



Security Council briefing on the Great Lakes, 24 April 2024

Malta Statement delivered by Her Excellency, Vanessa Frazier

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I begin by thanking Special Envoy Xia, OCHA Director Doughton, and Madame Petronille Vaweka for your briefings. We welcome Representatives of Rwanda, Democratic Republic of the Congo and Angola to the Chamber.

We also thank the Peacebuilding Commission for the written advice provided on judicial cooperation.

We once again bear witness to an alarming escalation of tensions in the Great Lakes region, particularly in the Eastern DRC. Renewed refugee influxes and internal displacement exacerbate already-dire humanitarian needs. We must scale-up funding and protection for women-led organisations, so they are able to reach those most in need.

Human rights violations and abuses, continued impunity, dis- and misinformation, hate speech, and incitement to violence, only serve to perpetuate an already volatile situation.



In light of the imminent risk of a military confrontation with regional implications, it is imperative that all concerned parties honour their international and regional commitments, including those under the Luanda and Nairobi processes.

The urgency to de-escalate tensions between the DRC, Rwanda, and Burundi cannot be overstated. The sovereignty and territorial integrity of the DRC must be fully upheld. We condemn foreign military support provided to M23 and any other armed group operating in DRC, and we demand that it ceases immediately.

We call on the parties to address their legitimate grievances through negotiation. The international community and this Council must unequivocally reaffirm that dialogue remains the only viable solution.

We commend the leadership of President Lourenço. We also strongly advocate for a prompt meeting between President Tshisekedi and President Kagame to foster dialogue and reconciliation.



The implementation of commitments under the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework, alongside the Luanda and Nairobi processes, remains crucial. We appreciate the efforts to revitalise the PSC Framework, including the recent ad-hoc session in Durban, which also gave a voice to civil society.

Malta considers the full, equal, meaningful, and safe participation of women a priority. Young persons too have a key role to play.

We commend Special Envoy Xia for promoting women's inclusion in regional political processes and we welcome the recommendations from his recent meeting in Nairobi on this critical priority.

Despite the disproportionate impact of the conflict on women, they have been marginal to regional peace efforts. We urge the facilitators of the Nairobi and Luanda processes to appoint women mediators and gender advisors, and to leverage the African Women Leaders Network.



Women possess invaluable perspectives that have yet to be fully recognised. This is especially true in environments rife with violence and hate speech.

We support initiatives promoting the participation of women and young persons in the mining sector. We also stress the need for transparent resource management to deprive armed groups of illicit income.

Non-military means remain essential in addressing negative forces in the region. We call for intensified cooperation in demobilisation and repatriation efforts, and enhanced collaboration through the Great Lakes Judicial Cooperation Network.

In conclusion, Malta stands resolutely with the people of the Great Lakes region. We remain committed to amplify the voices of women and young persons who are at the forefront of national and local efforts towards peace and security.



It is therefore imperative for relevant Member States to embrace the collaborative efforts extended by regional organisations, the UN system, and the international community. Together, we can recalibrate our common goals in addressing the pressing challenges facing the Great Lakes.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.