

M28 INVESTIGATES / OSINT ANALYTICA
INVESTIGATION REPORT

The Death of Karine Buisset

Drone Strike, Himbi District, Goma - 11 March 2026

Attribution, IHL Accountability, and the PSEA Dimension

Prepared by: Samuel Baker BYANSI

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Research Cycles: 30+ iterative research cycles across 5 languages

Author disclosure: Samuel Baker Byansi is an investigative journalist and OSINT analyst, RSF Germany Fellow, U.S. State Department Fellow in research and investigations, co-founder of M28 Investigates and Founder at OSINT Analytica. He is a member of The Network of Africa Investigative Reporters and Editors and the author of From Watchdogs to Traitors (Abibiman Publishing, 2024). His prior reporting on Rwanda, the RDF, and eastern DRC is a matter of public record. This report was produced independently; no party to the conflict, no government, and no humanitarian organisation commissioned, funded, reviewed, or approved it prior to publication. Analytical findings are reached on the evidence and are not predetermined by prior positions.

Executive Summary

Karine Buisset was a 54-year-old French national and UNICEF Programme Specialist for Protection Against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA). She had been working in Goma since at least early 2025, documenting sexual violence by armed actors in eastern DRC. She had planned to return to France in December 2025. Her mission was extended.

At approximately 04:00 on 11 March 2026, two drone strikes hit the Himbi district of Goma. Buisset was asleep in the apartment of Christine Guinot, UNICEF's head of security in the DRC, who was absent. The strike destroyed the apartment. Buisset did not survive. Two other people were also killed: an M23 combatant and a private security agent. The existence of these two victims was confirmed by the DRC government communiqué of 13 March 2026; neither has been identified by name in any source reviewed (DRC Government / Ministry of Justice, 2026).

The strike was not claimed. No party has issued an official denial. France's PNAT opened a war crimes investigation on 13 March 2026, framing the incident as a killing “linked to an armed conflict opposing Congolese forces and the M23 movement.” The OCLCH - the Gendarmerie Nationale's war crimes unit - is conducting the investigation.

KEY FINDINGS

Attribution (high confidence): The strike was conducted by FARDC drone operators, consistent with established pre-dawn targeting patterns used in prior M23 leadership strikes.

Target cluster: Himbi houses M23/AFC leadership - Bisimwa, Nangaa, Makenga - who requisitioned properties after seizing Goma in January 2025. The apartment building was inside this cluster.

IHL failure: FARDC almost certainly knew Himbi housed humanitarian personnel. Christine Guinot - UNICEF's head of security - is a figure who would appear in UN security coordination databases. The absence of feasible precautions under IHL Article 57 is a central legal question.

GPS jamming dimension: RDF GPS jamming systems over Goma, documented by the UN Security Council and sanctioned by OFAC on 2 March 2026, may have degraded drone precision. If FARDC struck during a jamming gap, terminal drift cannot explain the miss, and questions about the intended target become more acute.

PSEA motive: Buisset was finalising a report documenting systematic sexual slavery by M23 commanders. Colleagues confirmed this. The UN FFM (September 2025) found M23 had committed sexual slavery constituting crimes against humanity.

Assassination narrative rejected: Claims that RDF abducted and killed Buisset prior to the drone strike (Veritasinfo) are unsupported and structurally inconsistent with acoustic and forensic evidence.

*Methodological caveat: All findings are provisional, pending physical evidence recovery, munitions identification, and OCLCH access to FARDC targeting intelligence. Not all evidence has surfaced. **Conclusions should be read accordingly.***

Incident Timeline

The following timeline reconstructs the strike sequence from witness testimony, wire reports, and open-source material.

