

Republic of Rwanda



OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

*SPEECH BY H.E. PAUL KAGAME,
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF RWANDA,
AT THE FIRST MEETING
OF THE REGIONAL INTERMINISTERIAL COMMITTEE
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON PEACE, SECURITY,
DEMOCRACY, AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE
GREAT LAKES REGION*

Kigali, Intercontinental, February 17th, 2005

Your Excellencies;

The President of the Senate;

The Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies;

The Right Honourable Prime Minister;

The President of the Supreme Court;

Honourable Ministers;

Special Envoy of the United Nations Secretary General;

The African Union Commissioner for Political Affairs;

Members of the Diplomatic Corps;

Distinguished Guests;

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen.

On behalf of the Rwandan people, and on my own behalf, I would like to welcome you all to this First Meeting of the Regional Inter-ministerial Committee on Peace, Security, Democracy, and Development in the Great Lakes Region.

I am particularly pleased that we in Rwanda can provide this venue for this meeting, and we hope that we will be able to meet your expectations.

Excellencies;

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen.

At the Dar-es-Salaam Conference in November last year, we committed ourselves to bringing peace and prosperity to the Great Lakes Region, and eradicating conflict, insecurity and disaster.

The declaration in fulfillment of this vision is ambitious, and rightly so. But to achieve the vision, we need to move beyond rhetoric to concrete actions.

It is important that we critically examine the agreements we already have among ourselves on the continent and at international levels, and analyse why they have not produced the desired results.

This will enable us to determine what we need to do to change this through specific programmes and action plans.

But allow me to remind you that the idea of an International Conference on the Great Lakes Region was launched in the aftermath of the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, and its dire consequences for the Region.

Our challenge has been how to wipe out the ideology of genocide in our region, and how to deal with the perpetrators of genocide, namely, the Ex-FAR/INTERAHAMWE, who are still present in our region.

Failure to deal with this issue has led to widespread insecurity, devastation, and in the past has even led to wars.

Even during the course of our Conference in Dar es Salaam, these groups threatened to derail the path we had embarked on by attacking Rwanda.

Fortunately, the African Union, with the help of our development partners, and other partners, has expressed serious commitment to effectively deal with these genocidal forces.

We laud this effort, and the challenge for the Great Lakes Region is how we can all positively contribute to it.

The manner in which we cooperate, to uproot the problem of these genocidal forces, and to uproot their ideology will reflect our determination and capacity to deal with other pressing issues in this region and on our continent.

It will also contribute to the return of confidence in the region and allow us to live and work together as good neighbours, and to cooperate more effectively in matters of defence and security, and other matters of great importance.

**Excellencies;
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen.**

While we all need peace and security, peace and security must be seen as enablers; as preconditions for the socio-economic development of our region and beyond.

As we all know, poverty, disease, malnutrition, illiteracy and a whole host of other ills seem to have become endemic in our region. This is simply unacceptable and we must not allow this state of affairs to continue.

Individually as countries, we may attempt to deal with these challenges, but a sustainable and sustained solution can only be found if we work within a regional context.

I have in mind the need for regional integration, promoting free movement of people, goods, services, and ideas, and others.

We also need to cooperate in the development of common key infrastructure, to create viable markets through economies of scale, and to establish interstate relations based on trust, mutual respect, and mutual benefit. We need to put in place and harmonise sound fiscal, monetary and trade policies in our region. These are vital elements in the creation of an enabling environment in which local and foreign investment will flourish.

All these processes will be facilitated if our states are characterised by the rule of law, transparency, and accountability.

I also have in mind the effective management of our resources, in a manner that is open, transparent, equitable, legal, sustained, accountable and responsive to the needs of our people.

These are the necessary conditions for economic growth, and socio-economic development in general. These are also tangible ingredients for good governance in its wider sense.

Fortunately, the Peer Review Mechanism under the auspices of NEPAD provides the proper context and the tools to ensure that these attributes of good political and economic governance are attained.

Excellencies;

We in Rwanda will continue to support regional peace initiatives. And we remain ready to make our contribution to the peace efforts now underway.

We are confident that, if we all work together, these processes will bear fruit.

Excellencies; Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen.

Conflicts in our region have had far reaching ramifications. Therefore, our experience should provide us with enough reasons to ensure our determination to turn our nations and region from zones of conflict into spheres of shared development and prosperity.

While we welcome the support of our partners, we must own our initiatives and determine our agenda.

Ultimately, the responsibility for peace, security, democracy and good governance, socio-economic development and regional integration lies with the people of this region.

I challenge this meeting, therefore, to help by coming out with concrete proposals on how we can realize our objectives.

It is now my pleasure to declare this first meeting of the Regional Inter-Ministerial Committee open, and I wish you fruitful deliberations.

I thank you all for your attention.

Republic of Rwanda



Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Cooperation

*OPENING REMARKS OF DR. CHARLES MURIGANDE
HON. MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS &
REGIONAL COOPERATION AT THE
FOURTH REGIONAL PREPARATORY COMMITTEE
MEETING ON PEACE, SECURITY, DEMOCRACY, AND
DEVELOPMENT IN THE GREAT LAKES REGION*

*February 15 - 17, 2005
Intercontinental Hotel
Kigali, Rwanda*

Your Excellency, Mr. Ibrahima FALL, Special Representative of the Secretary General for the Great Lakes Region,

Your Excellency, Mr. Mamadou BAH, Special Envoy of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission,

National Coordinators,

Co-chairs of the Group of Friends,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to begin by welcoming you all to Rwanda and to the Fourth Regional Preparatory Committee Meeting for the International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy, and Development in the Great Lakes Region.

This meeting marks the commencement of the second phase of the Conference, in which emphasis will be placed on implementing the decisions reflected in the Dar es Salaam Declaration of Principles.

The signing of the Declaration of Principles in November 2004 signaled the beginning of a new phase for the entire Great Lakes region. The principles enshrined in the Dar es Salaam declaration reflected the key issues of concern within the four thematic areas: peace and security, democracy and good governance, economic development and regional integration, and social and humanitarian issues. Moreover, the Declaration clearly identified the root causes of conflict within the region and recognized the fact that, due to the regional implications of conflicts within and between states, solutions and strategies for conflict prevention and management must also take on a regional dimension in order to be truly effective.

The emphasis on collectively seeking and finding viable solutions stems from the fact that the people of the Great Lakes region are indeed inextricably linked to one another through common history, culture, language, and experience. It is important to recognize that ours is truly a shared struggle and that we therefore all have a vested interest in pursuing every available avenue in order to ensure the maintenance of peace and stability.

Your Excellencies;
Ladies and Gentlemen.

The preparation process during the initial phase of the conference reflected the importance of collective action and, through the regional specialized meetings, ensured that the concerns and views of all sectors of society were incorporated into the final Declaration.

The Regional Women's Meeting in Kigali, the Youth Specialized Conference in Kampala, the Regional Meeting of Regional NGOs in Arusha, and the Regional Preparatory

Committee Meetings have thus far facilitated the exchange of ideas and experiences between the peoples of the region - a fact that demonstrates that all people share a common humanity. Moreover, these meetings laid the foundation for future collective efforts of the region's women, youth, and civil society - all of whom continue to be key actors in the process.

