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Press Release

ICGLR

International Conference on the Great Lakes Region

7th ORDINARY SUMMIT OF ICGLR HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT

The Heads of State and Government of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR), meeting in Brazzaville, Republic of Congo, on 19th October, 2017 under the theme “***Fast-Tracking Implementation of the Pact to Facilitate Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region***” to review the political and security situation in the region at the invitation of H.E. **João Manuel Gonçalves Lourenço**, President of the Republic of Angola and outgoing Chairman of the ICGLR Summit;

His Excellency Denis Sassou Nguesso, Incoming Chairperson and host of the 7th Summit welcomed the ICGLR Heads of State and Government and other delegates to the Republic of Congo, and paid tribute to the Outgoing Chairperson of ICGLR, H.E. **João Manuel Gonçalves Lourenço** of the Republic of Angola and the immediate Former President H.E. Jose Eduardo dos Santos, for having provided excellent leadership to the Region during his tenure.

The Summit recalled the decisions of the last Ordinary Summit held in Luanda, Angola, on 14th June, 2016 to review the political and security situation in the Region and took note of the progress made in the implementation of the Pact over the last one year since the last Summit.

The Summit Congratulated His Excellency **João Manuel Gonçalves Lourenço**, on his election as the President of the Republic of Angola and His Excellency Paul Kagame, on his re-election as the President of the Republic of Rwanda.

The Summit reiterated its primary responsibility to finding lasting solutions to peace and security challenges in the region and reaffirmed its strong commitment to the ICGLR **Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region** and its related **Protocols**;

Having considered the recommendations of the Meetings of the Regional Inter-Ministerial Committee (RIMC) held on the 15th to 16th October, 2017, Meetings of the Committee of Ministers of Defence on the 11th October, 2017 and the Meeting of Ministers of Mines held on 21st October, 2016 all in Brazzaville, Republic of Congo, the Summit decided as follows:



On the Republic of Burundi

1. **Noted** the improving security situation in Burundi, and **Urged** countries hosting Burundian refugees to facilitate the return of those willing. As for those not willing to return, urged that they be settled far away from the common border as per the 1951 Refugee Convention;
2. **Reaffirmed** our support to the EAC-lead inter-Burundian dialogue and **Urged** all parties to conclude stakeholder consultations and commit to a peaceful resolution to all issues.

On the Democratic Republic of Congo

3. **Reiterated** support and called for the continued implementation of the Global Political and Inclusive Agreement signed on 31st December, 2016 in Kinshasa. DRC;
4. **Recommended** that operations conducted by FARDC against negative forces with the support of MONUSCO/FIB, in line with new MONUSCO mandate, be maintained and strengthened with a view to neutralising all armed groups, especially the ADF and FDLR;
5. **Urged** MONUSCO, AU, ICGLR and SADC as well as the international community to speed up the repatriation to Rwanda of the ex-FDLR combatants currently in transit camps in Kanyabayonga, Walungu and Kisangani;
6. **Urged** that an evaluation meeting be convened urgently to review the implementation of the commitments contained in the Nairobi Declarations on the M-23.

On the Central African Republic

7. **Expressed** support for the African Union Initiative on the restoration of Peace and Reconciliation in the CAR, and urged all Member States to assist in its full and expedited implementation;
8. **Recommended** that MINUSCA use authorised means to disarm rebels who have refused to take part in the on-going disarmament, demobilisation, reintegration and repatriation (DDRR) process, and to accelerate the training of the armed forces;
9. **Urged** the ICGLR and ECCAS Member States to facilitate the formation of a pilot brigade for the stabilization of the CAR;



10. **Called** upon the ICGLR to support the process of strengthening the capacity of the Armed Forces of the Central African Republic (FACA) through provision of equipment and training, pursuant to the decision of the Heads of State taken during the 6th Summit held in Luanda, Angola.

On the Republic of South Sudan

11. **Condemned** in the strongest terms continued attacks perpetrated by various armed groups against defenseless and innocent civilians around the country, resulting in loss of life, mass displacement and destruction of property;
12. **Expressed** support to the ongoing National Dialogue process initiated by the Government of South Sudan, which should compliment the Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan (ARCISS) signed in August 2015, and **Urged** all stakeholders to participate fully in the dialogue so as to ensure the speedy return of peace and stability to the country;
13. **Noted** the progress made in the resolution of the issue of South Sudanese from the SPLA-IO currently hosted in the eastern DRC through the tripartite cooperation of the two countries and the UN, and **Encouraged** the remaining elements to take advantage of the amnesty and repatriation process initiated by the Republic of South Sudan.

