



Security Council

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Letter dated 15 November 2024 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to refer to Security Council resolution [2746 \(2024\)](#), in which the Security Council requested me, in close coordination with the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, to report by 15 November 2024 to it on progress in the operationalization of the Mission and on the implementation of operative paragraph 1 of the resolution, as well as challenges encountered.

The political and security situation in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo has evolved significantly since a ceasefire agreement was signed on 30 July 2024 by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and of Rwanda under the Luanda process, led by the African Union-designated facilitator, the President of Angola, João Lourenço. Since taking effect on 4 August, the ceasefire has largely held, while clashes between the Mouvement du 23 mars (M23) and other armed groups have continued.

While the ceasefire is a significant step towards resolving the current crisis, the situation in North Kivu remains volatile, amid reports of violence against civilians and serious human rights abuses linked to the control by M23 of large swathes of the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In this context, Angola has facilitated a series of ministerial-level meetings between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda on the implementation of the harmonized plan for the neutralization of the Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda and the plan for the disengagement of forces.

In a meeting held in Goma on 18 September, the Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations, Jean-Pierre Lacroix, and the Force Commander of the SADC Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Major General Monwabisi Dyakopu, reaffirmed the commitment of the United Nations and the SADC Mission to jointly work towards the creation of an enabling environment for the implementation of regional peace initiatives, while acknowledging the complementarity of efforts by other actors present in North Kivu, including the reinforced ad hoc verification mechanism established under the Luanda process to monitor the parties' compliance with the ceasefire.

Progress in the operationalization of the Southern African Development Community Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

In August, the SADC Mission reached its full operational capability, with about 4,500 troops contributed by Malawi, South Africa and the United Republic of



Tanzania, under the leadership of Major General Dyakopu of South Africa. To date, the SADC Mission has maintained its defensive positions around Goma and the strategic town of Sake, some 20 kilometres north-west of Goma, in coordination with the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO).

Since the adoption of resolution [2746 \(2024\)](#), MONUSCO and the SADC Mission have strengthened coordination at the senior and tactical levels, including through regular exchanges of information at the joint Operations Coordination Centre, hosted by the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo in Goma, and additional weekly meetings of representatives of each of the three forces hosted at the headquarters of the SADC Mission. These measures have improved coordination and deconfliction, with a particular focus on the employment and use of indirect fire assets. Information-sharing continues to be institutionalized, in accordance with relevant United Nations guidelines and policies.

Support from the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo to the Southern African Development Community Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Following the adoption of resolution [2746 \(2024\)](#), MONUSCO adopted a demand-driven approach to the consideration of specific requests for support from the SADC Mission within the parameters set by the Security Council and in strict adherence with the human rights due diligence policy on United Nations support to non-United Nations security forces. As agreed by MONUSCO and the SADC Mission, a memorandum of understanding is being finalized to outline clear processes for the submission and consideration of requests, while ensuring transparency on applicable principles and practices.

MONUSCO has established mechanisms to facilitate its strategic engagement with the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the SADC Mission, as well as to ensure the coordinated and efficient delivery of support to the SADC Mission. Regular exchanges between MONUSCO and the SADC Mission confirmed that the main areas of support required by the SADC Mission include information-sharing, technical assistance on the protection of civilians and related areas, preparedness for medical and casualty evacuations and logistical support, including engineering material capabilities, an armoured vehicle to enhance the security of the Force Commander of the SADC Mission, and the facilitation of troop rotations in-country. In addition, the SADC Mission requested assistance from MONUSCO with safe storage capacities and the enhancement of camp protection to ensure the safety and security of SADC Mission contingents.

Following requests submitted by the SADC Mission, MONUSCO conducted three risk assessments in accordance with the human rights due diligence policy on United Nations support to non-United Nations security forces, leading to the approval of limited logistical and operational support. In line with standard practice, MONUSCO subsequently developed recommendations on appropriate risk-mitigating measures to inform its decision-making and ensure that its support to the SADC Mission would further the implementation of the MONUSCO mandate.

Protection of civilians and related areas

Supporting the authorities of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to uphold their primary responsibility for the protection of civilians is a shared priority, central to the mandates of both MONUSCO and the SADC Mission. To this end, MONUSCO has leveraged its expertise to deliver training for SADC Mission personnel. From 4 to 15 November, MONUSCO provided a training-of-trainers workshop on the protection

of civilians, international human rights and humanitarian law, civilian harm mitigation, the human rights due diligence policy on United Nations support to non-United Nations security forces, the prevention of misconduct and sexual exploitation and abuse, child protection, conflict-related sexual violence, explosive device and improvised explosive device awareness, community engagement and alert networks.

Compliance with international law

The SADC Mission has continued to express interest in receiving support to ensure that its activities are carried out in compliance with international humanitarian law and international human rights law. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, including through the United Nations Joint Human Rights Office in the Democratic Republic of the Congo integrated within MONUSCO, have provided technical support to identify ways in which MONUSCO could support the compliance of the SADC Mission with international law, including its establishment of a human rights and international humanitarian law compliance framework. These efforts build on previous work led by the United Nations Secretariat in support of the development and implementation of the four pillars of the African Union Strategic Framework for Compliance and Accountability in Peace Support Operations, covering international human rights law, international humanitarian law, conduct and discipline and the protection of civilians. On 14 October, the Force Commander of the SADC Mission appointed the regional force's legal adviser to serve as focal point for coordination on human rights and compliance efforts.

The United Nations remains committed to helping the SADC Mission to uphold the highest standards of conduct and discipline, in particular its efforts to prevent and address sexual exploitation and abuse and ensure accountability thereof. In addition to the training-of-trainers workshop, MONUSCO, with the support of relevant United Nations entities, will also offer dedicated training programmes on standards of conduct, risk management and the critical importance of preventing and addressing acts of sexual exploitation and abuse. Meanwhile, the United Nations continues to emphasize the need for high-quality predeployment training to ensure that the compliance efforts of the SADC Mission are in line with the African Union Compliance Framework.

Medical and casualty evacuation

All mechanisms and procedures are in place to enable MONUSCO to provide immediate support for the medical and casualty evacuation of SADC Mission troops within existing resources. While MONUSCO has yet to receive any requests for evacuation since the adoption of resolution [2746 \(2024\)](#), the United Nations Secretariat is engaging with the relevant MONUSCO troop-contributing countries to assess the feasibility of allowing the medical treatment of SADC Mission personnel in MONUSCO medical facilities.

Facilitation of the movements of the Southern African Development Community Mission and other logistical support

MONUSCO has facilitated the transportation of senior officials of the SADC Mission to engage with the leadership of the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and other relevant stakeholders in Kinshasa. The Mission has also provided logistical support to enhance the base defences of the SADC Mission in Sake and at the Goma international airport. This includes the provision of 7,500 metres of Hesco gabion military defence walls and 30 sea containers for storage, as well as the loan of an armoured vehicle.

Observations

I commend MONUSCO and the SADC Mission for their proactive steps to put in place the necessary mechanisms and procedures to enable the timely implementation of resolution [2746 \(2024\)](#). The technical assistance and logistical support that MONUSCO has provided and will continue to provide to the SADC Mission, within the parameters established by the Security Council, will help to enhance the impact of their combined efforts to restore peace and security in North Kivu. I welcome the decision of SADC to appoint a Special Representative and Head of the SADC Mission and look forward to furthering the strategic partnership between the United Nations and SADC through the implementation of resolution [2746 \(2024\)](#).

I would be grateful if you could bring the present letter to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(Signed) António **Guterres**
