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**EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY SECRETARIAT**

**THE MEETING OF EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY CHIEF OF  
DEFENCE FORCES/STAFF HELD IN NAIROBI,  
KENYA**

**ON 9<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2023**

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**REPORT OF THE MEETING**

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**EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY SECRETARIAT**

**5<sup>TH</sup> MEETING OF THE EAC CHIEFS OF DEFENCE FORCES/STAFF**

**NAIROBI, KENYA**

**9 FEBRUARY 2023**

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**1. OPENING SESSION**

**1.1. Preamble**

The Meeting of the EAC Chiefs of Defence Forces/Staff was convened on 9 February 2023 in Nairobi, Kenya, pursuant to the 20th Extra-Ordinary Summit of the EAC Heads of State held in Bujumbura on 04 February 2023 to evaluate the Security Situation in Eastern DRC.

The Meeting was attended by representatives from all the EAC Partner States, EACRF, Ad-Hoc Verification Mechanism and EAC Secretariat. A list of participants is hereto attached as **Annex I**.

**1.2. Purpose of the Meeting**

To consider the Report of the EAC Defence Experts Working Group held in Nairobi, Kenya from 7 - 8 February 2023.

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**1.3. Constitution of the Bureau**

In accordance with the EAC rules of procedure, the Republic of Burundi was the Chair of the Meeting while the Republic of South Sudan was the Rapporteur. Accordingly, Gen Prime Niyongabo chaired the Meeting while Gen Santino Deng Wol was the Rapporteur.

**1.4. Adoption of the Agenda and Programme**

The Proposed Agenda and Programme were adopted with amendments and copies are hereto attached as **Annexes II** and **III** respectively.

**1.5. Remarks by Representative of the Secretary General**

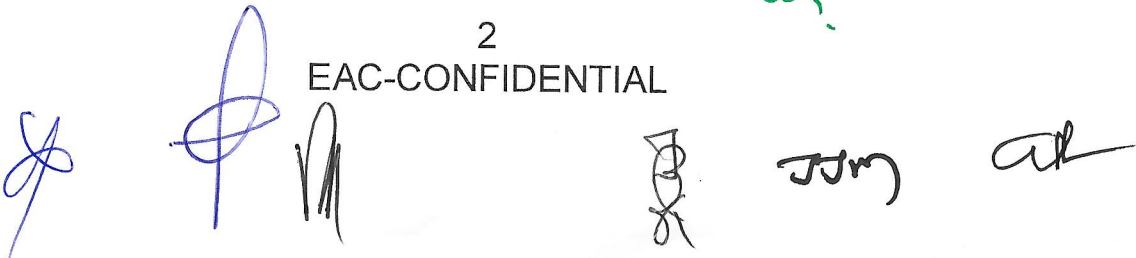
On behalf of the EAC Secretary General Hon (Dr.) Peter M Mathuki, the Defence Liaison Officer (Burundi), Col William Rusodoka welcomed all to the meeting of EAC Chiefs of Defence Forces/Staff to consider the Report of the DEWG on Security in the Eastern DRC. He expressed his genuine gratitude to the Republic of Kenya and in particular the Kenya Defence Forces (KDF) for the warm reception and hospitality accorded to the delegations.

Finally, he reiterated the EAC Secretariat commitment towards supporting the people of DRC in their pursuit for sustainable peace and security.

**1.6. Remarks by the Chairperson**

The Chairperson and Chief of Defence Forces of Burundi National Defence Force (BNDF), Gen Prime Niyongabo, welcomed the delegates to the Meeting in Nairobi, Kenya. He expressed his sincere gratitude to the Republic of Kenya in general and the Kenya Defence Forces, in particular, for accepting to host the meeting despite the short notice given. He further acknowledged the warm reception accorded to delegates since their arrival. He thanked the East African Community Secretariat for the role played in organizing the meeting.

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He expressed hope that the deliberations of the meeting will contribute towards creating lasting peace and stability in Eastern DRC. Finally, he wished the delegates fruitful deliberations and declared the meeting open.

## 2. FORMAL MEETING

### 2.1 Consideration of the Directives of the 20<sup>th</sup> Extra-Ordinary Summit of the EAC Heads of State in Bujumbura, Burundi on 04 February 2023

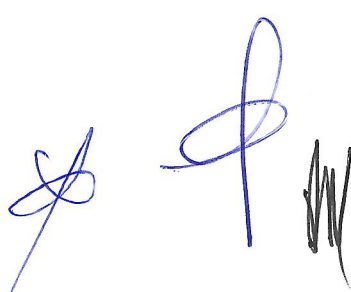
The 20<sup>th</sup> Extra-Ordinary Summit of the EAC Heads of State observed that the Security Situation in Eastern DRC was a regional matter that needed to be resolved through the political process and enhanced dialogue. Accordingly, the Summit directed the following:

- a. Immediate Ceasefire by all parties.
- b. Withdrawal of all Armed Groups including Foreign Armed Groups.
- c. Withdrawal to be accompanied by dialogue.
- d. EAC CDFs/CDSs urgently meet to review M23 withdrawal timelines, Force Posture and Operations Boundaries.

