



INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

BY SADC EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

H.E. MR ELIAS M. MAGOSI

**AT THE EXTRAORDINARY ORGAN TROIKA SUMMIT
PLUS SAMIDRC TROOP CONTRIBUTING COUNTRIES
AND THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO**

HELD VIRTUALLY

ON 06 MARCH 2025

Your Excellency Dr. Samia Suluhu Hassan, President of the United Republic of Tanzania, and Chairperson of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation;

Your Excellency Dr. Lazarus McCarthy Chakwera, President of the Republic of Malawi, and Incoming Chairperson of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation;

Your Excellency Mr. Hakainde Hichilema, President of the Republic of Zambia, and Outgoing Chairperson of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation;

Your Excellency Matamela Cyril Ramaphosa, President of the Republic of South Africa;

Your Excellency Félix Antoine Tshisekedi Tshilombo, President of the Democratic Republic of Congo;

Honourable Ambassador Mahmoud Thabit Kombo, M.P. Minister of Foreign Affairs and East African Cooperation, and Chairperson of the Ministerial Committee of the Organ;

Honourable Ministers and Deputy Ministers;

Heads of Security Institutions;

Senior Officials;

SADC Secretariat staff;

Members of the Media;

Ladies and Gentlemen.

It is a great honour and privilege for me to welcome Your Excellencies to this Extraordinary Organ Troika Summit Plus SAMIDRC Troop Contributing Countries and the Democratic Republic of Congo, taking place today through the virtual platform. I extend my sincere gratitude to the Chairperson of the SADC Organ, Her Excellency Dr. Samia Suluhu Hassan, for urgently convening this Extraordinary Organ Troika Summit following the meeting of the Defence Sub-Committee, as agreed during the Extraordinary SADC Summit of Heads of State and Government on 31 January 2025, in Harare, Republic of Zimbabwe.

I also wish to express our profound gratitude to Their Excellencies present here, for your continued commitment and the value you attach to matters of peace, security and stability in our region.

Your Excellencies, this meeting has been convened to primarily consider the prevailing security and humanitarian situation in the Eastern Part of the Democratic Republic of Congo as well as review the mandate of the SAMIDRC. The Security situation in Eastern DRC remains precarious, so is the humanitarian situation. The

attacks by M23 Armed Group against DRC Government Forces, SAMIDRC Troops and the civilian population, and subsequent capture of cities and towns of Minova, Sake, Goma and Bukavu have resulted in the killings and injuries of thousands, forcing thousands of people in North and South Kivu, particularly women, children, the elderly and disabled to flee their homes.

We mourn the loss of lives, and we extend our heartfelt condolences to Member States and families of the fallen heroes and heroines who lost their lives while standing in solidarity with our sister country, fighting for peace for the good of the country. We also wish the injured a speedy recovery.

The blockade of main supply routes and seizure of Goma International Airport and Kavumu Airport in Bukavu by M23 Armed Group only compound the already untenable humanitarian situation, thus making delivery of humanitarian assistance to the population in need, more complex. We cannot emphasise enough the need for immediate intervention by the international community to alleviate the suffering of the Internally Displaced Persons, including women and children.

The invasion of the DRC territory by M23 with their external supporters and the establishment of defacto authorities and illegitimate parallel administrations in some parts of the country are a serious violation of international law, and defiance to both the Nairobi and Luanda Peace processes, and further undermines the DRC's sovereignty and territorial integrity. This cannot be allowed to continue.

SADC reiterates its solidarity with the Government and the people of DRC and remains seized with the peace and security situation in Eastern DRC, in line with the SADC Mutual Defence Pact of 2003. To this end, collective efforts to address the deteriorating situation in Eastern DRC are continuing, with the latest being the Extraordinary Summit of Heads of State and Government of 31st January 2025, in Harare, Republic of Zimbabwe, where among others, ***the region's Chiefs of Defence Forces were directed to review the Mandate of SAMIDRC and report to the Chair of the Organ.***

The EO SADC Summit was followed by a joint Summit of the Heads of State and Government of the East African Community and SADC on 08 February 2025, in Dar Es Salaam, United Republic of Tanzania, to provide direction on measures to be taken to pacify Eastern DRC. Further, an Extraordinary meeting of the Defence Sub Committee of Organ Troika Plus SAMIDRC Troop Contributing Countries and DRC was held on 20th February 2025, in Dar es Salaam to review the SAMIDRC mandate to address the contemporary security dynamics in the theatre of operation. Additionally, a Joint meeting of EAC- SADC Chiefs of Defence Forces took place on 24 February 2025, in Dar es Salaam, and developed a securitization plan of Goma and Eastern DRC, as directed by the Joint SADC-EAC Summit.

In all these engagements, the common consensus is that the everlasting solution to peace in the Eastern DRC can only be achieved through inclusive diplomatic endeavours by means of dialogue among all parties to the conflict, given that there is no permanent solution through military pursuit or exploits. The call for re-opening of diplomatic channels through existing frameworks of the Nairobi and Luanda Peace Processes is fully supported by the SADC region.

Your Excellencies, in line with the January 2025 Summit directive, the Report of the Defence Sub Committee on the review of the SAMIDRC mandate was developed and tabled for the consideration of the Extraordinary MCO Troika Plus SAMIDRC TCCs yesterday. It is against this background that, Your Excellencies are meeting today to consider recommendations of the EO-MCO Plus on the proposed Mandate of SAMIDRC going forward.

I am confident that the outcome of this Extraordinary Organ Troika Summit Plus will further reinforce our collective resolve to create favourable conditions for diplomatic initiatives aimed at achieving long-lasting peace in Eastern DRC.

In conclusion, I wish to, once again, thank Her Excellency Dr. Samia Suluhu Hassan, Chairperson of the SADC Organ for her steadfast leadership and tireless efforts in promoting and consolidating peace, security and stability in the SADC region. Similarly, I wish to express our gratitude to Honourable Ambassador Mahmoud Thabit Kombo, Chairperson of the Ministerial Committee of the Organ for steering the discussions and deliberations of the EO-MCO Troika Plus in preparation for this Summit.

Your Excellencies, with these few remarks, allow me at this juncture to humbly invite Her Excellency Dr Samia Suluhu Hassan, President of the United Republic of Tanzania and Chairperson of SADC Organ to deliver the opening remarks and officially open this Extraordinary SADC Organ Troika Summit Plus SAMIDRC TCCs and DRC. I wish Your Excellencies, a very fruitful deliberation.

Thank you for your attention! Merci beaucoup! Asante sana! Ke a leboga!