



# JOINT PRESS RELEASE

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## **Ministerial Meeting of Signatory States and Guarantors of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Region**

**Addis Ababa, 28 January 2016** - Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Representatives of signatory states of the Peace, Security and Cooperation (PSC) Framework for the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and the Region met in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on 28 January 2016, in the margins of the 28th Ordinary Session of the African Union Executive Council. The United Nations (UN), the African Union (AU), the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) were represented at the meeting, in their capacity as guarantors of the Framework. The meeting was chaired by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Angola, supported by the AU Commissioner for Peace and Security and the UN Special Envoy for the Great Lakes region.

Participants in the ministerial meeting were briefed on recent political and security developments in the DRC, Burundi, the Central African Republic and South Sudan.

The meeting welcomed the recent elections in Tanzania, as well as the progress achieved in the peace process in South Sudan. It also welcomed progress in the peace process in the Central African Republic and urged the parties to continue their efforts.

Participants expressed their full support for the ongoing EAC-led dialogue on Burundi. They also welcomed the decision by the Government of the DRC to resume joint military planning and operations with MONUSCO, to neutralize negative forces, notably the FDLR. They further called on the ICGLR, in coordination with the Government of the DRC, SADC and UN, to convene a meeting of Ministers of Defence to review progress in the neutralization of negative forces. They endorsed the recommendation by the PSC Framework's Technical Support Committee (TSC) encouraging the guarantors to hold consultations with the Governments of the DRC, Uganda and Rwanda and the designated coordinator of the ex-M23, to address obstacles to the full implementation of the Nairobi Declarations, particularly the repatriation of former members of the ex-M23.

Regarding the strengthening of the governance mechanisms of the PSC Framework, the meeting recommended that future meetings of the Regional Oversight Mechanism (ROM) be

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delinked from the AU Summit and the UN General Assembly, to ensure that the Heads of State and Heads of Government of signatory states dedicate their undivided attention to, and actively participate in discussions related to the implementation of the Framework. The meeting further recommended that future ROM meetings be preceded by meetings of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of signatory states to lay the groundwork for discussions and decisions by the Heads of State and Heads of Government.

With regard to ongoing preparations for the Great Lakes Private Sector Investment Conference, to be held in Kinshasa, DRC, on 24-25 February 2016, participants welcomed the steps taken towards holding the Conference and encouraged signatory states to actively participate in the event at the highest level.

Participants requested that the ministerial meeting's recommendations be presented for consideration to the Heads of State and Heads of Government of the ICGLR, during their next summit scheduled for 12 February 2016.

Lastly, participants expressed appreciation to the AU Commissioner for Peace and Security and the UN Special Envoy for the Great Lakes region for convening this ministerial meeting and thanked the AU Commission for hosting it.

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