#### 2.1.1 Immediate Ceasefire by All Parties

##### 2.1.1.1 Observation

The Meeting observed that adherence to the ceasefire by all the parties is critical for implementation of directives by the Heads of State (HoS) Summit in Bujumbura. Some incidents of ceasefire violations have been registered since the Bujumbura Summit.





**2.1.1.2 Recommendations**

- 2.1.1.2.1** The warring parties must unconditionally cease hostilities with immediate effect.
- 2.1.1.2.2** EAC Monitoring and Verification Mechanism (EAC-MVM), distinct from EJVM and MONUSCO, be constituted and deployed by the EAC Secretariat by 28<sup>th</sup> February 2023 with members from EAC Partner States.
- 2.1.1.2.3** Dialogue needs to commence for the warring parties to seek political solutions to the conflict.
- 2.1.1.2.4** It is imperative that official communication be made by the EAC Secretary General for a ceasefire to be observed by all warring parties.
- 2.1.1.2.5** The Secretary General is to report all ceasefire violations to the Chair of the Summit.

**2.1.2 Withdrawal Considerations and Timelines**

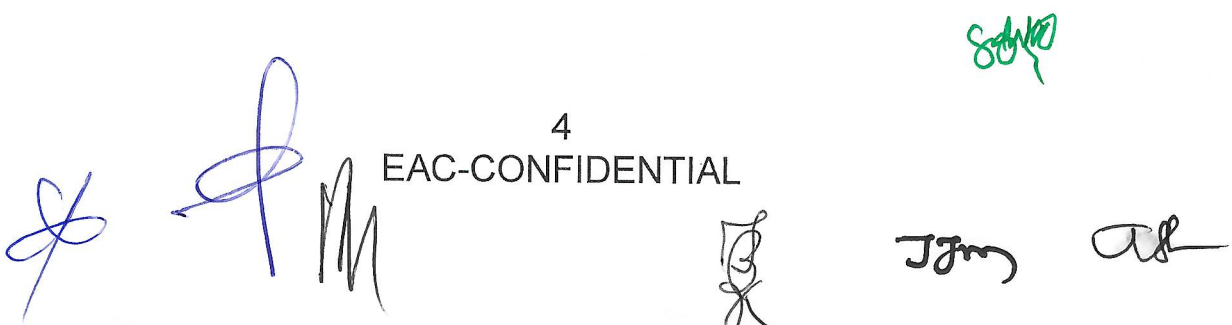
**2.1.2.1 Observation**

The Meeting observed that the previous withdrawal timelines directed by the Luanda and Nairobi processes, as well as by the CDFs/CDS meetings in Bujumbura and Dar es Salaam, were not adhered to.

**2.1.2.2 Recommendation**

The Meeting of CDFs/CDS of 9 February 2023 in Nairobi decided that the new withdrawal timelines must be adhered to by all Warring Parties.

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### 2.1.2.3 Observation

As a pre-requisite for successful implementation of the new timelines, the Meeting observed the following key considerations:

- a. Ceasefire to hold in order to facilitate organized and coordinated withdrawal of M23.
- b. Establishment of a Monitoring and Verification Mechanism.
- c. Concurrent withdrawal of all armed groups and EACRF Deployment in the vacated areas.
- e. Deployment of EACRF to areas earmarked for M23 phased withdrawal.
- f. Protection of civilians in areas vacated by M23.

### 2.1.2.4 Recommendations

**2.1.2.4.1 The Meeting took into account the key considerations which led to new withdrawal timelines.**

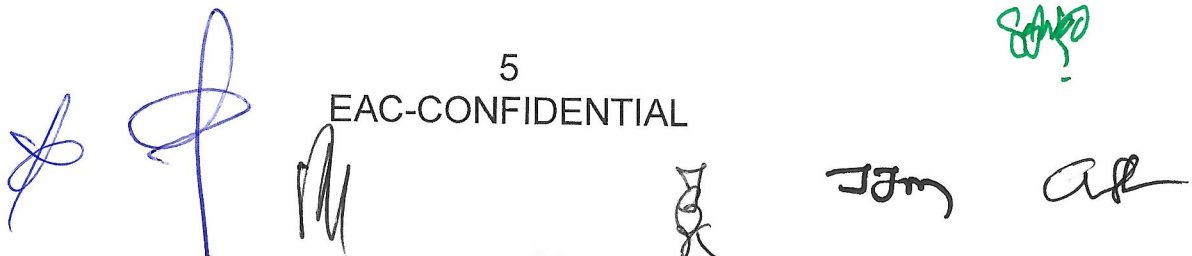
**2.1.2.4.2 From the key considerations, the Meeting decided that the withdrawal of M23 be phased over a period of 30 days, with the D-day set for 28 February 2023. Consequently, the new withdrawal timelines, which must be adhered to by M23, were developed as hereunder:**

**Phase 1: 28 Feb – 10 Mar 23**

M23 withdraws from Kibumba, Rumangabo, Karenga, Kirolirwe and Kitchanga.

