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United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Report of the Secretary-General

I. Introduction

1. The present report, submitted pursuant to paragraph 47 of Security Council resolution [2717 \(2023\)](#), covers developments in the Democratic Republic of the Congo from 20 March to 19 June 2024. It describes the progress and challenges in the implementation of the mandate of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO).

II. Political developments

2. The political dynamics during the reporting period were driven by negotiations on the installation of the Government and the National Assembly following the elections in December 2023. On 1 April, the President, Félix Tshisekedi, appointed Judith Suminwa Tuluka, then Minister of State for Planning, as the country's first female Prime Minister. On 12 June, the new Government was sworn in and the government programme approved. The new Cabinet comprises 54 ministers, including 17 women, compared with 57 ministers in the previous Government. The Government's action plan focuses on the priorities outlined in Mr. Tshisekedi's inaugural speech, including improved access to and efficiency of basic services, job creation, protection of household purchasing power, diversification and competitiveness of the economy, security sector reform and strengthened diplomacy.

3. The indirect senatorial and gubernatorial elections in the 26 provinces on 29 April were marked by a large victory by the President's majority platform, the Union sacrée de la nation. On 23 May, the National Assembly elected its permanent Bureau, with Vital Kamerhe as Speaker, a position he had previously occupied from 2006 to 2009.

4. On 19 May, the Government reported that in the morning hours armed men attacked the residence of the national parliamentarian and former Vice-Prime Minister and Ministry of the Economy, Mr. Kamerhe, killing two police officers in charge of his security, and later breached the premises of the Palais de la Nation, the official residence and workplace of the President. The security forces intervened to restore the order and investigations were launched. On 7 June, the trial of the 53 suspects accused of participating in the attacks on 19 May started at the Kinshasa/Gombe



military court. The accused include nine high-ranking officers, eight citizens of the United States of America and four women and are charged with, inter alia, terrorism, attempted assassination, murder and criminal conspiracy.

5. The Alliance Fleuve Congo, a politico-military alliance of which the Mouvement du 23 mars (M23) is a key member, extended its political reach, encouraging political, security and civil society actors to join the movement. Several high-level political actors individually declared their affiliation.

6. Following consultations in Kinshasa in mid-April, a subsequent meeting convened on 25 and 26 April by the Vice-Prime Minister and Minister of Defence, Jean-Pierre Bemba, with armed groups and community leaders in Bunia, Ituri Province, resulted in the signing of an acte d'engagement to cease hostilities with the Coopérative pour le développement du Congo (CODECO), the Mouvement d'autodéfense populaire de l'Ituri, the Force de résistance patriotique d'Ituri, the Front patriotique et intégrationniste du Congo and Chini ya Tuna. The agreement includes measures to facilitate civilian movement, the return of internally displaced persons and integration into the disarmament, demobilization, community recovery and stabilization programme.

7. Tensions between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda were marked by continued escalation, antagonistic rhetoric and mutual accusations regarding the use of armed groups as proxies. Regional diplomatic efforts, facilitated by the President of Angola, João Lourenço, continued. On 21 March, in Luanda, Angola hosted the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Francophonie of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Christophe Lutundula Apala Pen'Apala, and the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Rwanda, Vincent Biruta. Both sides reportedly agreed to propose to their Heads of State a cessation of hostilities, including a supervised ceasefire accompanied by the disengagement of forces as well as the adoption and strengthening of confidence-building measures. The Democratic Republic of the Congo agreed to present a plan to neutralize the Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda, conditional on Rwanda withdrawing its forces from the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. On 9 May, Mr. Lutundula informed members of the diplomatic community that the neutralization plan for the Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda had been shared with the Angolan mediation team.

III. Security situation

8. During the reporting period, MONUSCO recorded 334 security incidents in Ituri, North Kivu and South Kivu. In total, 562 civilians were killed, including 141 women and 38 children, while 194 civilians sustained injuries, including 17 women and 22 children. The security situation remained extremely volatile, in particular in North Kivu and Ituri, where the main perpetrators of violence against civilians were still the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) (340 civilians killed in North Kivu and Ituri combined) and CODECO (106 civilians killed in Ituri).

9. The reporting period also saw the recurrence of ADF attacks near the town of Beni and further to the south-west towards Cantine, North Kivu Province. On 18 March, the Government of Uganda issued a press release warning of the risk of ADF elements crossing the border from the Democratic Republic of the Congo to Uganda with the alleged intent of carrying out attacks. In the Petit Nord area of North Kivu, M23 expanded its territorial control to unprecedented levels since the group's resurgence in 2021, reaching the gates of Kanyobagonga in North Kivu and Minova in South Kivu, triggering mass displacements and compounding concerns for the protection of civilians. In South Kivu, the spillover from the M23 crisis affected

populations in Minova and the Hauts Plateaux area in Kalehe territory, and risks of further advances persisted against the backdrop of MONUSCO disengagement from the province by June 2024.

Ituri Province

10. In Ituri, MONUSCO recorded 150 security incidents during the reporting period, mostly involving CODECO, Zaïre and ADF. In total, 280 civilians were reportedly killed, including 61 women and 21 children. A total of 70 civilians reportedly sustained injuries, including 7 women and 8 children, and at least 129 civilians were abducted, including 13 women and 14 children.

11. In Djugu and Mahagi territories, cycles of retaliatory attacks between CODECO and Zaïre continued, resulting in at least 120 civilians killed, including 29 women and 10 children, in particular in camps for internally displaced persons and mining sites in eastern Djugu.

