

**Communiqué of the Sixth 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**

New York, 29 September 2015

1. We, signatories of the Peace, Security and Cooperation (PSC) Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the region, held the Sixth Meeting of the Regional Oversight Mechanism (ROM) on 29 September 2015 in New York, in the margins of the General Debate of the 70th session of the United Nations General Assembly. The meeting was jointly convened by the United Nations Secretary-General, H.E. Mr. Ban Ki-moon, and the Chairperson of the African Union (AU) Commission, H.E. Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma.

2. The Heads of State and Government, and representatives of the following signatory countries participated in the meeting:

Republic of Angola

Republic of Burundi

Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)

Republic of the Congo

Republic of Kenya

Republic of Rwanda

Republic of South Africa

Republic of South Sudan

Republic of the Sudan

United Republic of Tanzania

Republic of Uganda

Republic of Zambia

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

4. We reviewed the political and security developments in the region since our last meeting in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on 31 January 2015.

5. We noted the progress in the security situation in eastern DRC, and the region, more than two years after the signing of the PSC Framework. We reiterated our full engagement in the PSC Framework, and reaffirmed our support for the ICGLR Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region signed in 2006, and other efforts to promote peace and security in the region.

6. We expressed concern over the continued presence of armed groups in eastern DRC, notably the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR), the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), the Front for Patriotic Resistance of Ituri (FRPI), the Mai Mai groups, and the threat of terrorism in the region. In this regard, we condemned the continuous violations of human rights, and other egregious crimes committed by these armed and terrorist groups, and called for renewed efforts to neutralize all armed groups in eastern DRC. We called for the leaders of the armed groups to be brought to justice.

7. We recalled the decisions of the Second Joint ICGLR-SADC Ministerial Meeting of 2 July 2014 and the Second Mini-Summit of the ICGLR Heads of State and Government of 14 August 2014 calling for the voluntary surrender of the FDLR within six months from 2 July 2014, or face military action. We commended H.E. President Joseph Kabila for the continued efforts of his Government and the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to forcibly disarm the FDLR and for progress made to date. However, we noted with concern that the FDLR continues to operate in eastern DRC and efforts should be intensified with a view to fully neutralizing this negative force and its entire leadership.

8. We noted with concern that military cooperation between the Government of the DRC and MONUSCO has not resumed. In this regard, we encouraged the Government of the DRC and MONUSCO to resolve their differences with the view to reinstating their joint operations against the FDLR and its full neutralisation, by delinking such cooperation from the strategic dialogue. We called on the ex-FDLR combatants and their dependants cantoned in Kanyabayonga (North Kivu), Kisangani (Province Orientale), and Walungu (South Kivu), to voluntarily participate in the Disarmament, Demobilization, Reintegration, Repatriation and Resettlement (DDRRR) programme, without preconditions. We also called on the international community to increase assistance to MONUSCO for DDRRR and to the DRC Government for the DDR III programme.

9. We deplored the slow pace in the full implementation of the Nairobi Declarations of the Kampala Dialogue. Once again we urged the ex-M23 leadership to fully cooperate in the repatriation process and to participate in the follow-up mechanisms for the implementation of the Nairobi Declarations, failing which, sanctions could be considered against them. In support of the ongoing efforts by the DRC National Oversight Mechanism and the ICGLR, we urged the Guarantors of the PSC Framework to engage all concerned parties with a view to removing the remaining obstacles that impede the full implementation of the Nairobi Declarations. We requested the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes region and the Special Representative of the AU Commission Chairperson for the Great Lakes region to report to the ROM on progress achieved in this regard.

10. We expressed concern about the prevailing political and security situation in Burundi and the resulting loss of life, human rights violations and humanitarian consequences. We called on the Government of Burundi and all other stakeholders to exercise maximum restraint and to continue to engage in inclusive dialogue in accordance with the Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement (2000), the Constitution of Burundi and other relevant documents. In this regard, we expressed appreciation for the efforts of the East African Community (EAC), under the Chairmanship of H.E. President Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete, and the efforts of H.E. President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, as facilitator. We also welcomed the Presidential decree establishing the National Commission for the Inter-Burundian Dialogue on 23 September 2015, as well as the support of the UN, the AU, the ICGLR and other international partners to the EAC-led facilitation in Burundi.

11. We welcomed the signing of the Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on 17 August 2015 and in Juba, South Sudan on 26 August 2015, under the auspices of the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), and called on the signatories to implement it.

12. We commended the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes region and the AU Peace and Security Commissioner for the meetings of the Guarantors which led to the first Ministerial Retreat on the PSC Framework held in Nairobi, Kenya, on 10 July 2015.

13. Emphasizing the importance of ownership by the signatory member states in the implementation of the PSC Framework, we endorsed the recommendations contained in the Outcome document of the Ministerial Retreat, including: the championing by individual Heads of State of priority actions deriving from the PSC Framework's regional commitments; the possibility of convening extra-ordinary meetings of the ROM in addition to our regular meetings in the margins of the AU Summit and the UNGA; the convening of Ministerial segments of the ROM meetings as may be required; the enhancement of the role of the Technical Support Committee (TSC), as well as the increased involvement and contribution of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and the Guarantors. We called on the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, the TSC, and the Guarantors of the PSC Framework to ensure effective implementation of the recommendations of the Ministerial Retreat. We agreed to review progress in this regard at the next ROM meeting.

14. We welcomed the offer of the Government of the DRC to host the Great Lakes Private Sector Investment Conference in Kinshasa, on 24-25 February 2016. We noted the progress made to date, including: the preparation of the Investment Opportunity Brief (IOB); the Great Lakes Development Partners Ministerial Forum, held on 12 July 2015 in Addis Ababa; the establishment of the Great Lakes Private Sector Forum on 31 August 2015; and the convening of a meeting with private sector stakeholders on the Improvement of Regulatory Environment and Investment Climate, on 1 – 2 September 2015, also in Addis Ababa. We call on the international community to support the preparatory process to ensure a successful conference. We also appeal to private sector investors and all international and regional financial institutions to consider regional investment opportunities in the Great Lakes region.

15. Finally, we extended our deep appreciation to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, and the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for convening the ROM and expressed our gratitude to all those who contributed to the success of the meeting.

New York, 29 September 2015