**Phase 2: 13 – 20 Mar 23**

M23 withdraws from Kishishe, Bambo, Kazaroho, Tongo and Mabenga.



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**Phase 3:** 23 – 30 Mar 23

M23 withdraws from Rutshuru, Kiwanja and Bunagana.

### 2.1.3 EACRF Re-Posturing Proposed by Force Commander

#### Observation

In light of the prevailing security situation in North Kivu and the expansiveness of the Area of Operations, the Meeting observed the need for re-posturing of the EACRF.

#### Recommendation

The Meeting decided the Force Re-alignment as follows:

- a. **Burundi** – to deploy in Sake, Kiorolirwe and Kitchanga.
- b. **Kenya** – to deploy in Kibumba, Rumangabo, Tongo, Bwiza and Kishishe.
- c. **South Sudan** – to deploy in Rumangabo and co-locate with Kenyan Contingent.
- d. **Uganda** – to deploy in Bunagana, Kiwanja/Rutshuru and Mabenga area.

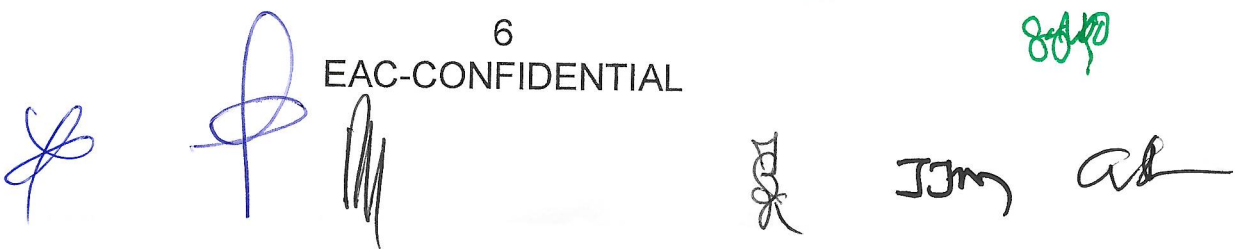
### 2.1.4 Operational Boundaries

#### Observation

The Meeting observed the need for distinct Operational Boundaries between contingents for the re-aligned Force.

#### Recommendation

The Meeting considered the proposed Operational Boundaries as developed by the EACRF Force Commander subject to re-confirmation after consultations with the Contingent Commanders. The presented Operational Boundaries are hereto attached as **ANNEX IV**.



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## 2.1.5 Withdrawal of Foreign Armed Groups

### Observation

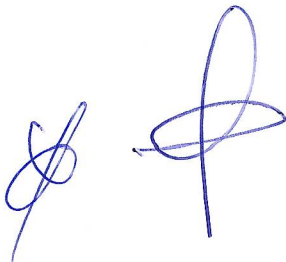
2.1.5.1 The meeting observed that many Foreign Armed Groups continue to instigate insecurity in Eastern DRC and across the National Borders in particular FDLR as well as ADF, RED TABARA, FNL and NAS among others.

### Recommendations

2.1.5.2 EACRF was tasked by CDFs/CDSs to deal with FDLR in areas it operates from. The EACRF will gather necessary information on FDLR effective 30<sup>th</sup> March 2023 up to 20 April 2023, after which a report will be produced to trigger operations. If intelligence is not enough for operations, the CDFs/CDSs will give an additional time for gathering more information for immediate operations against FDLR.

2.1.5.3 Operations would continue to be conducted in areas where operations against all other armed groups including the foreign ones (ADF, RED TABARA, FNL and NAS) as well as the local armed groups that affect the security of DRC and her neighbors.

2.1.5.4 The desired end state of all this is to allow the conduct of Programme for Disarmament, Demobilization, Community Recovery and Stabilization (P-DDRCS), which will enable the resettlement of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), and the return of refugees to their respective countries of origin.



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**3. AOB. RENEWAL OF THE STATUS OF FORCE AGREEMENT (SOFA)**

**Observation**

The CDFs/CDS Meeting reviewed the security situation in relation to the implementation of the EACRF mandate and observed that the mandate has not been fully implemented due to the lack of full deployment, non-adherence to the Ceasefire and withdrawal timelines. The CDFs/CDS further noted that the SOFA was signed on 8<sup>th</sup> September 2022 for an initial period of 6 months renewable.

**Recommendation**

**The Meeting recommends that the EAC Secretary General engage with the Government of the DRC towards the renewal of the SOFA.**

**4. CLOSING REMARKS**

The Chairperson thanked the participants for the extensive and fruitful deliberations that contributed to the fulfillment of the directives of the EAC Heads of State. He was optimistic that the deployment of the remaining EACRF Contingents will be expedited to enable the regional Force deliver on its Mandate. Finally, he thanked the Republic of Kenya for the successful hosting of the Meeting and wished participants safe travel to their home countries.