12. In Irumu and Mambasa territories, ADF remained the main threat to civilians, conducting regular attacks and mass kidnappings despite joint operations by the Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF) and the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (FARDC). The Front des patriotes pour la paix/Armée du peuple and other Mai-Mai groups continued to threaten civilians around mining sites, clashing with FARDC on several occasions. In the context of a spike in cocoa prices on international markets since February, in Irumu where large cacao plantations are located, attacks against Nande farmers by Chini ya Tuna, affiliated with the Lese community, continued to have an impact on social cohesion.

North Kivu Province

13. In North Kivu, MONUSCO recorded 154 security incidents, mostly involving ADF and M23. In total, 283 civilians were killed, including 78 women and 15 children, while a further 117 civilians sustained injuries, including 10 women and 14 children.

14. In Beni territory, despite ongoing operations by FARDC and UPDF, the security situation significantly deteriorated owing to increased ADF activity, with a frequency and lethality not recorded since 2018, in particular near the town of Beni and in the western part of the territory. Operation Shujaa, conducted by FARDC and UPDF, resumed in late May with a ground offensive against ADF west of Route Nationale 4, which resulted in retaliation by ADF involving attacks against civilians, in particular in the Cantine area in June. Attacks against civilians in Beni territory led to population displacements and resulted in at least 194 civilians killed, including 74 women and 6 children, and the abduction of 23 civilians, including 3 women and 12 children.

15. Following offensives launched in March, M23 consolidated control over most of northern Rutshuru territory, including the localities of Nyanzalé and Rwindi. On 27 March, upon the request of the Congolese authorities, MONUSCO closed its bases in Nyanzalé and Rwindi to allow for planned FARDC offensive operations. Despite these operations launched from Kanyobagonga, Lubero territory, M23 counter-operations advanced, threatening FARDC control over this northernmost front-line location. From 30 April to 8 May, M23 advanced on positions to the west of Sake, taking control of Rubaya, one of the world's largest coltan mining sites, and encroaching further west towards the town of Masisi and south towards Minova in South Kivu. On 18 May, FARDC employed its Sukhoi-25 fighter jet capacity for the first time since February. Soon afterwards, M23 withdrew from its southernmost positions in Masisi territory.

16. Repeated exchanges of artillery shelling between FARDC, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and M23 in the Sake area led to civilian casualties. On 3 May, five rockets exploded at sites for displaced persons in the Lac Vert and Mugunga quarters of Goma, killing at least 12 people and injuring several others. MONUSCO provided support for military justice in the investigation into the attacks on sites for internally displaced persons. From 13 to 19 May, upon request by the military prosecutor, the United Nations Joint Human Rights Office forensic team conducted autopsies on nine corpses (eight minors and one male adult), forensic examinations on 21 wounded survivors and psychological assessments on 10 of them.

17. MONUSCO blocking positions around Sake continued to come under direct and indirect fire until the withdrawal of positions on 4 April. The freedom of movement of MONUSCO peacekeepers, including their ability to conduct operations and tasks, was impeded by M23, FARDC and the pro-government *Volontaires pour la défense de la patrie* on several occasions.

18. Since April, a spike in violent criminality, including killings of civilians by various armed elements, was recorded in Goma. Between 12 to 17 April, incidents of killing and looting took place in Goma, resulting in at least 17 civilians killed and 12 injured.

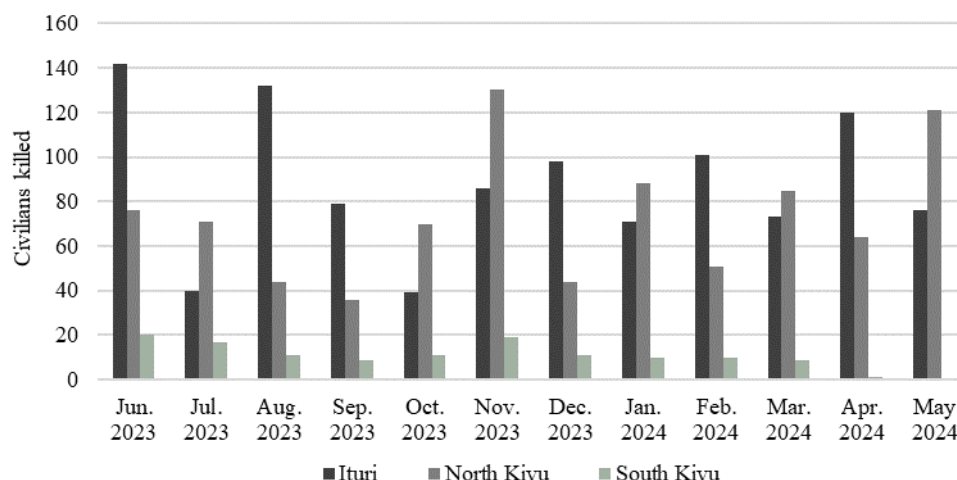
South Kivu Province

19. In South Kivu, MONUSCO recorded 31 security incidents between 20 March and 30 April (data cut off owing to the withdrawal), attributed to various armed groups, resulting in eight civilians killed, including two women and two children, while seven civilians sustained injuries.

20. The northern territory of Kalehe was directly affected by fighting between FARDC and M23, with indirect fire hitting Minova and other nearby locations, killing and injuring several civilians. Armed groups, including Raia Mutomboki and Nyatura, continued to operate under the Wazalendo label, which enhanced their legitimacy and facilitated their mobility, spreading violence to previously stable areas in South Kivu.

21. In the southern part of South Kivu, the increased militarization of the Ruzizi plain raised protection of civilians concerns, while in the Hauts Plateaux of Uvira, Fizi and Mwenga activities by armed groups as well as clashes between the Burundian armed forces and *Résistance pour un État de droit au Burundi* continued. Persistent rumours of M23 infiltration in the Hauts Plateaux exacerbated mistrust among the population and increased discrimination and attacks against minority communities.

