

**Communiqué of the 11th High-Level Meeting of the Regional Oversight Mechanism of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the region
Bujumbura, 6 May 2023**

We, the Heads of State and Government of the Signatory Countries of the Peace, Security and Cooperation (PSC) Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the region (hereinafter the PSC Framework), held our 11th meeting of the Regional Oversight Mechanism (ROM) of the PSC Framework on 6 May 2023 in Bujumbura, Burundi. The meeting was hosted by His Excellency Évariste Ndayishimiye, President of the Republic of Burundi. The purpose of the meeting was to review recent developments in the region as well as progress and challenges in the implementation of the PSC Framework, ten years after its signing on 24 February 2013 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

The Heads of State and Government or Representatives of the following Signatory Countries participated in the meeting:

Republic of Angola

Republic of Burundi

Central African Republic

Republic of the Congo

Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)

Republic of Kenya

Republic of Rwanda

Republic of South Africa

Republic of South Sudan

United Republic of Tanzania

Republic of Uganda

Republic of Zambia

The Secretary-General of the United Nations (UN), the Chairperson of the African Union (AU) Commission, the Executive Secretary of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) and the Deputy Executive Secretary of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) in charge of corporate affairs also participated in the deliberations as Guarantor Institutions of the PSC Framework.

We

1. Reaffirm our respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity, notably intangibility of borders, and the political independence of all countries in the region;
2. Express concern over the tensions between the DRC and the Republic of Rwanda and called for restraint, de-escalation of tensions, and pursuit of dialogue between the two countries;
3. Commend His Excellency João Manuel Gonçalves Lourenço, President of the Republic of Angola, Chairperson of the ICGLR, AU Champion for Peace and Reconciliation in Africa, and mediator designated by the AU to maintain dialogue between the DRC and Rwanda, for his engagement; and urge both countries to implement the decisions reached under the “Luanda Process”;

4. Condemn the occupation by the M23 of territories inside the DRC and call for its withdrawal to positions in accordance with the Communiqué of Luanda of 23 November 2022 and the decisions of the Nairobi Process; Express our concern over the worsened security situation in Eastern DRC since then as well as its serious humanitarian consequences. We further condemn the actions of foreign and local armed groups operating in Eastern DRC, including the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF)-Madina at Tauheed Wau Mujahedeen (MTM), *les Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda* (FDLR), *Résistance pour un État de Droit au Burundi* (RED Tabara), *Coopérative pour le développement du Congo* (CODECO), Zaire militia and Mai Mai, and urge them to immediately cease hostilities without conditions, engage in the process of voluntary disarmament and community reintegration for Congolese armed groups, in the case of foreign armed groups, the repatriation to their countries of origin. We direct the Operational Cell of the Contact and Coordination Group on non-military measures to pursue its engagement with foreign armed groups in this regard in full transparency with the Congolese government;
5. Further condemn the massacres perpetrated against the peaceful civilian population in Kizimba in the territory of Masisi, DRC during the night of 3 to 4 May 2023 and demand an independent investigation, in collaboration with the Government of the DRC and with the support of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO), the EAC Regional Force, and the Ad Hoc Verification Mechanism, in order to ensure that the perpetrators of these odious crimes are brought to justice.
6. Express our compassion following the disappearance of dozens of people in Rwanda due to floods linked to the effects of climate change.
7. Welcome and encourage the East African Community (EAC)-led Nairobi Process under the aegis of His Excellency Évariste Ndayishimiye, President of the Republic of Burundi, EAC Chairperson and AU Champion for Youth, Peace and Security, and His Excellency Uhuru Kenyatta, EAC Facilitator and former President of the Republic of Kenya; and urge all the parties to remain committed to this peace process and to honor the commitments made to cease hostilities during the Nairobi III consultations.
8. Reiterate our support to the Luanda Process and the EAC-led Nairobi Process;
9. Urge all partners to support these initiatives and their outcomes, including with regard to assistance towards demobilization of combatants of armed groups and their reinsertion and reintegration into civilian lives;
10. Reiterate our request to MONUSCO, the EAC Regional Force and the Ad Hoc Verification Mechanism to continue to enhance coordination and synergies with the *Forces armées de la République démocratique du Congo* (FARDC) in order to impress upon all armed groups to disarm. We also encourage other troops deployed through bilateral arrangements to fully commit themselves to the same; Encourage the DRC to authorize the continuation and the finalization of the deployment of the Regional Force;
11. Further express our deep concern over the escalation of violence between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) in the Republic of the Sudan and call for an immediate cessation of hostilities, a return to dialogue and a peaceful political transition. We encourage the AU, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the UN Trilateral Mechanism on Sudan's political transition to pursue their efforts to avoid a further escalation of violence;
12. Welcome the progress achieved by the parties to the Revitalized Peace Agreement for the resolution of conflict in the Republic of South Sudan;
13. Take note of progress and challenges in the implementation of the PSC Framework since its signing ten years ago and reiterate its pertinence as a vehicle for addressing the root causes of

