

ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL COUNCIL

Statement on the Situation in Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo

The African Union Economic Social and Cultural Council (AU-ECOSOCC) is deeply concerned about the continued escalation of conflict in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) due to the renewed offensive by the M23 group.

ECOSOCC strongly condemns the attacks and forced displacement of Civilians in the towns of Minova, Sake and Goma. The continued advances of the M23 group is an undesirable violation of the agreed ceasefire, which further excavates the devastating humanitarian crisis and the violations of human rights in the eastern part DRC. The danger of large numbers of Internal Displaced Persons, civil society and humanitarian workers being caught between combatants is deeply worrying.

ECOSOCC calls for a rapid reopening of negotiations within the Luanda and Nairobi processes to find a long lasting and peaceful political solution to the crisis.

ECOSOCC urges all parties to fully honour their engagements within the Luanda process, especially the ceasefire agreed on 30 July 2024. This agreement calls for the neutralization of the FDLR and the withdrawal of Rwandan forces.

ECOSOCC further calls for de-escalation and reaffirms its full support to the Luanda and Nairobi processes and an unwavering support for MONUSCO and Regional Forces to protect civilians and stabilize the region.

The organ urges all parties to respect their obligations under the international humanitarian law and international human rights law.

Humanitarian personnel and their facilities must be respected and protected, thereby allowing and facilitating rapid and unimpeded passage of humanitarian relief for civilians in need.

Finally, ECOSOCC appeals to all stakeholders, under the coordination of the African Union, to urgently take the necessary measures to restore peace and protect civilians and make the various actors face up to their responsibilities.

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Mr. Khalid Boudali
ECOSOCC Presiding Officer