Figure I
**Reported civilian killings in armed group-related incidents by province,
 June 2023–May 2024**



Source: MONUSCO/Joint Operations Centre/Situational Awareness Geospatial Enterprise.

IV. Human rights situation

22. Between 20 March and 31 May, 1,169 human rights violations and abuses were documented across the country. In conflict-affected provinces, 959 violations and abuses were documented, 63 per cent of which were reportedly committed by armed groups. Among them, it was reported that M23 was responsible for most abuses (111), followed by various Mai-Mai groups and factions (104), ADF (103) and CODECO (62). Of the 333 violations reportedly committed by State agents, FARDC was responsible for most of the violations (173), followed by other State agents (81), the Congolese National Police (67) and the Agence nationale de renseignements (8), among others. At least 466 people (272 men, 119 women, 14 boys, 7 girls, 8 children of unknown gender and 46 individuals of unknown gender and age) were victims of summary executions by armed groups, allegedly by ADF (201), CODECO (88), M23 (85) and Mai-Mai factions (26). State actors were reportedly responsible for the extrajudicial killing of 65 persons (43 men, 18 women and 4 boys), mainly by FARDC (58). In Goma and Masisi territories, eight civilians (four men, three women and one child) were reportedly executed jointly by FARDC and Wazalendo.

23. The human rights situation continued to deteriorate in North Kivu, South Kivu and Ituri, with increased clashes between FARDC, Wazalendo and M23 in the Rutshuru and Masisi territories of North Kivu, involving the regular use of artillery, including against internally displaced persons, and ADF attacks against civilians. In Ituri, ADF continued to commit human rights abuses and acts of reprisals on ethnic grounds, leading to population displacements. In South Kivu, since the deployment of the FARDC Aiglon battalion in the Ruzizi plain, allegations of human rights violations by FARDC soldiers re-emerged, creating tensions between FARDC and the local population.

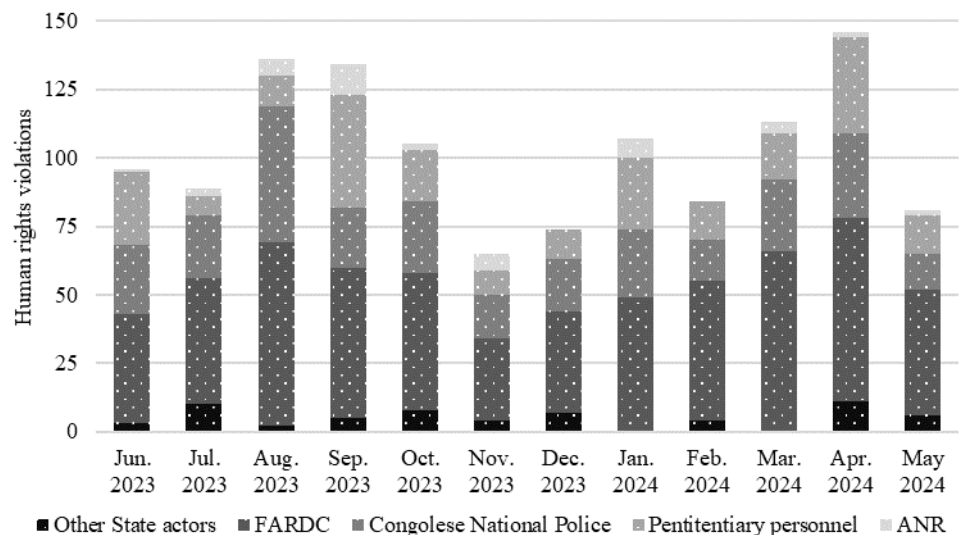
24. At least 37 human rights violations related to restrictions of civic space were reported, all allegedly committed by State actors, affecting 146 victims (129 men, 11 women, 4 girls and 2 boys), representing a 60 per cent decrease in the number of violations in comparison with those documented during the previous reporting period. The reported excessive use of force by the Congolese National Police during peaceful

demonstrations remained a concern, as did the Government’s restrictions on freedom of expression. For example, on 28 March, during a student demonstration in Kinshasa, the Congolese National Police used tear gas and lethal ammunition to disperse the demonstrators, wounding seven male students. On 17 April, the mayor of Goma forbade a march organized by citizens’ movements and pressure groups to protest against increased insecurity in the city. Demonstrators were dispersed by the police and 14 demonstrators (13 men and 1 woman) were arrested and detained at the police intelligence headquarters for two days before being released.

25. Overall, the United Nations Joint Human Rights Office documented at least 127 deaths in detention (all male). The main underlying causes are prison overcrowding and poor detention conditions.

