

## **Civil Society: A Key Partner in Achieving a Successful Post-MONUSCO Transition**

### **Executive Summary**

Discussions on the future of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) have captured the attention of political bodies and the international community for many years. With the acceleration of the withdrawal of the UN mission, critical questions have emerged on how to prevent a security collapse in a region where populations have suffered from armed group violence for decades.

The alarming security situation today poses difficulties to both national and regional actors to cater to the protection needs of the population, making it difficult to envisage an imminent withdrawal of the UN mission. With civilians being the primary victims of conflicts between armed groups, the international community must intensify its efforts to restore peace and stability in the DRC as well as offer support to the national authorities in the implementation of major security and justice sector reforms.

With this policy brief, the Europe-Central Africa Network (EurAc) offers an analysis of the main obstacles to the MONUSCO withdrawal and formulates a set of recommendations for a safe, gradual and time-sensitive transition where civil society plays a key role. MONUSCO's departure represents a pivotal moment for the DRC, and only strong local ownership guaranteed by civil society's inclusion in the process can ensure a successful transition.

### **Context**

February 28, 2024, marked a new milestone in the withdrawal process of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), which had been present in the country for more than two decades. This new step toward full accelerated disengagement, marked by its departure from South Kivu on June 30, represented a major turning point for the DRC, now determined to become the lead actor in ensuring its own stability.

Since its creation on November 30, 1999, by Resolution 1279 following the Lusaka Agreement, MONUSCO (formerly MONUC) has witnessed firsthand the upheavals shaping Congolese history. This evolution is reflected in the numerous modifications made to its mandate.

Initially, an indispensable actor in supporting the implementation of the ceasefire and ensuring the protection of civilians and humanitarian personnel, the mission gradually saw its mandate expand. However, it was the increasingly complex security landscape in the region, marked by the rise of rebel armed groups, that positioned MONUSCO as a key military actor. Following the emergence of the M23 and the capture of the city of Goma in November 2012<sup>1</sup>, a new Force Intervention Brigade (FIB) with the mandate to undertake unilateral offensive actions was formed. This unprecedented development in the history of UN peacekeeping missions marked a decisive turning point that significantly impacted MONUSCO's image in the sub-region.

The progressive, orderly, responsible, and sustainable withdrawal of MONUSCO, initiated in 2021<sup>2</sup>, has accelerated its course in 2023<sup>3</sup>. Criticized for its limited ability to protect civilians and prevent the proliferation of armed groups in the three eastern provinces, despite a considerable budget, the mission had been facing growing public discontent<sup>4</sup> for many years. Numerous protests organized recently, sometimes resulting in the deaths of civilians and UN soldiers<sup>5</sup>, illustrate this phenomenon. Confronted with its unpopularity and the pressures exerted by the Congolese government, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) finally approved a disengagement plan while extending the mission's mandate with an additional year. Starting with South Kivu, this three-phase strategy has a dual objective: the complete withdrawal of troops and the gradual, orderly transfer of all responsibilities to the Congolese government and UN country teams, with the main goals being the protection of civilians and the consolidation of gains.

Less than a year after the launch of the disengagement plan, and as the UNSC prepares to negotiate the next resolution on the UN mission, many questions remain regarding the relevance and potential for implementation of the current strategy. Beyond its roles in protection and peacekeeping, MONUSCO has supported the implementation of a range of essential activities for the stabilization of the region. These include support for security and justice sector reforms, the implementation of Disarmament, Demobilization, Reintegration, Repatriation, Resettlement, and Community Violence Reduction (DDR/RR) programs, the promotion and protection of human rights, as well as assistance in electoral processes. Given the magnitude of these tasks, and as the country is once more caught up in an armed conflict with little chance of swift resolution, how can we continue to ensure an orderly, responsible and sustainable withdrawal? Although the UNSC has not yet set a deadline for the remaining

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<sup>1</sup> [The UN Intervention Brigade in the DRC](#), International Peace Institute, July 2013

<sup>2</sup> [Plan de transition de la Mission de l'Organisation des Nations Unies pour la stabilisation en République démocratique du Congo \(S/2021/807\)](#), UNSC, 17 septembre 2021

<sup>3</sup> [Le gouvernement de la RDC et la MONUSCO signent un plan de désengagement pour le retrait de la mission](#), MONUSCO, 22 novembre 2023

