

REPORT OF THE FOURTH MEETING OF THE TECHNICAL SUPPORT COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONAL OVERSIGHT MECHANISM OF THE PEACE, SECURITY & COOPERATION FRAMEWORK FOR THE DRC AND THE REGION

NAIROBI, KENYA, 24-25 OCTOBER 2013

Introduction

1. The fourth meeting of the Technical Support Committee (TSC) took place from 24 to 25 October 2013 in Nairobi, Kenya, to discuss the plan of action for the implementation of the approved regional benchmarks. Participants included senior officials from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Republic of Angola, the Republic of Burundi, the Republic of Congo, the Republic of Rwanda, the Republic of South Africa, the Republic of South Sudan, the United Republic of Tanzania, the Republic of Uganda and the Republic of Zambia.
2. The Special Envoy of the UN Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region (SESG-GL), Mary Robinson, chaired the opening and closing sessions of the meeting. The other sessions were co-chaired by the Special Advisor of the SESG, Assistant Secretary-General Modibo I. Touré, and the AU Special Representative for the Great Lakes Region, Ambassador Boubacar Gaoussou Diarra. The Executive Secretary of the International Conference for the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR), Prof. Alphonse Ntumba Luaba, and Mr. Gerson Marco Sangiza, Senior Officer of Defence Affairs and Planning, from the Southern African Development Community (SADC) also attended the meeting, as well as representatives of MONUSCO and the UN Department for Political Affairs.
3. Upon invitation of SESG Robinson, the US Special Envoy to the Great Lakes Region of Africa and the DRC, Senator Russ Feingold, addressed the TSC on the international community's support to the implementation process of the PSC Framework.

Opening session

4. In her opening remarks, the Special Envoy Robinson commended the work done by the TSC that had led to the endorsement of the regional benchmarks by the Regional Oversight Mechanism (ROM). She informed the Committee of her joint efforts with the group of Envoys to support the Facilitator and the parties of the Kampala Dialogue between the DRC Government and M23. While she underlined the strategic opportunities created through the recent visit of the Security Council, she deplored the resurgence of violence in the eastern RDC. She urged the Committee to move forward by developing a result-oriented plan of action that could generate

tangible progress. She also encouraged the TSC to foster dialogue with key international stakeholders, as the implementation of the commitments under the PSC Framework requires partnerships at all levels.

Discussion

Kampala process

5. Participants welcomed the presence of the SESG in the TSC meeting as well as the joint efforts of the Envoys in support of the Kampala Dialogue. They stressed the need for the Dialogue to conclude swiftly, considering the security situation in the region. Upon request of the Committee, the delegate of Uganda provided a brief account of the progress achieved by the parties in reaching consensus on 8 out of the 11 substantive articles of the draft peace agreement. The Facilitator continues to work closely with the parties to try to find an agreement on the remaining sticking points.

6. SESG Robinson called on the TSC members, as senior advisers to their Heads of State, to individually and collectively contribute to sustaining the momentum for peace and prevent renewed violence. She called on signatory countries to move forward also on other components of the multi-track approach and not be held hostage by the Kampala Dialogue to the detriment of the wider goals of the PSC Framework.

Briefing on the AU Chairperson's DRC visit

7. Upon request of the Committee, Ambassador Diarra briefed on AU Commission Chairperson Mrs. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma's visit to the DRC. He informed of the consultations she held with political leaders as well as with representatives of the civil society.

US Special Envoy to the Great Lakes Region and to DRC

8. In introducing Senator Feingold, SESG Robinson underscored the efforts carried out by the US Envoy in his capacity as the International Contact Group (ICG) Chair. Senator Feingold reiterated the support of the international community to the PSC Framework and he underlined the importance of the donors' involvement in the implementation process of the Framework, noting that it would be prudent not to presume increased assistance. The Senator underscored regional ownership as a critical factor in peace building and further underlined the importance of a strong collaboration between the TSC and the donors. He said that for the ICG it is important to have strong benchmarks and indicators that are specific, measureable, achievable, relevant and timely. Each benchmark also needs to have an established baseline. The donors recommend including only those benchmarks that can realistically be achieved within two years.

Discussion on the plan of action

9. Special Advisor Touré introduced the draft plan of action for the implementation of the commitments under the regional benchmarks, explaining that a table of activities was proposed for the next twelve months. As a next step, lead implementers as well as costs and funding arrangements would need to be part of the draft plan too (indicated but not defined in the current draft). Following a presentation by the DRC of a draft plan of action in an alternative format, the Committee requested the Secretariat to prepare a revised format for the plan of action - which was adopted by the Committee.

10. Participants noted that while it was important to develop a comprehensive plan of action, they deemed it useful to identify priority activities which would lead to visible and tangible results in the short-term. It would be important to present concrete results at the next Regional Oversight Mechanism meeting (“11+4”) which is expected to take place in the margins of the AU Summit, January 2015, in Addis Ababa. The participants agreed on criteria for prioritization and short-term priority activities to be carried out before January 2014 (*see attached copy of the criteria and list of activities*).

11. The Committee also noted that activities in the draft plan of action needed to be refined to be more specific, measureable and achievable. It was agreed that the Secretariat would liaise with the ICGRL and other relevant stakeholders to map existing regional projects and cross-border activities and prepare a revised draft plan of action for the Committee’s review. The co-chairs encouraged the TSC members to provide the Secretariat with recommendations of relevant, specific activities that could be included in the plan of action.

Closing session

12. In her closing remarks, SESG Robinson welcomed the development of criteria and priority activities, noting that these would be crucial in making the TSC work more visible. It would also greatly assist in create peace dividends which the people in the region have been waiting for. She called on the TSC members to advocate for the implementation of these priority activities without further delay. She also encouraged the TSC to provide the Secretariat with specific and detailed activities that could result in the immediate delivery of tangible progress.

13. The co-chairs noted that the Secretariat would soon propose a date for the next TSC meeting to finalize the plan of action and prepare for the next meeting of the Regional Oversight Mechanism.

Nairobi, 28 October 2013