



## **ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GREAT LAKES PACT**

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### **CONCEPT NOTE**

## **INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE GREAT LAKES REGION – ICGLR**

**5-6 NOVEMBER 2009**

**HOTEL SOURCE DU NIL  
BUJUMBURA, BURUNDI**

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## I. Introduction:

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1. A Round Table Conference on the implementation of the Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region is taking place in Bujumbura, Burundi from 5-6 November 2009.

## II. Background and Justification

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2. The International Conference on the Great Lakes Region is a regional mechanism for peace, security, stability and development among the core countries of the Great Lakes Region of Africa as well as the states immediately bordering the region, which are designated as “co-opted” countries. The **eleven core** countries are Angola, Burundi, Central Africa Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Kenya, Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda, Sudan and Zambia. The **seven co-opted** countries are Botswana, Ethiopia, Egypt, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia and Zimbabwe.
3. The ICGLR process emerged as a result of a joint initiative in 1996 between the United Nations and the African Union in the aftermath of the 1994 genocide in Rwanda and the protracted conflict, instability and war in Eastern parts of the Democratic Republic of Congo in the late 1990s. These events generated widespread insecurity, culminating in the regionalization of the conflicts, which were a threat to peace, security and development in the region. The United Nations Security Council subsequently, in resolutions 1291 and 1304 of 2000, called for an International Conference on peace, security, democracy and development in the Great Lakes region. While the formal consultations began in 2001, the official launching of the preparatory process for the Conference took place in June 2003 in Nairobi, Kenya.
4. A self-constituted Group of Friends (GoFs)<sup>1</sup> of the Great Lakes Region was established in December 2003 with the support of 27 countries and 10 international organizations. From its inception, the GoFs served as a collective voice for the Conference process and provided political, diplomatic, technical and financial support for the activities leading to the institutionalization of the Conference, notably the Dar es Salaam Declaration and the Pact. This was in recognition of the fact that the contribution of the international community would be critical to the success of the Conference and the implementation of the Pact.

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<sup>1</sup> GoF member countries are: Austria, Belgium, Canada, China, Denmark, Finland, France, Gabon, Germany, Greece, Holy See, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kuwait, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Nigeria, Norway, Portugal, Russia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States of America. The international organizations are: the European Commission, African Union Commission, African Development Bank, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), UN Department of Political Affairs (DPA), Office of the Coordinator for Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank. The GoF are Co-chaired by Canada and the Netherlands.

5. The above preparatory activities culminated in the first Summit of Heads of State and Government in November 2004 in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, where Member states unanimously adopted the Dar-es-Salaam Declaration on Peace, Security and Development in the Great Lakes Region. In the Dar es Salaam Declaration, the Member States declared their collective determination to transforming the region into a hub of sustainable peace and security, to promoting political and social stability, and to facilitate shared growth and development. This was followed by the signing of the Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region, at the second Summit in Nairobi, Kenya in December 2006.
6. The signing of the Pact marked the beginning of the implementation process and the establishment of formal mechanisms for its implementation. A Regional Follow-up Mechanism is composed of: the Summit of Heads of State and Government, the Regional Inter-Ministerial Committee (RIMC), the Conference Secretariat, the National Coordination Mechanisms, and the Collaborative Mechanism. The Secretariat is the technical arm to initiate, facilitate and coordinate the implementation of the Pact, and the decisions of the Summit and the Inter-Ministerial Committee. The Secretariat was inaugurated in May 2007 and is headquartered in Bujumbura, Burundi.
7. The Pact has three stated objectives, namely to:
  - Provide a legal framework governing relations between Member States
  - Provide the platform for implementing the contents of the Pact
  - Create the favorable conditions for security, stability and sustainable development between the Member States.
8. The Pact itself has 10 protocols and 4 programmes of action. The Programs of Action (PoA) are:
  - Peace and Security
  - Democracy and Good Governance
  - Economic Development and Regional Integration
  - Humanitarian, Social and Environmental Issues

The 10 protocols provide a legal basis and reinforce at least each one of the above PoA
9. The Pact entered into force on 21 June 2008 upon ratification by the requisite number of Members States. It provides a legal framework governing relations between the Member States for implementing the Dar- es-Salaam Declaration, Protocols, Programmes of Action, the Regional Follow-up Mechanism, and the Special Fund for Reconstruction and Development(SFRD)
10. The SFRD was created for the purpose of supporting the implementation of the Protocols and Programmes of Action of the Pact. The financing of the Fund is ensured by mandatory contributions from Member States and voluntary

contributions from cooperating and development partners. The Fund is hosted and managed by the African Development Bank (AfDB). So far the Member States have contributed US \$ 4 million dollars in the SFRD Account managed by the AfDB.

