

Communiqué of the first meeting of the Regional Oversight Mechanism of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework Agreement for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the region, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

We, signatories to the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework Agreement for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the region, held our first meeting of the Regional Oversight Mechanism on 26 May in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on the margins of the Commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Organization of African Unity-African Union. This high-level inaugural meeting was jointly convened by the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, H.E. Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma and the United Nations Secretary-General, H.E. Mr. Ban Ki-moon. The purpose of the meeting was to review recent developments in the region and progress in the implementation of the Framework Agreement signed on 24 February 2013 as well as agree on the way forward.

The Heads of States, Heads of Government or Representatives of the following countries participated in the meeting:

Democratic Republic of the Congo
Republic of Angola
Republic of Burundi
Republic of the Congo
Republic of Rwanda
Republic of South Africa
Republic of South Sudan
United Republic of Tanzania
Republic of Uganda
Republic of Zambia

Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) participated in the deliberations.

We welcomed the designation of Mrs. Mary Robinson as the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes of Africa and expressed appreciation on her continued consultation with the Government of the DRC as well as national, regional and international stakeholders.

We reaffirmed our respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of all the countries in the region and pledged our continued commitment to the provisions of the Framework.

We acknowledged the indispensable role of regional bodies, in particular the African Union, the ICGLR, and SADC, in contributing to peace in the DRC and to bringing an end to the conflict. We underlined that the continued implementation of the Framework should be conducted in a spirit of unity, cooperation and shared responsibility for all regional and international actors working towards a durable peace process in eastern DRC.

We welcomed the establishment of a Technical Support Committee under the co-chairmanship of the Special Adviser of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes and an AU senior official designated by the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for the Great Lakes region, that includes government representatives of the signatory countries, which will define regional benchmarks, as requested by the United Nations Security Council in resolution 2098 (2013), to be presented for adoption at the next meeting of the 11+4 in September 2013

We stressed the importance of regional economic integration as a key driver for peace and in this regard, welcomed the recent meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the countries of the Economic Community of the Great Lakes (CEPGL) held on 9 and 10 May, in Bujumbura, and expressed support to its recommendations to hold a Heads of State Summit of the CEPGL as soon as possible. We also welcome the joint visit of the Secretary-General of the United Nations Ban Ki-moon with the President of the World Bank Jim Yong Kim to the Great Lakes Region.

We call upon all donor countries to provide coordinated support to the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework Agreement for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Great Lakes region, and to provide resources commensurate with the development needs of the region.

We recognized the importance of civil society in bringing stability and prosperity to the DRC and the region, highlighting in particular the important role of women and youth in revitalizing economic development and accountability of government authority.

We noted that spoilers to peace in the DRC remain; we condemned all acts of violence in eastern DRC and expressed concern about the threat posed by armed groups operating in the eastern part of the country, while welcoming the determination of the international community to take appropriate measures including by deploying the Force Intervention Brigade as part of MONUSCO.

We expressed appreciation to the troops contributing countries to the Force Intervention Brigade including Malawi, South Africa and Tanzania for their commitment to peace and stability in the Great Lakes region and beyond.

We agreed on the need of a comprehensive approach including to engage all stakeholders working towards the objective of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the DRC and the Great Lakes region.

We expressed serious concern that people in eastern DRC and beyond remain in need of sustained humanitarian assistance and many others are displaced within the country or hosted by neighboring countries.

We affirmed the need to ensure that all parties in the conflict in eastern DRC allow full, unhindered humanitarian access; support and protect humanitarian efforts, based on the principles of humanity, independence, neutrality and impartiality; and prevent the misuse of humanitarian aid.

We agreed to meet again in September 2013 in New York, on the margins of the 69th UN General Assembly, to further discuss concrete steps and specific benchmarks for implementing the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework.

We reaffirmed the comprehensive nature of the process inherent to the implementation of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework and the need for the political dimensions of it to be approached in such a way that dialogue with those stakeholders who accept it be given a chance to bear fruit, appropriate political reforms and initiative to be implemented so legitimate force be used if and when appropriate to achieve the agreed goals.

We are deeply grateful to the government and people of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia for the warmth of their hospitality and for all the courtesies extended to us since our arrival in Addis Ababa.

Addis Ababa, 26 May 2013