

HIGH-LEVEL REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON JUSTICE AND GOOD GOVERNANCE
Combating impunity and upholding human rights as key contributions to peace and security

Technical-level Consultation

13-14 May 2019

Windsor Golf Hotel & Country Club - Nairobi, Kenya

Keynote Speaker: *Ambassador Liberata Mulamula*

“Setting the scene on the objectives of the Consultative Meeting.”

Talking Points:

- I am honored to join you at this high-level consultation meeting and very pleased to be back in Nairobi, a place that is very memorable to me and close to my heart.
- It is here in Nairobi where I was handed the baton a decade ago by the Regional Heads of State under the Chairmanship of then President Mwai Kibaki to establish the ICGLR Secretariat as its first the First Executive Secretary following the signing of the Pact on peace, stability and development in the Great Lakes Region on 15th December 2006. I said at that Summit that failure was not my option and am still convinced that remains the spirit of my successor(s).
- I am happy that ICGLR has lived the test of time and would like to congratulate the new UN Special Envoy of the Great Lakes Region, Ambassador Huang Shia on his appointment and welcome him to the Region. As all Chinese, he has hit the ground running
- I commend Ambassador Zachary Muburi Muita for the sterling job in spearheading the ICGLR and keeping the momentum for peace, security and stability in the region.
- I thank you for the kind invitation and opportunity to address this august assembly.
- This meeting is indeed timely considering the many unfolding events in the region of the recent past and the ongoing regional and international efforts for stabilization and development in the region.
- The convening of this meeting has demonstrated the ardent need for addressing the implementation deficit that has plagued countless legal instruments, frameworks and commitments adopted at the international, regional and national levels in the search for durable peace, stability, justice and enduring democracy and good governance in the region.

- The Great Lakes Region has many “**firsts**”, the good and the ugly. It was first to experience the scourge of genocide of such magnitude in Rwanda but also the first to adopt a comprehensive and legally binding Pact and its Protocols that address the complex issues of good governance deficit, prevention and punishment of the crimes of genocide and war crimes; prevention and suppression of sexual violence against women and children; the fight against the illegal exploitation of natural resources, and judicial cooperation.
- I am happy to note that there will be various panels focusing on *Combating impunity and upholding human rights as key contributions to peace and security*.
- I have no doubt that discussions and conclusions of this experts meeting will advise the Ministers of Justice on concrete action points in the implementation of the strategic decisions made by our leaders both at regional and country levels.
- I was privileged to serve as the first Executive Secretary of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) from 2006 to 2011.
- The idea of an international conference on the Great Lakes Region was born out of the recognition that political instability and endemic conflicts and violence in the Great Lakes have a considerable regional dimension and thus require a concerted regional effort to promote sustainable peace and development.
- The complexities of the issues involved meant that any efforts to resolve conflict in any respective area entails a regional approach.
- ICGLR was also premised on the key principles of ownership, inclusiveness, partnership and complementarity.
- Ten years on I am happy to see that the partnerships between the region and the UN has grown from strength to strength. Today’s meeting is a clear testimony of the commitment of the ICGLR to provide a platform for coherence and coordinated approach among regional and international actors in finding workable solutions to common problems.

Gender and Sexual Gender based Violence

- While there have been significant progress and achievements in the region as outlined by the Special Envoy and others, allow me to underline the fact that violence against women remains perhaps the most pervasive human rights violation in the region.

- Women have become a factor of glaring statistics in the region. DRC is reported as having some of the highest rates of sexual violence in the world **with some 48 women estimated to be raped every hour according to one study by the American Journal of Public Health**. Dr. Denise Mukwege, the 2018 Nobel Prize Laureate for his fight and campaign against SGBV in DRC who could have amplified these statistics, regrettably could not be here with us due to other prior commitments
- At one time WHO reported that among women aged between 15 and 44, acts of violence cause more death and disability than cancer, malaria, traffic accidents and wars combined.
- Additional data available in the period of 2010-2012 indicated that at least one in every three women in the Great Lakes region has been beaten, coerced into sex or abused in some way or the other- most often by someone she knows husband or another male family member.
- The situation was even worse in conflict and post-conflict countries, where it was reported that at least *one in every two women have faced some SGBV*
- While this could sound perhaps as a bit of exaggeration, our task during my tenure at ICGLR was to change this image by marshaling the necessary political will to tackle these shameful acts.
- The convening of the first Special ICGLR Summit in Kampala, Uganda in December 2011 was in response to these glaring reports and statistics.
- I have been honored to chair and moderate the Panel on this pressing issue of SGBV in the region and look forward to engaging the panelists and all the participants experts on actionable recommendations to advance the fight against SGBV.
- The importance of prevention and protection of our sisters, daughters and mothers against sexual and gender- based violence (SGBV) is self-evident. The impact of SGBV on security, stability and sustainable development is also well documented.
- The ICGLR adopted the Protocol on Prevention and Suppression of Violence against Women and Children to address the challenges associated with SGBV in the Great Lakes Region.
- ICGLR also issued the Goma Declaration on - Elimination of Sexual Violence and the