11. As explained below, the Roundtable will be organized around two thematic areas encompassing the four programmes of action cited above including the Cross Cutting Issues. It will also include mobilisation of support to the implementation of the Pact.

### **Thematic area 1: Peace, Security and Good Governance**

12. **Peace and Security** – The programme of action seeks to promote joint security management of common borders; promoting, maintaining and enhancing cooperation in the fields of peace, conflict prevention and peaceful settlement of disputes; and promoting inter-State cooperation in general security issues including combating illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons, as well as preventing and combating organized transnational criminal activities and terrorism.
13. **Democracy and Good Governance** – The programme of action aims to establish regional mechanisms which work together to strengthen the rule of law in the region, to promote human rights and to combat impunity; consolidate the democratization process by enhancing institutional capacity, by promoting political participation of all segments of society, and by developing and implementing communication and information strategies; and harmonize and coordinate policies on the protection and rational management, including the fight against the illegal exploitation of natural resources with the associated violent conflict, mistreatment of populations, pillage, illegal trade and evasion of state funds in the region.
14. **Humanitarian and Social Issues** – The programme of action seeks to promote policies for disaster prevention, protection, assistance and search for durable solutions for refugees and internally displaced persons, as well as their environment; and to promote relevant policies to guarantee access to basic social services by the populations affected by conflicts and effects of natural disasters.

### **Thematic area 2: Economic Development, Regional Integration and Cross Cutting Issues**

15. **Economic Development and Regional Integration** –The programme of action aims to promote cooperation and economic integration by harmonizing and coordinating national and regional policies with relevant regional economic communities so as to improve stability and economic competitiveness, and reduce poverty; develop common infrastructure in the areas of energy, transport and communications; and promote local regional integration by strengthening multi-sectoral cooperation and solidarity among border populations and neighbouring States.

16. **Cross-Cutting Issues (CCIs)** – There are common strands which cut across the four programmes of action, which are necessary for successful and effective implementation of all the projects and protocols to attain ICGLR vision. These are defined as: gender, human rights, environment, youth, HIV/AIDS and human settlements. These issues are to be mainstreamed in all projects of ICGLR. Emphasis is put in projects that are of regional nature to mainstream and promote CCIs and also to ensure that those implemented in members states as well as regional projects are informed by principles guiding mainstreaming all the CCIs.
17. **ICGLR Principles:** The overriding principles of the ICGLR are: (i) **ownership** by the Great Lakes Region countries; (ii) **inclusiveness** of other major stakeholders such as special groups of civil society (women, youth, Persons with Disabilities), NGOs, faith based organisations and the private sector; (iii) **complementarities** with other organizations in the region; and (iv) **partnership** with development partners, in particular the Group of Friends of the Great Lakes Region (GoF). In this spirit, the Member States work actively with international development partners and regional and national stakeholders in ensuring a dynamic peace-building and development process.
18. **ICGLR Projects:** The Member States approved a total of 33 priority projects falling within the thematic clusters that they consider important for peace, stability, development and prosperity in the region. The implementation of some of the projects is already underway, and many positive developments have materialized: peace is gradually being restored in Eastern DRC (Peace and Security) ; the majority of nations enjoy increased political stability and have regained the confidence of development partners (Democracy and Good Governance); and there have been significant financial commitments made towards regional economic development and infrastructure building efforts, some of which are undertaken by other organizations operating in the region (Economic Development and Regional Integration). But major gaps still remain in the implementation of other projects which are critical to the Pact.
19. It is in this regard that the third Summit of the Heads of State and Government of ICGLR, held on 10 August 2009 in Lusaka, Zambia, endorsed the recommendation of the Inter-Ministerial Committee to organize a Round Table Conference on the implementation of the Pact to mobilize additional resources to implement the unfunded priority projects in the region. Accordingly, the Summit called on the ICGLR Troika<sup>2</sup> to take a leading role in mobilizing support for the Round Table.

