



Copper \$14,545/t ▲ +2.1% Cobalt \$56,290/t → +0.0% Tin \$56,075/t → -0.0% Gold \$4,390.70/oz ▲ +1.3%
Brent \$88.52/bbl ▲ +5.9% CDF per USD 2,265.56 ▼ -0.2%

Week-on-week close from live market feeds — ICE Brent front-month · LME/Fastmarkets Cobalt · LME cash settlement, as of 16 Aug 2026. Prices pulled from source at collection, not model-generated.

Abstract

DOMESTIC

The week saw intensifying armed conflict across eastern provinces—heavy artillery clashes resumed in Kalehe (South Kivu) between FARDC and AFC/M23, while CRP militia engaged FARDC in Djugu (Ituri) and Wazalendo clashes with AFC/M23 continued in Walikale (North Kivu). Civilian toll mounted with killings reported in Mambasa, Kalehe, Masisi, and abductions on the Kiwanja–Kanyabayonga road. Domestically, President Tshisekedi referred a contested referendum law back to Parliament for reconsideration after civil society opposition, while political gatherings persisted despite a government ban on mass assemblies. Infrastructure demands (RN17, RN2) triggered strikes and youth protests in Bandundu and Mwenga. Separately, teacher salary arrears threatened school reopening in Malemba-Nkulu. Airtel Africa and Starlink launched Direct-to-Cell satellite service in the DRC on 14 August, with ARPTC facilitation. The Central Bank announced franc appreciation—its strongest since creation—and disclosed plans to accumulate monetary gold to boost foreign exchange reserves.

REGIONAL

The Ebola Bundibugyo outbreak remained in intense transmission phase, confirmed as originating from a new zoonotic spillover affecting both DRC and Uganda, while a separate Sud-Kivu outbreak ended after 42+ days without new cases. Frontline response staff in Kisangani demanded overdue salary payments, and a diocesan pilgrimage in Ituri was cancelled due to outbreak risk. The International Contact Group endorsed an FDLR disarmament protocol on 13 August—a significant diplomatic development, though previous disarmament efforts (2009, 2015, 2019) failed to achieve meaningful combatant reductions. Analyst Patrick Mbeko criticised Kinshasa's negotiating strategy with Rwanda, citing Kigali's more disciplined and centrally managed diplomatic messaging as a structural advantage.

INTERNATIONAL

President Tshisekedi undertook a working visit to Gabon on 15 August, opening a new phase in bilateral relations and signalling diversification beyond the DRC's traditional diplomatic axis. Congolese MP Christelle Vuanga was elected Coordinator of the Human Rights Commission of Parliamentarians for Global Action. Analyst Patrick Mbeko argued that US involvement in the Great Lakes region is primarily driven by strategic competition with China rather than solely by peace-building objectives, framing Washington's engagement as increasingly transactional.

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Table 1: Summary of Key Findings		
Category	Findings	Implications
Income Inequality	Income inequality has increased significantly over the past decade, with the top 1% of households capturing a disproportionate share of total income.	Increased income inequality may lead to reduced social mobility and increased poverty.
Wealth Inequality	Wealth inequality is even more pronounced than income inequality, with the top 1% of households holding a large majority of total net worth.	High levels of wealth inequality can exacerbate income inequality and limit opportunities for lower-income households.
Regional Disparities	There are significant regional disparities in both income and wealth, with higher concentrations of wealth and income in certain areas.	Regional disparities may contribute to uneven economic development and social inequality.
Policy Recommendations	Implementing progressive tax policies, strengthening social safety nets, and promoting inclusive economic growth are key strategies to address wealth inequality.	These policies can help reduce income and wealth disparities and promote a more equitable society.

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