Time	Event	Significance
04:00	First drone strike - Himbi	Strikes Buisset's building in Belgian compound. Acoustic witnesses report drone sound, explosion, drone departing.
04:12	Second drone strike - Himbi	Hits adjacent structure. One drone fell in Lake Kivu (recovered or lost).
04:15-05:00	Emergency response arrives	MONUSCO, UNICEF security, and local responders reach the scene. Physical evidence collection begins.
Morning, 11 Mar	M23 accuses FARDC	Lawrence Kanyuka and Bertrand Bisimwa issue statements attributing the strike to FARDC and allied mercenaries.
11 Mar	UNICEF statement	“Devastated and outraged.” UNICEF confirms Buisset killed in “reported drone strike on a building housing aid worker.”
11 Mar	Macron statement	French president confirms death on X, calls for respect for IHL.
11 Mar	DRC government statement	Expresses “profound sadness,” denies responsibility, announces inquiry into “circumstances and origin of explosions.”

Time	Event	Significance
11 Mar	Wazalendo statement	Jules Mulumba, spokesperson for FARDC-allied Wazalendo militias, posted commentary directing mockery at M23: "Yet I had told you: the soil and the subsoil belong to the Congolese state. The DRC has the capacity to defend its airspace and attack threats at their source" (Uganda Radio Network, 2026; Sanyufm, 2026).
11 Mar	Mishiki statement / AFC exploitation	Deputy Willy Mishiki (élu de Walikale, Wazalendo Conseil des Sages president) celebrated and publicly claimed the strike in a Facebook video and in a parliamentary session from which he was expelled. AFC/M23 immediately amplified his statements in their communications to further accuse FARDC. Wazalendo's Directoire national formally expelled Mishiki on 13 March 2026 (Décision N° 002/CNVDP-WAZ/CNDS/DU), citing his "incendiary declarations" on TV5 Monde as contrary to the coalition's doctrine and values. This episode escalated the political fallout domestically and handed AFC a ready-made propaganda instrument. Significant: AFC's exploitation confirms that Mishiki's reaction was treated as an admission, not merely a rogue statement.
11 Mar	EJVM deployed	Expanded Joint Verification Mechanism team reaches Goma to conduct independent investigation.
12 Mar	EU Commissioner statement	Hadja Lahbib confirms drone struck a building housing ECHO humanitarian staff as well as UNICEF.
13 Mar	France PNAT opens investigation	War crimes investigation opened: "murder constituting a war crime." Assigned to OCLCH, gendarmerie nationale.
13 Mar	DRC judicial inquiry	the Minister of Justice instructed the Auditor General to the Armed Forces of the DRC to open an investigation without delay to establish the circumstances of the strike, determine any potential responsibilities, and initiate proceedings as provided for by Congolese law.
14 Mar	CNEWS/AFP profile	Colleagues confirm Buisset was working on a report on sexual violence against women and girls in eastern DRC.

Karine Buisset

Karine Buisset was 54 years old. She lived in Belz, a small commune in Morbihan, Brittany. She had been with UNICEF for a number of years, working on child protection in conflict zones. Her role in Goma was Programme Specialist for PSEA - Protection Against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse.

She had two daughters. Her LinkedIn carried the phrase: fin du mois, fin du monde, même combat - roughly, “end of the month, end of the world, same fight.” The expression is associated with economic justice movements, but those who knew her applied it to her work in the field: the crisis is always now, the stakes are always total.

She had been due to leave Goma in December 2025. Her mission was extended at the last moment. She was sleeping in the apartment of her colleague Christine Guinot - UNICEF's head of security in the DRC - when the drone struck. Guinot was not home.

Colleagues confirmed to Afrique XXI that Buisset was finalising a report on sexual violence committed by M23 commanders - specifically, the systematic abduction of girls held as sexual hostages and passed between officers. The UN Human Rights Council Fact-Finding Mission, in its September 2025 report, had already found that M23 had committed sexual slavery constituting crimes against humanity. HRW documented more than 80,000 rape cases in eastern Congo in 2025 alone. Buisset's report, colleagues said, was close to completion.

