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**SIGNING CEREMONY OF THE  
PEACE, SECURITY AND COOPERATION  
FRAMEWORK FOR THE DEMOCRATIC  
REPUBLIC OF CONGO AND THE GREAT LAKES REGION**

**ADDIS ABABA, 24 FEBRUARY 2013**

**INTRODUCTORY REMARKS BY H.E DR. NKOSAZANA DLAMINI ZUMA**  
**CHAIRPERSON OF THE AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION**

**Your Excellency, Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn, Chairman of the African Union,**

**Your Excellencies, Heads of State and Government of the countries of the Great Lakes Region and Heads of Delegations,**

**Secretary-General of the United Nations,**

**Executive Secretary of the International Conference of the Great Lakes Region,**

**Executive Secretary of the Southern African Development Community,  
Honourable Ministers,**

**Distinguished members of the diplomatic corps,**

**Representatives of the Media Fraternity,**

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to the Headquarters of the African Union, in Addis Ababa.

I wish to thank the Chairman of the AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government, Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn of Ethiopia who is here with us for his diligence and dedication in steering the affairs of our Union.

I would like to thank all the Heads of State and Government of the countries of the region, the Chair of the ICGLR and the Chair of the SADC, for having positively responded to our invitation.

I also like to thank the United Nations Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon. He has devoted considerable efforts to achieve the required consensus among all concerned to make today's event a reality. More generally, the AU is appreciative of his continued support to Africa's efforts to achieve the goals it has set for itself

Allow me also to express appreciation to all our invited guests from the diplomatic community in Ethiopia.

President Museveni is not with us here because of the loss of his father. On behalf of all of us, I express our heartfelt condolences to him and deepest sympathy to his family.

### **Excellencies,**

We are gathered here for the signing of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Great Lakes Region. This is a landmark event.

I would like to quote Lumumba in a letter he wrote to his wife because it speaks to all of us. It speaks to the Congolese, to us Africans, to the international community, to the UN as well as to our forbearers.

And I quote “I am writing these words not knowing whether they will reach you, when they will reach you, and whether I shall still be alive when you read them.....Dead or alive, free or in prison by order of the imperialists, it is not myself who counts. It is the Congo, it is our poor people for whom independence has been transformed into a cage from whose confines the outside world looks on us, sometimes with kindly sympathy, but at other times with joy and pleasure. But my faith will remain unshakeable. I know and I feel in my heart that sooner or later my people will rid themselves of all their enemies, both internal and external, and that they will rise as one man to say No to the degradation and shame of colonialism, and regain their dignity in the clear light of the sun.

We are not alone. Africa, Asia and the free liberated people from all corners of the world will always be found at the side of the millions of Congolese who will not abandon the struggle until the day when there are no longer any colonialists and their mercenaries in our country. As to my children whom I leave and whom I may never see again, I should like them to be told that it is for them, as it is for every Congolese, to accomplish the sacred task of reconstructing our independence and our sovereignty: for without dignity there is no liberty, without justice there is no dignity, and without independence there are no free men.

Neither brutality, nor cruelty nor torture will ever bring me to ask for mercy, for I prefer to die with my head unbowed, my faith unshakable and with profound trust in the destiny of my country, rather than live under subjection and disregarding sacred principles. History will one day have its say, but it will not be the history that is taught in Brussels, Paris, Washington or in the United Nations, but the history which will be taught in the countries freed from imperialism and its puppets. Africa will write its own history, and to the north and south of the Sahara, it will be a glorious and dignified history.

Do not weep for me, my dear wife. I know that my country, which is suffering so much, will know how to defend its independence and its liberty. Long live Congo”.

I commend the personal involvement of the UN Secretary General in pursuing this dream Lumumba died for.

I thank you.