



MEDIA RELEASE

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Hon. John Mulimba Addresses Virtual Ministerial Meeting of the Peace and Security Council on the Situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo

On July 15th Uganda's State Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hon. John Mulimba, attended a Virtual Ministerial Meeting of the AU Peace and Security Council, focusing on the escalating situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The meeting's agenda centered on the role of mediation and reconciliation in conflict resolution in eastern DRC, building on previous discussions from the 1157th meeting held on 13th June 2023.

Hon. Mulimba congratulated the Chair of the Peace and Security Council for assuming the leadership role for July and commending the effective management of the session. He also expressed gratitude for the inclusion of the significant agenda item addressing the DRC's situation and extended his congratulations to H.E. Thérèse Kayikwamba Wagner on her appointment as Minister of Foreign Affairs of the DRC, expressing eagerness to collaborate closely with her.

Highlighting the severity of the situation, Hon. Mulimba raised concerns about the escalating tensions in eastern DRC and their detrimental impact on the population and the region. He recalled the conflict's complex history, marked by misjudgments, external interference, and inadequate implementation of pivotal agreements such as the 2009 Agreement, the Nairobi Declarations of 2013, and the 2013 Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the DRC and the Region. He acknowledged positive outcomes from collaborative efforts, notably the cooperation between H.E. President Tshisekedi and Uganda in addressing the ADF issue.

Emphasizing the intricate nature of the conflict in the Great Lakes region, Hon. Mulimba cited issues related to ethnicity, citizenship, and the roles of regional and external actors, economic exploitation, and youth unemployment. He pointed out that "ideological confusion" imported by various actors exacerbates the strife through exclusionary politics.

Stressing the limitations of military solutions, Hon. Mulimba underscored the importance of political approaches. He highlighted the 2022 Nairobi process, initiated by the EAC Heads of State

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and Government, which includes a two-track approach emphasizing the political track to address grievances. He commended H.E. former President Uhuru Kenyatta for his efforts and called for the Commission to provide technical support to both the Luanda and Nairobi processes.

Hon. Mulimba praised H.E. João Manuel Gonçalves Lourenço, President of Angola, for his leadership and engagement with both the DRC and Rwanda. He noted the significance of the Mini Summit in February, where President Tshisekedi expressed readiness for direct talks with President Kagame, and supported the call for a follow-up meeting to resolve the matter. He also welcomed the two-week humanitarian truce in eastern DRC under the Luanda process, effective from 05 July, and supported its indefinite extension beyond 19 July 2024.

In his concluding remarks, Hon. Mulimba emphasized the need to address the root causes and structural drivers of youth participation in violence through socio-economic empowerment programs. He called on the parties to the 2013 Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework to implement their commitments and urged EAC member states to respect and implement decisions from previous summits to restore peace and security in eastern DRC. He highlighted the importance of immediate de-escalation and cessation of hostilities to create an environment conducive to peaceful conflict resolution and encouraged all stakeholders in the DRC to embrace dialogue and reconciliation, ensuring the participation of women, youth, and community leaders.

Hon. Mulimba expressed support for efforts to alleviate the humanitarian situation and called on the Commission, capable Member States, and the international community to intensify their humanitarian efforts. He endorsed the alignment and harmonization of regional processes to address the strategic problems of the DRC and the region. Finally, he advocated for the launching of the political component of the Nairobi Process, involving an inclusive inter-community dialogue in eastern DRC facilitated by H.E. former President Uhuru Kenyatta in collaboration with the AU Commission.

The meeting aimed to explore ways of strengthening regional cooperation to promote stability and security in the Great Lakes region, focusing on mediation processes aimed at reducing armed violence and initiating dialogue. The outcomes include strengthening the commitment of PSC Member States to peaceful conflict resolution, political support for DDR initiatives, and harmonization of regional and international efforts to stabilize the eastern DRC and promote sustainable development. **END**

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