



Security Council

Distr.: General
19 January 2006

Original: English

Letter dated 18 January 2006 from the Permanent Representative of the United Republic of Tanzania to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to attach herewith a concept paper on the Great Lakes region of Africa that will be used as the basis of discussion during the Security Council open debate on peace, security and development in the Great Lakes region, scheduled for 27 January 2006.

I would be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Dr. Augustine P. Mahiga
Ambassador



Annex to the letter dated 18 January 2006 from the Permanent Representative of the United Republic of Tanzania to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

CONCEPT PAPER ON THE OPEN DEBATE ON PEACE, SECURITY AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE GREAT LAKES REGION TO BE HELD DURING THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA'S PRESIDENCY OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL - 27 JANUARY 2006

(1) Introduction

During its presidency of the Security Council in January 2006, the United Republic of Tanzania will sponsor an open debate on the implementation of Resolution 1625 (2005) on conflict prevention, especially in Africa and its broader relevance to peace and stability in the Great Lakes Region of Africa. In the context of Resolution 1631(2005), the debate will seek to advance the case for strengthening collaboration between the United Nations and the African Union in accordance with Chapter VIII of the UN Charter.

Several initiatives by the Security Council and the Secretary General have been taken to address issues related to African conflicts. A recent initiative by the African members of the Council was the adoption of Resolution 1625 (2005) on prevention of armed conflict, especially in Africa by the Summit of the members of the Security Council meeting on the margins of the General Assembly World Summit in September 2005. The latest initiative was the adoption of resolution 1649 (2005) on foreign armed groups in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

The African Union has established its own Peace and Security Council to deal with conflict prevention, resolution and peacekeeping in Africa. This mechanism lends itself to institutional partnership with the United Nations Security Council in the areas of international peace and security in the African region.

(2) International and Regional Initiatives in the Great Lakes Region

The Great Lakes Region has been the scene of multiple violent conflicts for decades which reached an unprecedented crisis with the 1994 genocide in Rwanda. Countries of the region, the African Union and the United Nations have been involved in collaborative efforts to prevent new conflicts and resolve residual conflicts in order to stabilize the region.

The current focus on the Great Lakes Region is based on Security Council Resolution 1291 (2000) of 24 February 2000 and Resolution 1304 (2000) of 16 June 2000 which defined that the security situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo then constituted a threat to

international peace and security in the region. The Security Council further affirmed the need for an international conference on peace, security, democracy and development in the Great Lakes Region with the participation of the United Nations and the African Union to address comprehensively the root causes of the conflicts in the region.

The call for an international conference was based on the recognition of three inter-related factors. The first was the awareness that each national conflict in the Great Lakes Region had a regional dimension. The second was that the people of the Great Lakes Region were so interlinked ethnically, culturally and linguistically that the instability in one country invariably affected neighbouring communities in other countries through population displacements and movements. The third was the need to seek a regional approach and solutions to national and regional problems.

The first International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes Region was held in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania at the Summit level on 19 -20 November 2004. It was based on the premise of regional ownership of the process and outcome. The final outcome of the conference was the Dar es Salaam Declaration on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes Region.

The Declaration provides a vision and a follow-up mechanism to address the four themes of the Conference, namely, peace and security; democracy and good governance; economic development and regional integration; humanitarian and social issues. The Second International Conference on the Great Lakes Region has been scheduled for a later date in 2006 where relevant protocols and programmes would be adopted by the countries of the region.

(3) Security Council current concerns in the Great Lakes Region

The salient issues in the Great Lakes Region which need to be advanced under the current mandates of the Security Council are in the following areas:

- Under the United Nations Mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, assist the holding of free, fair, transparent and democratic elections before the end of the transitional period on 30 June 2006.
- Assist the transitional government complete reforms in the security sector, disarm and repatriate to Rwanda the Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda (FDLR) and other foreign armed groups in eastern Congo.

- Encourage the countries of the region implement the arms embargo in the DRC and enforce stricter controls on the illegal cross-border trafficking of natural resources, arms and movement of combatants.
- Support efforts to consolidate the new democratically elected government in Burundi through national reconciliation, power sharing, institution building and international assistance for reconstruction and development.
- Assist the government to complete the DDR programme, improve the security situation in the western part of Burundi and to engage the Palipehutu - Forces nationales de libération (FNL) to join the peace process under the elected government.
- Ensure the voluntary and safe return of refugees in the region and the secure reintegration of returnees and displaced persons in their respective countries.
- Encourage good neighbourliness in the region through peaceful resolution of differences, regular consultations and establishment of confidence building measures between and among the countries of the region.
- Encourage the early holding of the second Great Lakes Summit with a view to establishing a framework for conflict prevention and resolution, peaceful co-existence and regional cooperation.

(4) Relevance of the Peacebuilding Commission

The Commission, formally established on 20 December 2005 by Security Council Resolution 1645 (2005) and General Assembly Resolution A/RES/181 (2005), will be a mechanism to assist countries emerging from conflict to fill the gap in the transition from peacekeeping to sustainable peace and development in order to prevent the countries concerned from sliding back into conflict.

The Commission will provide advice to the countries concerned and the various stakeholders on integrated strategies for post-conflict peace building and recovery, governance, institution building, mobilize resources for reconstruction and improve coordination of relevant actors involved in post conflict situations.

In the Great Lakes Region, Burundi, which has successfully completed its peace process, is an ideal candidate for assistance from the Peacebuilding Commission while ONUB is phasing out. Following the completion of the electoral timetable in the DRC, the Peacebuilding Commission would also be a useful mechanism for stabilizing the post-electoral phase in institutional building, reconstruction and development.

(5) Issues for Open Debate on the Great Lakes Region

The Open Debate on Peace, Security and Development in the Great Lakes Region will focus on finding appropriate and effective ways of implementing and coordinating the various regional and international initiatives for peace and stability in the Great Lakes Region.

The main thrust of the open debate will highlight the following:

- Search for appropriate and effective means of applying the broader United Nations peace and security initiatives for Africa to a specific sub-regional setting, in this case, the Great Lakes Region. The initiatives include those taken by the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Secretary General before the adoption of Resolutions 1625 (2005), Resolution 1631 (2005) and the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission.
- Identify strategies for linking the United Nations and the Great Lakes Region initiatives on conflict prevention, resolution and peacebuilding.
- Implementation of the provisions of Resolutions 1625 (2005), 1631(2005), 1649 (2005) and the mandate of the Peacebuilding Commission.
- Deliberate on ways to support efforts of the countries of the region to transform the Great Lakes Region into an area of peace, security and political stability.
- How to strengthen democracy, good governance, rule of law, the protection of human rights, reconciliation and the participation of civil society, including women, on issues of peace and security.
- How to strengthen a coordinated response among the countries of the region and with the international community on protection and humanitarian assistance to civilians, including refugees, internally displaced persons and returnees.

(6) Outcome of the Debate

The outcome of the open debate should be a resolution focusing on:

- (a) The relevance of resolution 1625 (2005), 1631 (2005) and 1649 (2005) to Africa and the Great Lakes Region in particular.
- (b) The need to create an appropriate mechanism that will enhance practical cooperation between the United Nations Security Council and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union.
- (c) The significance of the Dar es Salaam Declaration and the Second International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy, Governance, Human Rights and Development in the Great Lakes Region.
- (d) Application of the Peacebuilding Commission mandate to conflict situations in the Great Lakes Region.

9/1/06
