

FINAL STATEMENT

- i. On the invitation of the Government of the Republic of Burundi, a delegation from the Democratic Republic of the Congo travelled to **Bujumbura on the 4th to 5th October 2020** as part of the Second Session of the Bilateral Ministerial Consultation on Peace and Security between the Republic of Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.
- ii. The Congolese delegation was led by **Her Excellency Ms. Marie Tumba Nzeza**, Minister of State and Minister of Foreign Affairs, and the Burundi delegation was led by **His Excellency the Ambassador Albert Shingiro**, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperative Development.
- iii. Before the session began, **His Excellency the Ambassador Albert Shingiro**, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperative Development for the Republic of Burundi welcomed the delegation from the Democratic Republic of the Congo.
In turn, **Her Excellency Ms. Marie Tumba Nzeza**, Minister of State and Minister of Foreign Affairs for the Democratic Republic of the Congo applauded the holding of this session which was brought about on the initiative of our two heads of state, Their Excellencies Evariste Ndayishimiye and Felix-Antoine Tshisekedi Tshilombo.
- iv. After the Second Session of Bilateral Ministerial Consultation was opened by **His Excellency Ambassador Albert Shingiro**, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperative Development for the Republic of Burundi, who praised the excellent bonds of friendship and cooperation between our two countries while advocating for their reinforcement, the two delegations discussed the following points: **(1) handling of security issues on the common border between the Republic of Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, (2) the promotion of commercial exchanges between the two countries, (3) handling of the COVID-19 pandemic, (4) as well as other matters of common interest.** The session was held in the conference room of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Cooperative Development in Bujumbura.
- v. After identifying the challenges facing the Republic of Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and following productive debate, the two delegations formulated the following recommendations:
 1. Establish a Memorandum of Understanding on reinforcing and keeping Peace and Security along the shared border between the Republic of Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo;
 2. Put in place an information exchange framework between the administrative authorities of the two countries at every level;
 3. Initiate regular meetings with military, police and administrative authorities in the border provinces of Burundi and those in Democratic Republic of the Congo;
 4. Put in place joint mechanisms to stabilise the Rusizi/Ruzizi plane which take into account long-term development, with the aim of making Lake Tanganyika our “*mare nostrum*”, our common heritage, and to make safe the space all around the borders;
 5. To restore National Route No. 5 between Bukavu-Uvira of which 10km has already been tarmacked to facilitate the flow of goods and people between Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo;
 6. To ask the two countries to accelerate works on the restoration of the bridge which links Cibitoke province in Burundi and South Kivu province in the Democratic Republic of the Congo;
 7. Regulate and increase cross-border business discussions in the interest of the economies of the two countries;

8. Put in place a joint plan to neutralize negative forces and other armed groups causing instability in our two countries, particularly in terms of organizing coordinated patrols at various points along our shared border;
 9. Build a footbridge between Gihanga and Kagina in South Kivu;
 10. Coordinate efforts to fight cross-border fraud and contraband as well as illegal trafficking of natural resources;
 11. Put in place a joint mechanism to protect the environment along the length of the shared border, particularly the banks of Lake Tanganyika and the Rusizi/Ruzizi plain;
 12. Re-launch the activities of the Mixed Technical Commission responsible for Demarcation and Materialisation of the shared border between the two countries;
 13. Encourage exchange of information and details between Defense Forces and Security Services, particularly cross-border security;
 14. Involve the Marine Forces of our two countries in the control of Lake Tanganyika through coordinated patrols, in order to prevent any activity by negative forces operating along Lake Tanganyika;
 15. Sign a Bilateral Agreement specifically relating to visits and settlement of the nationals of the two countries in both countries;
 16. Relaunch the Tripartite Burundi-Democratic Republic of the Congo-High Commissary for Refugees in order to, amongst other things, relocate Burundi refugee camps in accordance with regulations required by the High Commissioner for Refugees of the United Nations, and encourage their voluntary return to their respective countries.
 17. Charge migration services in the two countries with studying the issue of juxtaposed border crossings;
 18. Put in place a Permanent Joint Commission in charge of Political, Defense and Security issues;
 19. Harmonise and standardise tools and practices aimed at reducing the consequences of cross-border spread of illnesses through movement of people between the two countries.
- vi. The Minister of State, Minister of Foreign Affairs for the Democratic Republic of the Congo, **Her Excellency Ms. Marie Tumba Nzeza** thanked the Burundi authorities for welcoming her delegation and for the hospitality shown to them since their arrival in the Republic of Burundi.
- vii. The delegation from the Democratic Republic of the Congo thanked the Burundi authorities for organizing the recent democratic, transparent, free and peaceful general election which took place in Burundi and for putting in place new democratic institutions.
- viii. Over the course of her visit, Ms. Marie Tumba Nzeza, Minister of State and Minister for Foreign Affairs for the Democratic Republic of the Congo was welcomed for an audience with **His Excellency Mr. Evariste Ndayishimiye**, President of the Republic of Burundi to bring him a message from his Congolese counterpart, **His Excellency Mr. Felix-Antoine Tshisekedi Tshilombo** and took advantage of this opportunity to express the Congolese government's condolences once again following the death of **His Excellency, Mr. Pierre Nkurunziza**, former President of the Republic of Burundi.
- ix. Finally, **Her Excellency Ms. Marie Tumba Nzeza** invited her counterpart, **His Excellency Ambassador Albert Shingiro**, for a visit to the Democratic Republic of the Congo for the **Fourth Session of the Joint High Commission on Cooperation**, the date and place of which will be communicated via diplomatic channels, and he accepted.

Done in Bujumbura, on 5 October 2020

(signatories)