



# Secretariat of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region

## Newsletter

Issue 1, October 2022



### ICGLR National Coordinators' Retreat

The National Coordinators from the ICGLR Member States convened in Bujumbura, from May 11<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup>, 2022 at a Retreat organized by the ICGLR Conference Secretariat to finalize the Draft ICGLR Strategic Plan for 2022-2026.

The draft zero Strategic Plan was presented for deliberation during the meeting of National Coordinators held in December 2021 in Luanda, the Republic of Angola.

The Strategic planning involved group exercises and discussions, including a SWOT analysis and prioritization. At the end of the session, participants developed the vision for the next 5 years which is "A secure, stable, peaceful, and developed region for all" while the Mission is "To promote and safeguard sustainable security, stability, peace, and development in the Great Lakes region by creating a nexus of national mechanisms and programmes that complement the AU agenda for 2063 and the UN agenda for 2030".

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## National Coordinators' Retreat (Continued)

They also identified priority areas that would guide the organization's activities under Peace and Security, Democracy and Good Governance, Economic Development and Regional Integration, Gender, Women and Children and Enhancing Organizational Capabilities of the Conference Secretariat. The final draft would be submitted to the next meeting of the Regional Interministerial Committee (RIMC) for consideration.



"This retreat gives participants the opportunity to reflect and discuss the assets and challenges of the ICGLR in the region, for the benefit of its inhabitants."

Amb. Bernard Ntahiraja  
ICGLR National Coordinator for Burundi



Meeting of the ICGLR Executive Secretary with the Sudan Minister of minerals

## Executive Secretary Visit to the Republic of Sudan



The Executive Secretary was on an official visit to the Republic of the Sudan from 31st July to 2nd August 2022. He held discussions with the Chairperson of the Sovereign Council and Commander-in-Chief of the Sudanese Armed Forces, Lieutenant General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan.

The Executive Secretary was also received by the Ministries of Foreign Affairs Finance, Defence, Mines and General Intelligence Services of the Sudan.

The discussions with the authorities in the country centred on the general political and security situation in the Sudan as well as the next Chairmanship of the ICGLR, which the Sudan is expected to take during the next Summit of heads of State and Government. The Government of the Sudan and the Conference Secretariat agreed on a roadmap on this assumption.





# POWER OF PARTNERSHIP: JOINING FORCES TO FIGHT ILLEGAL EXPLOITATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES IN THE GREAT LAKES REGION

The ICGLR Executive Secretary, Ambassador João Samuel Caholo, and the Special Envoy of the OSESG-GL Secretary General for the Great Lakes Region, Ambassador Huang Xia, carried out a joint mission to Belgium and France from 5th to 9th September 2022 to solicit increased support from partner European institutions, in Belgium and France, for the enhanced implementation of the ICGLR Regional Initiative against the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources (RINR), in general, and the recommendations of the Khartoum High-Level Regional Workshop on Natural Resources, in particular.

The joint mission to the EU and OCED were success with all institutions committing to work to enhance partnership and support. There was a call from European stakeholders to enhance political ownership of the RINR from ICGLR Member States. In addition, they called for similar high-level joint missions to the different capitals of the 12 Member States to seek renewed political commitment for the implementation of the RINR and the recommendations of the Khartoum workshop.

Although the joint ICGLR-OSESG-GL mission to Belgium and France achieved a lot both at political and technical level, its success is dependent on systematic follow up and implementation of the commitments and agreements made during meetings held with the different stakeholders.

