



Security Council briefing on the Great Lakes, 8 October 2024

Malta Statement delivered by Ms. Francesca Gatt

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Thank you, President, and I thank Special Envoy Xia, and Ms. Kyabu Ntambwe for their briefings. I also welcome the participation of the DRC Foreign Minister Kayikwamba Wagner, and the participation of Rwanda and Angola's representatives.

The Great Lakes region is facing unprecedented challenges. Disease outbreaks such as the Mpox and cholera are a cause of grave concern, in addition to food insecurity. Serious human rights violations and abuses, as well as persistent breaches of international humanitarian law, continue to exacerbate the suffering of civilians across the region.

Moreover, despite the region being one of the wealthiest areas in natural resources, its people continue to struggle to meet their most basic needs.



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Malta welcomes all efforts to foster concrete and sustainable partnerships, including through the work of the Secretary-General's Panel on Critical Energy Transition Minerals, and the EU's Global Gateway Initiative.

President

This Council recently adopted Resolution 2746, authorising MONUSCO to support SAMIDRC in protecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the DRC.

We reaffirm our strong support to President Lourenço's leadership in facilitating the ceasefire agreement between the DRC and Rwanda. Furthermore, we call on all parties to respect international humanitarian law, ensuring that civilians, especially women and children, are protected from the impacts of conflict. We urge both countries to adhere to their commitments.

The proliferation of armed groups, coupled with foreign interference and the use of advanced military technologies, inherently undermines the Luanda process.



We echo the Secretary-General's call on all signatories to honour their obligations under the PSC Framework. The international community and this Council must unequivocally reaffirm that dialogue remains the only viable solution.

Malta also welcomes the efforts of sub-regional organisations in revitalising the Nairobi Process. These include the convening of the EAC Summit to revive this process in coordination with the Luanda Process. We also commend the work of former Kenyan President Kenyatta for his outreach and commitment.

Complementing these peace initiatives is the UN's critical role, including by Special Envoy Xia. We support his steadfast efforts to implement the WPS agenda in the region, by integrating gender perspectives and ensuring women's participation in regional peace and political processes and agreements.



We welcome the development of the Great Lakes Regional Gender Barometer, supported by the ICGLR and UNFPA, which aims to address gender gaps and enhance accountability for commitments on gender equality and WPS.

Malta also commends efforts to promote regional judicial cooperation in the fight against impunity. This should remain a priority at the national and regional level. Durable solutions to forced displacement should also be a priority.

President

Journalists, activists, and civil society must be able to work in a safe and just civic space. We reiterate our call on the countries of the Great Lakes region to uphold freedom of speech and media.



To conclude, since this is the last time that Malta will be taking the floor on the Great Lakes prior to ending our term on the Council, I would like to thank Special Envoy Xia and his team for all their efforts. Collaboration through sub-regional organisations and the UN demonstrate the international community's collective endeavour in addressing the pressing challenges in the region.

Malta also reaffirms its commitment in amplifying the voices of women and young persons of the Great Lakes region who are at the forefront of national and local efforts towards peace and security.

I thank you.