instability in the region and request the Technical Support Committee (TSC) to conduct an independent, frank, and sincere assessment of the implementation of the PSC Framework, highlighting its strengths and weaknesses, and of adherence by the signatory countries to its principles and commitments;

14. Request the inclusion of the conclusions and recommendations of the aforementioned assessment in the Roadmap for the Revitalization of the PSC Framework drafted by the TSC and to report at the next high-level meeting of the ROM for endorsement;

15. Welcome the progress made in the implementation of the Action Plan (2021–2023) of the UN Strategy for Peace Consolidation, Conflict Prevention and Conflict Resolution in the Great Lakes Region (2020–2030), aimed at supporting the countries and people of the region in their efforts to achieve lasting peace, security and development;

16. Express support for the full participation of women and youth in conflict prevention, peacebuilding and political dialogue in the region, including the Nairobi and Luanda Processes, as well as the efforts for the revitalization of the PSC Framework, and encourage the AU Special Envoy for Women, Peace and Security and the co-chairs of FemWise to work closely with the Guarantor Institutions and Signatory Countries in this regard;

17. Encourage the Republic of Burundi as incoming ROM chair to organize a platform for dialogue with women and youth of the region to allow them to contribute to the region's peace efforts;

18. Note that Angola will host on 25-26 May 2023 a forum on women, peace and democracy as well as on its role in peacebuilding and conflict prevention in Africa.

19. Welcome the initiative of His Excellency João Manuel Gonçalves Lourenço, President of the Republic of Angola, Chairperson of the ICGLR, to convene on 15 May 2023 an extraordinary Summit of ICGLR to address latest developments in the region, particularly the political and security situation in Eastern DRC and in the Republic of the Sudan;

20. Welcome and encourage efforts to deepen regional socio-economic integration and promote a responsible, transparent management of natural resources through the full implementation of the recommendations of the high-level regional workshop on this matter that was held in 2021 in Khartoum, The Sudan;

21. Direct the Ministers of Justice and relevant authorities to step up the fight against impunity in the region through the full implementation of the Kinshasa Declaration on Enhancing Judicial Cooperation in the Great Lakes Region signed in June 2022;

22. Express gratitude to His Excellency Félix Antoine Tshisekedi Tshilombo, President of the DRC, for his leadership as Chair of the ROM from February 2022 to May 2023;

23. Also extend appreciation to His Excellency Évariste Ndayishimiye, President of the Republic of Burundi, to the Government and people of Burundi for hosting the 11th ROM High-Level Meeting as well as for the warm welcome, the hospitality and all the courtesies extended to us during our stay in Bujumbura;

24. Finally, we agree to meet again in Kampala, Uganda, in 2024 to further review the implementation of the PSC Framework.

Bujumbura, 6 May 2023