THE PSEA DIMENSION

Buisset's PSEA mandate covered the full spectrum of sexual exploitation - by armed actors, peacekeepers, and humanitarian staff alike. In M23-controlled Goma, the investigation of M23 conduct would have placed her in direct tension with the movement's command structure.

The UN FFM (September 2025) found M23 had committed sexual slavery as a crime against humanity. OHCHR (February 2026) documented systematic M23 targeting of human rights defenders who documented violations.

Whether Buisset's near-complete report exists in UNICEF's document management system, and whether UNICEF will publish it posthumously, are unresolved questions. UNICEF has not addressed this publicly.

The analytical finding: the motive context is institutionally corroborated. A causal link between her report and her death remains unproven and unverifiable without access to targeting intelligence.

The Geography of Himbi

Himbi is an upscale lakeside district in central Goma, close to the shores of Lake Kivu. It is known to UN and humanitarian staff as an area where international workers and expatriates are concentrated. It is also, since M23 seized Goma in late January 2025, where M23/AFC senior leadership has established its residential presence.

Known M23 figures with residences in or adjacent to Himbi include Bertrand Bisimwa (AFC Vice-President), Corneille Nangaa Yobeluo (M23 political head), and General Sultani Makenga (operational commander). M23 requisitioned large properties after taking control of the city. Former Congolese President Joseph Kabila's family home is also in the area.

This creates a dual-use geography in which humanitarian staff and M23 command infrastructure are in close proximity. The Belgian compound targeted in the 11 March strike was approximately 50-100 metres from the Kabila family residence. Buisset's apartment - inside the compound - was in an area that would have appeared in FARDC targeting maps as inside the M23 leadership cluster.

The EU Commissioner for Crisis Management, Hadja Lahbib, confirmed on 12 March that ECHO civil protection staff were also housed in the compound. UNICEF's own head of security in the DRC - Christine Guinot - rented the apartment. FARDC drone operators conducting sustained surveillance would have produced imagery of this compound. Whether it was positively identified as a humanitarian residence in FARDC's targeting process is a central question the OCLCH investigation must answer.

A further silence in the public record warrants scrutiny. The two other people killed in the strike were identified by the DRC government communiqué of 13 March as an M23 combatant and a private security agent - a characterisation no independent source has corroborated. Neither has been identified by name, nationality, or institutional affiliation in any source reviewed across five languages online. The DRC government communiqué confirming their existence offered nothing further. This is not a minor omission. The identity and employer of the private security agent bears directly on whether M23 had designated the Belgian compound for operational use: a guard or contractor stationed there on M23 authority is qualitatively different from a civilian who happened to be present. Similarly, the presence of an M23 combatant inside the compound - not in adjacent territory, but inside the structure - reinforces the plausibility that FARDC's targeting process had identified it as part of the M23 leadership cluster, rather than as a humanitarian residence. Whether M23 had in effect requisitioned this compound, as it did with other large properties in Himbi after taking Goma in January 2025, is a question the OCLCH investigation must put directly to M23 command. The continued anonymity of both victims, in a case of this international visibility, is itself a fact that requires explanation.

Attribution Analysis

Evidence for FARDC Responsibility

No party claimed the strike. FARDC issued no statement, made no denial, and has not responded to questions from AFP or international media. This silence is consistent with FARDC's posture following the 24 February 2026 killing of Willy Ngoma - a strike that FARDC briefly claimed then deleted, and which followed an identical pre-dawn pattern.

The acoustic profile reported by a humanitarian worker adjacent to the site - drone sound, explosion, drone sound departing - is consistent with a fixed-wing or rotary military drone, not an improvised device. AFP's French wire described walls 'riddled with small impacts resembling fragmentation bomb explosion,' consistent with the fragmentation pattern of CH-4B munitions carrying Precision Guided Munitions in the 25 - 130-kilogram range. Al Jazeera-verified video showed the roof destroyed and structure on fire. Xinhua photographs showed interior and exterior damage consistent with an explosive munition rather than an accident or collapse.