On the Republic of Sudan

14. **Urged** all Member States and the international community to continue to support the peace and development efforts undertaken by the Government of Sudan;
15. **Welcomed** the decision of the US Government to lift the economic sanctions on the Republic of Sudan, and **Called** for the removal of the name of Sudan from the US list of State Sponsors of terrorism.

On the Joint Follow-up Mechanism and the ADF Threat

16. **Urged** concerned ICGLR Member States to expeditiously honour their financial obligations and deploy the necessary personnel to ensure operationalisation of the Mechanism given the growing threat of the ADF terrorist organisation.

On the Menace of Terrorism and the Mercenary Phenomenon

17. **Directed** all ICGLR Member States to enhance cooperation and information sharing on activities of terrorist groups in order to neutralize their threat to the region;



18. **Directed** that all Member States expedite the domestication and implementation of the Protocol on Non-aggression and Mutual Defence.

Reconstitution of the Troika Mechanism

19. **Reconstituted** the ICGLR TROIKA comprising of the Republic of Congo as Chair, the Republic of Angola as Vice Chair, and Republic of the Sudan as Rapporteur.

Establishment of the ICGLR Peace and Security Architecture

20. **Directed** the Committee of Ministers of Defence to establish the ICGLR Peace and Security Architecture, and directed the Conference Secretariat to develop and present the Terms of Reference during the next meeting of that Committee for approval.

On the Report of the ICGLR Ministers of Mines

21. **Adopted** the report and recommendations on the Self-Financing Mechanism of the Regional initiative on Natural Resources (RINR), which is a critical tool in the success of the fight against illegal exploitation of natural resources in the Great Lakes region;
22. **Directed** that all auditing firms operating in the minerals supply chain in the Great Lakes region be accredited by the ICGLR Regional Audit Committee of the Regional Initiative on Natural Resources (RINR), and Directed Member States to use the standard ICGLR MOU template when entering into agreements with any traceability entities;
23. **Directed** the Chair of the Committee of Ministers in-charge of Mines, in coordination with the Conference Secretariat, to convene the fifth meeting of Ministers in charge of mines in the Great Lakes Region not later than 31st December, 2017.

On the Fight against Youth Unemployment

24. **Directed** ICGLR Member States to mobilize adequate financing for the implementation of the Declaration of the 2014 Special Summit of ICGLR Heads of State and Government on the fight against Youth Unemployment in the Great Lakes Region;
25. **Directed** the ICGLR Secretariat to establish a robust data bank for the collection and monitoring of progress on the state of youth unemployment in the region;



26. **Directed** ICGLR Member States to expedite the development and implementation of the National Action Plans as was resolved in the Declaration of the 2014 Special Summit of ICGLR Heads of State and Government on the fight against Youth Unemployment in the Great Lakes Region.

On the Issue of Refugees

27. **Urged** Member States to embrace dialogue in addressing the security challenges that lead to instability and the proliferation of refugees;
28. **Directed** the Conference Secretariat to draft a Protocol on the Protection and Management of Refugees and Asylum Seekers hosted in the ICGLR Member States for adoption at the next Summit.

On the Eradication of Statelessness in the Great Lakes Region

29. **Directed** Member States to implement the Declaration and Regional Action Plan on the eradication of Statelessness as recommended by the Regional Inter-Ministerial Committee (RIMC).

On Gender and Women

30. **Urged** Member States to implement the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 and the 30% quota decision on elective positions and decision-making processes, and urged the active involvement of women in peace initiatives within the Region;
31. **Directed** the convening of a Special Session of Ministers in-charge of Gender Issues to assess the progress of implementation of the gender dimension of the ICGLR Pact over the last 10 years, the Kampala Declaration on Sexual and Gender based violence, and the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 in Member States and report to the next Summit.

On the Date and Venue of Next Summit

32. **Resolved** that the next Summit will be hosted by the Republic of the Sudan in December, 2019 at a date to be appointed.

The Summit avails itself of this opportunity to congratulate the Governments and People of the Republic of Rwanda and the Republic of Angola for having conducted peaceful, fair and transparent general elections.



The Summit finally expressed its profound appreciation to the Government and the people of the Republic of Congo for the warm hospitality extended to all delegations, and for the excellent facilities placed at their disposal to enable the success of the Summit.

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