A great deal of progress has been made since the First Regional Preparatory Committee Meeting in September 2004. Armed with a common vision and will; under the guidance and expertise offered by the joint AU/UN Secretariat and with the support and contribution of the Group of Friends, the Regional Preparatory Committee has become a formidable team. It is its excellent preparatory work that enabled the region to easily adopt the comprehensive Dar es Salaam Declaration.

During this second phase, the technicians of RPC - through the various task forces that will be established during this and the Interministerial meeting - are taking on a great responsibility, that of translating the Dar es Salaam Declaration into tangible and achievable protocols and programs of actions capable of transforming the daily lives of the Peoples of the Great Lakes Region.

The responsibility is indeed great, considering that despite the strides made by the agreed upon provisions in the Dar es Salaam Declaration, tensions within the region are ongoing and threats to the peace and security of the region are ever present, and the region still faces immense poverty and underdevelopment and is home for millions of refugees and internally displaced persons.

The coming phase of the conference, therefore, is of paramount importance as it will determine the course of action for the region and will create mechanisms that will provide the region with the tools necessary to ensure that conflict is prevented, managed, and resolved effectively; enhance the ongoing democratization processes and quick start the economic development.

We are however confident that armed with the wisdom and clarity of vision with which you prepared the first phase of the Conference and with the guidance of the Inter-Ministerial Committee, you shall produce what is expected of you.

Your Excellencies;
Ladies and Gentlemen.

Before I end my remarks let me once again thank their Excellencies Ambassador Ibrahima FALL and Ambassador Mamadou BAH for their dedication to process. I would also like to thank our partners, the Group of Friends and the European Union for their significant contribution and continued support.

To the members of the Regional Preparatory Committee who are from the region, wish to reiterate the principle of ownership that has guided the entire process thus far. Indeed, much as we desire and deserve maximum help and support as we struggle to address the ills of our region, we must bear in our minds that it is our

responsibility, as the people of the Great Lakes Region, to create and maintain a region characterized not by conflict and unrest as it has been in the recent past, but by a spirit of cooperation and a determination to achieve sustainable peace and stability. No one will substitute us in this endeavor.

On Behalf of the Regional Inter-ministerial Committee, I wish you all the best of luck in your deliberations and look forward to receiving and discussing the outcome. And on behalf of the people of Rwanda, I extend to you all a warm welcome and hope you take full advantage of our hospitality during your stay. With these few remarks, it is great pleasure that I declare open the Fourth Regional Preparatory committee Meeting.

May God bless every one of you and our region.

AFRICAN UNION
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UNION AFRICAINE
UNIÃO AFRICANA

**FIRST INTER- MINISTERIAL COMMITTEE MEETING
KIGALI, 17-18 FEBRUARY 2005**

**SPEECH OF MADAME JOLLY JOINER
COMMISSIONER OF POLITICAL AFFAIRS**

Your Excellency, the President of the Republic of Rwanda;

Members of the Government of Rwanda;

Distinguished Members of the Regional Inter-Ministerial Committee;

Excellency, the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary General for the Great Lakes Region;

Distinguished Co-Chairs of the Group of Friends of the Great Lakes Region;

Excellencies, Ambassadors and Heads of Diplomatic Missions;

Distinguished Guests;

Ladies and Gentlemen.

Let me begin by expressing my delight and pleasure to be in Kigali, the capital of this beautiful country of a thousand hills, at this threshold of the year 2005, to join you in launching the second phase of the preparatory process of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region. As you are all well aware, the African Union places a lot of hope on this Conference to find an acceptable and lasting solution to the numerous challenges confronting this very important region of our continent, a region teeming with valuable and strategic natural resources, and so richly endowed with human potentials. This first meeting of the Inter-Ministerial Conference could therefore be viewed as a practical step in addressing these challenges and realising the results envisaged in the historic Dar-es-Salaam Declaration on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes.

Excellencies,

The International Conference has set for itself the noble ambition to forever rid the countries of the region of the causes that recently led to one of the gravest and most unacceptable catastrophes in human history; causes which triggered the most protracted and destructive wars ever to occur in our continent. This laudable initiative aims to promote peace and security, democracy and good governance, as well as economic development and regional integration not only in the individual countries but also in the entire region. In so doing, the International Conference would have placed itself in a position to address the tragic experience of millions of refugees, displaced and stateless persons whose abject living conditions have contributed to the grim humanitarian crises and destabilizing conditions in the region, which while compromising its development also erodes our continent's credibility. One should also not lose sight of the Conference's potential to meet the hopes and aspirations of the region's resourceful youth, women and civil society. Such are the core considerations that motivated the erstwhile OAU and the African Union to engage in the process of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, in concert

with the United Nations, right from its conception to its present state of advancement, a stage which indeed strengthens and nurtures our hopes.

The African Union is indeed gratified that the Republic of Rwanda had offered to host the first meeting of this Committee, and we express satisfaction for the excellent facilities and conducive working environment that have been provided to ensure the success of our deliberations.

Permit me to take this opportunity to underscore the valuable contribution of the Government of Rwanda's representatives to all the stages of the first phase of the process which culminated in the adoption in Dar-es-Salaam, United Republic of Tanzania, of the Declaration on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes Region. I also avail myself of this opportunity to pay you deserved tribute to H.E. the President of the Republic of Rwanda for his useful interventions at the Dar-es-Salaam Summit of November 2004, interventions which went a long way to enrich and fine-tune the Declaration, thereby facilitating its adoption.

Excellencies,
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

The second phase of the process being launched today is the beginning of a long march, a phase that is both technical and political. During this phase, the Regional Preparatory Committee, under the guidance and political leadership of the Ministers in charge of the process will have, *inter alia*, the task of preparing the protocols and programmes of action which, after adoption by the Summit due to take place in Nairobi in November 2005, will together with the Dar-es-Salaam Declaration, form the framework of the Security, Stability and Development Pact for the Great Lakes Region.

This first meeting of the Inter-Ministerial Committee will further enable us to, among other things, examine and adopt the annual calendar of future meetings of the Inter-Ministerial Committee and the Regional Preparatory Committee. The Protocols and programmes of action that will be prepared at these meetings will also include the practical modalities for their implementation, regular follow-up and periodic evaluation.

Honourable Ministers, I am confident that your enlightened ideas that will come out of this meeting will serve as guidelines for the Regional Preparatory Committee in adopting the most appropriate approach and work methodology for the advancement of the process. In this regard, your contributions will determine the choices to be made by the Regional Committee as to whether or not to set up *Ad-hoc* thematic groups or engage the services of experts to assist it in its challenging task of preparing the draft protocols and programmes. To this end, it is strongly recommended that utmost care be taken to ensure that the experts whose services would be enlisted, have the right technical competencies and moral standing. Needless to say, only expertise that is fully versed in and understands the nature and complexity of the peculiar problems of the region can be in a position to come up with realistic, implementable and measurable short, medium and long-term draft protocols and programmes, as prescribed by the Dar-es-Salaam Declaration.