<sup>4</sup> [Majority of Congolese Reject East African Community Regional Force](#), Congo Research Group and Ebuteli, February 2023

<sup>5</sup> [Rutshuru : 7 blessés lors des manifestations contre la MONUSCO à Nyamiliima](#), Radio Okapi, 28 septembre 2022

[Nord-Kivu : un convoi de la MONUSCO attaqué par un groupe de civils à Kanyaruchinya](#), Radio Okapi, 2 novembre 2022

forces' withdrawal, the numerous risks associated with a rushed exit, highlighted by both civil society reports and the Congolese government's reluctance to speed up the process<sup>6</sup>, call for deeper reflection on the shortcomings of the current disengagement strategy.

Past experiences have shown that peacekeeping mission transitions typically create a significant security vacuum. In this context, **members of the EurAc network emphasize that the protection of civilians and human rights must remain a top priority for the Congolese government and the international community.** It is essential that the next steps in implementing the transition plan follow a pragmatic approach, taking into account the needs and aspirations of the local population as well as the evolutions in the security situation. **Efforts must also focus on strengthening national and local institutions, improving the capabilities of government security and defense forces, as well as including civil society in the process — crucial actors that must come together to ensure a future withdrawal that is responsible, peaceful, and sustainable.**

## Persistent Challenges Hindering the MONUSCO Withdrawal

### Key Points

- The MONUSCO withdrawal is conditioned by a **significant reduction in security threats posed by both national and foreign armed groups.**
- Currently, the increase in armed clashes, particularly between the FARDC and the M23 rebel group, along with the involvement of neighbouring countries in this conflict, highlights the prevailing **climate of insecurity** in the eastern territories.
- Civilians are the main victims of this considerable deterioration in the security environment. **Numerous human rights violations continue to be reported in the three eastern provinces**, particularly affecting the most vulnerable groups, such as women and children.
- None of the actors present in the region seem, at this time, capable of assuming all the protection tasks of the MONUSCO without contributing to an increased vulnerability of the local populations. This underscores the **immediate and ongoing need to ensure the protection of civilians** at every stage of the disengagement plan.

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<sup>6</sup> Cette date un peu fantasmée selon laquelle, au 31 décembre 2024, la MONUSCO pourrait quitter le Congo, n'a jamais été actée ni par les autorités, ni par nous-mêmes, ni par le Conseil de sécurité, Actualité.cd, 21 septembre 2024

## Intensification of the Security Crisis and Regional Instability

In line with the joint transition plan established in December 2023, the MONUSCO withdrawal is primarily conditioned by a significant reduction in security threats posed by both national and foreign armed groups. Since the announcement of the mission's departure from Congolese territory, numerous reports from experts, local and international civil society organizations attest to a deepening trend of insecurity and instability in eastern DRC. This is mainly explained by the rapid expansion of the M23 in several territories of North Kivu. The resumption of clashes between the rebel group, supported by the Rwandan army<sup>7</sup>, and the Congolese Armed Forces (FARDC), backed by Wazalendo militias, has resulted in a dramatic increase in armed violence. In Ituri, the abuses committed by the CODECO, Zaire, and ADF armed groups make this territory a significant hotspot of insecurity. These recent developments reinforce a complex situation characterized by the presence of over a hundred<sup>8</sup> non-state armed groups with competing interests.

Civil society organizations and local actors see as a shortcoming of the current strategy the insufficient consideration it places in the regional dynamics which are a major factor in the destabilization of the DRC. The involvement of neighbouring countries and other regional actors who instrumentalize armed groups to advance their economic, political, and security interests is a considerable obstacle to achieving sustainable peace and stability. Evidence of the presence of between 3,000 and 4,000 Rwandan soldiers<sup>9</sup> actively involved alongside the M23, as well as Uganda's active support for the rebels, highlights the omnipresence of foreign forces on Congolese territory, exacerbating regional tensions. The recent ceasefire agreement between the DRC and Rwanda, signed on August 4, has not yet proven effective in curbing the violence. On the contrary, the continued clashes between armed groups in Ituri and North Kivu<sup>10</sup> highlight the fragility of the security situation.

