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Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. P.O. Box: 3243 Tel.: (251-11) 5513 822 Fax: (251-11) 5519 321
Email: situationroom@africa-union.org

PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL
1256TH MEETING (MINISTERIAL LEVEL)

28 JANUARY 2025
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

PSC/MIN/COMM.1256 (2025)

COMMUNIQUÉ



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Adopted by the Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU) at its 1256th Emergency Ministerial meeting held on 28 January 2025 on the Recent Developments in the Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC);

The Peace and Security Council,

Recalling its previous decisions and pronouncements on the situation in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), particularly Communiqués [PSC/HoSG/COMM.1140 (2023)] adopted at its 1140th meeting held at the level of Heads of State and Government, on 17 February 2023; [PSC/PR/COMM.1203 (2024)] adopted at its 1203rd meeting held on 4 March 2024 and [PSC/MIN/COMM.1222 (2024)] adopted at its 1222nd meeting held on 15 July 2024;

Underscoring the AU principles as stipulated in Article 4 of the Constitutive Act, and the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, in particular, non-interference by any Member State in the internal affairs of another; peaceful co-existence of Member States and their right to live in peace and security;

Reaffirming the solidarity of the AU with the people and the Government of the DRC in their aspirations for durable peace, security, and sustainable development, as well as the continued commitment of the AU to respect the sovereignty, independence, unity, and territorial integrity of the DRC;

Taking note of the Statement of H.E. Moussa Faki Mahamat, Chairperson of the AU Commission, on the grave situation in eastern DRC, issued on 25 January 2025;

Noting the introductory remarks by H.E. Kacou Houadja Leon Adom, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cote d'Ivoire and Chairperson of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union for the Month of January 2025, and the briefing by H.E. Ambassador Bankole Adeoye, AU Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security; **also noting** the Statements by H.E. Thérèse Kayikwamba Wagner, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Francophonie of the DRC; H.E. Olivier Jean Patrick Nduhungirehe, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Republic of Rwanda;

Further noting the Statements by H.E. Mahmoud Thabit Kombo, Minister for Foreign Affairs and East African Cooperation of the United Republic of Tanzania, as the Chairperson of the Ministerial Committee of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Organ on Politics, Defence, and Security Cooperation; H.E. Tete António, Minister of External Relations of the Republic of Angola, Chair of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS); H.E. Musalia Mudavadi, Minister of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs of the Republic of Kenya and Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator; and

Acting under Article 7 of its Protocol, the Peace and Security Council:

1. **Expresses grave concern** over the offensive launched by the M23 and its supporters in the past weeks, capturing Minova, Sake, and the regional capital, Goma, which resulted in death and casualties amongst civilians and peacekeepers, as well as worsening an already fragile security and humanitarian situation in eastern DRC;

