



**OFFICE OF THE SPECIAL ENVOY OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL  
FOR THE GREAT LAKES REGION**

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**Regional Judicial Cooperation**

<p><b>Summary of Facts</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Through the Peace, Security and Cooperation (PSC) Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the region, the Heads of State of the region committed themselves to neither harbour nor provide protection to individuals accused of committing genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity or are under sanctions, and also to commit to facilitating the administration of justice through regional judicial cooperation.</li> <li>• These commitments reinforce the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) Pact on Security, Stability and Development for the Great Lakes region, and key ICGLR protocols related to judicial matters.</li> <li>• The Office of the Special Envoy for the Great Lakes region (O/SESG-GL) Roadmap also highlights the need to foster judicial cooperation among the countries in the region as a way to help strengthen accountability, build trust and confidence and improve rule of law.</li> <li>• To complement the regional cross-border political and advocacy efforts by the Special Envoy on the issue of displacement, the UN Great Lakes Regional Strategic Framework foresees regional cross-border development efforts regarding displacement. The Special Envoy is a co-champion of the UN Great Lakes Regional Strategic Framework, which seeks to align regional cross-border efforts of the UN in Burundi, the DRC, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Analysis</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• While there are regional guidelines for judicial cooperation in the ICGLR Protocol on Judicial Cooperation and while a number of countries have extradition treaties between them, there has been little concrete action to effectively foster regional judicial cooperation.</li> <li>• Currently, there is a drive amongst Governments in the region, O/SESG-GL and other stakeholders to stimulate this regional judicial cooperation, under the UN Great Lakes Regional Strategic Framework and under the recently-established Great Lakes Judicial Cooperation Network.</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partners include i) UN agencies such as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), World Health Organization (WHO), and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA); ii) regional organizations such as the African Union (AU) and the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR); iii) national authorities; and iv) other stakeholders such as the Regional Durable Solutions Secretariat (ReDSS).</li> </ul>
<b>Next Step</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Special Envoy is working with partners to follow up on the recently established Great Lakes Judicial Cooperation Network. The network will facilitate regional cooperation in criminal matters by formal and informal means. It will provide a forum to assist central authorities, prosecutors and others in the judicial chain to develop contacts with counterparts in neighbouring countries. Through regular meetings and training programs, the Great Lakes Judicial Cooperation Network will also enable central legal authorities and relevant practitioners to share information about their respective legal systems and procedures, develop common language and share good practices.</li> <li>The Special Envoy is also coordinating with partners to initiate an in-depth regional discussion on judicial cooperation in criminal matters in the Great Lakes region that can then develop recommendations and concrete action at different levels, including cross-border pilot projects, joint commissions of investigations, and/or high-level ministerial meetings on judicial cooperation.</li> </ul>
<b>Messaging</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support for the region’s justice initiatives is essential to ensuring those responsible for conflict-related atrocities are brought to justice, and will also go a long way toward building trust and confidence and developing a regional judicial network that is based firmly on the rule of law.</li> </ul>

	<b>Drafted by</b>	<b>Distribution</b>
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