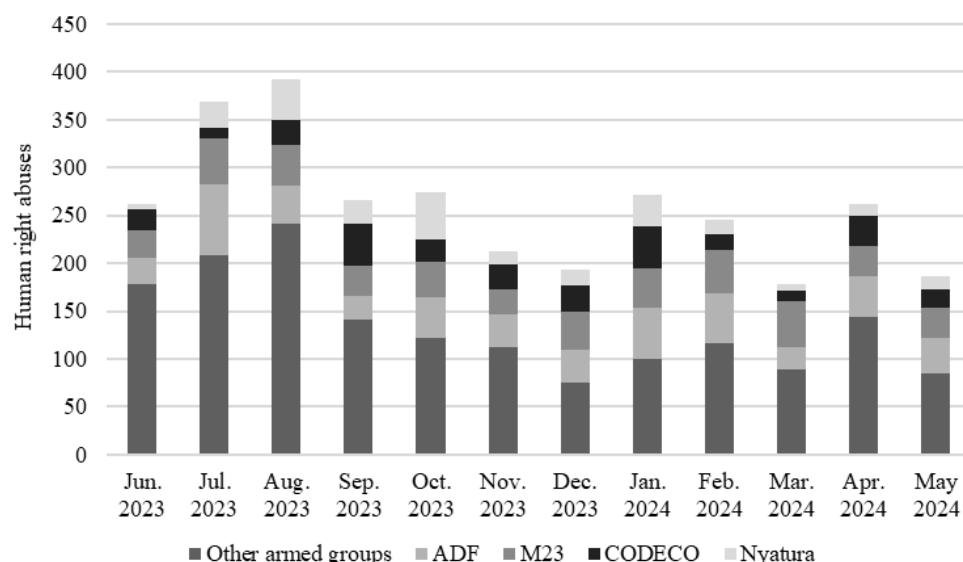
26. Following the lifting of the moratorium on the death penalty in the previous reporting period, on 3 May, the North Kivu military tribunal convicted and sentenced eight FARDC soldiers to death for treason and desertion, a decision appealed by the defendants.

Figure II
Human rights violations attributed to State actors by alleged perpetrator, June 2023–May 2024



Source: MONUSCO/Joint Human Rights Office.
Abbreviations: ANR, Agence nationale de renseignements; FARDC, Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.
Note: Includes violations and abuses across conflict-affected provinces.

Figure III
Human rights abuses attributed to armed groups by alleged perpetrator, June 2023–May 2024



Source: MONUSCO/Joint Human Rights Office.

Abbreviations: ADF, Allied Democratic Forces; CODECO, Coopérative pour le développement du Congo; M23, Mouvement du 23 mars.

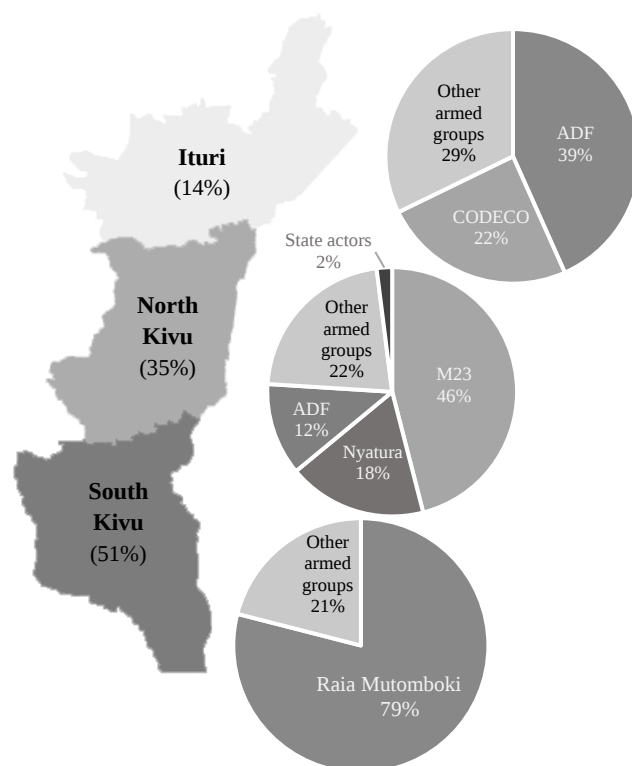
Note: Includes violations and abuses across conflict-affected provinces.

Child protection

27. Between 20 March and 31 April, MONUSCO verified 537 grave violations of children's rights perpetrated against 483 children (324 boys and 159 girls), including 402 cases of recruitment and use by armed actors. The violations were attributed to 19 non-State armed groups, while three cases of killing and maiming were attributed to Congolese security forces. A small number of violations were perpetrated by unidentified armed elements.

28. Following continued engagement by MONUSCO and partners, the commanders of the Mai-Mai armed groups Mouvement national congolais and Forces populaires pour la libération (both active in the Fizi territory of South Kivu), as well as the Union des forces pour la défense patriotique congolaise (active in the Nyiragongo territory of North Kivu) signed unilateral declarations and road maps to cease the recruitment and use of children in their ranks, leading to the separation of 345 children from these groups (229 boys and 116 girls).

Figure IV
Grave violations against children in armed conflict by alleged perpetrator, verified January–March 2024



Source: MONUSCO/Child protection section.

Note: The boundaries shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations. Armed groups, including those identified above, were reportedly responsible for the majority of the grave violations.

Abbreviations: ADF, Allied Democratic Forces; CODECO, Coopérative pour le développement du Congo; M23, Mouvement du 23 mars.

Gender and conflict-related sexual violence

29. The intensification of fighting in the eastern provinces dramatically heightened the vulnerability, in particular of women and girls, to conflict-related sexual violence, including in and around sites for internally displaced persons. During the reporting period, the United Nations Joint Human Rights Office documented cases of sexual violence against 130 individuals (87 women, 35 girls, 7 boys and 1 man) throughout the Congolese territory, including conflict-related sexual violence against 117 individuals (77 women, 32 girls, 7 boys and 1 man) in conflict-affected provinces (North Kivu, South Kivu, Ituri, Tanganyika and Maniema). Of these, 61 women and 15 girls were survivors of conflict-related sexual violence by armed groups, allegedly M23 (25 women and 4 girls), Twa militias (16 women and 3 girls), Raia Mutomboki (7 women and 1 girl), different Mai-Mai groups and factions (4 women and 3 girls), Nyatura (4 women and 2 girls) and CODECO (2 women). State actors were allegedly responsible for cases of conflict-related sexual violence against at least 42 survivors (16 women, 18 girls, 7 boys and 1 man), namely FARDC (10 women, 16 girls, 7 boys and 1 man), the Congolese National Police (2 women and 3 girls) and other State agents (3 women). Compared with the previous reporting period, conflict-related sexual violence, specifically rape, perpetrated by M23 rose significantly (15 victims

between 20 March and 17 May). However, access and security constraints inhibited the verification of such abuses, with many underreported.

