

**Joint Statement on Behalf of A3 (Niger, South Africa and Tunisia) and Saint  
Vincent and the Grenadines**

Delivered by

**H.E. Abdou Abarry**

Permanent Representative of the Republic of Niger to the United Nations

**Videoconference on the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in  
the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO)**

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**Mr. President,**

I have the honor to make this statement on behalf of South Africa, Tunisia, Niger (A3) and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

At the outset, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report of 18 March 2020, prepared in accordance with paragraph 51 of Security Council resolution 2502 (2019), which extended until 20 December 2020 the mandate of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) and, exceptionally, that of its intervention brigade.

This report provides us with sufficient elements that strengthen our hopes and confidence in the process under way in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The political process is being further consolidated with the opening up of the democratic space and the decline in cases of human rights violations, the reforms undertaken by the Government, culminating in the coalition Government's vote on the 2020 budget, as well as actions to strengthen the fight against armed groups, the settlement of communal conflicts, the protection of civilians and the strengthening of democratic governance.

In that regard, on behalf of the A3 and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, I would like to reiterate our warm congratulations and encouragement to the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which is sparing no effort to establish a peaceful political climate, to strengthen justice and to increase efforts to create a framework conducive to the return of peace and security and to economic and social development with the support of the United Nations, the countries of the region and the international community.

**Mr. President,**

As the Secretary-General observed in his report, we also remain convinced of the relevance of strengthened regional cooperation to restore peace and stability to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, while also remaining convinced of the need for the international community's continued assistance to the process and the resolve of all Congolese to combat the armed groups that are jeopardizing their physical integrity, economic and social development and the future of their country.

Thus, we welcome the progress made, with the effective support of MONUSCO, in the completion of several demarches with certain armed groups, within the framework of the Disarmament, Demobilization and Repatriation (DDR) process, among others, the signing of the peace agreement on 28 February with the armed group "Force de Résistance Patriotique de l'Ituri" (FRPI), as well as the signing by 29 other armed groups of the road map to end the recruitment of children, and the successful negotiations for the release of children at their hands.

We lend our full support to the implementation of MONUSCO's programs to support and strengthen justice, the strengthening of the professionalism of State institutions and a comprehensive approach to the protection of civilians.

It is clear that the country is in a good trajectory, as we have asserted in several occasions, in different settings, and that the situation still remains fragile, and that it is important that everything possible be done to preserve and strengthen all the actions carried out in favor of peace and security.

In that regard, we call on all political actors in the governing coalition and those in the opposition, at the national and decentralized levels, to continue to promote dialogue on certain areas of discord.

We urge the armed groups to exercise restraint and, in particular, to join the proposed road map for the systematic cessation of child recruitment and the cessation of human rights violations against women and children.

**Mr. President,**

MONUSCO's increased presence alongside the FARDC in provinces where there are resurgences of violence, particularly in North Kivu, where the ADF continues to sow unrest, has undoubtedly been one of the main causes of the decline in violence in some areas. That is why we would like to reiterate our congratulations to the members of MONUSCO and our support for the actions undertaken to strengthen cooperation with the FARDC and to counter the anti-MONUSCO campaigns.

However, we are concerned about the persistence of abuses by armed groups, including the increase in the number of summary executions and the persistence of gender and sexual violations, including cases attributable to the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

That is why we reiterate our call for MONUSCO's exit strategy, including the reduction and withdrawal of personnel, to be carried out prudently and in full consultation with the Congolese authorities on the basis of an assessment of the achievements made on the ground. In that regard, we welcome the discussions between MONUSCO and the Congolese Government to establish achievable benchmarks in the process of withdrawing from the stabilized provinces.

With regard to the humanitarian situation in the country, we express our concern about the proportion of the population in need of protection and humanitarian assistance, the number of internally displaced persons and the Ebola, which has fortunately been declared extinct, measles and cholera epidemics, which are still rampant in the country, with thousands of deaths.

In that regard, we express the hope that the 2020 humanitarian intervention plan, as well as the active solidarity of the international community, to which we all appeal, will bring the relief that the Government and the people of the Congo so desperately need.

**Mr. President,**

We commend the efforts of the countries of the region and call on them to further strengthen close and dynamic regional cooperation, and recall the implementation by all actors of the provisions of the Addis Ababa Framework Agreement to combat armed groups and all forms of trafficking in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, with the effective collaboration of neighboring countries and the international community, in particular the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR), the African Union and the United Nations, remains essential for the consolidation of the good momentum underway in the country and the region.

In conclusion, Mr. President, the A3 and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, in line with the approach of the African Union and the United Nations, will continue to support the commendable actions of the Congolese Government, peace, security and the economic and social development of the country.

**I thank you.**