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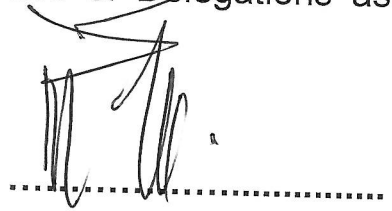
Signed on this 9<sup>th</sup> February 2023 by respective Heads of Delegations as hereunder:



**Gen Prime Niyongabo**  
Chief of Defence Force  
Burundi National Defence  
Force  
**Republic of Burundi**



**Lt Gen Tshiwewe  
Songesa Christian**  
Chief of General Staff  
Armed Forces of the  
Democratic Republic of  
the Congo  
**Democratic Republic  
of the Congo**



**Gen Robert Kibochi**  
Chief of the Defence  
Forces  
Kenya Defence Forces  
**Republic of Kenya**



**Gen Jean Bosco Kazura**  
Chief of Defence Staff  
Rwanda Defence Force  
**Republic of Rwanda**



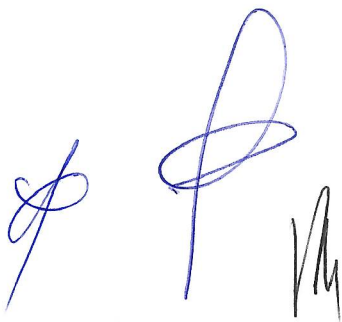
**Gen Santino Deng Wol**  
Chief of Defence Forces  
South Sudan People's  
Defence Forces  
**Republic of South  
Sudan**



**Gen Wilson Mbasu  
Mbadi**  
Chief of Defence Forces  
Uganda Peoples'  
Defence Forces  
**Republic of Uganda**



**Gen Jacob John Mkunda**  
Chief of Defence Forces  
Tanzania Peoples' Defence  
Forces  
**United Republic of  
Tanzania**





**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS FOR MEETING OF CHIEFS OF DEFENCE  
FORCES/STAFF 9<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2023**

**REPUBLIC OF BURUNDI**

1. **Gen Prime Niyongabo**  
Chief of Defence Force  
Burundi National Defence Force  
P. O. Box 2705  
Tel: +257 61367522  
**Bujumbura, BURUNDI**  
Email: embfdibeo18@gmail.com
  
2. **Brig Gen Silas Pacifique Nsaguye**  
Chief Military Intelligence  
Burundi National Defence Force  
Ministry of National Defence and War Veterans  
**Bujumbura, BURUNDI**  
Tel: +257 69649929  
Email: [burumilatt@gmail.com](mailto:burumilatt@gmail.com)
  
3. **Bde Gen Telesphore Irambona**  
Defence Attache - Kenya  
Burundi National Defence Force  
Tel: +257 7148639 or +254 112818250  
Email: irambonatel18@gmail.com
  
4. **Col Sebastian Niyonkuru**  
Chief Instructor  
SCSC Kinanira - Bujumbura  
Burundi National Defence Force  
Tel; +257 79984306  
Email: [sebastienniyonkuru@gmail.com](mailto:sebastienniyonkuru@gmail.com)

JU      f      ep      Z      mark      of      DR

5. **Lt Col Alexis Niyongabo**  
Advisor to the Office of the Minister  
Ministry of National Defence and War Veterans  
**Bujumbura, BURUNDI**  
Tel: +257 79518455  
Email: [niyalexis76@gmail.com](mailto:niyalexis76@gmail.com)
6. **Lt Col Gregoire Rivuzimana**  
ADC to CDF - Burundi National Defence Force  
Tel +257 68833384  
Email: [emgfdnb2018@gmail.com](mailto:emgfdnb2018@gmail.com)

**DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO**

7. **Lt Gen Christian Tshiwewe**  
Chief of General Staff  
Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of Congo  
**Kinshasa, DRC**
8. **Maj Gen Mpezo Mbele Bruno**  
Comd 34<sup>th</sup> Military Region  
Tel: +243 971544426  
**DR Congo**
9. **Maj Gen Ndaywel Okura Christian**  
Chief of Military Intelligence  
FARDC Headquarters - Kinshasa  
**Democratic Republic of the Congo**  
Email: [didiermat2000@gmail.com](mailto:didiermat2000@gmail.com)
10. **Brig Gen Mulume Oderhwa Balola J.B**  
Chief Department of Operations  
FARDC Headquarters - Kinshasa  
**Democratic Republic of the Congo**  
Email: [jbpmabalola@gmail.com](mailto:jbpmabalola@gmail.com)
11. **Col Sangwa Pathy**  
Legal Officer  
FARDC Headquarters - Kinshasa  
**Democratic Republic of the Congo**