Fight against Impunity in the Great Lakes Region in 2008 and convened a Special Summit dedicated to this scourge against humanity in Kampala, Uganda in 2011.

- The Heads of State in the Great Lakes region at the Kampala Summit in 2011 reaffirmed their commitment to end sexual and gender-based violence under the Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region (2006) and the Protocol on Prevention and Suppression of Sexual Violence against Women and Children (2006).
- The Kampala summit also agreed to fully domesticate and implement the Protocol on Non- aggression and mutual defense, protocol on prevention and suppression of sexual violence against women and children as well as the Protocol on judicial cooperation, in order to eradicate the existing armed groups, combat sexual and gender- based violence and cooperate in matters of extradition, judicial investigation and prosecution of the perpetrators.
- The summit committed to increase financial and technical support for judicial and security sector reform on human and women’s rights and SGBV eradication. This will provide institutional capacity and accountability to protect women, girls, men and boys from sexual and Gender Based violence in peace time, during conflict and post-conflict situations as a political and security strategy within 12 months.
- The Regional Leaders also committed to allocate budget lines for prevention and response to SGBV particularly the ministries of Health, Defense, Security, Interior, Local Government, Justice, Education and Youth.
- More importantly the Kampala summit declared - **Zero Tolerance Now - on SGBV crimes** and undertook to launch national campaigns for zero tolerance on SGBV simultaneously, involving men, in all ICGLR countries and establish Special Courts to prosecute the perpetrators.
- However, sexual gender- based violence remains a serious challenge in the Great Lakes

Region despite these concerted efforts. Reports from member countries indicate that incidences of SGBV are still high despite policy, legislative, programmatic, institutional and administrative measures to eradicate the problem. While the Leaders collectively declared zero tolerance, more often is zero attention.

- The evidence on SGBV in the Region underscores the need to tackle SGBV in three levels namely: prevention, protection and fighting impunity by implementing laws that exist in member states and at regional and international levels through domestication and mobilising the necessary arms of government such as police, judiciary and prisons in the administration of justice.
- I recall in 2010-2011 during my tenure at ICGLR a series of activities were conducted for security forces to sensitize them on ICGLR protocol on Sexual and Gender based violence and related instruments so that they can use their law-enforcement mandate to investigate, report and prosecute cases of sexual violence to protect women and children.
- The establishment of the Regional Training Facility on Prevention of Sexual and gender-based Violence in the Great Lakes Region in Kampala Uganda following the ICGLR Summit Declaration of 2011 on SGBV was part of such efforts. I am pleased to learn that the Office of the Special Envoy for the GLR supports this institution.
- Countries in the region have legislation and policies that are relevant to the restoration of justice and ensuring Good Governance through respect of the rule of law, human rights and fighting impunity.
- It is evident that although regional and international instruments on human rights have been ratified by Member States, concrete actions need to be urgently initiated in a multi-cultural, multi-sectoral and multidimensional manner both at national and regional level.
- The Sustainable Development Goals 16.3 that has been quoted in extenso also calls on Member States to “Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and

ensure equal access to justice for all... and building capacity at all levels. to prevent violence and combat terrorism...

- We welcome the recent adoption by the UN Security Council Resolution on combating Sexual Violence in conflict and commend this action as the good step in the right direction. However, like all other countless resolutions, the challenge is in its implementation and enforcement
- It is therefore my sincere hope that we will have a fruitful discussion with focus on the way forward in terms of fighting impunity and upholding human rights, respect of the rule of law and ensuring good governance. *We know the ‘what’, we know the ‘why’, we know the ‘who’.* We need to address the ‘**How**’ in the continued search for sustainable solutions.
- I am encouraged by the presence in the room of the legal practitioners and members of the judiciary from the ICGLR Member States working together in close collaboration with the Office of the UNSG Special Envoy of the GLR, the OHCHR and representatives from other regions such as ECOWAS at this high- level consultation meeting.
- Looking forward to fruitful deliberations.

I thank you for your kind attention