Considering the ongoing discussions around the further extension of MONUSCO's mandate, it is important to highlight that a **complete withdrawal of UN troops must be prepared in a timely and gradual manner to prevent the further exposure of local populations to security threats as well as to ensure the protection of DRC's territorial integrity.**

This analysis is even more alarming given the absence of sufficiently equipped actors to confront the worsening security situation. Reported internal dysfunctions within the Congolese army hinder its ability to defend the population against armed groups. The lack of a clear chain of command and the integration of fighters and rebel elements into its ranks without prior training have significantly compromised its operational capacity. Given these challenges, the highly controversial deployment of the Southern African Development Community mission in the DRC (SAMIDRC), with its offensive mandate, also presents several limitations. Rwanda's

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<sup>7</sup> [RDC : un rapport de l'ONU accuse le Rwanda de collusion avec le M23](#), Africanews, 13 August 2024

<sup>8</sup> [Democratic Republic of the Congo, Populations at Risk, Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect](#), 1 September 2024

<sup>9</sup> [Final report of the Group of Experts on the Democratic Republic of the Congo \(S/2024/432\)](#), United Nations Security Council (UNSC), 9 July 2024

<sup>10</sup> [United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo - Report of the Secretary-General \(S/2024/689\)](#), UNSC, 27 September 2024

opposition to its intervention risks further escalating regional tensions. Moreover, the confusion surrounding its military operations, its financial difficulties, and the distrust of local populations render a complete transfer of responsibility unrealistic at this stage. These observations highlight the importance of the ongoing collaboration with UN forces, a sentiment shared by the Congolese government, as illustrated by the recent UNSC's decision to allow MONUSCO to "enhance coordination, information sharing, and technical assistance"<sup>11</sup> for SAMIDRC.

## Humanitarian Emergency and Immediate Need for Civilian Protection

The scale and intensity of this crisis have resulted in a significant deterioration in the security and living conditions for the populations facing one of the world's most severe humanitarian catastrophes. Since the start of the MONUSCO withdrawal, both local and international civil society actors<sup>12</sup> have consistently alarmed the international community of the possible negative consequences of a rushed departure on civilian protection. Indeed, in light of the multitude of actors posing a threat to the well-being and security of communities in the eastern territories of the DRC, **it is imperative to take all necessary measures to prevent a security vacuum.**

Recent data provided by the MONUSCO<sup>13</sup> and supported by civil society, reports a high number of abuses and other acts of violence against populations, a situation exacerbated by the dramatic increase in the number of internally displaced persons since the beginning of 2024<sup>14</sup>. Between June and September of this year, 440 security incidents and 942 human rights violations (64% attributed to armed groups) were recorded in Ituri and North Kivu. The situation in South Kivu also remains very fragile since the mission's departure. EurAc members and our partners report an increase in human rights violations and abuses<sup>15</sup>, as well as growing difficulties operating in the most isolated areas, where the delivery of aid is hampered by an increased number of armed attacks. The insecurity faced by the most vulnerable groups, particularly women and children, raises serious concerns. Due to their extreme precariousness, sexual violence related to the conflict is constantly increasing among these two groups. In a report from September 2024, Doctors Without Borders<sup>16</sup> indicated that they treated 17,363 victims and survivors between January and May 2024 alone in North Kivu, accounting for 69% of the total number of victims treated in 2023 across the five provinces affected by the conflict.

**These alarming figures illustrate the urgent and ongoing need to ensure the protection of civilians and human rights throughout the transition process**, especially given the difficulty that the Congolese government and the actors present on the ground experience in

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<sup>11</sup> [Adopting Resolution 2746 \(2024\), Security Council Authorizes UN Operation in Democratic Republic of Congo to Support Southern African Development Community Mission in Country](#), UNSC, 6 August 2024

<sup>12</sup> [Résultat de l'évaluation préliminaire Sud-Kivu, RDC](#), Nonviolent Peaceforce, Mars 2024

<sup>13</sup> [United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo - Report of the Secretary-General \(S/2024/689\)](#), UN SC, 27 September 2024

<sup>14</sup> [M23 conflict caused nearly 3 out of every 4 displacements in the DRC this year](#), Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, 23 September 2024

<sup>15</sup> [Rapport de l'ONG Action des Chrétiens Activistes des Droits de l'Homme à Shabunda](#)

<sup>16</sup> [MSF has and continues to treat more than two victims of sexual violence per hour in DRC](#), Médecins Sans Frontières, 30 September 2024

this regard. Targeted by repeated attacks, human rights defenders<sup>17</sup> and humanitarian staff<sup>18</sup> find themselves unable to carry out their mission. Regionally, SAMIDRC forces do not have a civilian protection mandate as extensive as that of the MONUSCO. Its deployment also faces profound distrust from local populations<sup>19</sup>, partially justified by a lack of transparency and communication regarding the objectives of this new foreign mission.

