



Brussels, 25 April 2013

Dear Mary Robinson,

The European Network for Central Africa (EurAc) and its members have welcomed with enthusiasm your nomination as UN Special Representative for the Great Lakes region. EurAc hopes that your political experience will have a high and positive impact on the peace process in the region.

The population in the Democratic Republic of Congo has been victim of continuous violence for the last twenty years. EurAc is convinced that the proposed comprehensive approach that looks at regional as well as national dimensions of insecurity and conflict is an important tool to address the ongoing instability and violence in the region. The recent signature of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework on February 24 in Addis Ababa represents a tangible opportunity for progress in the pacification and stabilization of Eastern DRC.

Ahead of your first visit to the Great Lakes region, and in light of the latest development in the field, **EurAc would like to draw your attention to the following priorities** that EurAc has identified in cooperation with its Congolese partners:

- According to the UN Security Council Resolution 2098, the UN Special Envoy will have the responsibility to lead, coordinate and assess the implementation of the regional commitments foreseen in the framework agreement. EurAc believes it is **vital to develop an action plan that operationalizes the Framework Agreement** with the identification of commitments of the different signing parties and develops an **implementation plan including key actors that have to play a role towards stabilization and peace in the region**. It will be important for you and your team to win the support of all the international stakeholders, including the European Union and the United States, to make sure that they align with the process. With your political stature we are convinced that you will be able to put pressure on the neighboring countries, including Rwanda and Uganda, to fulfill their obligations as foreseen in the framework Agreement as well as in International Law and other existing peace and security pacts for the region;
- The UN Security Council Resolution 2098 calls “on the Special Representative for the DRC, in collaboration with the Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region, to support, coordinate and assess the implementation of national commitments under the PSC Framework in the DRC” , **EurAc therefore hopes that you will commit to ensure that national implementation and its oversight mechanism will allow active participation of all relevant stakeholders including Congolese civil society and representatives of the opposition political parties**. Pressure should be put on the Congolese government in proposing a specific implementation plan, and a schedule on how the plan will be developed. Ensuring strong coordination among all international actors involved and strong links between national and regional oversight mechanisms is essential: your commitment to coordination and cooperation with the SRSG for the Great Lakes is vital to ensure progress.

- EurAc believes that real progress in the search for peace and stabilization in the region will depend on **ensuring that commitments outlined in the Framework Agreement are linked to the objectives and activities of MONUSCO and in particular of the Intervention Brigade and the ISSSS program.** A part of your role should be to ensure the coordination and necessary political dialogue with the national authorities to make sure that any actions undertaken by Monusco and its components benefit the population and long-term peace and stability. .
- Civil society, both Congolese, regional and international, are willing to play a positive and proactive role in the solution of the crisis in the Kivu. **Civil society partners in the Great Lakes region need your support for their effective involvement in the mechanisms of control and monitoring of the Framework agreement and to make sure that their views are heard and are integrated in any specific action you will take.** Congolese civil society believes that a national process allowing debate and discussions on relevant issues of peace and stability as well as governance and legitimacy of the actual government should be encouraged. We therefore ask you to organize consultations with civil society during your visits to the region and support them in their quest for an inclusive national dialogue;
- Lack of serious progress in developing reforms in DRC is at the basis of the ongoing instability and conflict. **Your support to the development and strengthening of a comprehensive reform of the security sector focusing on the creation of a republican army and police free of elements responsible for massive violations of human rights and international law is at this stage the only way forward.** Pressure should also be put on the Congolese government in order to ensure substantial progress on an effective electoral reform that allows the creation of a democratic and transparent electoral system with the active participation of civil society organisations. Commitment to electoral reform should also include stressing the importance for the Congolese government to propose a clear plan to hold provincial and local elections;

We are aware that you will soon be travelling to Brussels before heading to the Great Lakes region: **we would like to propose a meeting with international Non Governmental organizations based in Brussels and working on the Great lakes region,** at that occasion. We would very much appreciate the occasion to highlight and elaborate on our recommendations above and would be happy to take all necessary arrangements at short notice, to organize this meeting.

For further information please contact:

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