In the process however, one spirit should prevail and guide the deliberations of the Regional Preparatory Committee and the Inter-Ministerial Committee throughout this preparatory phase of the Nairobi Summit; and, as underscored in the Dar-es-Salaam Declaration, that spirit is one of collective determination and total commitment to transform the Great Lakes Region into a zone of lasting peace and security, an area of political and social stability, high economic growth and development, and a bloc of cooperation built on convergent policies and strategies driven by a common destiny.

May I also add that the highest authorities of the core member countries, the United Nations, the African Union and our partners who are engaged with you in the process, should pool their efforts to convince the rest of the international community of the importance of declaring the Great Lakes Region "**a special zone of reconstruction and development**" and of providing a Special Fund for its reconstruction. To this end, it is essential to invest further effort to mobilize financial resources at national, regional and international levels to implement the programmes that will be adopted. This is another challenge that we have to face in an international context in which the attention of our traditional donors have shifted towards South East Asia, victim of the Tsunami disaster.

Excellencies, before I conclude, I would like on behalf of the African Union Commission, to reiterate gratitude to the Group of Friends of the Region whose technical, diplomatic and financial support have contributed immensely to the success of the first phase of this process. It is heartening that the Group of Friends is still standing by us at this start of a new and crucial phase leading to the Nairobi Summit. Let me therefore express the hope that the action programmes whose first phase of development we are about to launch will continue to generate the same interest and commitment from their formulation through implementation. The African Union for its part, reaffirms its commitment to the realization of the Vision of lasting peace, stability, security and development in the Great Lakes Region.

I wish the meeting every success and thank you for the kind attention.

**STATEMENT BY HON. JAKAYA M. KIKWETE, MINISTER FOR
FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION OF THE
UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA DURING THE LAUNCHING OF THE
REGIONAL INTER-MINISTERIAL COMMITTEE OF THE
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE GREAT LAKES REGION,
KIGALI -17TH FEBRUARY 2005**

Your Excellency, Paul Kagame, President of the Republic of Rwanda,

Right Honourable Prime Minister,

Honourable Senior Members of the Government of the Republic of Rwanda, Fellow Ministers,

Your Excellency, Ibrahima Fall, Special Representative of the UN Secretary General to the Great Lakes Region,

Madame Commissioner Julia Joiner, Commissioner for Political Affairs, the African Union Commission,

Excellencies Heads of Mission,

Excellencies Co-Chairs of the Group of Friends, Distinguished Invited Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Let me, at the outset, express our sincere thanks and gratitude to Your Excellency, President Paul Kagame for finding time out of your busy schedule to be present and officiate the opening of this first meeting of the Regional Inter- Ministerial Committee of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region. We thank the Government of the Republic of Rwanda for having kindly accepted to host the launching of this first meeting and for providing excellent facilities for our meeting. Let me also, on behalf of my colleagues, express our heartfelt thanks to the Government and People of Rwanda for the warm welcome and hospitality accorded to us since our arrival in this beautiful city of Kigali.

Excellency,
Ladies and Gentlemen:

In November 2004, the Heads of State and Government met in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania for the first Summit of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region. The Summit culminated in the signing of the Dar es Salaam Declaration on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes Region.

This Declaration unveiled a grand undertaking by the Heads of State and Government of our region to start a new chapter in the history of the Great Lakes Region, which unfortunately has for a long time been characterized by a vicious circle of interminable conflicts.

The Dar es Salaam Declaration is premised on the genuine desire of the people of this region to collectively and earnestly address the root causes of conflict in the region and promote a shared vision to guarantee sustainable peace, security, democracy and development through cooperation and regional integration. The Declaration identifies underlying principles to be applied and policy options to be made in order to realize the envisaged vision.

Excellency,
Ladies and Gentlemen:

Dar es Salaam marked the conclusion of the first phase of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region by charting out a regional vision. Kigali signifies the beginning of the second and more crucial phase of the process, which entails translating the Dar es Salaam Declaration and its enshrined vision into tangible, measurable and implementable action programmes and protocols.

Excellency,
Ladies and Gentlemen:

The task ahead of us is immense. This being the first Regional Inter-Ministerial Committee Meeting, we will have to come up with a 'road map' that will take us to the Second Summit of the Heads of State and Government. During our two days of deliberations we will be required to come up with concrete priority action programmes and protocols and determine their form and content. We will also have to decide on what can be implemented and achieved in the short, medium and long term in all the four thematic areas of the conference. Our meeting will equally deliberate on the structure and functioning of the Regional Inter-Ministerial Committee and timetable of work up to the Second Summit.

Excellency,
Ladies and Gentlemen:

I would like to take this opportunity to commend the Regional Preparatory Committee, the members of which have worked tirelessly for the past two days to prepare drafts for our consideration. The quality of these drafts clearly demonstrates the seriousness and commitment they have put into this task. In the same vein, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the joint UN/AU Secretariat for the prodigious groundwork they have so well done in preparing for this first Regional Inter-Ministerial Committee meeting. This is indeed a continuation of the unwavering support they have extended to this process. I would like to specifically thank our brother Ibrahima Fall, whose singular commitment and dedication to this process is unrivalled.

It will be remiss on my part if I will not thank the co-chairs of the Group of Friends who have shown an extra-ordinary commitment to this process in our endeavor to achieve sustainable peace and development in our region.

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen:

While we seek support from good friends, the question of ownership by the countries of the region is of crucial importance for the success of this process. The spirit and commitment demonstrated by our leaders in Dar es Salaam, in this regard, should continue to prevail and guide our deliberations throughout this meeting.

Yours Excellency,

Before I conclude I would like to express very sincere thanks to our host the Rwandese Foreign Minister Dr. Charles Murigande for arranging a visit to the Rwanda Genocide memorial. What happened in Rwanda in 1994 is horrifying, saddening, sickening and pitiful. We commend the Rwandese Government for establishing the memorial and preserving this aspect of your country's history. It is good you did that. What we saw at the Memorial is a stark reminder to all of us gathered here of what can happen if we don't succeed in our endeavors. It also reminds us of what can be prevented from happening. We hope it will never happen again in Rwanda, anywhere in the Great Lakes Region and anywhere on earth. This underscores the significance of the process we are involved in. The success of the Great Lakes Conference is one such assurance. So let us work with dedication and commitment to ensure that the Great Lakes Region initiative succeeds.

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen:

It is my singular honor and pleasure to welcome H.E. President Paul Kagame, President of the Republic of Rwanda to open this first meeting of the Regional Inter-Ministerial Committee.

Thank you very much.

Statement by the Netherlands Co - Chair of the Group of Friends, also on behalf of the European Union on the occasion of the Regional Inter-Ministerial Committee meeting, Kigali, 17 - 18 February 2005

Your Excellencies,

Honourable Ministers,

Mr. Special Representative of the Secretary General of the United Nations for the Great Lakes Region,

Mme Commissioner for Political Affairs of the African Union,

Mr. Special Representative of the President of Rwanda,

Mme and gentlemen,

Presidents of the National Committees and National Coordinators,

Dear colleagues and delegates,

Ladies and gentlemen.

