



Statement by the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes region

Nairobi, 22 November 2022 [English version]

United Nations Special Envoy Huang XIA calls for immediate end of violence in eastern DRC, welcomes regional efforts to address the security situation and restore confidence through dialogue

Huang Xia, the Special Envoy of the United Nations Secretary-General for the Great Lakes region, welcomes the sustained political and diplomatic engagement by leaders of the region in response to the deteriorating security situation in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and the tensions between some countries in the region.

Special Envoy Xia salutes the leadership of Presidents Evariste Ndayishimiye of Burundi, as chair of the East African Community (EAC), and João Lourenço of Angola, as chair of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) and as mandated by the African Union (AU), as well as of former President Uhuru Kenyatta of Kenya as Facilitator of the EAC-led peace process in efforts to put an end to the activities of the M23, the FDLR, the ADF, the RED-Tabara and all local armed groups still operating in eastern DRC, and to restore confidence through dialogue. He also takes note of progress in the deployment of the EAC Regional Force.

Special Envoy Xia emphasizes the importance of steps to be taken by all stakeholders to implement agreements reached during the recent regional engagements so as to create the basis for advancing peace and stability through open, frank and sincere dialogue.

Further recalling the commitments made under the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the DRC and the region signed in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on 24 February 2013, Special Envoy Xia reiterates the importance of this Framework and other regional agreements, including the 2006 Pact of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR), to address the root causes of instability in eastern DRC and bring about lasting peace and prosperity in the Great Lakes region.

The safety and well-being of the most vulnerable in society must be at the forefront of collective efforts, as is the need for dialogue and reconciliation to be inclusive involving women and youth. Reiterating his deep concern about the humanitarian consequences of the current crisis on the civilian population, Special Envoy Xia urges all armed groups, including the M23, to immediately cease all forms of violence and to engage resolutely in the process of voluntary disarmament. He further calls on the M23, to withdraw from all occupied positions, in line with the EAC Heads of State's decision in their Communique of 20 June 2022.

Special Envoy Xia reiterates his unwavering readiness, and that of the United Nations overall, to extend full support to the ongoing regional efforts.