

Communiqué of the 12th High-Level Meeting of the Regional Oversight Mechanism of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the region

Entebbe, 28 May 2025

We, the Heads of State and Government of the signatory countries of the Peace, Security and Cooperation (PSC) Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and the region, convened for the 12th High-Level Meeting of the Regional Oversight Mechanism (ROM) of the PSC Framework on 28 May 2025 in Entebbe, Uganda. The High-Level Meeting was chaired by His Excellency Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, President of the Republic of Uganda, and brought together the Heads of State and Government or their representatives of the following signatory countries of the PSC Framework:

Republic of Angola

Republic of Burundi

Republic of the Congo

Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)

Republic of Kenya

Republic of Rwanda

Republic of South Africa

Republic of South Sudan

Republic of Sudan

United Republic of Tanzania

Republic of Uganda

Republic of Zambia

The representatives of the Guarantor Institutions of the PSC Framework, namely the African Union (AU), the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR), and the United Nations (UN) also participated in the meeting, as well as partners of the region as observers.

The main purpose of the meeting was twofold: (i) to discuss recent developments in the Great Lakes region, particularly security and humanitarian issues, including ongoing peace efforts to address the crisis in eastern DRC, with a view to identifying ways in which the signatory countries of the PSC Framework can support those efforts, and (ii) to adopt the Action Plan on the revitalization of the PSC Framework, prepared by the Technical Support Committee (TSC) and reviewed by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the signatory countries.

We, the representatives of the signatory countries of the PSC Framework, by this communique:

1. Call for strict adherence to the commitments of the PSC Framework, particularly the commitments to respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the neighbouring countries, to neither tolerate nor provide assistance or support of any kind to armed groups, to respect the legitimate concerns and interests of the neighbouring countries, in particular regarding security matters, and to neither harbour nor provide protection of any kind to persons accused of war crimes, crimes against humanity, acts of genocide or crimes of aggression, or persons falling under the United Nations sanctions regime;
2. Express our deep concern over the worsened security situation in eastern DRC as well as its grave humanitarian and human rights consequences, notably the large displacements of civilians, the serious increase in conflict-related sexual violence and reduced access to humanitarian services and support;
3. Condemn the territorial advances and installation of parallel administrations by the *Mouvement du 23 mars/Alliance Fleuve Congo (M23/AFC)* with external support and call for the swift and full implementation of UN Security Council resolution 2773 (2025) by all concerned parties, in particular its paragraphs 4 and 6;
4. Condemn and call for the dismantling of the *Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda (FDLR)* armed group in DRC. Further condemn and call for the dismantling of all other foreign armed groups, including the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), the *Résistance pour un État de Droit au Burundi (RED Tabara)*, and the *Coopérative pour le développement du Congo (CODECO)*, among others, and urge them to immediately lay down their weapons without conditions. Direct the Operational Cell of the Contact and Coordination Group (CCG) on non-military measures to continue its engagement with foreign armed groups to promote voluntary disarmament and facilitate their repatriation;
5. Commend the progress achieved by the mission of the CCG Operational Cell deployed to the DRC in September 2024, focused on the disarmament of former combatants, as well as the organisation of a technical workshop in Burundi in December 2024 to facilitate the elaboration of a national legal framework for the reintegration of Burundian ex-combatants. Encourage all CCG member countries, whose nationals are part of foreign armed groups in the DRC to initiate and/or continue the process of repatriating their former combatants that have renounced violence;
6. Express our solidarity with the Government and people of Sudan in confronting the ongoing rebellion. Affirm our support for Sudan's nationally led roadmap to restore peace and stability and call on the rebel militia of RSF to fully comply with UN Security Council Resolution 2736, including the lifting of the

siege on El Fasher by the RSF and ceasing all atrocities against civilians and the destruction of infrastructure. Reaffirm the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and unity, and non-aggression, and reject all forms of external interference in the Sudan conflict and encourage dialogue;

7. Also call for enhanced regional cooperation to prevent the flow of arms and mercenaries into Sudan in accordance with the arms embargo of the UN Security Council and to cut off external support to the RSF rebel militia. Also call for an immediate halt to drone attacks on Port Sudan, which serves as the temporary hub for humanitarian agencies assisting affected civilians. These attacks pose a direct threat to Red Sea security and the safety of humanitarian operations;

8. Commends the Government of South Sudan on its efforts to continue the implementation of the revitalized Agreement on the resolution of the conflict in South Sudan and encourages its efforts to bring on board the non-signatories of the revitalized Agreement to sign the agreement;

9. Recognize Uganda's different bilateral initiatives, including engagements within the region, especially regarding the ongoing joint military operations with the DRC against the ADF negative forces and the planned construction of infrastructure projects with CAR, DRC, and South Sudan, plus the ongoing construction of the East African Crude Oil Pipeline with the United Republic of Tanzania. These initiatives go a long way in addressing one of the commitments by the region under the PSC Framework;

10. Welcome the joint peace efforts by the East African Community (EAC) and SADC, launched at the first joint Summit of Heads of State and Government of EAC and SADC, held on 8 February 2025 in Dar-es-Salaam, United Republic of Tanzania. Welcome the second joint EAC-SADC Summit held virtually on 24 March 2025, which appointed the EAC-SADC Panel of Facilitators to support sustainable peace in eastern DRC, including the appointment of two women Facilitators, which marks a significant and commendable step towards institutionalizing women's leadership and participation in peace processes;