On behalf of the Netherlands co-Chair of the Group of Friends of the Great Lakes Region and of the European Union, I am pleased to participate in this Regional Inter-Ministerial Committee meeting in Kigali, marking the take-off of the second phase of the Great Lakes Conference, preparing for the next Summit in Nairobi.

The First Summit in Dar es Salaam, on 19 and 20 November 2004, was a landmark and a historic event. The Declaration adopted, and solemnly signed at the Summit by all Heads of State of the Region, presents a common vision and includes principles and actions that reflect African ownership as well as African solidarity and partnership. It contains the building blocks to turn the region into an environment in which all people can enjoy security and prosperity and can build their own futures, free from fear of conflict, aggression and genocide.

The first phase of the Great Lakes Conference was a success. The Conference has shown a large degree of political commitment and mobilized the region. It also proved that a formula where governments, civil society, women and youth work together as partners enriches the debate and strengthens the sense of ownership.

Although these are major achievements in itself, more will be needed to advance the agenda for peace, stability and development in the region. Now is the time to move ahead of rhetoric in order to ensure that the spirit and text of the Declaration of Dar es Salaam will be translated into reality on the ground.

In that respect, there have been, since the 20th of November 2004, the day the Declaration was signed, both positive and negative developments, in furthering this agenda for peace, stability and development.

On the one hand, tensions in the region and delays in the transition processes in Burundi and the DRC gave rise to skepticism about the real meaning and impact of the Declaration of Dar es Salaam. On the other hand, the Dar Declaration has already been useful to convince parties to revert to dialogue and to find negotiated solutions to the causes of conflict. The Declaration of Dar es Salaam has apparently inspired governments, international organizations and the people in the region to further the agenda for peace and overcome the threat of war.

More recent developments, such as the outcome of the Tripartite meeting between the DRC, Rwanda and Uganda in Washington and the fact that the Joint Verification Mechanism between the DRC and Rwanda is operational, are also considered encouraging signs.

We welcome for example the recognition by the international community - at last - of the urgent need to find a solution to the problem of armed rebel groups and "forces negatives", including the ex-FAR and Interahamwe. The decision of the African Union to consider providing for regional assistance in this respect deserves our full support.

Other positive developments are the forthcoming referendum in Burundi to be held on 28 February 2005, and the fact that the DRC, with assistance of the international community is speeding up the DDR and SSR processes fundamental to the preparations for the elections.

But even if we welcome the positive developments in the region since Dar es Salaam, we know that there is still a considerable task in front of you. All depends on the political will for action and implementation. Tangible results for the people in the region are required in order to be able to keep the momentum. The government of the Netherlands, as co-Chair of the Group of Friends, as well as the European Union, call upon you to do all within your power to work towards full implementation of the declaration of Dar es Salaam.

For this, the second phase of the Conference, starting here in Kigali will be important, perhaps even crucial. The Group of Friends of the Great Lakes region therefore offers you its full support. So does the European Union. It is up to us as partners to work together and assist you in implementing the Dar es Salaam Declaration, both in spirit and in its letter, and in showing that the Conference represents a genuine effort of the region to advance the agenda for peace, stability and development in the Great Lakes region.

With regard to the question on how to proceed, we in the Netherlands and in the European Union recommend that the Conference embarks on an approach with two tracks:

- immediate action to implement already existing commitments and agreements, such as the Tripartite-agreement, the Joint Verification Mechanism, the CEPGL, the Lusaka, Arusha, Pretoria and other peace agreements, solving the problems related to the presence of the ex-FAR/Interahamwe in the DRC, elections and DDR/SSR;
- and the participatory process to the second Summit, in which the Inter-Ministerial Committee, the Regional Preparatory Committees and thematic technical taskforces will formulate action plans and protocols to create a Pact for Stability, Security and Development in the region.

With regard to immediate action related to the Declaration, We also believe that the message of the Dar Declaration deserves to be communicated to the people in the region, to create greater awareness about what the Conference is about. A number of key principles, like tolerance, respect and non-violence, can be echoed throughout society to lay the basis for a new era. Awareness raising and civic education will also enhance involvement of the population in the implementation of the Dar Declaration, including the monitoring of the commitments made. We welcome initiatives already taken by the UN/AU joint secretariat.

Over the past few days, the Regional Preparatory Committee has discussed the issue of action plans and protocols extensively. The selection process of themes for these action plans and protocols we find very encouraging. But an important task remains. The action plans and protocols will have to be coloured in. It is of the utmost importance that they be made feasible and include a calendar for implementation with benchmarks that are both realistic and ambitious. The actions in the Pact will have to be supported by the population. Civil society, youth and women can play a significant role in this regard. Their involvement is therefore of great importance.

Partnership

The Great Lakes Conference is considered the platform for discussing the causes of the conflicts endemic to the Great Lakes region and finding solutions to which all involved are committed. As co-Chair of the Group of Friends and on behalf of the European Union, I wish to reaffirm our political, diplomatic, financial and technical support to make the Conference a success, while fully respecting your ownership. The agenda can only be determined by you.

At the same time, we could look at possibilities to enhance this support and to strengthen the partnership between the Group of Friends and the members of the Conference. With this in mind, a Round Table, chaired by the Netherlands Minister for Development Cooperation, Mrs. Agnes van Ardenne, and the Canadian co-chair was organized on 18 November in Dar es Salaam. The concept of a Round table was chosen as a forum for an exchange of views between Ministers of the region and ministers from the Group of Friends. This formula has in our view been useful and was appreciated. As co-chair of the Group of Friends, the Netherlands would therefore like to suggest that we continue to use this formula in order to enable ministers of the region and ministers of the Group of Friends to meet and consult whenever developments call for consultations at a political level.

Closing remark:

As was mentioned on Tuesday, at the beginning of the Regional Preparatory Committee meeting, the second phase of the Conference will be a major challenge and deserves full political commitment. It will require us to go an extra mile overcoming obstacles in the process. However, if we work together, we will be able to proceed and advance the agenda for peace, security and development in the Great Lakes region and move from rhetoric to action. I wish you all success, courage and wisdom in this effort.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, let me conclude on behalf of the government of the Netherlands, as co-chair of the Group of Friends, as well as on behalf of the European Union, by expressing our deep appreciation for the tireless efforts, personal commitment and dedication with which the SRSG/UN for the Great Lakes Region, his Excellency Ibrahima Fall is fulfilling his mandate and assure him of our continued support for him and his able and competent secretariat.

Thank you.



