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PRESS RELEASE

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Said Djinnit: despite progress made and women’s active participation in political and peace processes in the Great Lakes, there is still need for more strategic action

Nairobi, 23 February 2018 - The Advisory Board of the Women’s Platform for the Peace, Security and Cooperation (PSC) Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and the region met in Nairobi, Kenya, on 22 February 2018, to agree on concrete actions to promote women’s political engagement in peace and security, as well as in political processes at local, national, and regional levels in the Great Lakes region.

The Women’s Platform for the PSC Framework was established in 2014 to empower and support women in the region as leaders and peacemakers, and to ensure that they play critical roles in implementing this landmark Framework agreement. It builds on the momentum generated by women’s groups and women’s movements to claim justice, peace, and security for all citizens in the Great Lakes region.

The meeting brought together high profile officials from the United Nations, the African Union and the Great Lakes region, including the United Nations Special Envoy for the Great Lakes region, Said Djinnit; the Director-General of the United Nations Office in Nairobi, Sahle-Work Zewde; the AU Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security, Ndeye Bineta Diop; the Minister

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of Gender, Children and Family of the DRC, Chantal Safou Lopusa; former head of Central African Republic Transitional Government, Catherine Samba-Panza; and the former Vice-President of Uganda, Co-president of FemWise-Africa, Speciosa Wandira Kazibwe.

During the meeting, the ninth of the Advisory Board, participants noted that there can be little progress on peace and security if women continue to be under-represented in relevant political decision making processes and peace and security instances in the region both at grass roots and leadership level. They agreed that decisive action is required to change this situation.

Special Envoy Djinnit noted that “the members of the Women’s Platform Advisory Board are determined to ensure that the Platform becomes a key, powerful tool to advance the Women Peace and Security agenda in the region.”

Participants also agreed to undertake solidarity missions to Burundi, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and South Sudan to promote an active role of women in conflict prevention and in building peace and stability in the region.

The new Strategy on Women Peace and Security developed by the Office of the Special Envoy was welcome as an important vehicle to ensure coordinated and effective high level political engagement in achieving the goals of the Women’s Platform.

Note to the reader:

The Peace, Security and Cooperation (PSC) Framework was signed on 24 February 2013 by 13 heads of State and four ‘Guarantors’, including the United Nations, the African Union, the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, and the Southern African Development Community. The PSC Framework constitutes an important instrument to assist the region in achieving durable peace and development. The Framework outlines commitments at national, regional and international level, to consolidate peace and security in the region and to promote cooperation and confidence-building between Governments.

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