## Concrete outcomes

- ✓ The Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS) and the ICGLR resolved to sign a Memorandum of Understanding.
- ✓ Team Europe Initiative is developing a strategic plan for the support on mineral certification, traceability, human rights, national chain of custody systems, particularly for gold, and cross-border mineral trade in the Great Lakes Region. It is expected that the strategic plan be finalized before the end of 2022.
- ✓ The French delegation is committed to work in synergy with other EU Member States and promised to contact the EU to know how the outcomes of the meeting with the joint delegation, particularly the Team Europe Initiative strategic plan, will be implemented.
- ✓ The OECD Secretary-General expressed the openness of the OECD for the revision of the current ICGLR-OECD MoU if needed in order to take the partnership to a new step further.
- ✓ The EBCAM was open to a formal partnership which can be materialized by signing a partnership Memorandum of Understanding with the ICGLR which could provide a framework for the European investors to engage with individual ICGLR Member States under the coordination of the EBCAM and the ICGLR.
- ✓ The two principals were welcomed to the next Forum on Responsible Mineral Supply Chains scheduled for April 2023 at the OECD Headquarters in Paris.



# The ICGLR Secretariat receives the African Union Peace and Security Council

The Conference Secretariat, led by the Deputy Executive Secretary (DES), Amb. Yasir Ibrahim Ali Mohammed received a delegation from the African Union Peace and Security Council (AUPSC) on 21st June, 2022. The delegation was led by the H.E. Ambassador Daniel OWASSA, the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Congo to the AU and the Chairperson of the PSC for June 2022 and the Chairperson of the AU 5th Panel of the Wise and former President of Burundi, H.E. Domitien Ndayizeye. It also included representatives from the Republic of Burundi, Republic of Djibouti, Republic of The Gambia, Republic of Ghana, the Kingdom of Morocco, Republic of Namibia, Federal Republic of Nigeria, Republic of South Africa, the United Republic of Tanzania, Republic of Tunisia, Republic of Uganda, and the Republic of Zimbabwe.



The Commander of the EJVM Col. Josee Rui Lourdes Miranda (3rd left) and his delegation during the meeting.

The Deputy Executive Secretary also briefed on some of the activities recently undertaken by the EJVM including the convening of the first meeting of the Chiefs of Military Intelligence of the Republic of Burundi and Republic of Rwanda. Other activities include monitoring the security situation in the region, the operationalization of the Contact and Coordination Group and conducting verification and investigation Missions.



The Deputy Executive Secretary, Amb. Yasir Ibrahim Ali Mohammed (centre), together with the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Congo to the AU and the Chairperson of the AU 5th Panel of the Wise

Also present in the meeting were the Special Representative of the AU Chairperson to the DRC, Ms. Michelle Ndiaye, the Ag. Head of Mission of the African Union Liaison Office for the Great Lakes Region, Mr. Gonzague Patrick Balagizi, the ICGLR Management Team, and the Commander of the Expanded Joint Verification Mechanism. The visit was in implementation of the Communique of the 1078th meeting of the AUPSC in it expressed concern on the security situation in the Great Lakes Region and particularly in eastern DRC and urged the Council to interact with various actors in the region; such as the concerned Member States, and sub-regional and international organisations, in particular the ICGLR and its affiliated organs (notably the EJVM, the Joint Intelligence Fusion Centre-JIFC and the Joint Follow-up Mechanism-JFM on the Allied Democratic Force-ADF) and the United Nations (UN). The meeting also provided an opportunity to identify concrete actions that would be jointly be undertaken with these entities, both in the long and short term.

During the meeting, the DES gave a presentation on the ICGLR and its role in peace and security in the region, focusing on the Regional Follow-Up Mechanism (RFM), the ICGLR Programs of Action and activities in the areas of Peace and Security and economic development; and the development and implementation of the Regional Certification Mechanism (RCM).





# Women, Peace and Security in the Great Lakes Region



From left to right:

Catherine Samba Panza Head of the Delegation, Gisèle Ndaya Luseba DRC Minister of Gender, Hon. Sabine Ntakirutimana Chair of the RWF

In the framework of preventive diplomacy and the inclusion of women in political and peace processes, the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR-comprising the Gender Women and Children Directorate and the Expanded Joint Verification Mechanism), the Women's Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding Network (FemWise-Africa-an organ of the African Union), the Office of the UN Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region, MONUSCO, and the UN Women, in partnership with the Government of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), held an advocacy mission to Kinshasa from 12 to 15, July 2022.