Structure and functioning of the Regional Inter-Ministerial Committee (RIMC) and Regional Preparatory Committee (RPC)

A. Introduction

1. The first phase of the International Conference on the Great Lakes region culminated in the holding of the First Summit of Heads of State and Government in Dar-es-Salaam on 19 - 20 November 2004, which adopted a Declaration on a shared vision for the region, known as "The Dar-es-Salaam Declaration".
2. The adoption of the Dar-es-salaam Declaration was a turning point in the Region's history and especially in the process of restoring peace and stability. In fact, the Heads of State and Government, determined to translate into concrete actions the will of building together a peaceful and prosperous space, have decided to conclude a Pact of security, stability and development and established a Regional Inter-Ministerial Committee (RIMC) to steer its preparation and by precisely formulating programmes of action and protocols on the four themes of the Conference.
3. To ensure appropriate technical monitoring of the process of the second phase and afford the RIMC all necessary means to foster adequate preparation of the phase, the Inter-Ministerial Committee will be assisted by the Regional Preparatory Committee (RPC) supported by representatives of the civil society and renowned experts.
4. This note recalls the mandate of the Regional Inter-Ministerial Committee and Regional Preparatory Committee (RPC), describes the functioning of the committees and briefly presents the role of the Joint African Union/United Nations Secretariat.

B. Mandate and composition of the Regional Inter-Ministerial Committee

5. The Regional Inter-Ministerial Committee (RIMC) has been mandated to steer the process of formulating draft programmes of action and protocols that will constitute the basic components of the Pact as provided for in the Dar-es-Salaam Declaration. The RIMC will also have to come up with

practical modalities for implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Pact at national and regional levels.

6. The RIMC shall be composed of the eleven (11) Ministers in charge of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (IC/GLR) of the core countries. In addition to the core countries, the co-opted countries, United Nations, African Union, regional economic communities, development partners and the Group of Friends, as well as UN agencies will be in attendance at RIMC's meetings.
7. To ensure relevance of the draft programmes of action and protocols and take into account the recommendations made by all the meetings organised during the first phase of the International Conference, the RIMC will be supported by the RPC in its technical coordination task. In the same vein, preparation of the initial draft programmes of action and protocols will be supported by thematic technical task forces (TTTF) set up on the four themes of the International Conference and comprising renown experts drawn from the governments of core countries, United Nations agencies, civil society, regional and sub-regional organisations and partners.
8. The Regional Inter-Ministerial Committee will meet three times before the convening of the second Summit scheduled for November 2005. The RIMC may hold special meetings if it so decides. The first meeting will aim at reviewing and adopting the organisational structure, implementation mechanism and terms of reference of the different committees, terms of reference relating to the protocols and programmes of action, the work programmes of the RIMC, RPC and TTTF, the experts required and their profile, as well as the financing plan for the process. The second meeting should review the first drafts of programmes of action and protocols as well as monitor progress made. The third and final meeting of the RIMC should put final touches to and adopt the draft protocols and programmes of action, as well as draft modalities for implementation, monitoring/evaluation of the Pact in readiness for submission to the Summit.
9. While the direct responsibility of overseeing the entire process rests with the Ministers in charge of the IC/GLR through the IMC, the latter should try as much as possible to involve their colleagues of other relevant ministries who could provide useful technical advice and support.

C. Mandate and composition of the Regional Preparatory Committee (RPC)

10. The RPC has been tasked by the Summit of Heads of State and Government to assist the RIMC in the preparation of draft programmes of action and protocols relating to the above mentioned Pact. The RPC, as established during the preparatory phase of the Conference and as a multi-sector and multi-disciplinary organ, shall remain the driving force for the coordination of technical work in the second phase of the IC/GLR.

It will be supported by representatives of the civil society, women, youth, private sector, media and other renowned experts, a third of whom will be women.

11. The process of preparing the draft programmes of action and protocols will be based on recommendations made at the meetings of the Regional Preparatory Committee, the other specialised regional fora, as well as all inputs made in the preparatory process of the Conference, including the First Ladies Forum.

12. Four TTTFs reflecting the themes of the International Conference (Peace and Security, Democracy and Governance, Economic Development and Regional Integration, Humanitarian and Social Issues) and composed of renowned experts, will be set up to support the basic work. The experts may be drawn from the NPCs, United Nations agencies or regional organisations, or may be recruited as consultants at national, regional or international levels. if necessary, the RPC may establish ad hoc working groups to address cross-cutting issues or further review issues that would require deeper analysis.

13. It is important to note that consultations in each core country through the National Preparatory Committees should continue to foster an appropriate environment for the process of the International Conference, and especially to facilitate public awareness at national level on the importance of the initiative as well as access information required for drafting the programmes of action and protocols.

D. Role of the joint AU/UN Secretariat

14. In the first phase of the IC/GLR, the Commission of the African Union and the United Nations (OSRSG/GLR) have provided secretariat support to the preparatory process of the Conference. In this regard, the joint Secretariat supported the mobilisation and management of resources to finance the process, identification of appropriate experts and through United Nations agencies, preparation, organisation and follow-up of meetings of the National Coordinators, the Regional Preparatory Committees and the Specialised Groups, sensitization and mobilisation of all players in the region and their partners through a dynamic advocacy strategy, collection and centralisation of documentation/information relating to the process. The joint Secretariat also facilitated partnership with UN agencies and cooperation relations with regional and sub-regional organisations.

15. In the second phase, the Dar-es-Salaam Declaration calls on the United Nations and African Union to continue providing assistance to member countries of the Conference until the second Summit scheduled for November 2005 and recommends to the RIMC to work closely with those partners in the accomplishment of its mandate. Accordingly, the role of the Joint Secretariat will be extended by the Regional Inter-Ministerial Committee to capacity building for drafting programmes of action and protocols as well as support to the work of coordinating and steering the process entrusted to the host country of the first Summit of the IC/GLR (Tanzania).

Annex 1

International Conference on the Great Lakes region (IC/GLR)

