



Council of the
European Union

Brussels, 19 January 2015
(OR. en)

5106/15

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NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Delegations

No. prev. doc.: 5076/15

Subject: Council conclusions on the DRC/FDLR

At its meeting on 19 January 2015, the Council adopted the Council conclusions set out in the annex to this note.

Council conclusions on the DRC/FDLR

1. The European Union (EU) confirms its commitment to promoting stability and development in the Great Lakes Region and in particular to full implementation of the Peace Security and Co-operation Framework Agreement for the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and the Region (the PSC Framework). Progress in achieving the goals of the PSC Framework has been insufficient. Renewed efforts from all parties to maintain the momentum are required so that the Agreement can fulfil its potential in uniting all actors around a common goal.
2. Noting that the January 2nd deadline has passed without the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) fully complying with the decisions of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR), the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), the EU stresses that the moment has come to start military action as per UNSC Resolution 2147, and as called for also by the UNSC Presidential Statement of 8 January 2015 and the International Envoys for the Great Lakes Region Communiqué of 2 January 2015. It calls upon the authorities of the DRC and MONUSCO to engage immediately to disarm the FDLR. At any point, FDLR combatants can still choose a peaceful path by entering into the existing Disarmament, Demobilisation, Repatriation, Reintegration and Resettlement (DDRRR) programme which continues to repatriate former FDLR members to Rwanda.

3. The EU greatly regrets the recent upsurge in violence attributed to armed groups in the eastern DRC and deplores the substantial loss of life incurred. Continuing and severe human rights violations in the DRC, in particular gender based violence and the recruitment and use of child soldiers, whether conducted by armed groups or other actors, are absolutely unacceptable and must end. The protection of civilians and the neutralisation of all armed groups in the eastern DRC must therefore remain a priority and the EU encourages the DRC, in partnership with MONUSCO, to take robust and effective action against them. The EU urges the DRC, in cooperation with Uganda and Rwanda, to accelerate DDRRR of ex-M23 members. The EU reiterates its support for all those engaged in combatting sexual violence and its consequences. There can be no impunity for those responsible for abuses and violations of human rights and of international humanitarian law and the EU calls upon the DRC to ensure that authors of these crimes are brought to justice.

4. Ending the threat from the FDLR and other armed groups is crucial to realising the ambition of a region at peace with itself. Military action has to be complemented by political action that will also build a long-term basis for stability. By tackling the root causes of instability, it will strengthen confidence and allow for future investment and development. Key to this is pursuing the implementation of commitments taken under the PSC Framework, the organisation of credible and free elections and the active participation of women in line with UNSCR 1325. The EU encourages the guarantors – UN/AU/ICGLR/SADC – and all countries in the region to continue efforts in this regard. The EU supports the efforts of Saïd Djinnit, Special Envoy of United Nations Secretary General for the Great Lakes Region in that regard. The EU pledges to fulfil its own responsibilities, both through political means and with the resources at its disposal.