The mission was led by H.E. Catherine Samba-Panza, Former Interim President of the Central African Republic, and Co-Chair of FemWise-Africa, and Hon. Dr. Sabine Ntakirutimana, Chairperson of the ICGLR Regional Women's Forum.

The mission reaffirmed its commitment to contribute to advocacy efforts for greater participation of women in the on-going political and mediation processes; convinced that the achievement of sustainable peace requires the pooling of efforts and effective involvement of women in the dialogue and mediation process. The mission concluded its visit in Kinshasa contented with the assurances it received from the Congolese authorities on the promotion of the inclusion of women in the political and peace processes.



Overview of the delegation



# PEACEFUL ELECTIONS

## In the Great Lakes Region: Kenya & Angola



The observation mission to Kenya

In line with the ICGLR Pact on Security, Stability and Development on the Great Lakes Region adopted by the Heads of State and Government of the ICGLR and the Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance, the ICGLR deployed two election observation missions to the Republic of Kenya and the Republic of Angola during the elections held on 9th August and 24th August 2022 respectively.

This also followed invitations to the ICGLR by both Governments. The Kenyan team was led by H.E. Amb. Ismael Abraão Gaspar Martins, a Diplomat and former Minister of Finance and of External Trade of the Republic of Angola.

### Pre-election activities



In the build-up to the elections, the core team led by the Director for Democracy and Good Governance, Dr. Emmanuel M. Mali and the Regional Director of the Levy Mwanawasa Centre for Democracy and Good Governance (LMRC), Dr. Jean-Paul Kimonyo, met with various agencies in order to better understand the state of preparedness for the elections, inclusivity of all groups in the election process as well as the general political.

The Deputy Head of Mission was Hon. Claude Nahayo, Member of Parliament from the Republic of Burundi. The Executive Secretary of the ICGLR, Amb. João Samuel Caholo and the Secretary General of the Forum of Parliaments of the ICGLR, Amb. Onyango Kakoba and former Vice-President of the Republic of Zambia, H.E. Enoch Kavindele were also part of the mission.

The Observation Mission to the Republic of Angola was led by Ambassador Professor Charles Murigande, Chairperson of the Governance Council of the Kepler College in Rwanda and former Minister for Foreign Affairs, Governmental Affairs and Education in the Republic of Rwanda.

The Deputy Head of Mission was Hon. Chalain Betty Louke, Member of Parliament, National Assembly of the Republic of Uganda. H. E. Dr. Nevers Sekwila Mumba, the former Vice President of the Republic of Zambia was part of the ICGLR Election Mission to Angola.

The observers were drawn from the ICGLR Member States, staff from the Conference Secretariat, the Levy Mwanawasa Regional Centre for Democracy and Good Governance (LMRC) as well as the ICGLR Forum of Parliaments were also part of the Observation Mission.



"As ICGLR, we are happy that this tool has found its place in the region."

Dr Emmanuel Mali  
Director for Democracy and Good  
Governance Program



## Training on Election Observation

In order to better undertake the election observation, the observers underwent a 2-day training facilitated by the Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa (EISA). Participants were trained on a range of issues including, international and regional instruments and benchmarks for elections observation and Code of conduct for international observers; Election observation exercise; the rationale, principles and methodology; and gathering information and reporting on findings during the election day.



### Did you know that

The election observation mission is a tool for the impartial and independent evaluation of electoral process and enhances the efforts to strengthen democratic process and institutions and ensure that elections meet international standards. It is a tool for strengthening democratic culture in the region and ensuring inclusivity in the election cycle.



### Preliminary statements

After elections in both countries, the respective Heads of Mission gave their preliminary statements, mainly highlighting that the elections reflected, the unwavering determination of the Government of the Republic of Kenya and the Government of the Republic of Angola, to consolidate democracy within the ambit of key regional and international standards of conducting elections, especially Chapter 3 of the ICGLR Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance.

# Analytical Fingerprinting: Key to Mineral Governance



AFP sampling team observing first step mineral processing at Murehe mine in Burundi

The Analytical Fingerprint (AFP) Method refers to a combination of scientific techniques which are used to verify whether the alleged origin of 3T concentrates (Tin, Columbite-Tantalite and Tungsten) as declared in accompanying documents is plausible or not. This uses information inherent in the concentrates by laboratory analysis.