Ultimately, it is difficult to envision a complete transfer of protection tasks to the FARDC, given their involvement in criminal acts and human rights violations<sup>20</sup>, which perpetuates the climate of insecurity. The lack of discipline and the prevailing sense of impunity within their ranks demonstrate the challenges faced by the Congolese authorities when it comes to exercising control over the army. Consequently, it leads to a decreased level of protection and security for the concerned population. Furthermore, alliances formed with foreign and local armed actors exacerbate this situation. In North Kivu, the involvement of numerous Wazalendo fighters in extortion, kidnappings, sexual violence, and the mass recruitment of child soldiers<sup>21</sup> has been widely documented. On July 26, the European Union (EU) sanctioned two officials<sup>22</sup> for their involvement in these serious human rights violations.

## Responsible and Sustainable Withdrawal of the MONUSCO

### Key Points

- The responsible and sustainable withdrawal of the MONUSCO must include three key objectives: 1) **the active participation of civil society** in the withdrawal process, ensuring local ownership; 2) **the stabilization of the security situation** in the DRC, and 3) **the implementation of long-term reforms in the security and justice sectors** at the national level.
- Due to its profound understanding of the local context and the needs of local populations, **civil society has not only the legitimacy but also the constructive potential to contribute to an inclusive and safe MONUSCO withdrawal**. Therefore, it needs to be equipped with the tools, allowing it to play a more prominent role in the analysis, monitoring and accountability of the withdrawal process.

<sup>17</sup> [RDC : les attaques contre les défenseurs des droits humains doivent cesser, selon une experte de l'ONU](#), OHCHR, 19 juin 2024

<sup>18</sup> [Aid groups call on the international community as civilians continue to pay the price of inaction in eastern DR Congo](#), Inter Agency Working Group East and Central Africa, 5 July 2024

<sup>19</sup> [Civilian Perspectives on Regional Security Efforts to Address Violence in the DRC](#), Center for Civilians in Conflict, July 10 2024

<sup>20</sup> [Le BCNUDH publie les principales tendances des violations des droits de l'homme en République démocratique du Congo pour le mois de juillet 2024](#), MONUSCO, OHCHR, 3 septembre 2024

<sup>21</sup> [DR Congo turns to abusive militias to fight M23 rebels](#), the New Humanitarian, 13 August 2024

<sup>22</sup> [DRC: EU lists nine individuals and one entity](#), EU Council, 26 July 2024

- Next to the efforts to achieve lasting peace and stabilization of the security situation, the **immediate and uninterrupted protection of civilians must remain an absolute priority for both the Congolese government and the international community**. This involves supporting community-based and non-armed protection initiatives.
- The implementation of structural reforms in the security and justice sectors is crucial to combat impunity, corruption and break the cycle of violence. Given the insufficient impulse to implement such reforms at the national level, **emphasis must be placed on the role that local authorities can and should play in advancing these reforms**.

### Civil Society Engagement as a Means of Local Ownership and Lasting Stability

A responsible and sustainable transition cannot be successfully achieved without **an integrated approach based on a close collaboration between all key actors**: UN agencies, the Congolese government, regional actors together with civil society and local communities.

The current transition plan views MONUSCO's withdrawal as a bilateral process between the government and the international community, relegating civil society to a symbolic consultation role. Certainly, the UN's presence in Congolese territory remains essential in the current context, particularly to support civil activities ensuring the protection of civilians and humanitarian personnel. However, with a view to a future responsible and sustainable withdrawal, **civil society (CS) actors must gradually take on roles of support, analysis, monitoring, and accountability throughout the withdrawal process**, at all levels. Through their knowledge of local dynamics and their trust-based relationships with local communities, **CS actors have access to crucial security insights at the community level and can easily identify the specific protection needs of the concerned populations**. Moreover, civil society organizations (CSO) play a central role in supporting reforms in the security and justice sectors. They ensure local ownership of these issues while making sure that the reforms fully meet citizens' expectations.

