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THE REPUBLIC OF CONGO

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ACTION

Your Excellency,

**RE: INTEGRATION OF ITURI ARMED GROUPS**

Working closely with President Dos Santos of Angola and President Kabila of DRC, we signed the Luanda Agreement of September 2002, to address the specific problem of Ituri, which was pacification.

Whereas we had maintained only one Battalion in Ituri and the entire Congo, our army had to redeploy in Ituri in March 2003, to ensure among other things, the protection of the Ituri Pacification Commission which gave birth to a leadership through consensus.

The Luanda Agreement also established a framework to guide the Governments of Uganda and DRC on Ituri and since the withdrawal of UPDF in May 2003, Uganda has actively supported the French led multi-national Force codenamed "Operation Artemis" and the deployment of MONUC all launching their operations from Entebbe-Uganda in order to achieve peace in Ituri.

Uganda continues to work closely with the DRC transitional Government and MONUC on containing the activities of negative forces still in DRC and the disarmament and integration of the Congolese armed groups in accordance with the Lusaka Agreement of 1999 and the Luanda Agreements of 2002.

Uganda was beginning to see a ray of hope with the cessation of hostilities among the different armed groups in Ituri, the deployment of MONUC to protect the people, although more needs to be done to control airports and disarm the negative forces, but more importantly, dialogue between the transitional national government and the Ituri armed groups on peaceful disarmament and reintegration. I however observe setbacks to this process which may, need you urgent attention.

On the 22 June 04, President Kabila, concerned about the deteriorating situation in eastern Congo, especially Bukavu, requested me to engage the leaders of the armed groups in Ituri to stick to the accords and not

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to join the rebellion. I gladly accepted, and assured him that Uganda wholly supported the peace process in Congo. I, thereafter invited those leaders to Kampala where they raised a number of issues which, although I have briefed H.E. Joseph Kabila, also require your intervention. Their complaints were as follows:

1. At a meeting in Dar es-Salaam, on 16 May 2003, the Ituri armed groups voluntarily and peacefully agreed to cease hostilities and work with the DRC Government. Since then nothing more than a signed document, has been done to implement this understanding.
2. That although the DRC Government has been reluctant to reopen Lusaka, Mai-Mai and former Mobutu Army (Ex-FAZ), have been integrated and deployed when they were not in the Lusaka process.
3. That the recent Kinshasa Agreement of 14 May 2004, was not freely negotiated but was signed under duress which may herald a reversal of the achievements of peace in the Congo.
4. That some of the leaders of Lendu's like Ndjabu of FNI did not participate in the Kinshasa meeting, because he had just escaped arrest by the authorities in Kinshasa. His Minister of Defence is still in jail in Kinshasa.
5. MONUC has been hunting for many of them, even when they have, albeit involuntarily, signed the Kinshasa Agreement for voluntary disarmament.
6. It is very expensive for them to maintain these armed groups without a clear source of funding. They may therefore fall prey to those who harbour negative designs for the Congo or begin attacking the population for food.
7. The recent appointments to Governorships and offices in the local government, especially in oriental province where Ituri falls, did not reflect the spirit of integration, as they were never consulted on the matter.
8. We are still faced with various armed groups still marauding the Congo, 6 years after signing the Lusaka Agreement, and with the Bukavu example, there is need to expedite the process of voluntary disarmament and integration.

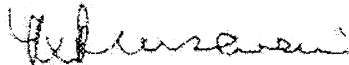
5. It will be very difficult to hold elections in the Congo, in the next one year, when the armed groups are not yet disarmed or integrated.

Your Excellency, whereas Uganda has been at the fore front of working for an end to impunity, with respect to war crimes and genocide in this region, our experience in the Burundi peace process has convinced us of the need for **provisional immunity in order to achieve peace first.**

It may be important to advise the DRC Government to suspend the activities of the international criminal court until the peace process in Ituri and DRC in general is irreversible.

This could enable all of us achieve Justice as well as peace in the DRC.

Please accept, Your Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration and regard.



**YOWERI KAGUTA MUSEVENI**  
**PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA**

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27 July 2004

**H.E. Kofi Annan**  
**SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS**  
New York