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Press Release

International Conference on the Great Lakes Region

9th Extra-Ordinary Summit of ICGLR Heads of State and Government

Luanda, Angola, May 18, 2015: The Heads of State and Government of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR), Conclude their meeting in Luanda, Angola, on 18th May, 2015 at the invitation of H.E. Jose Eduardo Dos Santos, President of the Republic of Angola and Chairman of the ICGLR Summit, to discuss the Security and Humanitarian situation in the Great Lakes Region with special focus on the Republic of Burundi, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Republic of South Sudan and on the growing threat of terrorism in the region.

The Summit considered of the recommendation of the 10th Ordinary RIMC held on 11th March, 2015 in Luanda, Angola, for a Special Summit on the security situation in the Republic of South Sudan and the Central African Republic;

Reiterated its primary responsibility of the ICGLR to find 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 reviewed the recent events in the Republic of Burundi and the resultant humanitarian crisis in the country which has impacted on the neighboring countries and the normal operation of the conference secretariat, and Having considered the respective reports of the ICGLR Committee of Ministers of Defence and the Regional Inter-Ministerial Committee (RIMC) on the Security situation and Humanitarian situation in the Great Lakes Region with special focus on the Republic of Burundi, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Republic of South Sudan and the growing threat of terrorism in the region, the Summit decided as follows:

On the Republic of Burundi



1. **Strongly condemn** the attempted coup d'état in the Republic of Burundi, which is a grave violation of the ICGLR PACT on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region, the Constitutive Act of the African Union and the UN Charter;
2. **Strongly Urge** the Government of Burundi to expeditiously work towards the restoration of peaceful and secure environment in the country that would encourage speedy return of refugees;
3. An ICGLR delegation of Heads of state visits Burundi in the shortest possible time to evaluate the situation and contribute to the peaceful resolution of the current crisis; This delegation will be comprised of South Africa, Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania ;
4. **Call on** the Government of Burundi to postpone elections and join hands with all stakeholders in establishing the necessary conducive atmosphere for an electoral process that is peaceful, credible and transparent in accordance with the ICGLR Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region;
5. **Strongly urge** all parties in Burundi to stop the on-going acts of violence and pursue dialogue and peace;
6. **Urge** the Government respect the constitutional rights of the people of Burundi and its obligations under the ICGLR Pact on Security, Stability and Development and the Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance to which it is a signatory;
7. **Urge** the International Community extends much-needed humanitarian assistance to Burundians who have been displaced as a result of the crisis;
8. **That** Conference Secretariat (CS) be temporarily relocated from Burundi to ensure the safety and security of the staff and the continued effective functioning of the organisation until such time as the situation stabilizes.

On the Democratic Republic of Congo

9. **Encourage** the Government of the DRC to continue military offensive against FDLR and other negative forces in the Eastern DRC with special emphasis on neutralizing their command structures;



10. **Encourage** the Government of the DRC and the United Nations to restore a conducive environment for resuming cooperation between FARDC and MONUSCO, through the current strategic dialogue between both parties, in order to increase pressure on FDLR, all other negative forces and armed groups operating in Eastern DRC.
11. **Encourage** the speedy repatriation of FDLR elements in the transit camps (KANYABAYONGA, WALUNGU and Lt Gen BAHUMA camp) to Rwanda along with their dependents;
12. **Direct** the Conference Secretariat to facilitate the establishment of a mechanism composed of (DRC, Uganda, UN, AU, SADC, ICGLR) and (DRC, Rwanda, UN, ICGLR, AU, SADC) to help expedite the repatriation of the remaining ex-combatants of M23 within a period of three months in implementation of the **Nairobi Declarations**;
13. **Commend** the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania for apprehending the ADF leader Sheikh Jamil Mukulu, and **welcome** the surrender of the founder of NALU to the Uganda government authorities.

On the Central African Republic

14. **To convene a joint** ICGLR/ECCAS Summit on the situation in the Central African Republic and urged all stakeholders in CAR to expedite the national reconciliation process in view of the forthcoming elections in the country;
15. **Urge** ICGLR Member States and the international community to honour their previous pledges, and mobilize additional resources to ensure the conduct of elections as scheduled;
16. **Call upon** the UN to lift the current sanctions and arms embargo on the CAR, and urge current African members of the UN Security Council to support that move in order to facilitate the reestablishment of a functional national security force as well as the lifting of sanctions on diamond trade in the framework of the Kimberley process ;
17. **That ICGLR Ministers shall** fully participate at the upcoming International Conference on the CAR in Brussels on May 26, 2015, under the coordination of the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of the Republic of Rwanda.



18. **Instruct the Committee** of Ministers of Defence to establish a Military Experts Committee from the ICGLR Member States to be dispatched to the CAR to assess the military's needs and to draw a plan for technical assistance.

On the Republic of South Sudan

19. **Strongly Condemn** the SPLM-IO rebels and their leader, Dr. Riek Machar for their continued intransigence and reneging on previous agreements and commitments which are essential for the ceasefire and peaceful resolution of the conflict in the Country;
20. **Urge the** mediation team of the Historical African Liberation Parties (ANC, Chama Cha Mapinduzi, NRM) to convene urgently to update the status of the implementation of the SPLM Reunification Agreement, in order to conclusively ascertain the commitment of the SPLM-IO rebels to a negotiated settlement as offered by the Government, and thereafter apply the proper ICGLR designation;
21. **Affirm** the sovereignty and legitimacy of the elected Government of the Republic of South Sudan, and commended the Government for continuing to seriously engage in the peace talks despite continued violations from the SPLM-IO rebels. Urge the SPLM-IO rebels to accept and participate in the formation of the proposed all-inclusive Transitional Government of National Unity as accepted by the Government;
22. **That no** UN sanctions, whether targeted sanctions or arms embargo, be imposed on South Sudan, as these would be counter-productive and only serve to exacerbate the situation;
23. **Welcome** the supporting and observer role of the CPA Troika (Governments of Norway, USA and UK) in the South Sudan IGAD-led peace process, and urge them to continue their positive engagement without directly participating in the mediation process;
24. **Call for** increased humanitarian assistance for South Sudan from the International Community, and urge the ICGLR Member States to mobilize financial and other resources to address the increasing number of internally displaced civilians as a result of the conflict.

On the Republic of Sudan



25. **Call for** the lifting of sanctions imposed on the country for the last two decades;
26. **Fully support** the efforts of the Government of Sudan to neutralise all Sudanese negative forces operating in the country;
27. **Call for** the suspension of any form of support to Sudanese negative forces (JEM, SPLM-N, SLM-AW & SLM-MM);
28. **Strengthen** cooperation with other regional actors and international organisations to deter the proliferation of mercenary groups, arms traffickers and negative forces that are targeting UN peacekeepers, humanitarian workers and civilians.

On the threat of Terrorism

29. **Strengthen** proactive sharing of intelligence by all ICGLR Member States, enhance early warning mechanisms, increase close monitoring of cross border movements, and strengthen the existing regional counter-terrorism mechanisms in the fight against this growing threat.
30. **Propose** a Summit of Heads of State on the terrorism problem to develop a regional and continental strategy and direct the Secretariats of ICGLR, EAC and SADC with the support of South Africa and Kenya to proceed with the assessment of counter-terrorism strategies at the continental and regional level in order to propose a common strategy and concerted actions.

The Summit expressed its profound appreciation to the Government and the people of the Republic of Angola for the warm hospitality extended to all delegations, and excellent facilities placed at their disposal that enabled the Summit to be successful.

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