



## TOWARDS GREATER COLLABORATION ON ISSUES OF SECURITY AND DEVELOPMENT BETWEEN THE OFFICE OF THE UN SPECIAL ENVOY FOR THE GREAT LAKES REGION AND THE ICGLR



*UN Special Envoy Said Djinnit (left) and ICGLR Executive-Secretary Zachary Muburi-Muita meet in Bujumbura, 16 November 2017*

The United Nations Special Envoy for the Great Lakes region, Said Djinnit, and the Executive-Secretary of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR), Zachary Muburi-Muita, met on 23 November 2017 in Bujumbura, Burundi, to explore ways for greater collaboration on key development and security issues concerning the region.

The two heads held discussions on topical areas falling under their respective mandates. On the Expanded Joint Verification Mechanism and the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) Joint Follow-up mechanism, the Special Envoy expressed his readiness to advocate for further funding of both mechanisms in his regional and international endeavors.

On their joint initiatives on Gender, the two leaders expressed their appreciation for their good collaboration on matters concerning women empowerment in the Great Lakes region. In particular, they stressed the importance to follow up on the recommendation of the 8<sup>th</sup> high-level meeting of the Regional Oversight Mechanism held last October in Brazzaville, Republic of Congo, and to fast-track the implementation of UN Resolution 1325 and the Goma Declaration. To that end, a meeting of the

Advisory Board of the Women's Platform is scheduled from 22-23 February 2018, preceded by a technical level meeting on 21 February, to discuss the Regional Action and Strategic Plans for Women Peace and Security. The Office of the Special Envoy and the ICGLR are also working together towards a Gender Ministers meeting scheduled to take place sometime in 2018.

On their common agenda, the Office of the Special Envoy and the ICGLR are also working towards the second edition of the Private Sector Investment Conference closely with Rwandan authorities who will host the event in 2018. The first Private Sector Investment Conference took place in Kinshasa, Republic of the Congo (DRC), in February 2016.

Special Envoy Djinnit and Mr. Muita also noted the need for coordination and consultation with ICGLR in the design and implementation of the Peace Building Fund cross-border project for Tanzania and Burundi amounting to \$2 million. This project was presented to the Peace Building Commission on 27 November 2017 at the United Nations headquarters in New York.

Other matters of collaboration include the illegal exploitation of natural resources and the question of displacement. On natural resources, it was agreed that more emphasis be put on criminal networks' activities, which deprive the region from fully benefiting from these resources. Such activities are known to sustain the livelihoods of illegal armed groups in the region. On displacement, the Special Envoy congratulated his interlocutor on the regional conference of ICGLR experts on statelessness under the theme: «The Universal Right to Nationality: Adopting a Joint Regional Response to Ratify and Implement the UN Conventions on Statelessness», held on 27-28 June 2017 in Kinshasa. In the same vein, the UN Special Envoy informed the ICGLR Executive-Secretary of his intention to organize and facilitate a Ministerial meeting on Displacement in 2018 focusing on protracted displacement of the DRC refugee situation.