V. Humanitarian situation

30. Armed conflict and natural hazards displaced over 7.3 million people in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, one of the largest displacement crises in the world. Some 90 per cent of the internally displaced persons (6.6 million people) are in Ituri, South Kivu and North Kivu, representing an increase of 1.2 million people compared with the same period in 2023. As at 2 June, the humanitarian response plan for the Democratic Republic of the Congo, budgeted at \$2.6 billion, was funded at only 23 per cent (\$593 million). Meanwhile, humanitarian partners continued efforts to provide emergency and life-saving assistance, having reached more than 3 million people as at 30 March.

31. The massive influx of newly displaced persons, along with the return of 2.4 million people to different areas further strained the humanitarian situation. In April alone, the protection monitoring system reported some 9,000 people affected by various abuses and violations of human rights, including 1,612 cases involving children.

32. Violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law continued to raise grave concerns amid a proliferation of weapons in and the presence of artillery near sites for internally displaced persons and reported attacks on those sites as well as schools, hospitals and public services. As a result of the presence of armed elements and the installation of artillery batteries near such sites, the exposure of the sites to bombs and other projectiles increased significantly. Between February and April, at least 35 incidents of artillery fire, including fire from positions close to the sites, were reported. Of the incidents, at least 15 bombardments hit the sites or their surroundings (within less than 500 m). These bombardments resulted in the deaths of at least 28 people and 74 injuries.

33. Outbreaks of cholera, measles and monkeypox continued to aggravate an already complex humanitarian situation, in particular in North Kivu and South Kivu, where 12,000 cholera cases, nearly 63,000 measles cases and 6,500 monkeypox cases were reported from January to April 2024.

34. High water levels in Lake Tanganyika caused flooding, affecting housing and livelihoods and impeding road access. In South Kivu more than 80,000 people were affected and 22 deaths reported, while in Tanganyika Province 163,000 people were affected and 11 deaths reported.

35. Security incidents affecting humanitarian workers and goods increased, with 93 incidents reported during the first quarter of 2024 compared with 57 during the same period in 2023, hampering humanitarian access.

Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and the national coordination of the disarmament, demobilization, community recovery and stabilization programme for 49 staff members of the national coordination (30 women and 19 men) to improve knowledge on gender equality and share good practices on the integration of demobilized women into community stabilization efforts.

VII. Implementation of mandated priorities

A. Protection of civilians

37. MONUSCO continued to implement its protection of civilians mandate through a multidimensional, three-tiered approach, incorporating protection through dialogue and engagement, physical protection and the establishment of a protective environment in support of the Congolese authorities and in coordination with United Nations agencies, funds and programmes. Attacks on peacekeepers and restrictions on movement in North Kivu, however, affected the Mission's ability to implement its mandated protection tasks. In the Grand Nord of North Kivu, the MONUSCO Force continued to face coordination challenges with Congolese and Ugandan armed forces, despite the Mission's continued engagement with counterparts to deconflict operations.

38. During the reporting period, the MONUSCO community alert system received 180 alerts from Ituri, North Kivu and South Kivu. State security forces, MONUSCO and humanitarian actors responded to 72 per cent of the alerts.

39. MONUSCO and FARDC continued to jointly conduct large-scale operations, such as Spider Web II, launched in March and aimed at preventing the movement of CODECO elements in Djugu territory, Ituri Province. Operation Springbok, a joint operation launched to secure the towns of Goma and Sake in North Kivu, experienced major challenges due to the advancement of M23. Nonetheless, MONUSCO Force operations had positive impacts against CODECO and various Mai Mai groups, contributing to a significant reduction in civilian casualties in the theatre of operations. For example, on 11 and 25 April, in Djugu territory, the timely intervention of MONUSCO troops stopped and prevented violence by armed groups.

40. From 18 to 22 May, as part of a comprehensive and integrated joint operation with FARDC, Operation Tiger Paw, MONUSCO troops conducted extensive patrols along main axes and around sites for internally displaced persons, engaging CODECO elements at Uzi hill, Ituri Province, dismantling eight CODECO checkpoints and carrying out a medical campaign for 120 locals, including 45 women and 45 children, during the operation. MONUSCO also continued to engage with FARDC and the SADC Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in particular on airspace coordination and fire support coordination to deconflict operations and mutualize protection of civilians efforts.

41. MONUSCO also supported local authorities and security forces in improving local security governance and establishing an effective, nationally owned early warning and response system. Capacity-building initiatives were held with local security councils and the Protection civile of the Ministry of the Interior, the State structure identified by MONUSCO and Congolese authorities to coordinate early warning and response functions. From 7 to 9 May in the town of Beni, and from 21 to 23 May in Bunia, MONUSCO facilitated workshops with, respectively, the North Kivu and Ituri provincial divisions of the Protection civile to enable the handover of protection tools managed by the Mission and facilitate their integration into nationally owned systems. Similar initiatives were held in South Kivu ahead of the Mission's disengagement.

42. In Ituri and Petit Nord, MONUSCO engaged with representatives of internally displaced persons, authorities and parties to the conflict to advocate respect for the civilian character of sites for internally displaced persons and other infrastructure, together with the implementation of measures to enhance the protection of such sites, including adequate police deployment and awareness of international humanitarian and human rights principles.