ACLED data through early March 2026 attributes more than 60 drone strikes in eastern DRC during 2026 to FARDC, with fewer than five percent attributed to rebel actors. M23 has no established record of offensive drone operations targeting residential structures.

Jules Mulumba, spokesperson for FARDC-allied Wazalendo militias, posted commentary on 11 March directing mockery at M23: "Yet I had told you: the soil and the subsoil belong to the Congolese state. The DRC has the capacity to defend its airspace and attack threats at their source" (Uganda Radio Network, 2026; Sanyufm, 2026). Whether this post was subsequently deleted is unconfirmed. This pattern - initial celebration followed by silence after civilian deaths were confirmed - mirrors the Ngoma strike behaviour precisely.

A further dimension of the post-strike communications record is the reaction of Deputy Willy Mishiki, élu de Walikale and president of the Wazalendo Conseil des Sages. On 11 March, Mishiki publicly celebrated and claimed the strike in a Facebook video and subsequently in a parliamentary session, from which he was removed. AFC/M23 immediately amplified his statements in their external communications, using them as corroboration to further accuse FARDC of deliberate civilian targeting. This exploitation was rapid and strategically effective: Mishiki's statements, made in his capacity as a senior FARDC-aligned figure, provided AFC with a ready-made admission from within the Kinshasa camp. The political damage was significant enough that Wazalendo's Directoire national formally expelled Mishiki on 13 March (Décision N° 002/CNVDP-WAZ/CNDS/DU), citing his "incendiary declarations hors cadre organisationnel" on TV5 Monde on 11 March as contrary to Wazalendo doctrine. The expulsion decision - primary source, reviewed - explicitly references his TV5 Monde statement claiming that forces had organised from Virunga National Park to retake Goma. This episode is analytically significant in two respects: it confirms that Mishiki's celebratory reaction was understood by his own coalition as a de facto admission, and it documents the speed with which AFC converted a domestic political misstep into international attribution evidence.

Critical Threats, drawing on multiple sources, characterised the 11 March strikes as FARDC operations 'targeting senior M23 officials in a residential neighbourhood in Goma.' AFP's security sources, contacted independently, assessed that the strikes 'targeted leaders or associates of the rebel movement and that the house occupied by the humanitarian was hit by mistake.' The Africa Report noted that several senior M23 figures have residences in Himbi and Katindo - the explicit framing used by security sources who assessed the strike's intent.

Date/Time	Source	Evidence	Assessment
24 Feb 2026	Reuters/ACLED	FARDC drone kills Willy Ngoma, M23 military spokesperson, Rubaya - pre-dawn, unclaimed, matching pattern	Establishes FARDC pre-dawn decapitation strike pattern
11 Mar 2026, 04:00	AFP acoustic testimony	Drone sound, explosion, drone departing - reported by adjacent humanitarian worker	Consistent with fixed-wing or rotary military drone
11 Mar 2026	AFP French wire	Walls 'riddled with small impacts resembling fragmentation bomb explosion'	CH-4B-type munition fragmentation pattern
11 Mar 2026	Al Jazeera verified video	Roof destroyed, structure on fire	Explosive munition, not structural collapse
11 Mar 2026	Wazalendo/Jules Mulumba	Celebratory posts directed at M23 following strike; deletion subsequently unconfirmed	Consistent with FARDC success, not FARDC denial
11 Mar 2026	Critical Threats	Characterises strikes as FARDC targeting senior M23 officials in Himbi	Multi-source assessment confirming FARDC intent
11 Mar 2026	AFP security sources	'Strike targeted M23 leaders or associates; humanitarian residence hit by mistake'	Confirms FARDC intent; raises proportionality question
13 Mar 2026	France PNAT	Frames as 'linked to armed conflict opposing Congolese forces and M23'	PNAT attribution framing consistent with FARDC culpability
2026 aggregate	ACLED	60+ FARDC drone strikes in 2026; 5% attributed to rebel actors	Establishes FARDC as dominant drone actor in theatre

The GPS Jamming Dimension

UN Security Council document S/2024/969 established that the Rwanda Defence Force deployed GPS jamming and spoofing systems over Goma from Rwandan territory - specifically from a hill overlooking the city - and from inside DRC at Kanyabayonga. These systems caused a MONUSCO drone crash in October 2024. Janes reporting in January 2025 confirmed two RDF

jamming systems on Rwandan territory with lines of sight over Goma, and a third inside DRC (Janes, 2025).