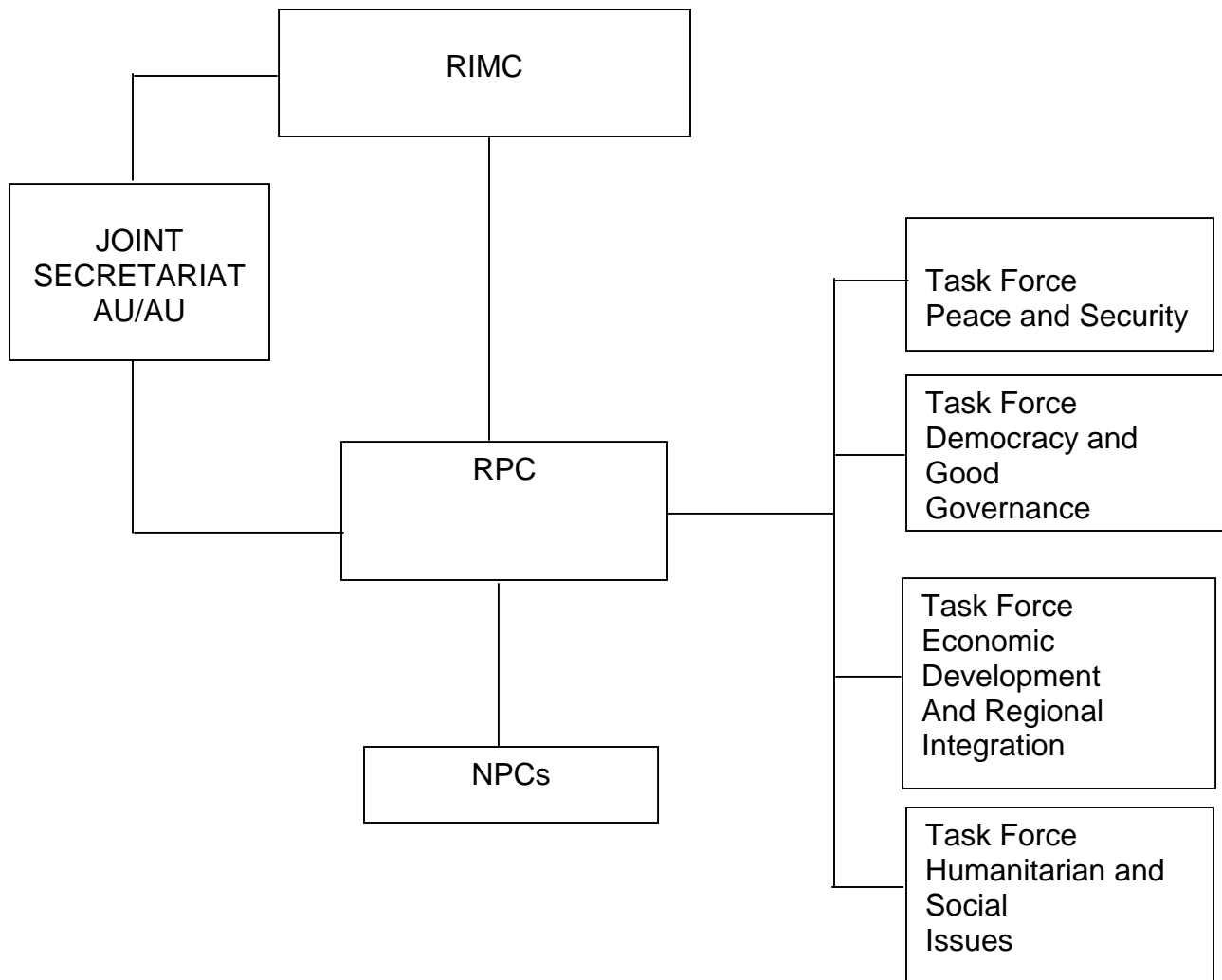
Proposed Timetable of the meetings of the Regional Inter-Ministerial Committee (RIMC)

January to November 2005

January 2005	Meeting of the Regional Preparatory Committee followed by the inaugural meeting of the Regional Inter-Ministerial Committee (RIMC) - Kigali
February to April 2005	Meetings of the Regional Preparatory Committee (RPC)
June 2005	Meeting of the PUNIC
July to September 2005	Meetings of the RPC
October 2005	Meeting of the RIMC
November 2005	Pre-Summit meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs followed by the Summit of Heads of State and Government

ANNEX 2

Proposed structure



RIMC: Regional Inter-Ministerial Committee

RPC: Regional Preparatory Committee

NPC: National Preparatory Committee

NB: The RPC might decide, if necessary, to establish ad-hoc task forces



Meeting of the Regional Preparatory Committee (RPC)

Kigali, 15 -17 February 2005

Draft report

Rev 1

Introduction

1. The first meeting of the Regional Preparatory Committee (RPC) of the second phase of the International Conference on the Great Lakes region (IC/GLR), hosted by the Government of the Republic of Rwanda, took place in Kigali from 15 to 17 February 2005 under the chairmanship of Rwanda. Participants included delegates from the core countries, the co-opted countries, the co-chairs of the Group of Friends, the joint UN/AU Secretariat, the European Union, African regional and sub-regional organizations, lead UN agencies for the four themes of the Conference and other specialized UN agencies. Officials from the UN Peacekeeping missions in Burundi, Central African Republic, and DRC also participated in the meeting.

2. As the technical arm of the Regional Inter-Ministerial Committee, the RPC had on its agenda the following issues:

- Review on the structure, functioning, timetable and terms of reference of the Regional Inter-Ministerial Committee, the Regional Preparatory Committee and the Technical Thematic Task Forces (TTTFs);
- Review its own programme of activities and that of the thematic task forces for the period leading to the Second Summit of Heads of State and Government;
- Discuss the draft terms of reference of the various proposed protocols, sectoral/thematic programmes of action and the related required expertise;
- Discuss budgetary issues related to the Conference process up to the Second Summit of Heads of State and Government;
- Adopt the draft criteria for the granting of observer status and discussing the issue of co-opted members;
- Prepare the agenda of the meeting of the Regional Inter-Ministerial Committee.

3. On each of the issues outlined above, the joint UN/AU Secretariat had prepared working papers and background documents which constituted the basis for discussion.

4. Following a fruitful exchange of ideas and reviewing all the suggestions and inputs made, the RPC meeting reached the following conclusions and recommendations.

I. Structure, Functioning, and Timetable of the Regional Inter-Ministerial Committee (RIMC), the Regional Preparatory Committee (RPC) and their Programmes of Activities

5. There was general consensus that in addition to the current meeting there will be two more meetings of the RPC and the RIMC in June and a second RIMC meeting in October preceded by an RPC meeting in September 2005. The June meeting will be devoted to the mid-term review of the drafts elaborated by the TTTFs while the October meeting will carry out the final review of those drafts. There will be another meeting of the RPC in September to review the drafts of the TTTFs. The meeting stressed the critical role of the TTTFs which are the driving force behind the substantive aspects of the process. A number of countries also emphasised the need for the continuation of national consultations, through the respective NPCs, to continue in order to feed into the work of the TTTFs. Similarly, the meeting emphasized the need to consider mainstreaming crosscutting issues which might lead to the establishment of specific TTTFs.

6. It was suggested to have four TTTFs, one for each theme and it was recommended that each TTTF should form no more than 3 sub-committees or ad-hoc groups to address specific sub-themes as they arise. Each country can send between a minimum of three members and a maximum of six members. The TTTFs should meet in Nairobi for a period of five days. It was suggested that the experts should be primarily drawn from the national level and if possible be financially supported by their governments. If required, these experts could also come from the regional and international arena including from within the sub-regional and regional African organizations, the AU as well as from the UN system. During the discussion on funding experts for the TTTFs, organizations such as the African Development Bank and UNECA offered their contribution.

7. Emphasis was also put on the following cross-cutting issues: Gender, Youth, Environment, Human settlements, Media, Civil Society, Human rights, HIV/AIDS, Malaria and TB. It was agreed to have a programme of action for Women but it does not necessarily mean that there will be a specialised TTTFs for this purpose.