JU

A OF

ZC

OS

DFL



12. **Lt Col Nguna Magbo Baby**  
Defence Liaison Officer  
DRC Embassy in Nairobi  
DR Congo  
Tel: +254 714057131  
Email: [bixduxmagbo@gmail.com](mailto:bixduxmagbo@gmail.com)
13. **Lt Col Lwauba Nzungo Guy**  
Defence Advisor  
FARDC Headquarters - Kinshasa  
**Democratic Republic of the Congo**
14. **Lt Col Matreshi Kamfwa Didier**  
Defence Advisor  
FARDC Headquarters - Kinshasa  
**Democratic Republic of the Congo**  
Email: [didiermat2000@gmail.com](mailto:didiermat2000@gmail.com)

**REPUBLIC OF KENYA**

15. **Gen Robert Kibochi**  
Chief of Defence Forces  
Kenya Defence Forces  
P. O. Box 40668  
**NAIROBI, KENYA**
16. **Maj Gen Fredrick Leuria**  
Asst. Chief of Defence Forces – Kenya Defence Forces  
P O Box 40668 – 00100  
**Nairobi, KENYA**
17. **Brig Seif Salim Rashid**  
Chief of Operations – Kenya Defence Forces  
P O Box 40668 – 00100  
**Nairobi, KENYA**  
Email: [ssrashid0005@gmail.com](mailto:ssrashid0005@gmail.com)
18. **Brig Ngugi Muhindi**  
Chief of Operations – Kenya Army  
P O Box 40668 - 00100  
**Nairobi, KENYA**  
Email: [coops-hqka@mod.go.ke](mailto:coops-hqka@mod.go.ke)

SU A SP Jc mtee of DP

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19. **Brig Chirstopher Imboywo**  
Defence Millitary Intelligence  
Kenya Defence Forces  
P. O. box 40668  
**Nairobi, KENYA**  
Tel: +254 0722765468
20. **Col Mungori Bundi Paul**  
Budget - Kenya Defence Forces  
P O Box 40668 - 00100  
**Nairobi, KENYA**  
Email: pbmungori@yahoo.com
21. **Col Shadrack Musango Musau**  
CMO/00TW - Kenya Defence Forces  
P O Box 40668  
**Nairobi, KENYA**  
Email: [shadrackmusau@rocketmail.com](mailto:shadrackmusau@rocketmail.com)
22. **Col Kyalo Munyao**  
Kenya Defence Forces  
P O Box 40668  
**Nairobi, KENYA**  
Tel: +254722887183  
Email: kyalomun@gmail.com
23. **Lt Col James Luhukuya Ogolla**  
Budget  
Kenya Defence Forces  
P O Box 40668  
**Nairobi, KENYA**  
Tel:  
Email: [jluhukuya@gmail.com](mailto:jluhukuya@gmail.com)

**REPUBLIC OF RWANDA**

24. **Gen Jean Bosco Kazura**  
Chief of Defence Staff  
Rwanda Defence Force  
P. O. Box 85  
**Kigali, RWANDA**
25. **Maj Gen Vincent Nyakarundi**  
Head Defence Intelligence  
Rwanda Defence Force  
Tel: +250 788 316948  
Email: [hdi@minadef.gov.rw](mailto:hdi@minadef.gov.rw)

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JU A BR ZL WERE JA BPL

26. **Lt Col Richard Kayitare**  
Head Intelligence Strategic Assessment  
Defence Intelligence  
Rwanda Defence Force  
Email: [ekigoma@yahoo.com](mailto:ekigoma@yahoo.com)
27. **Lt Col Ephraim Ngoga**  
Defence Attache  
Rwanda Defence Force  
**Kigali, RWANDA**  
Email: [jfau90@gmail.com](mailto:jfau90@gmail.com)
28. **Maj Jackline Uwamahoro**  
Head Int processing and production  
Rwanda Defence Force  
**Kigali, RWANDA**  
Tel: 250 788 872610  
Email: [nkubitojacky@yahoo.com](mailto:nkubitojacky@yahoo.com)
29. **Capt Allain Paul Nsabimana**  
ADC – CDS – RDF  
Rwanda Defence Force  
**Kigali, Rwanda**  
Tel: +250753977032
30. **Lt Christian Ruranganyire**  
Defence Intelligence  
Rwanda Defence Force  
**Kigali, Rwanda**  
Email: [rurachris@gmail.com](mailto:rurachris@gmail.com)

**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH SUDAN**

31. **Gen Santino Deng Wol**  
Chief of Defence Forces  
South Sudan Peoples' Defence Forces  
**Juba, SOUTH SUDAN**
32. **Lt Gen Marshal Stephen Babanen**  
Chief of Military Intelligence  
Ministry of Defence and Veterans' Affairs  
**Juba, SOUTH SUDAN**  
Tel: +211 928611115  
Email: [thagono@gmail.com](mailto:thagono@gmail.com)