43. As part of the MONUSCO Integrated Operational Strategy for the Fight against Insecurity, the Mission's police component delivered comprehensive training sessions and community awareness activities for the Congolese National Police focused on community policing, judicial functions and public order management.

44. MONUSCO, through the Mine Action Service, conducted one explosive ordnance spot task in North Kivu (a low number due to the conduct of bulk demolitions of obsolete pistol calibre carbine ammunition), destroying 15 explosive remnants of war. Explosive ordnance risk education sessions were facilitated in Ituri, North Kivu and South Kivu for the benefit of 13,269 civilians.

B. Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration

45. MONUSCO continued to support to the implementation of the disarmament, demobilization, community recovery and stabilization programme at the national and provincial levels.

46. The disarmament, demobilization, community recovery and stabilization programme, in partnership with the International Organization for Migration and Swiss Church Aid, continued to implement community reinsertion projects in Ituri, North Kivu and South Kivu. On 24 May, one of the pilot projects in Lubero, North Kivu, which focused on democratic dialogue, economic resilience and women and peace and security, was completed, benefiting more than 1,800 individuals, including 527 women and 503 ex-combatants in Lubero, Rutshuru and Walikale territories. Of the 503 ex-combatants, 100 were formerly cantoned at the Mubambiro site in Grand Nord, North Kivu, with MONUSCO support for their transfer by air from Goma to Beni.

47. Following an agreement on the cessation of hostilities signed by Zaïre, the Force de résistance patriotique d'Ituri, CODECO, the Mouvement d'autodéfense populaire de l'Ituri and the Front patriotique et intégrationniste du Congo on 19 April, MONUSCO, the International Organization for Migration and the World Bank held regular meetings with Mr. Bemba to support the development of an operational plan for the implementation of the agreement. From 21 to 23 May, MONUSCO supported the organization of a workshop by the disarmament, demobilization, community recovery and stabilization programme in Bunia that developed a first action plan for future operations under the programme in Ituri, taking into consideration the specific challenges of each armed group and incorporating the lessons learned from past programmes.

48. MONUSCO also continued to implement eight community violence reduction projects that directly benefit 2,340 people (1,415 men and 925 women), including 345 ex-combatants, 295 vulnerable community members and 1,700 at-risk young people.

49. From 17 to 24 May, MONUSCO organized a workshop in Goma for 21 representatives of the coordination structure of the disarmament, demobilization, community recovery and stabilization programme at the national level and from South Kivu and North Kivu. The workshop provided specific technical training on key disarmament, demobilization and reintegration-related areas, including training on analysis and planning to strengthen national capacities.

C. Security sector reform

50. MONUSCO pursued its good offices and technical support for the National Security Council to encourage the establishment of a national entity overseeing and coordinating the implementation of security sector reform under the leadership of the Presidential Security Adviser, while continuing engagements with international partners and the United Nations country team to enhance collaboration in the transition context. On 16 May, the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator and the Presidential Security Adviser endorsed a joint action plan, outlining key milestones for the finalization of a national security vision and policy framework to be implemented by September 2024. From 15 March to 12 April, MONUSCO supported the Congolese National Police in Kinshasa in evaluating its five-year reform plan, including by facilitating a national forum for police representatives from all 26 provinces. The evaluation highlighted the need for sustainable and predictable financing of police reform and provincial focal points to raise awareness of security sector reform and foster local ownership.

51. From 6 to 20 April, MONUSCO supported the third phase of an outreach campaign for the recruitment of young women into FARDC in the eastern provinces through targeted events in Goma, Bunia and Bukavu. As at 30 April, the defence forces had met their target recruitment of 3,000 young women over a three-year period. Overall, women make up 3 per cent of FARDC (estimated at around 150,000 elements). MONUSCO also facilitated two concurrent five-day workshops, from 27 to 31 May in Kinshasa, to strengthen the capacity of heads of police and military schools.

52. On 23 and 24 April, MONUSCO partnered with a civil society organization to initiate an online campaign for 130 youth representatives from all 26 provinces, aimed at raising awareness in four local languages of security sector reform in the country and MONUSCO support.

Support for the justice sector and the fight against impunity

53. MONUSCO continued to support the strengthening of the justice sector, including through the implementation of the United Nations Joint Justice Reform Support Programme, which constitutes a key transition tool for the Mission's tasks on the rule of law. From 20 March to 31 May, with the Mission's support, hearings of the Uvira Court and judicial inspections of the Congolese National Police detention facilities in South Kivu, North Kivu and Ituri led, respectively, to the regularization of 52 detainees, the release of 123 detainees and the transfer of 248 others to the judicial competent authorities. From 4 to 6 June, a judicial inspection and an open day for local judicial institutions were supported in Mahagi, Ituri Province, to reinforce the accountability of the judiciary.

54. MONUSCO also continued to provide technical and financial support to the judicial authorities in the fight against impunity for international crimes, which led to the prosecution and conviction on 24 May of nine ADF members for crimes against humanity, including sexual violence and war crimes perpetrated in October 2022 in Maboya, Beni territory, North Kivu. They were sentenced to between 10 years' and life imprisonment. Around 50 victims, including 11 girls and 4 boys, participated in the hearing and were allocated compensation for damages. From 7 to 12 April, an investigation mission into alleged crimes against humanity and war crimes was carried out in the Kitutu locality in Mwenga territory, South Kivu, with accounts heard from 80 victims. From 1 April to 6 June, the Mission supported capacity-building for 90 judicial actors, including 14 women, on digital investigation, criminal

analysis and international investigation techniques in Bukavu, Beni, Goma and Bunia, with a view to establishing the first digital investigation cell within the general military prosecution's office.

