



## Briefing

On the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa

(UNOCA)

### **Joint Statement A3 (Ghana, Kenya, Gabon)**

**By H.E Lilly-Stella Ngyema Ndong,**

**Deputy Ambassador, Chargé d'affaires**

08 December 2022

**Madam President,**

1. I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Permanent Representatives of the A3: Ghana, Kenya and my country Gabon.
2. First, we extend our warm congratulations to Ambassador Abdou A Barry, Special Representative for Central Africa and Head of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA). It is a real pleasure to see Ambassador A Barry continuing his commitment to international peace and security.
3. We wish him every success in his new duties and assure him of our full support in the implementation of his mandate, which we believe will greatly contribute to peace and security in the region.

4. We thank the President of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), Mr. Gilberto Da Piedade Verrissimo, for his briefing.

**Madam President,**

5. Our statement will focus on the political, security and humanitarian situation in the region.
6. **At the political level**, the A-3 welcomes the peaceful conduct of elections in various countries in the subregion. This demonstrates the will of the regional states to strengthen and preserve their democratic gains. We encourage to continue their efforts.
7. We recognize the active participation of women and youth in political processes, particularly in Angola with the election of the first woman President of the National Assembly.
8. We note the signing of the Doha Peace Agreement and the holding of the "Inclusive, and Sovereign National Dialogue" launched in N'Djamena, Chad. These developments are significant for a return to constitutional order. We deplore the incidents that occurred following the demonstrations of 20 October that resulted in the death of several civilians and call on the Chadian authorities to expedite the investigations.
9. We denounce the coup attempt in the Republic of Sao Tome and Principe, on the night of 25 November 2022, which sought to undermine hard-won democratic gains. We also call on the international community to support Sao Tome and Principe in its quest for economic development that integrates democracy and good governance through the establishment of strong institutions.
10. We also note with satisfaction Cameroon's positive actions to deal with the security crisis in the North of the country through an inclusive dialogue.

11. **On the security front**, several countries in the region remain plagued by crises and tensions that are as complex as they are multidimensional. These include terrorism and violent extremism, cross-border crime, the persistence of armed groups; maritime insecurity, illicit exploitation of natural resources, and inter-communal clashes, exacerbated by the growing effects of climate change.
12. We are deeply concerned about the Boko Haram and splinter groups' persistent terrorist attacks in the Lake Chad basin have resulted in civilian casualties and damage to civilian infrastructure in Cameroon and Chad. The ADF has also intensified its attacks in Eastern DRC with the same effects. We denounce these activities in the strongest terms possible.
13. We reiterate our call for concerted and sustained efforts by the regional states and the international community to address the root causes of terrorism in the region.

**Madam President,**

14. The persistence of armed groups is a continuing threat to peace and security in Central Africa.
15. These groups are responsible for massacres and abuses of civilians and destruction and looting of their property with impunity, for decades. Their actions have a direct bearing on the future of millions of Central Africans. We strongly condemn these groups and demand that they immediately and unconditionally join the Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) programs and ongoing political consultations.
16. The A-3 welcomes the commitment of the Regional Economic Communities which, through the Nairobi and Luanda processes, are seeking to end the insecurity caused by armed groups in eastern DRC. These initiatives must be supported by the United Nations.

17. We welcome the ongoing deployment of the East African Community Regional Force in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo. We hope that this will contribute to the resolution of the deadly conflict in eastern DRC. It is imperative that the international community effectively supports such subregional efforts.
18. The A3s also stresses the importance of boosting cooperation between Central African States through ECCAS and their West African counterparts through ECOWAS, on the one hand and UNOWAS and UNOCA on the other. This synergy is essential to improve the coordination of cross cutting economic, security and political actions and to meet the real needs of the population, for sustainable peace in the sub-regions.

**Madam President,**

19. On the **humanitarian front**, the number of refugees and displaced persons in the region continues to grow, reaching record levels, particularly in the DRC. In the Lake Chad Basin, 9.7 million people will need humanitarian assistance.
20. The deterioration of the humanitarian situation exacerbated by the adverse effects of climate change in Central Africa is most worrying. To be skeptical about the obvious and direct link between climate change and conflict in Central Africa is to be blind to the reality of what is happening in the region particularly Lake Chad and Great Lakes.
21. The recurrent episodes of alternating floods and droughts in the region have forced people to migrate leading to inter-communal clashes. Today, many countries and communities in Central Africa face a dual impact problem: climate change and violent conflict, with a real risk that climate change will worsen the propensity for violent conflict.
22. Consequently, there is an urgent need to implement mechanisms for prevention, mitigation and management related to security risks caused by the effects of climate change, by strengthening the adaptive capacities of

- fragile or post-conflict states. Failure to do so will leave communities even poorer and less resilient.
23. While stressing that the future of the planet depends heavily on the tropical forest of the Congo Basin, we recall that Africa is the continent that pollutes the least and is most vulnerable to natural disasters. This is an opportunity to remind the international community to respect its commitments to finance adaptation and mitigation policies.
  24. The A3s welcomes the continued efforts of humanitarian actors to provide assistance to the most vulnerable at a risk to their lives. We call for safe and unhindered humanitarian access in countries in conflict and echo the Secretary-General's appeal to donors and international partners to fund humanitarian response plans in the region.
  25. We support UNOCA's efforts to systematically integrate climate change and natural resource management dimensions into conflict prevention, mediation, peacebuilding, and development processes.
  26. In conclusion, the A-3 reaffirm their respect for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the countries of Central Africa. We also reiterate our full support to Mr. Abdou Abarry and his team for their tireless efforts on the ground and hope that Council will support it with a presidential statement on UNOCA.

**I Thank you.**