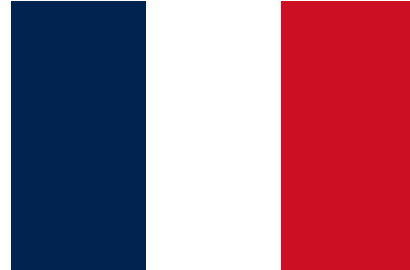




France (French Republic)

By Markus Pobl

POSITION OF FRANCE REGARDING RIGHTS OF WOMEN IN THE DRC



General information

Equality between women and men in France is guaranteed by the French Constitution, and is implemented today through laws guaranteeing important rights (e. g. vote, education, divorce, contraception) and promoting measures aiming to achieve equality. France was notably the first country worldwide to enshrine the right to abortion in its Constitution. However, violence against women (rape, sexual harassment, domestic violence, ...) and structural inequalities (gender pay gap, stereotypes, ...) are still significant challenges today: the ECtHR has repeatedly ruled against French courts for failing to judge cases of violence adequately.

Position on the matter

The promotion of women's rights around the world is key in France's international relations. France has adopted an international strategy on feminist foreign policy. The government, via the French Development Agency (AFD), has initiated multiple projects to support girls' education in parts of Africa including DRC together with local NGOs, as well as promoting women's access to sports in DRC in collaboration with the DRC government. In general, France and the DRC maintain stable diplomatic relations and frequently collaborate, mainly in education and peacekeeping matters. France

strongly condemns acts of sexual violence in the DRC.

Proposed solutions

France would very likely advocate for the protection of victims of violence and mass rapes, as perpetrated by the M23 rebels supported by Rwanda, and support the psychological, medical and socioeconomic assistance of survivors. In this context, France might focus on strengthening accountability by supporting independent investigation into war crimes and sexual violence, and coordinate diplomatically with the EU and the UN to demand the immediate withdrawal of M23 and foreign forces from DRC territory. Another aspect is providing help locally through programs improving access to education and reproductive and maternal healthcare.

Potential blocks

Most European countries share similar positions to France. Possible countries with opposing positions are (among others) Senegal, Burundi, Jordan, and other countries where women's status remains strongly determined by religion and local customs.

- [Preamble of the Constitution \[in French\]](#)





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- [French Constitution, Article 34 \[in French; right to abortion\]](#)
- [Women in France](#)
- [Strategy for Feminist Foreign Policy](#)
- [Strategy for Feminist Foreign Policy \[in French, more details\]](#)
- [Agenda "Women, Peace and Security" \[in French\]](#)
- [UN Women France](#)
- [France-DRC diplomatic relations](#)
- [AFD Project IGNITE: Inspired Girls for an Inclusive and Transforming Education \[in French\]](#)
- [AFD Project For Them: Sport and Culture in the DRC \[in French\]](#)

Relevant news articles [in French]

- [RDC - Crise à l'Est : "Le viol collectif des femmes à la prison de Goma et la mort des casques bleus de la Monusco constituent les crimes de guerre" \(France\)](#)
- [Yabisonews](#)
- [RDC : la France s'engage à renforcer l'éducation pour 45 000 jeunes filles - LePoint.cd](#)
- [99 millions de \\$ USD de don de la France pour appuyer l'éducation et encourager la pratique sportive féminine et culturelle en RDC](#)

