

Kigali, Rwanda, April 14 (Infosplusgabon) - The United States government has announced nearly US\$67 million in additional humanitarian assistance to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DR Congo), according to an official statement made available on Friday in Kigali.

The announcement of assistance came on the sideline of the DR Congo Humanitarian Conference held in Geneva, Switzerland.

It said that the United States is currently providing food, protection, shelter, health care and other urgent aid for vulnerable Congolese and refugees in the DR Congo.

Under the new intervention scheme, the allocated funding will support the humanitarian response for new Congolese refugees in the region, including the construction of new settlements, water, infrastructure, logistics, and other life-saving assistance.

"While the US is disappointed that the government of the DR Congo elected not to participate in today's conference, we nevertheless urge the Congolese government to continue working to ensure that life-saving humanitarian assistance reaches those in need," the statement said.

DR Congo boycotted a UN donor conference in Geneva on Friday that sought to raise US\$1.7 billion.

Official reports indicate that the intensifying conflicts in DR Congo since late 2016 have left more than 13 million people in need of urgent humanitarian assistance, including 7.7 million people facing acute food insecurity. However, the government has exaggerated the problem.

It is said said that about 4.5 million Congolese have been displaced from their homes within the country, double the number displaced at the beginning of 2017.

DR Congo's neighbours host some 700,000 of the refugees, including more than 50,000 who have fled so far in 2018.

Since October 2016, the US government has provided nearly US\$277 million in critical assistance to people in need in the DR Congo and for Congolese refugees in the region.

"We urge more donors to provide new and additional resources to help those who are suffering in the midst of this terrible conflict and the Congolese government to take steps to address underlying causes of insecurity," the statement said.

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