



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Towards the operationalization of a Youth Forum in the Great Lakes region**

**25 August 2015** - Special Envoy Saïd Djinnit today convened a regional stakeholders' meeting in support of the Youth Forum of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR). Representatives of the ICGLR Secretariat, the Kenyan Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, the Ministry of Devolution and Planning, the ICGLR Youth Forum, as well as the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes region (O/SESG-GL) were in attendance.

The meeting received briefings from the Kenyan Government representatives, the ICGLR Deputy Executive Secretary, and the President of the ICGLR Youth Forum on progress to establish the Secretariat in Nairobi and on the programmes of the Forum respectively. Participants also discussed other issues, including roles for Heads of State in the region to champion youth issues in line with the objectives of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework (PSCF) agreement.

"Today marks a significant step towards the realization of our common vision to empower our youths, and to give them the necessary space to contribute to regional peace, stability and development as advocated by the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework agreement for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the region. With this Forum, the PSCF is indeed on its way to becoming a 'Framework of Hope' for young men and women in the Region," Special Envoy Djinnit said.

The meeting is a follow-up to the commitments of the Extraordinary Summit on youth held in Nairobi in July 2014, during which the ICGLR established a regional Youth Forum to be based in the Kenyan capital. The leaders of the region had agreed that the Youth Forum would: (1) provide a platform for interactive and meaningful youth engagement in the ICGLR member states; (2) be a key facility for information and research on youth development and empowerment; (3) advocate for and recommend

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policies that promote youth development in member states; (4) support and enhance capacity and skills development for youth in the region; (5) advocate and work against all forms of sexual and gender-based violence and the protection of civilians including youth, women and children; and (6) ensure effective resource mobilization for the programmes and projects of the Forum.

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