



LEADERS OF AFRICA'S GREAT LAKES REGION MEET IN LUSAKA, ZAMBIA, TO ASSESS PROGRESS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PEACE PROCESS FOR THE DRC AND THE REGION

Lusaka, Zambia – 13th May 2016

Lusaka, 13 May 2016 - The Republic of Zambia, in its capacity as signatory to the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework (PSCF) agreement for the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and the region hosted the 13th meeting of the Technical Support Committee on 13 May 2016. The Technical Support Committee is an advisory mechanism comprising senior government officials from the 13 signatory countries of the PSCF, including the DRC, Angola, Burundi, the Central African Republic, the Republic of Congo, Kenya, Rwanda, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia.

The meeting was organized following a recommendation of the Heads of State and Government of the region, and the “Guarantors” of the PSCF, including the United Nations, the African Union (AU) Commission, the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) and the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) to promote inclusive participation by member states in the implementation process of the PSCF agreement. The peace agreement, also referred to as “Framework of Hope” includes a set of commitments for the DRC, the region and the international community.



Map of Africa highlighting the Great Lakes region

In his opening remarks at the event, the United Nations Special Envoy for the Great Lakes region, Said Djinnit, said a lot still remained to be done despite some progress in the neutralization of negative forces in the region. “We, as co-chairs and guarantors of the PSCF, believe that the region will not be at peace and able to focus on socio-economic progress if the plague of negative forces, and other root causes of conflicts in the region remain unaddressed,” Mr. Djinnit said. “On this point, we should acknowledge that achievements in the neutralization of armed groups, and FDLR in particular, remain minimal,” he added.

The Technical Support Committee meeting made recommendations in its final communique to advance the implementation of the core objectives of the PSCF, which include: the neutralization of armed groups in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo; tackling the illegal exploitation of natural resources; addressing impunity and promoting judicial cooperation; finding durable solutions for refugees and IDPs; supporting Women and Youth empowerment; and promoting regional integration, economic development and governance.

Outcome of the 13th Meeting of the Technical Support Committee (TSC) of the Peace, Security and Cooperation (PSC) Framework Agreement for the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Region

1. The meeting followed the recommendation endorsed by the Heads of State and Government of the region, and the Guarantors of the Framework, including the United Nations (UN), the African Union (AU) Commission, the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) and the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) to promote inclusive participation by member states in the implementation process. The 13th meeting of the TSC comes at a time of renewed momentum in the implementation of the PSC Framework including: the successful Private Sector Investment Conference held in Kinshasa on 24-25 February 2016; the Security Council Open Debate on the prevention and resolution of conflicts in the Great Lakes Region, convened in New York during the Presidency of Angola on 21 March 2016; and the joint consultative visit of the PSC Framework Guarantors to Uganda, Rwanda and the DRC from 24-29 April 2016 to assess the implementation process of the Nairobi Declarations, the repatriation of Ex-M23 combatants, and the neutralization of the FDLR.



Special Envoy Said Djinnit (left) with Zambian Technical Support Committee representative

2. Mr. Rayford Mbulu, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Zambia (host) and Mr. Said Djinnit, UN Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region on behalf of the Co-chairs, addressed the meeting at the opening session. Present at the meeting were the representatives of the following signatory countries: Burundi,

Republic of Congo, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, Rwanda, South Africa, the Sudan and Zambia (host). In addition to the UN Special Envoy, other representatives of the Guarantors also participated in the meeting, including Professor Ibrahima Fall, AU Special Representative for the Great Lakes Region and Head of AU Liaison Office in Burundi, Professor Ntumba Luaba, Executive Secretary of the ICGLR, and Jorge Cardoso representing Dr. Stergomena Tax, Executive Secretary of SADC. MONUSCO representatives were also in attendance.



Participants at the Technical Support Committee meeting

3. During the closed-door session, which was co-chaired by Special Envoy Djinnit and Prof. Fall, participants were briefed on the implementation of national and regional commitments under the PSC Framework. While acknowledging progress achieved in the economic pillar of the PSC Framework, participants noted the challenges in the overall implementation of the PSC Framework Plan of Action, notably in the political and security fields. In this regard, they stressed the need for member states to redouble efforts to address ongoing challenges, notably, those related to the neutralization of armed groups, and the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants. Participants equally expressed concern with the slow pace in the repatriation and resettlement process. The meeting was briefed on the recent visit of the Framework Guarantors to Uganda, Rwanda and the DRC, aimed to advance the implementation of the Nairobi Declarations, the repatriation of the ex-M23 members from Rwanda and Uganda, and to review the neutralization of the FDLR. MONUSCO representative briefed participants on the main features of the recently adopted Security Council Resolution 2277 (2016), highlighting the support for elections, the protection of civilians, including in the context of elections, and support to the AU Facilitation of the

national dialogue in the DRC. The presentation also highlighted MONUSCO's efforts in the DDRRR process, in particular that of the former members of the FDLR.