8. The timetable of the meetings of the RIMC, RPC and TTTFs is as follows:

Date	Duration	Purpose	Venue	Meeting
15-18 February	RPC 15-17 RIMC 17-18	Launching of the second phase	Kigali	First meeting of the RIMC preceded by RPC
End of March	5 days	Thematic discussions to harmonise the various proposals as tabled	Nairobi	First meeting of the TTTFs
April/May	On-going	National consultations		NPC
End of May	5 days	Refine the drafts to be submitted to the RPC and RIMC	Nairobi	Second meeting of the TTTFs
June	5 days	Midterm review and further political guidance	Lusaka/Livingstone	Second RIMC preceded by the RPC
August	5 days	Finalization of drafts	Nairobi	Third meeting of the TTTFs
September	3 days	Adopt drafts coming out of August task forces	Luanda	RPC
October	2 days	Adopt the Programmes of Action and Protocols	Bangui	Third RIMC
November (tentative)		Signing of the Pact of Stability, Security, and Development	Nairobi	Summit preceded by meeting of ministers of foreign affairs

II. Terms of Reference (TOR) for the Possible Protocols and Programmes of Action for the Security, Stability and Development Pact

9. The development of TORs was based on inputs of the Kinshasa matrix, meetings of the RPCs, from specialized groups, the Dar-Es-Salaam Declaration, the Declaration of First Ladies, meetings of the agencies of the UN system, AU and African sub-regional organizations.

10. In order to reflect the vision and strategic options of the Dar-Es-Salaam Declaration, the Joint Secretariat developed a comprehensive list of issues raised and which should emerge in the proposed Programmes and protocols, while at the same time trying to cluster them for the purpose of increasing relevance and efficiency.

11. In addition to the Protocols and Programmes of Action of the four thematic areas of the Conference, namely Peace and Security, Democracy and Good Governance, Economic Development and Regional Integration, and Humanitarian and Social Issues, there are a number of cross-cutting themes: HIV/AIDS, Malaria and TB, Youth, Gender, Civil Society, Environment, Human settlements and Human Rights. However, specific Programmes can be developed if the need arises. Similarly, a protocol could be proposed to enhance the effective involvement of specialized groups (women, youth and the civil society). Special attention was given to the Private sector, and Media and there was need to see how best to include these two stakeholders.

12. To facilitate the work of TTTFs, the Joint Secretariat, regional and sub-regional African organizations, as well the UN agencies reiterated their support in the collection of information on legal instruments and the existing Programmes or projects that could inform the work in order to avoid duplication and only elaborate new Protocols and Programmes of Action when absolutely necessary. In this regard, the annex in the terms of reference for "Peace and Security" in the draft document on possible Protocols and Programmes of Action for the Security, Stability, and Development Pact serves as an example.

III. Peace and Security

Key Issues

13. The members agreed on the 6 following sub-themes as priorities. (Proliferation and Circulation of Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons / Antipersonnel Mines, Border Security, Ex-Combatants and DDRRR, Defense and Security Cooperation, Transnational Crime and Terrorism, Conflict Prevention, Management, and Resolution).

14. The members also agreed on the need for the two suggested protocols in the TOR working paper, namely a regional Non-Aggression Pact and a regional Protocol on Good Neighbourliness.

15. The need to prioritize within each sub-theme was raised. It was suggested that this could be solved by:

- Setting a hierarchy of themes; one recurring important and urgent priority mentioned was Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution;
- Identifying the sequences of short, medium and long term action oriented Programmes within each sub-theme.

16. There was wide consensus on the need to regroup sub-themes.

17. It could be suggested to combine prioritization and regrouping.

- First, by regrouping the sub-themes into very few groupings.
- Second, by prioritizing the groupings.

18. It is recommended that each country as a priority establish an inventory of existing agreements as well as conduct a critical assessment as to why some have not been implemented.

Further Issues Raised

19. A number of proposals have been made to also focus on:

- preventing armed groups from operating from within neighbouring countries;
- undertaking regional efforts to grant amnesty to those individuals who belonged to an armed group and seek to be redeemed, except to those who have been found guilty of acts of terrorism or genocide;
- an MoU should be signed amongst the countries of the region to assist countries coming out of conflict;
- fight genocide in the region
- issues pertaining to children in armed conflict and their exemption from military service upon demobilisation.

IV. Democracy and Good Governance

20. During the discussion on priority setting and additional topics for the thematic area of Democracy and Good Governance, it has been proposed to create a specific sub-item on women taking into account CEDAW and the Beijing Platform of Action and existing protocols on women, such as the protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa as well as taking into account Security Council resolution 1325 on women, peace and security.

21. It was also proposed that youth participation be included into this thematic area. A youth representative suggested that there should be a specific protocol or program of action on youth which should include affirmative action for youth representatives.

22. It was also agreed that a new item 5 should be created entitled "Equal participation and empowerment of women and youth as well as Persons with disabilities and other marginalised groups".

23. During the discussions, the important role the media can play in the area of peace and security in the prevention of conflicts, was underlined. In response it was pointed out that there was already a comprehensive programme entitled "Communication, Information and Education". under the thematic area "Democracy and Good Governance" elaborating on the important role of the media in the process. Regarding the role of the media as a cross-cutting issue, it was suggested that the conclusions of the Bagamoyo meeting be circulated for information.

24. There was consensus on the following priorities:

1. Rule of law/justice/fight against impunity/human rights
2. Democratization processes
3. Political, Economic and Corporate Governance
4. Communication, Information and Education
5. Equal participation and empowerment of women and youth as well as persons with disabilities and other marginalised groups.

25. Participants also suggested that paragraph 1.1.2 of the English version on the working document on the TORs be reformulated so as to make it clear that the existing security services are to be reformed to be more democratic and professional and not to be replaced by new security forces.

26. It was also agreed that the proposals for new protocols that emerged during the discussions were already covered by the protocols proposed in the working document on the TOR.

V. Economic Development and Regional Integration

27. The meeting agreed on the priorities areas outlined in the document and suggested as short term actions the following:

- Debt Management Cooperation
- Free movement of people, goods and services
- Cooperation: Agriculture, fishing and livestock farming,
- Cooperation: Education, Science, Technology, Culture, Health and Research,
- Poverty Eradication,
- Eradication of illegal exploitation of Natural Resources
- Women Economic Empowerment, Women's Property Rights and Ownership
- Declaring the region a Specific Reconstruction and Development Zone
- Cooperation: Infrastructure (railways, air transportation, submarine cables, fiber optics, and oil pipelines), Energy (water, timber...), Industry and Services (tourism, banking, insurance and ICT).

28. It was suggested regrouping the 11 items in the working document on TORs into 4 items in the following order of priority:

1. **Specific Reconstruction and Development Zone** (short-term objective)

2. **Cooperation in the alleviation of poverty** (short term objective)

- Debt management Cooperation
- Cooperation: Agriculture, Fishing and Livestock Farming, environment, trade and commerce
- Eradication of Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources
- Women Economic Empowerment, Women's Property rights and Ownership (Land and Housing)
- Social Infrastructure Reconstruction: Health and Education Systems.

3. **Harmonization of Economic/Financial Policies and Regional Integration** (medium-term objective)

4. **Private Sector Development / Investment** (short-term objective)

- Free movement of people, goods and services
- Cooperation: Infrastructure (railways, air transportation, submarine cables, fiber optics, and oil pipelines), Energy (water, timber...), Industry and Services (tourism, banking, insurance and ICT).