11. Thank His Excellency João Manuel Gonçalves Lourenço, President of the Republic of Angola, current ICGLR Chairperson and current Chairperson of the African Union, for his tireless and tangible efforts within the framework of the Luanda Process and welcome His Excellency Faure Essozimna Gnassingbé, President of the Council of the Republic of Togo, as new AU-designated Mediator between the DRC and Rwanda. Welcome the initial consultations undertaken by President Gnassingbé in the region and the meeting convened with the EAC-SADC Panel of Facilitators on 17 May in Lomé, Togo, to enhance coordination and complementarity of roles and actions;

12. Welcome the peace efforts facilitated by the State of Qatar and the United States of America and the signing of a Joint Declaration by the Government of the DRC and the M23 on 23 April 2025 in Kinshasa and Goma, DRC,

respectively, as well as the signing of a Declaration of Principles between the DRC and Rwanda in Washington D.C. on 25 April 2025;

13. Emphasize the importance of ensuring coordination of international diplomatic efforts in support of the efforts undertaken by the AU-designated Mediator and the EAC-SADC Panel of Facilitators, building on progress made under the Luanda and Nairobi processes;

14. Take note of and encourage the request made by EAC and SADC to work with the ICGLR Expanded Joint Verification Mechanism;

15. Urge all partners to support these initiatives and the implementation of the agreed decisions, as appropriate;

16. Welcome efforts at regional level to enhance the voice of women and youth in political dialogue, peacebuilding and conflict prevention, including through the holding of the Regional Women Fora hosted respectively by Burundi and Angola from 22 to 23 August 2024 and from 18 to 19 October 2024; as well as the continental dialogue on Youth, Peace and Security in connection with the Youth Forum of the signatory countries of the PSC Framework, organised from 14 to 16 December 2023, in Bujumbura, Burundi, capital of the African youth, under the auspices of H.E. Évariste Ndayishimiye, President of the Republic of Burundi, AU Champion for the Youth, Peace and Security Agenda;

17. Recall the importance of fighting against impunity in the region, notably through the full implementation of the Kinshasa Declaration on Enhancing Judicial Cooperation in the Great Lakes Region, signed in June 2022;

18. Emphasize also the urgency of combatting the illicit exploitation and trade of natural resources in the region, which remains a significant driver of instability. Call for enhanced efforts to promote a responsible and transparent management of natural resources, including through the full implementation of the recommendations of the high-level regional workshop on this matter, held in 2021 in Khartoum, The Sudan as well as sanctions provided for in the ICGLR Protocol on the fight against the illicit exploitation of natural resources of 30 November 2006;

19. Welcome the undertaking of the independent assessment of the implementation of the PSC Framework, initiated on the occasion of the Framework's 10th anniversary in 2023, and note its findings and recommendations, some of which are submitted by the TSC through the draft Action Plan on the revitalization of the PSC Framework;

20. After careful review, adopt the Action Plan, thereby emphasizing the continued relevance of the PSC Framework as a key vehicle to address the root causes of the instability in eastern DRC and the region;

21. Commit to strengthen accountability for the implementation of the Framework's commitments by ensuring regular reporting by each signatory country during meetings of the PSC Framework governance mechanisms, and

establishing a peer-review system, to be operationalized before the 13th High-Level ROM Meeting;

22. Commit to strengthen the involvement of women, youth and civil society in the monitoring of the PSC Framework implementation, building on existing fora and mechanisms within the Guarantor Institutions and, in this regard, welcome the revitalization of the Advisory Board for Women Peace and Security in the region;

23. Agree on the establishment of a group of women mediators to support peace processes, as well as the effective participation and contribution of the AU Special Envoy for Women, Peace and Security in all governing mechanisms of the PSC Framework; Support the *Common Pledge for Women's Full, Equal and Meaningful Participation in Peace Processes* launched by the Secretary-General of the United Nations on 24 October 2024;

24. Request the TSC to take all necessary steps to follow up on the implementation of the Action Plan on the revitalization of the PSC Framework and to report to the 13th High-Level ROM Meeting in this regard;

25. Further call on the Guarantor Institutions and international partners to continue their support to the signatory countries in the implementation of revitalized PSC Framework, including through the 2025-2027 Action Plan of the United Nations Strategy for Peace Consolidation, Conflict Prevention and Conflict Resolution in the Great Lakes region;

26. Express our gratitude to His Excellency Évariste Ndayishimiye, President of the Republic of Burundi, for his leadership as Chair of the ROM from May 2023 to May 2025;

27. Extend our appreciation to His Excellency Yoweri Museveni, President of the Republic of Uganda, and to the Government and people of Uganda for hosting the 12th ROM High-Level Meeting as well as for the hospitality during our stay;

28. Encourage Uganda to lead consultations on the designation of the next ROM Chair to host the 13th High-Level ROM Meeting;

29. Recognize that there can be no economic development in the region without peace, and stress the importance of the peace and development nexus;

30. Finally, agree to meet again within one year, in 2026, to further review the implementation of the revitalized PSC Framework.

Entebbe, 28 May 2025