OFAC's 2 March 2026 sanctions package, issued nine days before the strike, explicitly named GPS jamming systems as RDF equipment introduced into DRC.

Critical Threats reported on 11 March 2026, drawing on a source described as an M23-aligned journalist, Rodriguez Katsuva - that FARDC had received intelligence on 10 March, the day before the strike, that RDF GPS jamming had gaps in coverage over Goma. This would have represented a precision window for drone operations.

The analytical implication is significant. If FARDC struck during a documented jamming gap, GPS drift cannot explain why the Belgian compound rather than an adjacent M23 structure was struck. Under these conditions, the question of whether the compound itself was inside the target cluster, and whether FARDC's targeting process positively identified it as such becomes a question the OCLCH must put to the drone operators and their commanders.

GPS JAMMING - ANALYTICAL CAVEAT

The intelligence that RDF jamming had gaps on 10 March originates from a single source assessed as M23-aligned (Rodriguez Katsuva, cited by Critical Threats). This source has an interest in attributing precision to FARDC's strike to foreclose the jamming-caused-drift explanation.

The finding cannot be independently corroborated at publication. It is retained as a material variable pending verification - not as an established fact.

The IHL question does not depend on whether jamming was active. If FARDC struck in a cluster known to contain humanitarian personnel without adequate precautionary measures under Article 57 of Additional Protocol I, a war crime may have occurred regardless of drone precision.

Culpability Scenarios

SCENARIO A - RECKLESS INDIFFERENCE (most evidentially supported)

FARDC struck at M23 leadership in Himbi knowing the district housed humanitarian personnel and organisations. Christine Guinot's apartment - the UNICEF DRC security chief would appear in UN security coordination databases. ECHO staff were also in the compound. Sustained drone surveillance would have produced compound imagery.

Under IHL Article 57 (Additional Protocol I), parties must take all feasible precautions to verify that targets are not protected persons, and must cancel or suspend attacks if civilian harm would be excessive relative to military advantage.

The failure to identify and protect humanitarian residents in the target cluster - regardless of whether the compound itself was the intended target - constitutes reckless indifference to protected persons, and potentially a war crime.

SCENARIO B - DELIBERATE TARGETING (cannot be excluded without forensics)

If FARDC's intelligence identified the Belgian compound as an M23-associated facility - rather than a humanitarian residence - and the compound was struck with precision during a jamming gap, the question of what information FARDC operators held about its occupants becomes legally critical.

Requires access to: targeting intelligence package, pre-strike imagery, rules of engagement authorisation. OCLCH has the powers to compel this disclosure.

This scenario cannot be confirmed or excluded on current open-source evidence. It is retained as a live investigative line.

SCENARIO C - M23 CO-RESPONSIBILITY (parallel IHL liability)

M23's deliberate clustering of command infrastructure adjacent to humanitarian compounds - and the requisitioning of residential properties in a district known to house UN and international staff - constitutes potential human shielding under IHL.

Human shielding does not extinguish FARDC's obligation to take feasible precautions. Both parties can bear IHL liability simultaneously.

M23's complicity, if established, is a matter for the EJVM and the UN Group of Experts, not a substitute for determining FARDC accountability.