JU A BR ZC MTRK O BPL

33. **Brig Gen Kuai Deng Kuai**  
Director Information Analysis  
SSPDF/MODVA  
**Juba, South Sudan**  
Tel: +211 928804040  
Email: [kuaidengkuai@yahoo.com](mailto:kuaidengkuai@yahoo.com)
34. **Col David Agol Thiong**  
Accountant Officer  
SSPDF/ MODVA  
Tel: +211 921883355  
Email: [agoldavidyahoo.com](mailto:agoldavidyahoo.com)
35. **Lt Col David Piro Lemi**  
Military Assistance to the CMI  
SSPDF/MODVA  
**Juba, South Sudan.**  
Tel: +211 924236962  
Email: [davidplemi@gmail.com](mailto:davidplemi@gmail.com)
36. **Maj Lual J. Alaak Ayual**  
SSPDF/MODVA HQs  
**Juba, South Sudan.**  
Tel: +211 922800877  
Email: [movlanalval@gmail.com](mailto:movlanalval@gmail.com)

**REPUBLIC OF UGANDA**

37. **Gen Wilson Mbasu Mbadi**  
Chief of Defence Forces  
Uganda Peoples' Defence Forces  
P. O. Box 7069  
**Kampala, UGANDA**
38. **Brig Gen Irumba Tingira Omero**  
MA to CDF(UG)  
Ministry of Defence HQS  
P O Box 7069  
**Kampala, UGANDA**  
Email: [tingirairumba@gmail.com](mailto:tingirairumba@gmail.com)

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39. **Col Muwonge Paul**  
Uganda Peoples Defence Forces  
P O Box 7069  
**Kampala, UGANDA**  
Email: [puganga09@gmail.com](mailto:puganga09@gmail.com)

40. **Col Robert Oumo Odeke**  
Staff Officer  
Ministry of Defence HQS  
**Mbuya Hill, Kampala**  
Tel: +256 772843148  
Email: [robertoumo5@gmail.com](mailto:robertoumo5@gmail.com)

41. **Col Joab Kambwenu Yebazibwe**  
Finance Officer  
Ministry of Defence HQs  
**Mbuya Hill, Kampala**  
Tel: +256 772407460  
Email: [yowabu@yahoo.com](mailto:yowabu@yahoo.com)

**UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA**

42. **Gen Jacob John Mkunda**  
Chief of Defence Forces  
Tanzania Peoples' Defence Forces  
P. O. Box 194  
**Dodoma, TANZANIA**

43. **Brig Gen Charles Ndiege**  
Chief of Ops and Training  
P.O Box 194,  
**Dodoma, TANZANIA**  
Tel: +255 095067  
Email: [charlesndiege31@gmail.com](mailto:charlesndiege31@gmail.com)

44. **Col Fabian Gaspar Machemba**  
Director of Defence Security  
P O Box 194  
**Dodoma, TANZANIA**  
Tel: +255 754592542  
Email: [fabian.machemba@gmail.com](mailto:fabian.machemba@gmail.com)

JU A OR ZC MISA OS BR

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45. **Lt Col Mohamed Abas Khamis**  
P O Box 194  
**Dodoma, TANZANIA**  
Tel:+255 779150000  
Email: [mkhamis94@yahoo.com](mailto:mkhamis94@yahoo.com)
46. **Lt Col Evans Alfred Mtambi**  
Tanzania Peoples' Defence Forces  
P. O. Box 194  
**Dodoma, TANZANIA**  
Email: [evans.mtambi@gmail.com](mailto:evans.mtambi@gmail.com)
47. **Maj Godfrey Alfred Maseke**  
P O Box 194  
**Dodoma, TANZANIA**  
Tel:+255 713 302430  
Email: [ddfr.tpdf@gmail.com](mailto:ddfr.tpdf@gmail.com)
48. **Maj Mkami Richard Chacha**  
Tanzania Peoples Defence Forces  
P O Box 194  
**Dodoma, TANZANIA**  
Tel:+255 764146027  
Email: [cmkami@yahoo.com](mailto:cmkami@yahoo.com)
49. **Capt Ambonisye Mathew Mwansasu**  
Tanzania Peoples Defence Forces  
P O Box 194  
**Dodoma, TANZANIA**  
Email: [amamwa80@gmail.com](mailto:amamwa80@gmail.com)

**EAC SECRETRIAT**

50. **Brig. Gen. Matur Dharuai Yor**  
Defence Liaison Officer RSS  
East African Community Secretariat  
P O Box 1096  
**Arusha**  
Tel: +255 788496790  
Email: [myoraguaguas@eachq.org](mailto:myoraguaguas@eachq.org)