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<sup>2</sup> Troika consists of current chair (Zambia), immediate past chair (Kenya) and the designated next chair (Uganda) of the Summit of Heads of State and Government.

### **III. Objectives of the Round table**

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20. The overall goal of the Round Table is to mobilize support for the implementation of the Pact. The specific objectives are to:
- (i) Review progress and remaining challenges in the Great Lakes Region;
  - (ii) Reaffirm the political support of the Member States for implementing the Pact;
  - (iii) Present project proposals for the priority areas that are currently unfunded and for which support will be required;
  - (iv) Re-engage the Group of Friends, other partners and stakeholders to reaffirm their continued support of ICGLR; and
  - (v) Initiate a dialogue for the mobilisation of the required financial and technical resources through pledges and commitments to support the specific projects submitted to the Round Table.
21. The two-day meeting will thus provide ample opportunity to review progress and agree on strategic investment and funding priorities going forward.

### **IV. Preparatory Process**

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22. To prepare for this conference many stakeholders have assisted to contribute towards its success. The Member States through national coordinators assisted to sensitize key stakeholders in their respective countries ,about ICGLR in general and the Round Table in particular. Our partners, in various ways, have also contributed to the popularisation of this round table and calling for support.
23. In the same vein,, the Group of Friends will be organizing a meeting ahead of the Round Table in Bujumbura, Burundi on the 4<sup>th</sup> November 2009 to provide opportunity to review progress in the preparation for the meeting and concretise their support.

### **V. Expected Outcome**

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24. It is envisaged that the meeting will provide a unique platform for interaction that could lead to immediate, short or medium term commitment or pledges. The Round Table Conference is therefore expected to result in, (i) presentation of project proposals highlighting the priority areas of the Pact that still require funding, (ii) commitments and/or pledges of financial, technical and political support to ICGLR for the implementation of these priority projects and Protocols defined under the Pact, and (iii) agreed way forward.

### **VI. Partner organisations**

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25. The ICGLR Executive Secretariat will partner with the Troika, the Government of Burundi as the host of the ICGLR as well as host of the roundtable, the Group of

Friends, the African Development Bank, the African Union Commission, the United Nations, and the Regional Economic Communities such as EAC, ECCAS, CEPGL, SADC and COMESA .

26. The African Development Bank continues to provide vital support to ICGLR. It manages the Special Fund for Reconstruction and Development (SFRD), one of the important instruments of the ICGLR Pact. The Bank is actively supporting the organization of the roundtable with ICGLR Secretariat by providing consultants and other technical advice. These activities are in addition to the normal Bank operations in the region.

27. The African Union and the United Nations as the joint initiators of the Conference continued to provide technical support to the Secretariat in the preparation of the Round Table, while the RECs and IGOs are expected to play an active role in supporting projects in their respective domains.

## **VII. Dates and Venue**

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28. The meeting will take place at Hotel Source du Nil in Bujumbura, Burundi, on 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> November 2009.

## **VIII. Participation**

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29. The Round Table will bring together the political leaders of the countries in the Region, high-level representatives from each of the Group of Friends, international cooperating partners, African development institutions and other stakeholders. The Heads of State and Government of the Troika are expected to set the tone and direction on key thematic issues for the Round Table discussion. The African Union Commission, Regional Economic Communities and United Nations agencies and programmes are expected to play a key role in the conference in accordance with their mandates to implement regional development programmes.

## **IX. Host**

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30. The Round Table is hosted by the Government of Burundi and is organized by the ICGLR Secretariat with the support of the African Development Bank.

## **VIII. Working Languages**

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31. The working languages will be English and French, with translation and interpretation services.

## **X. Documentation**

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32. The ICGLR Secretariat will make all Round Table background documents available online. Information can be downloaded from: <http://www.icglr.org>. Any questions related to the Round Table can be directed to the ICGLR Secretariat; Tel +257 22 25 68 24/25 /27 /29; Fax +257-22 25 68 28; or through e-mail address: [roundtable@icglr.org](mailto:roundtable@icglr.org): Attention Mr. Charles Kapekele CHILEYA, Deputy Executive Secretary and Senior Programme Officer or Mr. Franck Corneille MAMPOUYA M'BAMA, Administrative and Finance Officer.