



## LEADERS OF AFRICA'S GREAT LAKES REGION AGREE TO VIGOROUSLY TACKLE THE ISSUE OF ILLEGAL ARMED GROUPS IN THE REGION AND SPEED UP THE REPATRIATION PROCESS OF DISARMED FDLR COMBATANTS



*Special Envoy Said Djinnit talking to the media after the 8th High-Level Meeting of the Regional Oversight Mechanism for the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework, Brazzaville, Republic of Congo, 19 October 2017 (Photo UN/Penangnini Toure)*

The Eighth Meeting of the Regional Oversight Mechanism of the Peace, Security and Cooperation (PSC) Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and the region was held in Brazzaville, Republic of Congo, on 19 October 2017. The meeting brought together leaders of the region, including heads of State and Government from the signatory countries of the PSC Framework, as well as high officials from the United Nations (UN), the African Union (AU), and representatives from regional organizations and various stakeholders.

The meeting reviewed progress and challenges in the implementation of the PSC Framework agreement signed in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in February 2013. The meeting focused on measures to address the issue of the neutralization of illegal armed groups, otherwise known as negative forces, in eastern DRC and neighboring countries. The African leaders also discussed the status of political dialogues and processes in the region, as well as elections, especially in Kenya.

The heads of State summit saw the participation of Denis Sassou Nguesso, President of the Republic of Congo; Joseph Kabila of the DRC; Paul Kagame of Rwanda; Faustin Archange Touadera of the Central African Republic; and Joao Lourenco of Angola. Other high officials included the Chairperson of the AU Commission, Moussa Faki Mahamat; United Nations Special Envoy for the Great Lakes region, Said Djinnit; the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for the DRC, Maman Sidikou; the Executive-Secretary of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR), Zachary Muburi Muita; and several government ministers.

The leaders agreed to take vigorous measures to tackle the threat of negative forces such as the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF). They also pledged to speed up the repatriation process of disarmed combatants of the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) to their country of origin. The leaders also took note of the offer of the Republic of Uganda to host the 9th High-Level Meeting of the Regional Oversight Mechanism in 2018.