55. Over the reporting period, the population in the 10 priority prisons increased to 29,362 (28,578 men and 784 women, including 642 juveniles), with 77 per cent in pretrial detention. MONUSCO continued to advocate for the speedy trial of cases to reduce the impact of prolonged and irregular detentions. MONUSCO also continued efforts to enhance prison security, for instance in the Kinshasa and Goma prisons, which operate at 975 and 1,145 per cent capacity, respectively, through training, improved surveillance, early warning systems and intelligence. This contributed to avoiding major prison security incidents in the past year, despite prison overcrowding.

56. In the light of the Mission's disengagement from South Kivu, MONUSCO facilitated a joint mission from 22 to 28 March led by the Ministry of Justice. The delegation assessed prison conditions, evaluated MONUSCO support and reflected on ways to ensure the sustainability of the gains achieved during the Mission's presence following its withdrawal.

57. MONUSCO continued to strengthen the corrections system and the fight against radicalization and violent extremism in prisons by providing technical and logistical support, including for prison intelligence and security, surveillance and radio communication systems, with a view to developing partners' competencies. On 27 March, MONUSCO handed over the Kabare high security block in South Kivu, which has a holding capacity of 112 prisoners, as part of its support for efforts in the fight against impunity.

58. In support of prison reforms, in March, MONUSCO supported the establishment of computer training centres in eight priority prisons, in Makala, Beni, Bukavu, Bunia, Goma, Kabare, Kalemie and Uvira. The donation of 60 computers completed the activity, along with training for 53 personnel, including 28 women.

VIII. Gradual, responsible and sustainable withdrawal

A. Update on implementation of the disengagement plan

59. On 30 April, MONUSCO ceased its operations in South Kivu, in line with phase 1 of the joint disengagement plan. Only the uniformed personnel required to provide security for United Nations personnel, facilities, convoys, installations and equipment will be maintained until the end of June. As at 3 June, MONUSCO had completed the withdrawal and repatriation of 2,227 troops from South Kivu despite challenges related to insecurity and road conditions.

60. During the reporting period, two bases were handed over to FARDC, the Bunyakiri base on 19 April and the Kavumu Airport base on 25 April. However, in the context of other security priorities and limited resources, the sustained deployment of national security forces to locations previously secured by MONUSCO has proven challenging. MONUSCO also transferred all of its infrastructure at Kavumu Airport, including the weather station, air traffic control and firefighting capabilities, to the Congolese authorities to ensure the continuation of safe airport operations. Throughout the disengagement process, MONUSCO adhered to stringent environmental protocols upon which all transferred or closed bases underwent environmental clean-up.

61. On 21 May, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Head of MONUSCO met Mr. Lutundula to discuss the Mission's disengagement, taking stock of the progress made and the

challenges ahead, including the importance of increasing the deployment of the Congolese National Police and FARDC to the bases transferred to the Government, as well as providing adequate resources for the implementation of the South Kivu transition road map.

B. Implementation of priority collaborative actions and joint programmes

62. MONUSCO, together with the Congolese authorities, United Nations agencies, funds and programmes and other key partners, further integrated planning and joint programming in support of the transition process.

63. At the provincial level, the United Nations country team conducted an analysis of its mandates, capacities and operational presence in South Kivu to tailor its support for the Congolese authorities following the withdrawal of MONUSCO from South Kivu. On 26 April, the South Kivu integrated provincial transition team, co-chaired by the Governor, the MONUSCO head of office and representatives of United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, validated a transition road map after three months of consultations. On 6 May, the final road map was transferred to the joint technical secretariat of the United Nations and the Government for validation, covering four priority areas: protection of civilians and security, including civilian-based unarmed protection mechanisms; strengthening of State authority; support for the disarmament, demobilization, community recovery and stabilization programme; and operations and logistics. The reviewed road map was submitted to the joint working group on 21 May for political endorsement.

64. In parallel, the United Nations support plan for the transition in South Kivu, which identifies leading agencies for each task, was also completed and harmonized with the road map, and will be implemented over a one-year period until 30 June 2025.

65. The United Nations system and partners initiated discussions with the Government to develop a comprehensive unarmed approach to the protection of civilians following the withdrawal of MONUSCO from South Kivu. In this context, the United Nations Population Fund and the international non-governmental organization Nonviolent Peaceforce developed a new programme for social cohesion and community violence reduction in South Kivu, supported by the Peacebuilding Fund. MONUSCO was extensively consulted and involved in the preliminary needs assessment, leveraging its knowledge and past experiences.

66. Alignment with the MONUSCO disengagement and transition was also integral to the planning process for the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework for 2025–2029, including the priorities and results of the Framework validated on 31 May, which focused on tackling the root causes of conflict, development deficits and transformational policies and reforms.

C. Update on integration and resource mobilization

67. While the mobilization of funds in support of the transition remains a challenge, the Peacebuilding Fund allocation for the Democratic Republic of the Congo for 2024 was confirmed at the level of \$15.5 million, of which \$8 million will support transition priorities in South Kivu. Building on lessons learned from the disengagement of MONUSCO from South Kivu, the integrated transition team discussed ways to support the provincial integrated transition teams in North Kivu and Ituri and developed a resource mobilization strategy for the transition.

IX. Mission effectiveness

A. Mission performance (military, police and civilian personnel)

Military component

68. As at 3 June, MONUSCO had deployed 10,530 troops, 7.69 per cent of whom were women, and 469 United Nations military experts on mission, 23 per cent of whom were women – against an authorized strength of 13,500 troops and 660 United Nations military experts on mission. During the reporting period, MONUSCO established three standing combat deployments and conducted 554 day patrols, 3,916 night patrols, 553 long-range patrols and missions, 896 joint patrols and 665 escorts. There were no aerial reconnaissance operations, owing in part to an expanded no-fly zone because of armed groups targeting United Nations aircraft on several occasions.