The AFP is designed as an optional proof of origin within the ICGLR RINR mineral certification framework of 3Ts and seeks to complement existing chain of custody systems to strengthen the integrity/credibility of the whole certification system. AFP tests are to reduce the inherent loopholes of chain of custody systems at the beginning of the supply chain, i.e., preventing minerals with falsely declared origin from entering the supply chain.

In pursuance of the implementation of the above Method, the AFP sampling campaigns were conducted in Burundi and DRC on the mine sites producing the 3T minerals.

The results of the sample analysis are very useful to mining companies, as the mineralogical results provide information on the content of minerals and other precious minerals or metals. For the institutions in charge of mining, the results inform them about the mineral occurrences in the mining areas, which will guide them in the research and orientation of mining activities.



AFP sampling team surveying the Mpinga mine in Kirundo Province, Burundi



# High Demand of Third Party **AUDITS** in The Region

The ICGLR Regional Certification Mechanism (RCM) forms a core tool of the ICGLR Regional Initiative against the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources (RINR) and foresees compulsory tri-annual Third Party Audits (TPA) at each mineral exporter in the region managed by a tri-partite Audit Committee. Third Party Audits are key in order to maintain the credibility of the ICGLR Certificate which guarantees regional responsible mineral supply chains.



ICGLR Third Party Auditors visiting a mining tunnel in Rwanda

**“Mineral exporters who had not applied for an ICGLR Third Party Audit before end of June 2022 are no longer eligible for an ICGLR Certificate”**



Visit of a processing plant as part of an ICGLR Third Party Audit.

There has therefore been high demand in TPA ever since. For example, the Audit Committee received 20 requests of audits from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). These requests followed a successful coordination of 16 TPAs in Rwanda and 5 TPA in Burundi.

The Exporter Audits are key because they serve as a control mechanism which helps the exporter to demonstrate that his/her supply chain is compliant with regional and international standards.

At its 24th meeting held in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), the Regional Committee on the Fight Against the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources recommended that “All remaining exporters of 3TG must apply for an ICGLR Third Party Audit before end of June 2022” and that “Exporters who will not apply by June 2022 will no longer be eligible for an ICGLR Certificate”.



## 3rd General Assembly of the Regional Women Forum: Catalyzing the involvement of women in the region

The 3rd General Assembly of the ICGLR Women's Regional Forum was held from May 18 to 20, 2022. More than 40 women from the 12 ICGLR member states took part in this meeting, in which the First Lady of the Republic of Burundi, H.E. Angeline Ndayishimiye.

Also present was the Minister of National Solidarity, Social Issues, Human Rights and Gender, Hon. Imelde Sabushimike, the Executive Secretary of the ICGLR, Amb. João Samuel Caholo, Senior officials from the Government and Parliament of Burundi, as well as representatives of partner organizations.



The First Lady of Burundi, H.E. Angeline Ndayishimiye recalled that the recurrent armed conflicts that ravage the region continue to affect women and girls, and urged the participants to identify the best strategies to adopt in order to establish sustainable peace in all the countries of the Great Lakes Region and enable all women to make their contribution to the development of their families, their nations and the sub-region.



The newly elected officers of the ICGLR Regional Women's Forum. In the middle, Hon. Dr. Sabine Ntakarutimana, the new Chairperson, surrounded by her 2 vice-chairpersons from Angola and Congo and 2 rapporteurs

The General Assembly voted in the new Bureau and Steering committee during the elections. Honorable Sabine Ntakarutimana, from the Republic of Burundi was elected as the Chairperson of the Regional Women's Forum. Her two Vice Presidents are from the Republic of Angola and the Republic of South Sudan, while the two rapporteurs of the bureau are from the Republic of Congo and the United Republic of Tanzania. The steering committee is composed of 12 members, one from each Member state of the ICGLR.