To achieve the above-mentioned objectives, MONUSCO must design **clearer and more accessible communication tools**, particularly for inhabitants of the eastern territories. Decades of disappointment and misinformation have contributed to generating frustration, sometimes anger, towards UN troops. The recent suspension of Radio Okapi broadcasts in certain localities in South Kivu Province caused great disappointment, as this station was a vital tool for local communities to access information. It is therefore essential to develop a clear dissemination plan and ensure transparent access to information about the mission's role, its objectives in consolidating achievements, and the next steps of the withdrawal process. This

will help guarantee that the future disengagement takes place under the best possible conditions.

**Engaging civil society in the transition process makes it more credible and inclusive to the population, which inevitably guarantees more sustainability and predictability for the government in installing lasting peace.**

## Security Stabilization for Civilian Protection

**Peace is an essential precondition that needs to be in place to allow for the implementation of any structural reforms that address the root causes of instability.**

Experience has shown that the crisis in eastern DRC cannot be resolved through purely military means. Therefore, an urgent priority is to identify a political and regional solution to the crisis by reviving peace negotiations among the various stakeholders at all levels. In this regard, the recent reactivation of the Luanda process through the signing of a ceasefire agreement stands as the only tangible political path to stabilize the situation, facilitate the delivery of humanitarian aid, and allow the return of displaced persons. It is also important for the international community to continue strongly condemning unauthorized foreign interventions on Congolese territory, in support of the country's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Alongside these negotiations, **the immediate protection of civilians and human rights must remain a top priority**, both for the national government and the international community. The gravity of the situation in the eastern territories, coupled with the current limited efficiency of the Congolese army and the SAMIDRC, heightens the risk of a potential security collapse, with dramatic consequences for the future of the region's populations. Civilian protection should be treated as a sovereign prerogative, and the Congolese state has committed to strengthening its security forces in these three territories. **To support the government in enhancing the capacities and performance of its army and police, MONUSCO must work toward a complete and transparent transfer of skills, equipment, and logistical resources.**

Moreover, while maintaining a reduced UN force presence to ensure the gradual handover of these responsibilities, UN country teams should continue to support local civil society in developing unarmed protection plans and mechanisms for civilians. This includes the continuation of existing local protection programs, especially for the most vulnerable groups, such as women and children. Drawing on the experience gained from MONUSCO's operations, ongoing initiatives in South Kivu province<sup>23</sup>, which aim to develop a community-based protection approach and compensate for the mission's eventual departure, align with this effort.

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<sup>23</sup> [Départ de la MONUSCO de RDC : au Sud-Kivu, quel espoir pour les civils en danger ?](#) Nonviolent Peaceforce, 11 juin 2024

## Lasting Peace Through Structural Reforms in the Security and Justice Sectors

Weaknesses in DRC's security apparatus have facilitated the expansion of armed groups in the country and the formation of numerous insecurity hotspots. To ensure a successful transition, it is crucial to work towards the restoration of a strong democratic state, supported by responsible and robust institutions capable of controlling the proliferation of these groups, breaking the cycle of violence, and ultimately addressing the peace aspirations of communities.

**Implementing structural reforms in the security sector is instrumental in combating impunity and corruption, thereby achieving strong governance objectives.** These two factors interfere with the professionalization of the defense and security forces and limit their capacity to serve civilians. In addition to programs aimed at enhancing the operational capacities of security forces already initiated by MONUSCO, it is necessary to improve local security governance and increase the levels of public accountability of the army and police, particularly through training focused on civilian protection and respect for human rights. Additionally, transparent and independent monitoring mechanisms must be established to protect citizens' safety and intervene in cases of abuse. Ultimately, these reforms should be designed through an inclusive approach and aligned with the swift and effective implementation of the P-DDRCS for combatants, in order to prevent the emergence of new groups and foster a more peaceful environment. In this context, the demobilization of Wazalendo combatants in North Kivu requires increased vigilance. Their reintegration into society after fighting alongside the FARDC as "reservists" poses a risk of considerable tension with possible safety implications for civilians<sup>24</sup>.

Similarly, **a robust justice system is the most effective tool for preventing any resurgence of human rights violations.** Described as being "sick" by President Tshisekedi, the Congolese judicial system faces numerous deficiencies that perpetuate this climate of impunity and violence. It is essential to develop an impartial, independent, and effective judicial system, not only to prosecute those responsible for human rights violations but also to restore citizens' trust in the judicial institutions. Developing a national transitional justice policy is also crucial in amplifying the voices of victims and establishing a strong foundation for a peaceful future.

