

ORION FORUM

Joshua Walker: Conflict and Peace in the Eastern DRC

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In this episode of Orion Talks, host Marta Furlan speaks with Dr. Joshua Walker about the current conflict and peace dynamics in the Eastern DRC. Following M23's capture of Goma and Bukavu in late January 2025, Dr. Walker starts by describing the state of the current peace processes. Highlighting the role and leverage of Qatar and the US, Dr. Walker compares their efforts with the shortcomings of past mediation efforts. He then explains how domestic politics in the DRC and regional dynamics have been influencing the M23 conflict, and their role in the current peace processes. From there, he offers his thoughts on the role that the Eastern DRC's richness in natural resources has been playing in the conflict, questioning the dominant narrative whereby the conflict is exclusively driven by natural resources.

Dr. Joshua Walker is the Director of Programs of the Congo Research Group at New York University's Center on International Cooperation. He has been working in and researching the Democratic Republic of the Congo since 2004. Before joining the Center on International Cooperation, he was a research associate at the Wits Institute for Social and Economic Research in Johannesburg, South Africa. He also worked for The Carter Center and the United Nations (UN) Peacekeeping mission in the DRC. His research on politics, economy, and culture in the DRC sits at the intersection of academic knowledge and policymaking. It has included work on extractive economies and their social effects, public culture, conflict, and politics. He holds a Ph.D. in sociocultural anthropology from the University of Chicago, a master's degree in anthropology and development from the London School of Economics, and a Bachelor of Arts degree in political science from McGill University.

**image credit: VOA.*