

Directorate of Information and Communication

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Ministers Discuss Policies and Their Implementations towards the Development of the Great Lakes Region



Friday 19 July, 2013- The Meeting on Regional Approaches to Development in the Great Lakes Region ended today, Friday 19 July 2013 with the unanimous agreement that Peace and Security in the region must go hand in hand with Development programs.

The meeting was co-organized by the African Union Commission (AUC), the World Bank and the United Nations. It was attended by Ministers of Finance and

Economic Planning and Ministers of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Countries of the Great Lakes Region, Regional Economic Communities (RECs), Partner Countries, International Organizations and Civil Society Organizations.

Beginning with statements by the co-organizers of the conference, H.E. Mr. Erastus Mwencha, Deputy Chairperson, AUC opened the session by reiterating its objectives and reminding all of the issues faced by the region. He said “We meet here today to exchange ideas, define aspirations and priorities, and policies and programmes to catalyze the development of a region that has had a share of both pain and suffering arising from a prolonged conflict that has gone on for two decades.” Before concluding, he commended the work of RECs in the region for helping to lower barriers on trade and other areas, while also assuring the delegation that AU Commission is partnering to strengthen regional integration.

Mr. Modipo Toure, Assistant Secretary General -UN gave his opening statement, delivering a message of Mrs. Mary Robinson, Special Envoy of the UN Secretary General for the Great Lakes Region. She expressed her optimism, saying that this time it will be possible for peace and development to play a mutually reinforcing role in the region thanks to the leaders of the AUC, UN and World Bank. She also urged partners to engage in more strategic funding as in the past, considerable resources had been invested in the region without producing any visible impact on its population.

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The final opening statement by Mr. Colin Bruce, Director of Strategy and Operations, Africa Region World Bank concisely reaffirmed the commitment of the World Bank stating that they fully embraced the Peace, Security and Development framework that had been established and hoped that the conference would focus on the efficient implementation of policies established for the region. After stressing the

importance of the outcome of the conference to the region as well as the World Bank, he finalized by stating his hopes that all parties involved in this development are here for the long haul just as the World Bank is.

Several sessions followed including presentations on '*Promoting Long Term Stability in the Great Lakes Region*' as well as an Open floor discussion chaired by Mr. Colin Bruce. The report of the Senior Official's meeting held on the previous day, 18 July 2013 was also presented, discussed and adopted. This was followed by the expected adoption of the Communiqué on the Ministerial meeting. Future steps and key outcomes were also discussed and adopted

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