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## Inauguration Speech by Honorable Dr. Vincent Biruta

Dr. Vincent Biruta  
*Speaker of the Senate*

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# Inauguration Speech

## Speech by Honorable Dr. Vincent BIRUTA (Speaker of the Senate)

General Martin AGWAI, UNAMID Force Commander, Ambassador MULAMULA, Ambassadors, Heads of Diplomatic Corps, Rector of National University of Rwanda, Provincial Governors, Distinguished Guests, ladies and gentlemen, I'm delight to take part in this important meeting and I would like to thank its organizers.

As you know the 1994 genocide in Rwanda caused loss of human lives and mass displacements within regional countries and different continents. The international Conference on the Great Lakes Region, whose pact has been signed by Heads of States in November 2006 at Nairobi Kenya, is like a roadmap towards peace and stability in our region. It goes without saying that citizens of the Great Lakes Region, our partners and international community are expecting that this process leads to sustainable peace and economical development.

The programs of action of the ICGLR are linked each other. Those are namely Peace and Security, Democracy and Governance, Economic Development and Regional Integration, and Social and Humanitarian Affairs. Peace and security cannot be guaranteed without Democracy and good governance and these cannot exist in the absence of Economic development and social welfare. It is therefore obvious that in order to overcome a numerous problems that Africa in general and the ICGLR member states in particular are facing, it is imperative to stand up to the challenges mentioned above.

Ladies and gentlemen, Rwanda is as an epicenter of that instability in the Great Lakes Region and played a big role in the process that led to the signing of the Pact of the International Conference on the great Lakes Region. Therefore, all areas of the society, youth, women and civil society have a big role to play for the accomplishment of the ICGLR programs. In all aspects, the International conference on the Great Lakes Region is special because, contrarily to the previous regional which are normally initiatives of politicians and or governments, the ICGLR pact was a collective process of different categories of regional peoples. Rwanda is in the process of adopting the national implementing strategy of the ICGLR Pact.

The Parliament of Rwanda is working closely with the ICGLR executive Secretariat and other parliaments to set a forum of member countries in order to fully.

Distinguished Guests, I have the pleasure to notice that this International conference on Great Lakes Region has brought out participants from various countries of Africa, Europe and America. Also those participants are from different backgrounds, stakeholders, policy makers and academician, local government and media. I also note that this important meeting has been organized by academia Institution, the National University of Rwanda's Center for Conflict Management which has a mission of catalyzing debates in the area of conflict resolution and peace consolidation.

It is an honor for Rwanda to play such a big role in that debate, regarding our recent bad history especially during years 1990- 994 when we paid a big price of conflict.

Distinguished Guests, nothing can be done for us without us. Sustainable

peace and stability need to begin within communities and the involvement of the latter in search for their social cohesion and solutions to their problems is critical in this process. Working hand in hand is key to collective security and the latter is leading to durable economic development.

Distinguished guests, the signatures of ICGLR pact towards peace in the Great Lakes Region are an important stage despite many cases of conflicts and crises that many countries of Africa continent are still facing. However, up to now, only 7 countries have already ratified the ICGLR Pact while 8 are required to fully enter in force. It is therefore the responsibility of the ICGLR member countries to all ratify the pact and to fully implement it in order to prevent different kinds of crises. Furthermore, all the member countries are to ratify all the protocols of the ICGLR Pact in order to bring sustainable peace and stability within their communities. It is important that friendly debates like this one are emphasized at different levels in order to promote and strengthen peace initiatives. I thank you again and wish you fruitful deliberations.

