



## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Press release on the situation in eastern DRC**

The Secretariat of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region is very concerned about the resumption of fighting between the DRC Armed Forces known as FARDC against the armed elements of the March 23 Movement known as “M23” since this Thursday, October 20, 2022 in the territory of Rutshuru and more precisely on the axis Rangira – Rwanguba – Tchengerero. Another offensive has started on the Ntamugenga axis since Sunday, October 23, 2022.

These attacks put an end to the lull in the theatre of operations since the negotiations started by President Uhuru Kenyatta in Nairobi and continued by President Joao Lourenço in Luanda.

At least 23,000 people have been displaced by the armed violence and another 25,000 people have reportedly crossed into Uganda since Thursday, October 20, 2022 to flee the violence, according to the United Nations Office for Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).

The Secretariat of the Conference calls on all parties in conflict to exercise the utmost restraint to enable the ongoing initiatives led by H.E. Joao Lourenço, President of the Republic of Angola and Chair of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region and those of the Community of East African States to continue.

Finally, the Conference Secretariat invites all parties in conflict to scrupulously respect international humanitarian law and the protection of the civilian population who are victims of such violence.

**Done in Bujumbura, 31<sup>st</sup> October 2022**