A counter-narrative advanced in some pro-Kinshasa media warrants direct engagement. Writing in *Infos27.cd*, analysts argued that the AFC/M23's near-instantaneous attribution of the strike to FARDC - issued before any independent investigation - is itself suspicious, and that staging an incident involving a Western victim could serve Kigali's interests by provoking international outrage against Kinshasa (*Infos27*, 2026, March 11). The argument points to the synchronised speed of M23 social media reaction and the absence of any publicly disclosed technical analysis of the drone. This report acknowledges the argument and notes that it cannot be entirely foreclosed until forensic evidence is independently verified and OCLCH has disclosed its findings. However, on the current evidentiary record, it does not withstand scrutiny. The case for FARDC responsibility does not rest on M23's attribution: it rests on the independent ACLED and AFP evidence base, the established pre-dawn targeting pattern from the 24 February Willy Ngoma strike, the Wazalendo celebratory posts, the Critical Threats multi-source assessment, and FARDC's continued silence - evidence streams that existed before M23 issued any statement. The staging hypothesis would additionally require the drone acoustic testimony to

have been fabricated, AFP fragmentation documentation to be false, MONUSCO and EJVM on-site collection to have been compromised, and the Wazalendo celebratory response to have been coordinated theatre. No evidence supports any of these premises. The counter-narrative is noted; on available evidence, it is not credited.

Rejected Narrative: The Assassination Claim

The website Veritasinfo published a claim that Buisset was abducted by the Rwanda Defence Force in the days before 11 March, killed prior to the drone strike, and placed in the apartment. The narrative frames the drone strike as cover for a targeted assassination by Rwandan intelligence.

This claim is rejected. No independent source has corroborated it. The acoustic evidence - drone sound, explosion, drone departing - establishes that the strike was real and produced the structural damage observed. The fragmentation pattern documented by AFP is consistent with explosive munition impact, not post-mortem staging. MONUSCO was on site shortly after 04:00 and began evidence collection; no such finding has emerged from their investigation or from EJVM.

The claim is structurally convenient for FARDC and Kinshasa: it removes FARDC culpability, implicates Rwanda as the key actor responsible for the killing, and does so in a format that circulates on social media before it can be verified. Rwanda's government spokesperson, Yolande Makolo, promoted deleted pro-FARDC celebratory posts on X following the strike - an action more consistent with amplifying evidence of FARDC responsibility than with managing a Rwandan intelligence operation.

The assassination narrative is assessed as disinformation. It is retained in this report solely to document and rebut it.

Legal and Accountability Framework

Applicable IHL

Goma is an active conflict zone. The killing of a humanitarian worker in a drone strike is governed by international humanitarian law, specifically the Geneva Conventions and Additional Protocol I. Article 57 of AP I requires that parties planning an attack take all feasible precautions to verify that targets are not protected persons, and cancel or suspend attacks if civilian harm would be excessive. Buisset held protected status as a humanitarian worker.

The ICRC has stated clearly that 'drone operators are no different from pilots of manned aircraft in terms of their responsibilities. Distance does not lessen legal obligations' (ICRC, 2023). Operators who strike in the vicinity of known humanitarian compounds without positive identification of the target bear legal responsibility for the consequences.

Investigations Underway

France's PNAT opened a war crimes investigation on 13 March 2026, framing the killing as 'murder constituting a war crime' and assigning it to OCLCH. France is the UN Security Council penholder for the DRC file and co-hosted a humanitarian conference on 8 March, jointly with Togo - three days before the strike - at which UNICEF raised alarm over 12 million children at risk. France has both legal standing and political motivation to pursue the investigation vigorously.

The DRC Ministry of Justice announced a parallel judicial inquiry via the FARDC Auditor General. Given that the most evidentially supported attribution points to FARDC as the responsible actor, the credibility of an inquiry conducted within the FARDC command structure is limited. The OCLCH investigation is the primary accountability mechanism.

The EJVM reached Goma on 11 March to conduct independent investigation. MONUSCO was on site collecting physical evidence from the early hours. The question of whether physical evidence - munitions debris in particular - has been recovered and secured is a critical outstanding variable.