29. Other issues raised were:

- Air transportation be included in Infrastructure Cooperation
- Particular emphasis should be put on NEPAD programmes and MDGs
- Greater attention should be given to the environmental dimension of economic development.

- Industrialisation for value-addition
- Market access both regionally and internationally
- Enhancement of the mobilisation of domestic resources
- Sustainable exploitation of natural resources

VI. Humanitarian and Social Issues

30. The meeting of the Regional Preparatory Committee (RPC) agreed that all the entries found in the Humanitarian and Social Issues section were equally important and deserved to be urgently tackled in order to uplift the welfare of the citizens of the Great Lakes region and to address the suffering of the most affected groups. The meeting also agreed that social issues needed to be equally emphasized. It was also agreed that issues pertaining to children in armed conflict and their exemption from military service upon demobilisation should be moved into Peace and Security cluster.

Prioritization

31. Although not totally relevant in light of the inter-linkages existing between the various issues in the Humanitarian and Social Issues cluster, the following reordering of the priorities was suggested:

- Protection and assistance to displaced populations and host communities
- Humanitarian access and safety of humanitarian workers
- Disaster preparedness and response including environmental restoration
- Vulnerable groups and populations with specific needs which encompass the whole notion of assistance in general and provision of basic social services

Classification

32. Stemming from a detailed presentation made by the representative of the Office of the Coordination for Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the meeting concluded that the humanitarian and social issues ought to be categorized in two broad fields: on the one hand, legal and protection issues and, on the other hand, issues pertaining to assistance to populations. This categorization was however purely done for technical and practical purposes since protection and assistance were complementary.

33. After agreeing on this classification, the meeting then proceeded to identify the issues that should be addressed in the short term and those that should be addressed in the medium term. Indeed, the meeting reached the agreement that there should not be any long-term humanitarian issues given that once security and stability are restored throughout the region, humanitarian problems would be reduced to the strict minimum if not completely eradicated.

Short-term legal issues

34. The meeting felt that the main challenge consisted in ensuring that existing legal instruments were ratified by States, and fully domesticated, implemented at the national level. It was therefore suggested and agreed to prepare a Programme of Action (PoA) which would address the compliance by States of those instruments through the setting up of a regional monitoring mechanism and an appropriate regional forum.

35. The meeting unanimously agreed that while there were adequate provisions in the International Law for the protection and assistance of refugees, the same could not be said for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). It was therefore agreed that the domestication and national legislation of these Guiding Principles on IDPs should be the subject of a special protocol which could take the form of a regional understanding and commitment of States on the types of protection and assistance this particular group deserved.

36. One protocol was suggested on the status and assistance of victims of sexual violence.

37. Lastly, the issue of access and security of humanitarian workers would only require a programme of action given the existence of sufficient legal instruments addressing these issues.

Short-term assistance issues

38. Other priority programmes of action in the short term would address de-mining of settlement and/or resettlement areas, maintaining and safeguarding the civilian nature of refugee camps and settlements, and the resumption of basic social services. It was agreed that this latter issue was also linked to the problem of debt cancellation and subsequent reallocation of funds notably for social use. The latter issue might require specific negotiations, perhaps in the form of a protocol, between the countries of the region and their development partners.

Medium-term legal and assistance issues

39. In the medium term, with the exception of the complex issue of property rights which have legal implications and which may therefore require a specific protocol, all the other humanitarian and social issues pertain to assistance and would have to be addressed in the framework of specific programmes of action. These include, but not limited to:

- Assistance to host communities including issues touching on human settlements and environmental restoration;
- Disaster preparedness and response with a particular emphasis on partnership between Governments and civil society at large;
- Voluntary repatriation of refugees and sustainable reintegration of returnees;

- HIV/AIDS, Malaria and other infectious diseases but taking into due consideration the on-going activities of the Great Lakes Aids Initiative (GLIA and the Congo-Ubangui and Chari River Countries Initiative on HIV/AIDS)
- Skills development, assistance and psycho-social support notably to groups with special needs (refer to Kinshasa matrix) notably children, women and youth.

40. It was noted that most of these issues fall under the broad definition of human security and the notion of social safety nets. These issues are somewhat half way between the emergency mode and the long term development goals which are ultimately poverty eradication and socio-economic growth.

41. It was clarified that gender issues and concerns, as a cross-cutting issue, should be reflected in all protocols and programmes of action identified above, in addition to a proposed specific protocol on gender.

42. Promotion of Swahili as a working language for the Great Lakes region.

VII. Group of Friends report on the financial situation

43. The Group of Friends (GOF) for the Great Lakes region reiterated its support to the principle of ownership of the IC/GLR. It welcomed the decision that expertise would be primarily sought at national and regional level in line with the principle of ownership including its financial aspect. Similarly, that the decision that TTTFs would take place in Nairobi, was greeted with satisfaction and it expressed its belief that the streamlining of the timetable would also help to render the process more practical and cost-efficient.

44. Concerning the Multi-Donor fund for the IC/GLR, managed by UNDP-Kenya in collaboration with the respective UNDP offices in the Members countries, the Co-Chairs of the GOF indicated that the objectives were fulfilled for the year 2004.

45. The Co-chairs assured that they would continue to provide funds to the Member States and the Joint UN/AU Secretariat for the IC/GLR process, even if the funds were not unlimited. For that reason, it was necessary that the Secretariat of the GOF received the detailed plans of action and budgets for Phase 2 as soon as possible at any rate not later than March 21.

46. The Co-chairs recommended that the successful management procedures put in place by UNDP continue in Phase 2, using the same regulations and criteria as in phase 1. They reminded the members of the need to give the relevant information to the respective UNDP country offices in time.

47. It was also the understanding of the GOF that the timetable adopted for Phase 2 would take into consideration political consultations and consultations with Civil Society in each Member country. Special attention will be given to the inclusion of Civil Society in the national Plans of Action.

48. Budgets have not yet been allocated in order to allow for the reception of all submissions and a balance will be kept between, the National Preparatory Committee, the Regional Preparatory Committee and the Joint UN/AU Secretariat.

49. The GOF would take into consideration the possible special needs of the new Members of the IC/GLR. Since the Group believes that the IC/GLR belongs first and foremost to its members, it was requested that the financial or non-financial contribution of each country member be clearly indicated in the Plan of Action and budget. Once final decisions are made at the end of the Regional Inter-ministerial Committee meeting regarding the structure, process and timetable of Phase 2, it is expected that the remaining Plans of Action and Budgets be sent to the GOF Secretariat, no later than 21 March 2005. The GOF were open to individual consultations and open to receiving urgent requests whenever relevant.

VIII. Co-opted Status and Observer Status

These two issues were referred to the National Coordinators.

X. Conclusion

50. The RPC meeting was conducted in a frank and cordial atmosphere. It came up with a number of important recommendations regarding the second phase of the process. The stage is now set for the formulation of concrete, feasible, and measurable Protocols and Programmes of Action, which will form along with the Dar-Es-Salaam Declaration, the Security, Stability, and Development Pact to be signed in Nairobi in November 2005.