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STATEMENT

BY

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AT THE

**SIXTH HIGH-LEVEL MEETING OF THE REGIONAL OVERSIGHT MECHANISM OF THE
PEACE, SECURITY AND COOPERATION FRAMEWORK FOR THE DRC AND THE
REGION**

SEPTEMBER 29, 2015

New York

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**Excellences, Heads of State and Government,
H.E Ban Ki-Moon, Secretary General of the United Nations
Distinguished Delegates**

At the outset I wish to commend Mr. Said Djinnit for his tireless effort in ensuring the implementation of the PSC Framework on the DRC and the region. I have no doubt that your effort has tested progress in realizing peace and security in the region.

Excellences,

The Great Lakes Region has experienced recurrent and devastating armed conflicts as well as humanitarian crises, resulting in social and human destruction. In various parts of the region, the legacy of colonialism, ethnic conflict, weak state structures, transnational crime and terrorism, proliferation of small arms and light weapons, and the illegal exploitation of natural resources have given rise to a vicious cycle of violence, instability, displacement, and institutional collapse.

The state of Peace and Security in Africa and in particular the Great Lakes Region remains a pre-occupying phenomenon, with successes and continuing challenges. Indeed, the establishment of regional and sub-regional Organizations such as International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR), East African Community (EAC), Southern African Development Cooperation (SADC) and many others to mention but a few, with great and promising achievements in the region should be venerated. However, there are diverse challenges which are often based on the logic of confrontation and rivalries, to the detriment of concepts and ideological orientations that are more receptive to the exigencies of the peaceful solutions anchored on dialogue, Peaceful settlement of disputes, compromise and win-win for mutual benefit.

Excellences

On the basis of our observation and engagements over the recent years, there is no doubt that there is a desire and commitment on the part of the region and the international partners, to resolve conflicts in the region. This desire and commitment are well expressed in previous and recent regional efforts undertaken to ensure security, stability and development in the Great Lakes Region. However, if commitments and agreements like the Nairobi declarations are not fully implemented. They create a gap for relapse into conflicts in the region.

We commend DRC and UN Force Intervention Brigade for the joint operations against Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) and urge continued efforts in dealing with other armed groups to pacify and stabilize the region. We also commend Tanzania for extraditing Mr. Jamil Mukulu, the Commander/ Rebel leader of the Allied Democratic Forces to Uganda.

Excellences,

Some of the achievements of the PSC Framework are;

- Bringing relative peace in Eastern DRC following the military defeat of the M23 and the conclusion of the Kampala Dialogue, as well as FADRC military operations against the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF).
- The launch of a number of initiatives to engage women and civil society to support the PSC framework. However, there are concerns that some initiatives are replicating on-going activities of the ICGLR. However, there are concerns that some of the initiatives are being duplicated such as the established Great Lakes Women's Platform yet the ICGLR Women's Forum exists.
- Progress under the economic pillar of the framework, in particular, an Investment Opportunities Brief (IOB) has been prepared to attract potential investors in the region. The IOB profiles the investment opportunities in the region and an Investment Conference at the level of Heads of State is expected to be held early next year.
- Enhanced collaboration between the region and international community. The PSC-Framework is credited mobilizing international attention and resources towards the region and bringing countries of the region to collectively address challenges through Mini-Summits and joint ICGLR/SADC meetings.

Excellenices,

Challenges that are slowing the Implementation of the PSC Framework include;

- Delays in implementation of the Nairobi Declarations that concluded the Kampala Dialogue. The slow pace of repatriation of ex-M23 elements from Uganda/Rwanda and implementing other commitments outlined in the Nairobi Declarations remain a concern. We urge the government of

DRC to expedite repatriation of M23. Uganda has no interest at all in keeping the M23 elements. We have been very clear on those elements that have refused to go back to DRC and proposed that third Country be identified for them to live in.

- Continuing incidents of crimes against humanity, displacement of people attributed to renewed activities of ADF and continued existence of armed groups in Eastern DRC. Whereas focus has been on foreign armed groups, local armed groups motivated by illegal extraction of minerals have the potential to undermine the PSC-Framework.
- Difficulties encountered by regional security mechanisms such as Expanded Joint Verification Mechanism (EJVM) and Joint Intelligence Fusion Centre (JIFC) to fully deliver on their mandate. There is a need for financial and logistical support to these Mechanisms to enable them implement the mandates and deliver on the tasks.

On our part, Uganda established the ICGLR Regional Training Facility on Sexual and Gender Based Violence in Kampala to train judicial officers, social and medical workers, military, police and prisons, law enforcement officers and many other professionals to prevent and suppress crimes of sexual violence. We welcome the support by the partners on the ICGLR Regional Training Facility in Kampala and call upon all development partners and the international community to support the activities and operationalization of this Regional Training Facility.

Excellencies

On Burundi, The East African Community (EAC) has been leading in efforts to resolve the political impasse and in a Summit held on 6th July 2015, appointed President Yoweri Museveni, to facilitate dialogue among the parties in Burundi with a view to finding solutions to all contentious issues.

On 14th and 15th July 2015, President Museveni held consultations with various stakeholders with a view of building consensus on the contentious issues. The dialogue continued from 16th-19th July 2015 and was facilitated by Hon. Crispus Kiyonga, Minister of Defence on behalf of President Museveni.

Uganda therefore remains committed to facilitate the dialogue as mandated by the EAC Summit. Hon. Kiyonga is in consultations with the parties with a view to resuming the dialogue in the near future.

In conclusion, we remain committed to the PSC Framework and convinced that fostering strategic partnerships will bolster effectiveness, and ensure peace, stability and development in the Great Lakes Region. We therefore call for regular interaction, coordination, and consultation among different players and actors in the region and United Nations. This will enable us to augment complementarities and avoid duplication of efforts.

I thank you.