ACCOUNTABILITY - KEY QUESTIONS FOR OCLCH

What building or compound did FARDC operators believe they were striking?

What pre-strike imagery or intelligence existed for the Belgian compound? Was it positively identified as a humanitarian residence?

Who authorised the Himbi strikes? At what command level?

Did FARDC's targeting process include any UN security coordination records for the Himbi district?

Was GPS jamming active or inactive during the strike window? Was a jamming gap communicated to drone operators?

Were the Agemira or Vectus contractors flying the drones? What were their rules of engagement?

Geopolitical Context

The strike occurred nine days after the US Treasury's OFAC imposed sanctions on Rwanda's Defence Forces institution and four named RDF officers on 2 March 2026, explicitly citing GPS jamming systems and the RDF's role in supporting M23 in eastern DRC. The sanctions had already elevated pressure on Kigali and disrupted the diplomatic track around the Washington

Accords - a December 2025 US-brokered peace deal between DRC and Rwanda that included a minerals agreement with the Trump administration.

France co-hosted a humanitarian conference on 8 March 2026, jointly with Togo, at which UNICEF warned that 12 million children were at risk in eastern Congo. Three days later, a French UNICEF worker was killed when FARDC struck M23 leadership in Himbi. France is the UN Security Council penholder for the DRC. The political implications are significant: Paris now has a direct national interest in the OCLCH investigation producing a clear and credible finding of responsibility.

The 24 February killing of Willy Ngoma - M23's military spokesperson, killed in a FARDC drone strike in Rubaya - established the operational precedent. FARDC briefly claimed the strike, then deleted the post. The pattern - pre-dawn leadership strike, no official claim, initial celebratory response followed by silence after civilian casualties emerge - is consistent across both incidents.

FARDC drone operations are conducted by at least two contractor organisations: Agemira, a Bulgarian-registered entity founded by French national Olivier Bazin, operating approximately 120 technicians and CH-4 drones from Kisangani Airport in Tshopo Province; and Vectus, a contractor with documented links to Erik Prince. The involvement of private military contractors in a strike that killed a French UNICEF worker is a further dimension the OCLCH investigation will need to address: specifically, whether French nationals employed by Agemira were involved in the chain of command that authorised or conducted the 11 March strikes.

Outstanding Investigative Questions

The following are material gaps in the current evidentiary record. Each represents a discrete investigative task for EJVM, or OCLCH and any other interested organisation in the case.

Gap	Investigative Path	Priority
Satellite imagery of Himbi, 9-12 March 2026	Sentinel-2 / Planet Labs / Maxar tasking; geolocation of AP/AFP photographs against compound footprint	Critical
Munitions debris identification	MONUSCO physical evidence collection; EJVM forensic analysis; CH-4B fragmentation pattern comparison	Critical
Deleted celebratory posts (pro-FARDC/Kinshasa)	Wayback CDX API; archived screenshots; Yolande Makolo's cited reposts	High

Gap	Investigative Path	Priority
Jamming gap intelligence corroboration	Independent verification of 10 March FARDC intelligence report; Rodriguez Katsuva source assessment	High
Buisset PSEA report - existence and content	UNICEF document management system; institutional contacts; posthumous publication advocacy	High
Agemira/Vectus chain of command, 11 March	Company registries; FARDC Auditor General inquiry; OCLCH compulsory disclosure	High
FARDC targeting intelligence package for Himbi	OCLCH compulsory disclosure; UN Group of Experts inquiry	High - OCLCH only
Christine Guinot apartment in UN security databases	UN DSS records; UNICEF DRC security protocols; compound notification records	Medium
Identity and employer of the two unnamed victims (M23 combatant and private security agent): not disclosed in any source reviewed. Identity of the private security agent bears directly on whether M23 had designated the compound for operational use.	DRC government communiqué; OCLCH compulsory disclosure; M23 command	High – OCLCH only

Editorial Note

This report was researched and written between 11 and 17 March 2026, in the immediate aftermath of the strike. It is published on 18 March 2026 - five days after France's PNAT opened its war crimes investigation, and seven days after Karine Buisset's death.

