago:

**Ebola outbreak in DRC and Uganda passes 1,000 cases, as Italy reports 2 suspected cases**

Ebola is only the most visible sign of the resulting crisis. Cholera, measles, mpox, polio and multidrug-resistant infections circulate freely through crowded displacement camps as vaccination and primary care collapse. Focusing on Bundibugyo-specific vaccines or improved genomic surveillance while ignoring war and austerity is to treat the symptom and ignore the disease.

“Enough is Enough!”—it’s true. But this has to be directed toward the central problem: world imperialism, which needs to be overthrown as rapidly as possible, by the international working class. The present system spells catastrophe, and not only in the DRC.



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To understand the situation, including the Ebola epidemic, it