
1. The representatives of the Guarantors of the Peace, Security and Cooperation (PSC) Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and the region held their fifth ministerial meeting in Brazzaville, Republic of the Congo, on 20 July 2018. The meeting was chaired by H.E. Jean-Claude Gakosso, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Cooperation and Congolese abroad, representing the Chair of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) and Chair of the Regional Oversight Mechanism of the PSC Framework. It was attended by H.E. Manuel Augusto, Minister of External Relations of the Republic of Angola, representing the Chair of the Organ for Politics, Defense and Security of the Southern African Development Community (SADC); Amb. Abel Mxolisi Shilubane, representing H.E. Lindiwe Sisulu, Minister for International Relations and Cooperation of South Africa on behalf of the presidency of SADC; Mr. Said Djinnit, the United Nations Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region; Amb. Basile Ikouebe, the African Union Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for the Great Lakes Region, and Amb. Zachary Muburi-Muita, ICGLR Executive Secretary.

2. Participants reviewed developments in the region since the 8th meeting of the Regional Oversight Mechanism of the PSC Framework, held in Brazzaville on 19 October 2017.

3. In regard to negative forces, the participants welcomed the ongoing consultations in the context of the joint United Nations-SADC task force aimed at strengthening MONUSCO Force Intervention Brigade (FIB), as called for by the 8th meeting of the Regional Oversight Mechanism. They encouraged continued and enhanced cooperation between the Forces Armées de la République démocratique du Congo (FARDC) and MONUSCO-FIB to maximize military pressure on the negative forces towards their full neutralisation.

4. They further welcomed the launch of the Follow up Mechanism for the repatriation of former combatants, on 24 April in Goma, DRC. They requested the Governments of the DRC, Uganda, and Rwanda to continue to cooperate within the framework of the Follow up Mechanism to implement the plans to conclude the repatriation of former FDLR and ex-M23 combatants and their dependents, despite the challenges encountered so far.

5. Regarding the political and electoral processes in the DRC and Burundi, participants welcomed the progress made in the preparation of the elections in the DRC.
They encouraged the Government of the DRC and all concerned national stakeholders to continue with their efforts to create conducive conditions for credible and peaceful elections in respect of the 31 December 2016 agreement.

6. They reiterated their support to the East African Community (EAC)-led mediation and facilitation efforts in Burundi and urged the Burundian parties to engage in dialogue under the auspices of the EAC with the continued support of the African Union and the United Nations, bearing in mind the importance of the legacy of the Arusha peace accord.

7. Reviewing the situation in South Sudan, participants welcomed the ongoing efforts of the leaders of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD). They also welcomed the signing, on 27 June 2018, of the Khartoum Declaration of Agreement between the parties of the conflict in South Sudan and of the security arrangements agreement on 6 July. They took note with concern of continuing violations to the cessation of hostilities and called on all stakeholders to fully abide by their commitments under the signed agreements. They called on the parties to conclude the negotiations on the power sharing arrangements without further delay. They encouraged the IGAD member states to continue in their efforts and cooperation to achieve an end to the crisis in South Sudan.

8. Regarding the situation in the Central African Republic, they noted with concern continued attacks by armed groups and slow progress in the dialogue. They called on the armed groups to lay down their arms and engage in good faith in the dialogue, and encouraged the panel of the African Initiative to redouble its efforts in support of peace and stability in the country.

9. Participants noted the increasing number of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), refugees, and asylum seekers as a consequence of violence and insecurity in the region. They acknowledged that this situation, in addition to generating tensions within the displaced populations and with host communities, contributes to mistrust among the countries in the region. They stressed the importance of dealing with cases related to war crimes, crimes against humanity, and crimes related to the illegal exploitation and trade of natural resources.

10. Participants took note of the conclusions of the seminar held in Addis Ababa on 26-27 February 2018 on the occasion of the fifth anniversary of the PSC Framework. They agreed on the need to further strengthen the bounds of cooperation and friendship especially between the core countries of the region to accelerate the implementation of the PSC Framework. They encouraged regular exchanges at the leadership level to address existing tensions, reiterated the importance of collective responsibility, and proposed to consider any other relevant initiative to further strengthen regional cooperation.

11. Finally, the participants were briefed on the ongoing consultations for the convening of the 9th Regional Oversight Mechanism, in Kampala (Uganda) on 8 October 2018.

DONE IN BRAZZAVILLE, REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

20 JULY 2018