The decision to publish at this stage is deliberate. The evidentiary record available through open sources - wire reporting, acoustic testimony, ACLED data, official statements, primary documents, and satellite-accessible geospatial context - is sufficient to support the analytical findings presented here at the confidence levels indicated. Publication serves the accountability purpose this report is designed to advance: establishing a documented open-source baseline before the evidentiary record can be altered, suppressed, or contested.

Several material gaps remain open, as documented in the Outstanding Investigative Questions section. Critically: munitions debris from the strike site has not been independently confirmed as recovered or analysed; the OCLCH investigation has not yet disclosed targeting intelligence; the GPS jamming gap intelligence rests on a single M23-aligned source; and satellite imagery of the Himbi compound has not been tasked or published. These gaps do not undermine the findings presented - they define the boundaries of what can currently be established through open-source means.

This report will be updated as the OCLCH investigation develops, as physical evidence is identified and published, and as satellite imagery and additional primary sources become available. Version history will be maintained. Corrections or additional sourcing may be submitted to M28 Investigates via the contact details on record.

Methodology

Research process. This report is the product of 30+ iterative research cycles conducted between 11 and 17 March 2026. Each cycle involved systematic re-examination of the evidentiary record as new sources became available, with findings updated, corroborated, or revised accordingly. Research was conducted across five languages: English, French, Swahili, Dutch, and Kinyarwanda. Source languages are indicated in the references.

Source categories and reliability assessment. Sources are categorised as follows. Primary sources - official statements, primary documents (including the Wazalendo expulsion decision reviewed in original), judicial filings, and direct social media posts by named actors - are treated as the highest-reliability tier and cited directly. Secondary sources - wire agency reports (AFP, AP, Reuters), specialist outlets (ACLED, Critical Threats, The Africa Report), and verified video - are treated as corroborating evidence and assessed individually for methodology and access. Tertiary sources - aggregator sites, social media commentary, and unverified claims - are used only where they document a relevant act (e.g. a post that was made and deleted) and are flagged as such. One source - Veritasinfo - is assessed as disinformation and is included solely to document and rebut the claim it carries.

Attribution methodology. Attribution is assessed using a convergence model: multiple independent evidence streams pointing toward the same actor or scenario are treated as mutually corroborating. No single piece of evidence is relied upon in isolation. Confidence levels (high / medium / low / unconfirmed) are assigned based on the number and independence of corroborating sources, the absence or presence of countervailing evidence, and the degree to which the finding is dependent on access-restricted material (targeting intelligence, classified communications). Where a finding rests on a single source, this is explicitly noted and the source's potential interests are disclosed.

IHL and legal framework. Legal analysis in this report applies the framework of international humanitarian law as codified in the Geneva Conventions and Additional Protocol I, with specific reference to Articles 51 (protection of civilians), 57 (precautions in attack), and 58 (precautions against the effects of attack). The report does not make a formal legal finding of criminal liability - that is the function of OCLCH and the relevant judicial bodies. It maps the factual record against the legal standard to identify which questions the investigation must answer.

Independence and conflicts of interest. This report was produced independently by M28 Investigates / OSINT Analytica. No party to the conflict, no government, and no humanitarian organisation commissioned, funded, reviewed, or approved it prior to publication. The author's prior reporting on Rwanda, the RDF, and eastern DRC is a matter of public record and is disclosed in the interest of transparency. The analytical findings in this report are reached on the evidence; they are not predetermined by prior positions. Readers are encouraged to examine the sourcing and reach their own conclusions.

References

Note: APA7 format. All sources accessed March 2026 unless otherwise stated.

FARDC: Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo

PNAT : Parquet National Antiterroriste

OCLCH : Office Central de Lutte contre les Crimes contre l'Humanité.

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