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- 51. Brig. Gen. Richard Karemire**  
Defence Liaison Officer  
Uganda  
East African Community Secretariat  
P O Box 1096  
**Arusha**  
Tel: +255 784 202 685  
Email: [rkaremire@eachq.org](mailto:rkaremire@eachq.org)
- 52. Col. Raphael Kibiwot Kiptoo**  
Defence Liaison Officer  
Kenya  
East African Community Secretariat  
P O Box 1096  
**Arusha**  
Tel: + 255 782 027 048  
Email: [rkiptoo@eachq.org](mailto:rkiptoo@eachq.org)
- 53. Col. Caple Mwezi Karangwa**  
Defence Liaison Officer  
Rwanda  
East African Community  
P O Box 1096  
**Arusha**  
Tel: +255699134980  
Email: [ckarangwa@eachq.org](mailto:ckarangwa@eachq.org)
- 54. Col Anchila Stephen Kagombola**  
Defence Liaison Officer  
United Republic of Tanzania  
East African Community Secretariat  
P O Box 1096  
**Arusha**  
Tel: +255 754264388  
Email: [akagombola@gmail.com](mailto:akagombola@gmail.com)
- 55. Col. Rusodoka William**  
Defence Liaison Officer  
Burundi  
East African Community  
P O Box 1096  
**Arusha**  
Tel: + 255 788 080 056  
Email: [wrusodoka@eachq.org](mailto:wrusodoka@eachq.org)

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**EAST AFRICA COMMUNITY REGIONAL FORCE (EACRF)**

56. **Maj Gen Ally Mzee Katimbe**  
Military Advisor for EAC SG  
East African Community Secretariat  
PO Box 1096  
**Arusha, Tanzania**  
Email: [amkatimbe@yahoo.com](mailto:amkatimbe@yahoo.com)
57. **Maj Gen Mungai Nyagah**  
Force Commander  
East Africa Community Regional Force  
FHQ, Goma - DRC  
**Nairobi, KENYA**
58. **Brig Gen Emmanuel Kaputa Kasenga**  
Deputy Force Commander, Regional Force EACRF  
**Democratic Republic of the Congo**  
Email: [ekasenga6@gmail.com](mailto:ekasenga6@gmail.com)
59. **Maj Hillary Kalivo Lando**  
EACRF  
Kenya Defence Forces  
P O Box 40668  
**Nairobi, KENYA**  
Email: [landohillary@gmail.com](mailto:landohillary@gmail.com)

**AD HOC VERIFICATION MECHANISM**

60. **Lt Gen Nassone Joao**  
**Commander, Ad Hoc Verification Mechanism**  
GOMA, Democratic Republic of the Congo  
**Democratic Republic of the Congo**  
Tel: +244 935760246  
Email: [mecrevifad@gmail.com](mailto:mecrevifad@gmail.com)
61. **Col Evaristo Jose de SOUSA**  
**Expert, Ad Hoc Verification Mechanism**  
GOMA, Democratic Republic of the Congo  
**Democratic Republic of the Congo**  
Tel: +244 935760246  
Email: [mecrevifad@gmail.com](mailto:mecrevifad@gmail.com)

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62. **Capt Eliseu Dop**  
**Expert, Ad Hoc Verification Mechanism**  
GOMA, Democratic Republic of the Congo  
**Democratic Republic of the Congo**  
Tel: +244 726623  
Email: [mecverifad@gmail.com](mailto:mecverifad@gmail.com)

**EXPANDED JOINT VERIFICATION MECHANISM (EJVM)**

63. **Col Kongbo Elmor Marcia**  
**Expert, Joint Verification Mechanism**  
GOMA, Democratic Republic of the Congo  
**Democratic Republic of the Congo**  
Tel: +243 997329708  
Email: [elmako77@gmail.com](mailto:elmako77@gmail.com)
64. **Lt Col Victor Mwendwa Muithya**  
**Expert, Joint Verification Mechanism**  
GOMA, Democratic Republic of the Congo  
**Democratic Republic of the Congo**  
Tel: +243 97830567  
Email: [ops-ejvm@gmail.com](mailto:ops-ejvm@gmail.com)

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## **EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY**

### **MEETING OF THE EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY PARTNER STATES' CHIEFS OF DEFENCE FORCES/STAFF**

**9<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2023**

**NAIROBI, KENYA**

#### **PROVISIONAL AGENDA**

#### **1.0 OPENING SESSION**

- 1.1 Constitution of the Bureau
- 1.2 Adoption of the Agenda
- 1.3 Statement by the Representative of the Secretary General
- 1.4 Opening Remarks by the Chairperson of the Meeting

#### **2.0 FORMAL MEETING**

- 2.1 Consideration of the Report of the EAC Defence Experts Working Group Meeting in Nairobi, Kenya from 7-8 February 2023.
- 2.2 Consideration of the Report of the EAC Sub-Committee on Budget Meeting held in Goma, DRC from 05-10 January 2023.

