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Speech by Ambassador Liberata Mulamula CGLR Secretary General

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Speech by Ambassador Liberata MULAMULA CGLR Secretary General

Your Excellency Guest of Honor, President of the Senate, Rector of National University of Rwanda, General AGWAI, Head of Mission, Swedish Embassy, ARNE STROME, Members of Diplomatic Corps, Distinguished Guests, Dear participants, my dear brothers and sisters, I bring you the greetings from Bujumbura, the site of the ICGLR Secretariat.

Allow me to begin by thanking the Center for Conflict Management (CCM) of the National University of Rwanda, together with Peace and Development Research Institute (PADRIGU) and also SIDA-SAREC for organizing this important Conference and inviting me again. The invitation to take part in this Conference is a honor not only for me, but for the people of the Great Lakes Region whom we represent here today.

Mister Guest of Honor, it is indeed a privilege and honor for me to address this important gathering of quite eminent scholars and practioners in the Great Lakes Region to share some talks with you about the challenges and progress in the Great Lakes Region. Honorable Guest of Honor, I speak in the name of the 11 members of the International Conference on Great Lakes Region. I would like to thank you Honorable Speaker of the Senate for gracing this conference by your personal presence in this conference despite your busy schedule. This is a testimony of the commitment, by the Government of Republic of Rwanda to the International Conference on Great Lakes Region.

Excellencies, dear participants, ladies and gentlemen I assume that most of us here are aware of the tractable conflicts and massive movements of the populations in the Great Lakes region that brought out the genesis of the International Conference on the Great Lakes region and it is not therefore my intention to lecture you on that genesis. Of the importance to know is however that the ICGLR Conference was settled to promote peace, security and to facilitate development in the Great Lakes Region countries and peoples. This was the motivation of the Heads of State of the 11 states members of the ICGLR while signing the Nairobi Pact on Peace and Stability in the Region on 15th December 2006 in Nairobi, Kenya.

The Heads of States committed themselves to act towards peace, stability and development in the

great Lakes Region. Never before, there has not been so much dialogue, so much participation, so much enthusiasm and interaction of peoples and leaders in the Great Lakes Region. The ICGLR Secretariat that I head, Excellencies, is a part of that pact. It works in that perspective of coordinating and monitoring peace and stability processes in the Great Lakes Region.

After year in office, we notice an immense dynamism to work for a new era of peace and stability among members states of the Great Lakes Region. We have been able for example to secure 7 ratifications out of 8 required before the ICGLR Pact to enter in force. 5 member states

have already submitted their instruments of ratification to the general secretariat in Bujumbura as required by the Pact. We are confident that soon we shall have the ratification of the remaining state members.

For now Excellencies, the ICGLR Secretariat is fully established in Bujumbura Burundi with the staff from 11 member states. The member states signatories are guided

by the principles of ownership, partnership, inclusiveness and complementarity. What gives comfort is the enhancement of conflict resolution and dialogue within member states. In this perspective, the member states are proud of witnessing the signing of different agreements and peace protocols aiming at finding of durable solutions to conflicts and crises that were pending within and between some member states.

The Democratic Republic of Congo and the Republic of Rwanda signed on 9th November 2007 joint communiqué, in the spirit of the International Conference on the great Lakes Region, in which they agreed to address each other the security issues regarding eastern party of the DRC and the Rwandese rebel groups operating in DRC. The Novotel Conference on South Kivu between Government of DRC and Congolese Armed Groups is in that sprit of ending armed conflicts.

The recent agreement between Uganda and DRC and the progress made in Burundi between the Government and PALIPEHUTU FNL under South African facilitation, the progress made in Sudan concerning Darfur region, the management of recent post election violence in Kenya are good initiatives that show the efforts of ICGLR member states towards sustainable peace and stability according to the sprit of the ICGLR Pact.

The ICGLR provided a legal framework to facilitate increase IDP within the member states. The aim is to have a transborder security and developed zone within ICGLR state members. We will need your support to operationalize this project and to meet ICGLR peoples' expectations. We need this diversity membership. We have a strong hope that the ICGLR Conference will reach a sustainable peace, security and development. Let's all of us support these initiatives. Thanking the organizers of this Conference, I would like to wish you a successful Conference. I thank you all.