2. **Also expresses grave concern** over the increased tensions between the DRC and Rwanda; **encourages** them to prioritize peaceful means of addressing the challenges between them; **Commends** the efforts of H.E. João Manuel Lourenço, President of the Republic of Angola, the Chair of ICGLR and AU Champion for Peace and Reconciliation, for facilitating dialogue between the DRC and Rwanda and **urges** the two parties to continue extending their cooperation and collaboration to the efforts of the Facilitator; and **requests** the AU Commission to enhance its support to the efforts of the Facilitator;
3. **Strongly condemns** the heinous attacks by the M23, which resulted in the loss of lives, injuries, and displacement, especially women and children, and **warns** that those concerned will be held accountable for their actions; **also strongly condemns** the activities of the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) and Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR), which have worsened the insecurity and suffering of the population in eastern DRC;
4. **Demands** the M23, ADF and FDLR, other armed and terrorist groups operating in eastern DRC to immediately and unconditionally cease their attacks and permanently disband and lay down their arms; **calls for** an immediate and unconditional withdrawal of M23 from Minova, Sake, and Goma, and other occupied areas in the DRC, and all other foreign armed and terrorist groups operating in the DRC, in line with the Communiqué of the Mini-Summit of Luanda of 23 November 2022, while emphasizing the need for respect of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Democratic Republic of Congo;
5. **Unequivocally condemns** any foreign military support being provided to M23 and any other armed group operating in eastern DRC and **demands** the immediate cessation of such support and the immediate withdrawal of any such external party from the entire Congolese territory; **further condemns** support provided by military forces to specific armed groups, in particular the FDLR, and **demands** the immediate cessation of such support;
6. **Urges** the signatories of the August 2024 Ceasefire Agreement and the "Harmonized Plan for the Neutralization of FDLR and their Disengagement" of November 2024, adopted under the auspices of the Luanda Process to implement the aforementioned Agreements and to urgently and unconditionally return to dialogue;
7. **Calls on** the two parties to return immediately to the Luanda Process under the facilitation of H.E. João Manuel Lourenço, President of the Republic of Angola, the Chair of ICGLR and AU Champion for Peace and Reconciliation, and resume the Nairobi Process; **reiterates** that there can be no military solution to the current situation in the eastern DRC;
8. **Commends** the gallantry of the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (FARDC), the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (SAMIDRC) and the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) troops; **expresses** condolences to the families and governments of the deceased; **also expresses condolences** to South Africa, Malawi, United Republic of Tanzania and Uruguay, for the loss of their troops, and to the Government and people of the DRC, for the loss of the Interim Military Governor of North Kivu; and **wishes** a speedy recovery to the injured;
9. **Stresses the need** for the implementation of the outcome of the Quadripartite Summit of the EAC, ECCAS, ICGLR, and SADC, under the auspices of the AU, held on 27 June 2023, in Luanda, Republic of Angola, and underscores the imperative of enhanced coordination of efforts within the framework of the Quadripartite Mechanism; in this regard, **directs** the AU Commission to urgently convene a follow-up Quadripartite meeting on the implementation of the commitments made during the first Summit of the Quadripartite;

10. **Calls** for respect and adherence to International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights Law, the protection of civilians, internally displaced people (IDP) camps, and medical sites, and the protection of peacekeepers, noting that attacks against civilians and peacekeepers constitute war crimes;
11. **Notes with concern** the deterioration of the dire humanitarian situation in eastern DRC and **demands** rapid, unimpeded, and safe humanitarian access while appealing to the international community, particularly the UN humanitarian agencies, to enhance their efforts in the mobilization of resources and **appeals** to international partners to upscale humanitarian assistance in Goma and surrounding areas, ensuring access to food, medical supplies, and shelter, in particular to women, children, the elderly and people living with disabilities;
12. **Requests** the United Nations and the AU Commission to continue to provide support to the SAMIDRC;
13. **Calls on** all stakeholders to embrace and promote dialogue and reconciliation as a way of putting an end to violence and, in so doing, ensure the participation of women, youth, as well as religious, and traditional leaders in the process;
14. **Condemns** the attacks on Diplomatic and Consular Missions in the Democratic Republic of Congo as a blatant violation of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations of 1961, and Vienna Convention on Consular Relations of 1963, and in this regard, **calls upon** the authorities of the DRC to protect all Diplomatic and Consular Missions, and to undertake investigations on these developments with the view to holding those responsible to account;
15. **Underscores the need** to address the structural root causes and drivers of the conflict in eastern DRC, including through supporting socio-economic empowerment programs aimed at economically empowering the population, especially the women and youth;
16. **Mandates** the AU Commission to immediately deploy a fact-finding mission on the ongoing crisis in eastern DRC within the context of the quadripartite framework and report back to the Council soonest;
17. **Proposes** the holding of the PSC Meeting on the situation in eastern DRC at the Head of State and Government level, on the margins of the upcoming AU Assembly in February 2025; and
18. **Decides** to remain actively seized of the matter.