



# UGANDA

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**Permanent Mission of Uganda  
To the United Nations  
New York**

**Tel : (212) 949 – 0110**

**Fax : (212) 687 - 4517**

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**STATEMENT**

**BY**

**HON SAM K. KUTESA  
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA**

**AT**

**A SECURITY COUNCIL DEBATE  
ON “THE SITUATION IN THE GREAT LAKES REGION: DRC AND  
THE GREAT LAKES”**

**25 July, 2013  
New York**

**Please check against delivery**

**Mr. President,  
Secretary-General,  
Honourable Ministers,  
Members of the Security Council,**

At the outset, I congratulate you, Mr. President, and the United States delegation on your leadership of the Security Council this month. Thank you for organizing and presiding over this important and timely debate on the situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and the Great Lakes Region.

I also thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, Special Envoy Mary Robinson, World Bank President Jim Yong Kim and AU Commissioner for Peace and Security, Ramtane Lamamra for their Statements.

**Mr. President,**

This debate is taking place at a time when eastern DRC is in a deep crisis again. The presence of a multiplicity of foreign and local armed groups including ADF, FDLR, FNL, M23, and Mai-Mai militias has exacerbated insecurity in the DRC and the region.

Within the framework of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR), the region has been involved in efforts towards a peaceful resolution of the instability in eastern DRC through both political and military approaches.

We are convinced that the political process should be at the forefront of our efforts, with peace enforcement measures complementing it. It was in this context that the region conceived the Neutral International Force (NIF) initiative which the Security Council took on and made the Intervention Brigade. In this regard, Uganda welcomed the statement by the UN Secretary-General on 18 July 2013 in which he underlined *“the importance of pursuing a political solution to address the root causes of conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo”*. We are also encouraged by the approach taken by Special Envoy Mary Robinson and would appreciate her engagement in the political process, including the Kampala Talks.

President Yoweri Museveni, in his capacity as the current Chairman of the ICGLR, has convened five extra-ordinary summits including four in Kampala, aimed at finding a lasting solution to the recurrent conflicts in the DRC. The sixth is due to take place in Nairobi on 31 July, 2013.

The extra-ordinary summits were instrumental in de-escalating the situation in eastern DRC last year, and the commencement of the talks in Kampala between the DRC Government and the M23, facilitated by Hon. Crispus Kiyonga, Uganda's Minister of Defence, who is with me in this Chamber.

**Mr. President,**

We believe the Kampala Talks between the Government of DRC and M23 provide the best opportunity for resolving their differences. The political engagement between the DRC government and the M23 must be given priority in the search for a durable and peaceful solution.

The successful conclusion of these Talks will no doubt have a positive contribution to the National Consultations due to start in DRC. We are glad to inform the Council that since December 2012, there has been some progress in the Talks, with two key milestones. First, both parties reviewed the Peace Agreement of 2009 between the Government of DRC and CNDP and agreed on the status of implementation, which was a significant step in confidence building. Secondly, both parties presented draft peace agreements in March 2013 which were consolidated into one draft that is currently in its second version and subject to further negotiations.

While these developments are commendable, the renewed fighting raises serious concern over the commitment to the Talks. We call upon the Security Council and partners to encourage the parties to expedite and speedily conclude the Kampala Talks.

We also call upon the international community to provide logistical and financial support to ICGLR mechanisms such as the Joint Intelligence Fusion Center and the Expanded Joint Verification Mechanism.

**Mr. President,**

The renewed fighting between the Congolese Armed Forces and M23 is a major concern for the region and the international community. Simultaneously, the atrocities committed by the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), which has linkages with Al-Shabaab, have increased since the beginning of July, both in intensity and frequency. During the last three weeks, the ADF attacked Kangbaya Prison, captured Kamango town and ambushed a MONUSCO convoy. These attacks caused an influx of over 66,000 Congolese refugees who fled into Uganda.

The humanitarian situation in the region remains a matter of grave concern, as insecurity caused by armed groups has led to large scale displacements of people.

While we deplore and condemn these attacks by ADF and other armed groups, they serve as a grim reminder of the real challenges faced by the DRC and the region.

Uganda is particularly concerned about the possibility of an imminent attack by the ADF from the DRC, and it is our expectation that the new mechanism combined with DRC's security sector reform will give it the requisite capacity to deter foreign armed groups from occupying and using its territory to destabilize neighbours.

**Mr. President,**

We consider the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the DRC and the region as a unique and important milestone towards addressing the challenges in the DRC and the region. In our view, the following three elements of the framework are crucial.

First, the PSC Framework recognizes a holistic approach as the best way to end instability. Secondly, it outlines commitments and actions at the national, regional and international levels, and we should focus on their implementation. Thirdly, and most important, it emphasizes partnership and collective efforts amongst the UN, AU, ICGLR and SADC.

We therefore reiterate and underscore the need for expeditious implementation of the commitments in the PSC Framework by the DRC, the region and the international community. Uganda is committed to playing its part. From our experience, regional-led initiatives, with support by the international community, have yielded good and better results on our continent.

We underscore the need to bring into central focus the nexus between peace and development in eastern DRC. It is important that regional initiatives in key areas such as infrastructure, energy, trade and agriculture are supported.

In this regard, Uganda welcomed the visit by the UN Secretary-General and the World Bank President to the region in May 2013, during which they pledged to support peace, security, and economic development in the Great Lakes region.

**Mr. President,**

In conclusion, for many years now, Uganda and indeed the region, has called for concerted efforts to address the root causes of conflict in DRC. We have also called for support to the DRC Government to exercise effective authority over all of its territory, in order to deal with armed groups destabilizing it and the region.

Now is the time to redouble our resolve and efforts to effectively address the root causes of the conflicts in eastern DRC in a comprehensive manner. The forthcoming extraordinary ICGLR Summit to be held in Nairobi will review the situation in DRC and the region, actions being undertaken, and make specific decisions to consolidate our efforts.

I thank you for your attention.