

Communiqué

1. From 3 to 6 May 2021, experts from Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, the United Republic of Tanzania and Uganda held a workshop in Goma, the DRC to launch and operationalize the Contact and Coordination Group (CCG). This workshop followed the decision of the third meeting of the Heads of Intelligence and Security Services held on 3 February 2020 in Nairobi, Kenya, and its subsequent endorsement by the Heads of State during the 8th Ordinary Summit of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) on 20 November 2020.
2. The workshop was supported by the DRC National Oversight Mechanism and the Guarantors of the Peace, Security and Cooperation (PSC) Framework for the DRC and the region, namely the United Nations, the African Union, the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) and the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC). Representatives of Angola, Central African Republic, Kenya, the United Nations Stabilization Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO), the ICGLR Expanded Joint Verification Mechanism (EJVM) as well as the Economic Community of Great Lakes Countries, the outgoing EJVM commander, the representative of GIZ, and representatives from Civil Society and Women's and Youth's Organizations were also in attendance.
3. The participants reiterated the need for a comprehensive approach to eradicate negative forces operating in Eastern DRC and the Region, and the imperative of complementarity between military efforts and non-military measures.
4. The Participants also agreed on an Action Plan for the next two years that identifies areas of engagement as follows: (i) encourage identified negative forces to peacefully adhere to voluntary disarmament and repatriation processes without political conditions; ii) undertake initiatives with a view to cut their supply sources at the local, national and regional levels, as well as to prevent recruitment and illegal flows of small arms and light weapons; iii) improve the DDR programs through the reinforcement of existing mechanisms and enhance coordination among national commissions at the regional level; iv) identify actions aimed at addressing the root causes of the activism of negatives forces.
5. Participants further agreed that the Action Plan would be implemented in line with their commitments under the PSC Framework, the Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes region, the respect of human rights and international humanitarian law, as well as in synergy and complementarity with existing mechanisms.
6. Member States have requested the support of the Guarantors of the PSC Framework to the operational cell that will be established and will be composed of national experts tasked with the day-to-day coordination of the implementation of non-military measures.
7. Member States and Guarantors agreed to hold physical meetings of the CCG on a biannual basis that would be complemented by virtual meetings depending on the issues at hand.

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8. Finally, it was agreed that the outcomes of the workshop would be presented for endorsement to the Heads of Intelligence and Security Services and the Guarantors of the PSC Framework at their fourth meeting due to take place in Bujumbura in June 2021.
9. Participants expressed their appreciation to the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo for the warm welcome and excellent arrangements made to facilitate the organization of the workshop which was held in strict observance of COVID-19 standard operating procedures.

Done in Goma on 6 May 2021.

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