In the face of these challenges, civil society has widely criticized the Congolese government for lacking sufficient political will to bring real reforms to the sectors in question. It is crucial to have **national and especially local ownership of initiatives and reforms in order to attain sustainable peace and stability.** This is why the members of EurAc and our local partners emphasize the **risks of a rushed and non-inclusive withdrawal of the MONUSCO that could not only jeopardize the progress made so far but also lead to the complete abandonment of ongoing reforms.** It is therefore vital that the mission maintains its priority support for reforms in these key sectors at the local level. Local authorities, better positioned to understand the specific security challenges in areas where state presence is limited, can contribute to the

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<sup>24</sup> [Conquêtes, soutien, armement : l'offensive du M23 décryptée en infographies](#), Jeune Afrique, 26 juillet 2024

implementation of relevant reforms while strengthening the legitimacy of the state and the trust of the population in the institutions. **This decentralized approach should be supported by civil society organizations actively engaged in robust advocacy**, especially women's and youth groups, who play a crucial role in advancing these reforms.

## Recommendations

The accelerated withdrawal of the MONUSCO has sparked controversy not only among government officials but also within civil society. A notable divide in perspectives exists between larger communities and the rural areas most severely impacted by violence. The local population hopes for a reasonable, effective, and sustainable transition that does not jeopardize their safety or the future of their communities. For the members of the EurAc network, these aspirations must take prevalence in the negotiations of the next phases of the withdrawal strategy.

An assessment of the security and humanitarian situation reveals that the DRC, far from fulfilling the necessary conditions for an imminent and responsible withdrawal, continues to face a multitude of challenges that seriously compromise its stability. It is crucial to work towards strengthening the capacities of the state and local actors while placing the protection of civilians and human rights at the core of the process ahead. In light of these observations, **EurAc members call on the international community, particularly members of the United Nations Security Council, to:**

- **Place civil society as a key actor in defining the next steps of the withdrawal process.** This involves strengthening its capacities and employing a collaborative approach that ensures equal involvement of all actors: civil society, the Congolese government, MONUSCO, and UN country teams in order to ensure the implementation, evaluation, and monitoring of the upcoming withdrawal plan. The involvement of civil society will ensure a transitional process that is inclusive and credible for the affected population. Such an approach will contribute to attaining lasting peace and stability as opposed to short-lived solutions.
- **Support and help strengthen civilian and human rights protection capacities in the three eastern provinces.** The main objective is to avoid a security vacuum with devastating consequences for civilians while continuing to ensure the gradual transfer of tasks to the government, UN country teams, and civil society. In this context, it is essential to adopt a local partnership approach, particularly by funding initiatives aimed at implementing community-based and unarmed protection strategies.

- **Encourage the national government to adopt a decentralized approach when it comes to the implementation of reforms in the security and justice sector.** This will give local authorities a lead role in the implementation process and will help overcome instances of political uncertainty and insufficient political will at the national level. This approach will contribute to strengthening governance and fostering local ownership in seeking peaceful and sustainable solutions to security challenges.
- **Improve the current communication strategy regarding the MONUSCO withdrawal in favor of a clearer and more transparent approach.** The objective is to inform local communities about the next steps of the withdrawal plan and establish a climate of trust allowing for a disengagement under the best possible conditions.
- **Continue to firmly condemn unauthorized foreign incursions into Congolese territory as well as any form of collaboration by regional countries with armed groups in the name of the territorial integrity of each country as well as the sub-regional stability.** It is also crucial to continue supporting ongoing efforts to find a regional and political solution to the crisis.

## About EurAc

The Europe-Central Africa network (EurAc) was created in 2003 and brings together 32 non-governmental organisations active in Central Africa, with a particular focus on the Great Lakes region. EurAc advocates for a strong, coherent and sustainable commitment from the European Union and its Member States to help the region build a better future.

As a network, collaborating with both European and African civil society actors, EurAc offers a common platform for exchange between CSOs and the institutions of the European Union, thus creating a coordinated and holistic approach to addressing the challenges of the region, as well as proposing solutions adapted to the needs and realities on the ground

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