The Executive Secretary of the ICGLR, Amb. João Samuel Caholo reassured the ICGLR's determination to facilitate the work of the Regional Women's Forum. He, however, called on the women members of this mechanism to play their role effectively: "It is desirable and in the interest of the region, that you develop an action plan with concrete and practical activities to enable you to effectively promote women's rights, gender equity and strengthen the meaningful participation of women at all levels of decision making".

### CHALLENGES AND WAY FORWARD

At the conclusion of the General Assembly, participants agreed on among other issues, working closely with the Kampala Center on issues related to Sexual And Gender-Based Violence (SGBV), enhance women's participation mineral governance and economic empowerment, advocate for the eradication of child labour, recruitment and involvement of children in armed groups and Undertake solidarity missions for peace and security in member states with conflicts among others.



### Kenya sign Host Country Agreement, aiming to enhance meaningful involvement of the youth

On the 31st January, 2022, in Nairobi, Kenya, the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) and the Government of the Republic of Kenya signed a Host Country Agreement for the Secretariat of the ICGLR Regional Youth Forum. The ICGLR was represented by Amb. João Samuel Caholo, Executive Secretary, while Amb. Raychelle Omamo, SC, EGH, Cabinet Secretary for Foreign Affairs, signed the Agreement on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Kenya.



The Executive Secretary with the Director for Host Country and Legal Affairs Directorate, Amb. Joseph Vungo, after the signing ceremony.



The Host Country Agreement comes as the former President of the Republic of Kenya, H.E. President Uhuru Kenyatta offered to host the Secretariat of the Region Youth Forum and to meet the initial cost of its establishment during the ICGLR Special Summit held in Nairobi on 24th July 2014. Thus, the Agreement provides for regulation on the establishment and functioning of the Regional Youth Forum and its relations with the Republic of Kenya. The ICGLR Heads of State and Government endorsed the creation of the Regional Youth Forum to champion the interests of the youth at the national, regional and global level.

This Agreement, further, ensures that the youth are not only involved but are actively engaged in all political processes and decision-making that affects them and the region at large. It will also strengthen young people's role in preventing and resolving conflicts, violence and extremism is essential to building sustainable peace and development for all the people in Great Lakes region. In addition, it will also boost the exchange of ideas, networking and interactions between the youth in the region and within Member States. Above all, the Host Country Agreement will greatly contribute to the realization of the Pact on Security, Stability and Development signed in 2006 by the Heads of State of the Great Lakes region.



The ICGLR National Coordinator of the Republic of Kenya, Amb. Nyambura Kamau presenting a gift to the Executive Secretary





# Joint Round Table on Peace and Security

A Joint Regional Roundtable on Peace and Security was held in Bujumbura from June 14 to 15, 2022. It brought together about fifty participants composed of representatives of the governments of Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda and the DRC; the various bodies of the ICGLR, donors, embassies and cooperation agencies, United Nations agencies, implementing partners, and civil society organizations.

The objective of this meeting was to present the achievements, lessons learned and challenges of the "Regional Project on Peace and Security in the Great Lakes Region", with a particular focus on peace education and internal mediation.

This project, which supports the ICGLR Peace and Security Program, is co-financed by the European Union, the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and implemented by GIZ and the Office of the Special Envoy of the UN Secretary General to the Great Lakes Region, through UN Women, UNDP and UNFPA, with the support of their partner organizations. It was implemented in four pilot countries: Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda and the DRC.

In his welcoming remarks, Ambassador Bernard Ntahiraja, ICGLR National Coordinator for Burundi, expressed the hope that this roundtable will contribute significantly to the promotion of peace, security and stability in the Great Lakes region by addressing the challenges and assessing the approaches and tools for peacebuilding

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"The objectives of the roundtable are to provide an opportunity to build national, regional and global partnerships between key actors and to identify areas of good practice that could be consolidated and extended to other ICGLR member states. This roundtable also intends to make recommendations for strengthening peacebuilding approaches and tools."



The Deputy Executive Secretary,  
Amb. Yasir Ibrahim Ali Mohammed



# Secretariat of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR)

## Newsletter

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