#### **3.0 A.O.B**

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**EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY SECRETARIAT**

**MEETING OF THE EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY PARTNER STATES'  
CHIEFS OF DEFENCE FORCES/STAFF**

**9<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2023**

**NAIROBI, KENYA**

**PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME**

<b>TIME</b>	<b>ACTIVITY</b>
<b>10:00-10:30 Hrs</b>	<b>OPENING SESSION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EAC Anthem.</li> <li>• Constitution of the Bureau.</li> <li>• Adoption of the Agenda and Programme.</li> <li>• Statement of the Representative of the EAC Secretary General.</li> <li>• Opening Remarks by the Chairperson.</li> </ul>
<b>1030-1120 Hrs</b>	<b>HEALTH BREAK</b>
<b>1120-1230 Hrs</b>	Consideration of the Report of the EAC Defence Experts Working Group Meeting held from 7 <sup>th</sup> – 8 <sup>th</sup> February 2023 in Nairobi.
<b>1230 – 1330 Hrs</b>	<b>LUNCH BREAK</b>
<b>1330-1430 Hrs</b>	Consideration of the Report of the EAC Sub-Committee on Budget Meeting held in Goma, DRC from 05-10 January 2023.
<b>1430-1500 Hrs</b>	<b>HEALTH BREAK</b>
<b>1500-1630 Hrs</b>	Preparation of the Reports of the Meeting.
<b>1630-1730 Hrs</b>	Adoption of the Reports of the Meeting.
<b>1730-1800 Hrs</b>	Signing of the Reports

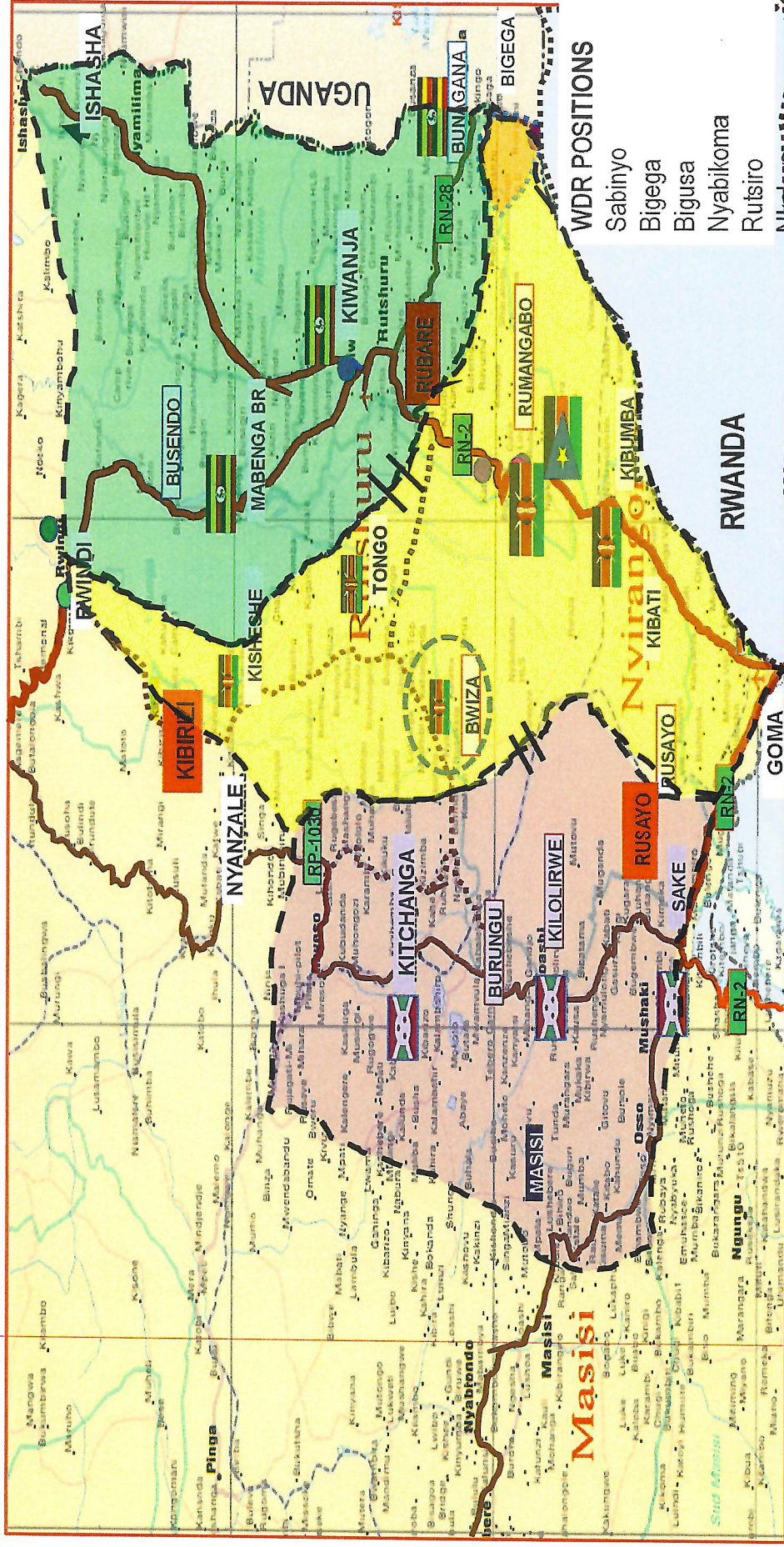
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**ANNEX IV**

**EACRF CONTINGENT OPERATIONAL BOUNDARIES**



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