

Press statement on the situation in the Great Lakes region

The members of the Security Council met on 10 April 2018 to discuss the situation in the Great lakes region, five years after the signature of the Peace, Security and Cooperation (PSC) Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Region. They were briefed by Mr Said Djinnit, Special envoy of the Secretary General for the Great Lakes, and Amb. Raymond Serge BALE, permanent representative of the Republic of Congo, as chair of the PSC Framework Regional Oversight Mechanism.

The members of the Security Council reaffirmed that the PSC Framework remains an essential mechanism to achieve durable peace and stability in the DRC and the Region. They welcomed the renewed commitment of its signatories towards its full implementation, and reiterated their call to all signatories to fulfil promptly, fully and in good faith their respective commitments under this Framework in order to address the root causes of conflict and put an end to recurring cycles of violence, and promote lasting regional development. They reaffirmed their support to the Special Envoy of the Secretary General and called for further engagement to address the remaining challenges in implementation of the PSC Framework and to promote peace and stability in the region.

The Members of the Security Council commended the efforts of the African Union, as well as the subregional organizations in particular ECCAS, EAC, ICGLR and SADC, towards supporting political processes and finding peaceful solutions for the conflict situations in the region. They underlined the need for a continued and close coordination between those organizations in order to strengthen their efficiency. They welcomed, under the auspices of Angola followed by Congo-Brazzaville, the reactivation of the PSCF follow-up mechanism as a sign of a renewed commitment from the countries of the Great Lakes, and encouraged them to intensify their interactions at a significant level.

The members of the Security Council urged continued regional and international support for initiatives aimed at promoting inclusive dialogue amongst national stakeholders and stressed the importance of opening political space to enable the full and free participation of political parties, civil society and the media as well as the full participation of both men and women in the political process. They stressed that women's participation in political and dialogue processes must be further promoted. They further urged international and regional support for strengthening and improving capacity for elections and governance in the countries of the region, and called on member states in the Great Lakes region to take steps to ensure that electoral processes promote peace and security through timely, peaceful, inclusive and credible elections, in line with countries' own constitutions and the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance, as applicable. They recognized that the strengthening of regional cooperation in the field of justice would contribute to the fight against impunity, and through reinforcing the confidence of the people of the region in the reliability of judicial institutions, play a stabilizing role.

The members of the Security Council welcomed the commitment of the signatory states of the PSC Framework to complete without precondition the repatriation of the FDLR disarmed combatants and former M23 combatants within the shortest time frame possible. They urged the Governments of the region, with the support of the PSC Guarantors, to strengthen their collaboration to meet the agreed timeframe.

The members of the Security Council urged the governments of the region, as well as regional and international partners, to continue addressing urgent and drastically increasing humanitarian needs and pursue durable solutions for internally displaced persons, refugees and asylum seekers. They commended United Nations humanitarian agencies, partners, and donors for their efforts to provide

urgent and coordinated support to the population. They noted that despite increasing needs, humanitarian appeals remain underfunded across the region, and urged international partners, and the donor community at large, to step up their support to humanitarian action in the region and in the DRC.