4. After deliberations, the TSC made the following recommendations:

Implementation of national and regional commitments under the PSC Framework:



UN Special Envoy Said Djinnit

- welcomed the presentation and progress made thus far by the DRC on the implementation of national commitments and encouraged the Government to continue these efforts; requested the DRC

National Oversight Mechanism (NOM) to jointly prepare with MONUSCO and the Office of the UN Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region (O/SESG) its next status report on the implementation of the national commitments under the PSC Framework; and noted with appreciation that the DRC has already initiated preparatory work for the establishment of the Commission on national reconciliation and encouraged the Government to vigorously pursue this project;

- welcomed the presentation made by Zambia on the implementation of regional commitments and requested other signatory member states to submit a status report on the implementation of their commitments under the PSC Framework at the next meeting
- agreed to undertake the assessment of the implementation of the national, regional and international commitments under the PSC Framework and requested the co-chairs to make appropriate arrangements accordingly. The report on such assessment should be reviewed by the TSC and submitted to the Regional Oversight Mechanism (ROM);
- took note of the briefing by Burundi on the political and security situation in the country; reiterated its support to the EAC facilitation conducted by former President Benjamin Mkapa and looked forward to the early launching of the dialogue; urged the parties to immediately cease violence; and looked forward to the upcoming meeting between the African Union and the Government of Burundi on the Memorandum of Understanding on the deployment of human rights observers and military experts; and
- took note of the briefing by the DRC on the preparation for national dialogue ahead of the forthcoming elections, and expressed support to the AU facilitation led by Mr. Edem Kodjo, and encouraged the Congolese parties to cooperate with the facilitator.

- **Neutralization of negative forces:**

- expressed concerns on the continuous activities of armed groups in eastern DRC;
- called for additional efforts to fully neutralize all armed groups in accordance with the UN, AU, ICGLR and SADC relevant decisions, and in this regard, called on DRC and MONUSCO to fully implement the technical arrangements on the resumption of military cooperation signed on 28 January 2016;
- stressed the importance of effectively addressing the problem posed by negative forces in eastern DRC, notably the FDLR, and the need to tackle the root causes of conflicts in the region, including but not limited to the illegal exploitation of natural resources; and welcomed and endorsed the initiatives of the Guarantors aimed to address the issue of negative forces. Welcomed in this regard the Guarantors' proposed field visit to eastern DRC on 24-26 May to assess the situation of disarmed combatants in the camps and make some recommendations to address this issue. Welcomed the Guarantor's convening of the meeting of Ministers of Defense of the concerned member states subject to further consultations, on 10 June, preceded by a meeting of Chief of Defense staff on 8-9 June, to review progress and challenges in the neutralization of negatives forces in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Implementation of the Nairobi Declarations

- Welcomed the Guarantors' efforts to advance the implementation of the Nairobi Declarations signed on 12 December 2013 as directed by the Addis Ababa meeting of Foreign Affairs ministers of the PSC Framework signatory countries, including their visit to Uganda, Rwanda and DRC from 25 to 29 April. Encouraged them to pursue their initiative, including the convening of a meeting in Kinshasa, in liaison with the NOM, to discuss outstanding obstacles in the full implementation of the Declarations.

- welcomed the launch on 21 March 2016 in New York of the UN Regional Strategic Framework and the on-going coordination with the regional organizations and the national governments, and offered further support in widening and deepening the impact of the socio-economic projects to address the root causes of conflict in the Great Lakes region;
- welcomed the successful conclusion of the Great Lakes Private Sector Investment Conference held in Kinshasa on 24-25 February 2016, jointly organized by ICGLR and O/SESG in cooperation with the DRC Government's Investment Promotion Agency (ANAPI). Encouraged the implementation of follow-up actions to maintain the momentum of the PSIC, including the development of activities to improve the investment climate in the Great Lakes region, secure sources of funding for the Investment Opportunities Brief, and support the operationalization of the ICGLR Private Sector Investment Forum;
- agreed to further reflect on ways to link the economic and political dimensions of the PSC Framework as well as the national and regional commitments to efforts aimed at achieving peace and security in the region, as reflected in the 2006 ICGLR Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes region; and
- welcomed the ICGLR efforts in fast tracking the implementation of the Protocol against the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and, in this regard, encouraged O/SESG and the ICGLR Executive Secretariat to coordinate their efforts and initiatives aimed at ensuring regional leadership on the critical issue of natural resources building on existing ICGLR initiatives and instruments.

PSC Framework humanitarian and judicial pillars

- commended Zambia for bringing together the Ministers of Justice of the Great Lakes region member states in August 2015 as well as the ICGLR and the O/SESG for convening a high level meeting on 19-20 April 2016 in Nairobi to increase judicial cooperation and mutual support between member states to facilitate extradition and end impunity in the region; and
- requested ICGLR and O/SESG, in coordination with UNHCR, to convene a dedicated regional meeting with the support of a lead country on the issue of refugees.



From left to right Ibrahima Fall, AU Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region; LT Gen Solomon Mumbi, Zambian focal point of the Technical Support Committee and Said Djinnit, UN Special Envoy

Closing

Championing of the PSC Framework pillars

- emphasized the need for collective efforts in creating a new momentum in the implementation process of the PSC Framework and agreed that countries should take the lead in championing the pillars of the PSC Framework;
- welcomed the announcement by the Republic of Zambia to champion the Governance pillar of the PSC Framework and encouraged other member states to follow suit by committing to champion other pillars; and
- requested the Guarantors to develop the Terms of Reference in support of championing by respective leaders and governments of the signatory countries.

5. The TSC recommended that its next meeting takes place on 6-7 July 2016 to review the implementation of the action points agreed above.

6. Participants expressed their full appreciation to the Government of Zambia for the warm hospitality and excellent facilities placed at the disposal of the delegates, and for Zambia's continued commitment to the implementation of the PSC Framework.



Local artists performing at the meeting