69. In line with its Action for Peacekeeping Plus commitments, MONUSCO conducted evaluations of 24 military units. A performance improvement plan was developed for each unit to implement specific improvement measures.

70. The number of engagement platoons remained at 13, representing 2.4 per cent of the total strength of the Force. Engagement platoons conducted 197 activities, spanning from civil-military to outreach projects and including 61 targeted patrols, compared with 173 activities during the previous reporting period.

71. The percentage of women among the Mission's military staff officers and military observers increased from 22 per cent to 23 per cent, compared with the previous reporting period. Contingent female participation also saw an increase, from 6.68 per cent to 7.69 per cent.

Police component

72. As at 31 May, the MONUSCO police component had deployed 1,554 personnel from 32 contributing countries, comprising 1,228 formed police personnel from eight formed police units (including 215 women) and 326 individual police personnel (including 100 women). The overall performance rating of individual police officers decreased by 2 percentage points to 80 per cent compared with the previous reporting period. This decline can be attributed to the evaluation of new individual police officers who were in the first quarter of their deployment and the departure of former individual police officers who had obtained high scores due to their extensive experience during long-term deployment in the Mission.

73. Formed police units conducted 2,961 quick-response interventions, 158 escorts, 1,468 patrols, 311 joint patrols with individual police officers, 19 joint patrols with the Congolese National Police, 134 joint patrols with individual police officers and the Force, 120 joint patrols with individual police officers, the Congolese National Police and the MONUSCO Force, 10 long-range patrols and 69 patrols around camps for internally displaced persons.

Civilian component

74. As at 31 May, 2,320 civilian personnel (25.7 per cent women), including 308 United Nations Volunteers (50 per cent women) and 38 government-provided personnel (42 per cent women), were serving with MONUSCO.

B. Comprehensive Planning and Performance Assessment System

75. MONUSCO continued to implement the Comprehensive Planning and Performance Assessment System. Data generated against the Mission's results framework also informed the assessment of the disengagement from South Kivu Province and the associated discussions on the accelerated transition process. This assessment helped to consolidate data on the human rights situation as well as protection hotspots and informed the discussions of the provincial integrated transition team, notably on the requirement to sustain civilian alert networks in areas from which the Mission is withdrawing.

C. Strategic communications

76. During the reporting period, MONUSCO amplified its strategic communications, highlighting and explaining its disengagement from South Kivu. Through widespread coverage on the Mission's social media channels, with live tweeting of base transfer ceremonies, video explainers and infographics, extensive efforts were made to enhance the transparency of the disengagement process and to prevent possible disinformation. Media were invited to every base transfer. Three field visits and four press briefings were organized for international and national journalists.

77. Following five training sessions for trainers on the MONUSCO disengagement and disinformation, through a cascade process, awareness-raising on the dangers of fake news was provided to 500 young influencers (including 230 women) in Bukavu, Goma and Kinshasa.

78. The Mission disputed disinformation campaigns concerning collusion with armed groups that used a range of tactics, including echo chambers, conspiracy theories, doctored videos, photographs and targeted group attacks. MONUSCO responded with pre-bunking content and has worked with influencers to disseminate factual and triangulated information. Knowing that disinformation is spread widely via WhatsApp, the Mission started a WhatsApp channel in April, which has garnered more than 71,000 subscribers in less than two months, to disseminate verified information.

D. Serious misconduct, including sexual exploitation and abuse

79. In line with the Secretary-General's zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse, MONUSCO continued to enhance its preventive efforts, including outreach and training activities and engagement with troop-contributing countries, local communities and humanitarian organizations.

80. The Mission sustained its efforts to ensure that survivors receive adequate medical and psychological support in a timely manner and in accordance with the victim assistance protocols established with service providers, including the United Nations Children's Fund and the United Nations Population Fund.

81. From 10 March to 31 May, MONUSCO recorded 15 allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse that had taken place between 2005 and 2024 involving four United Nations civilian staff members, two police personnel and nine military personnel currently or previously deployed to MONUSCO or the United Nations Observer Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The cases involving military personnel are pending completion of an investigation by troop-contributing countries. The Office of Internal Oversight Services is investigating the cases involving police and civilian personnel.

82. The MONUSCO Force updated its directives and orders to strictly enforce sexual exploitation and abuse prevention measures. More than 420 routine patrols were conducted in Goma, Beni, Bukavu and Bunia to reinforce compliance with standards of conduct. The police component led six specialized sexual exploitation and abuse training programmes for individual police officers and formed police unit personnel. Overall, 600 police personnel received awareness-raising training on sexual exploitation and abuse.

83. As part of its efforts to manage misconduct-related risks, MONUSCO carried out a thorough risk assessment in collaboration with the community-based complaint network. The assessment covered the entire area of operation and was aimed at identifying and addressing potential risks. On the basis of the assessment findings, the Mission is currently focused on developing measures to mitigate the identified risks and ensure the timely implementation of such measures.

84. Owing to the Mission's withdrawal from South Kivu, there has been an anticipated surge in reported allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse that occurred in previous years, mainly from 2015 to 2020, as complainants realize that complaints need to be reported before the Mission's closure. To that effect, the Mission put in place appropriate measures to receive and assess the allegations. The Mission is collaborating with the protection from sexual exploitation and abuse coordinators to ensure a swift transfer of certain reporting mechanisms following the withdrawal of MONUSCO.

85. In response to the rise in reported cases, MONUSCO is taking steps to ensure that the victims receive the necessary support, in coordination with the Senior Victims' Rights Officer. Additional efforts have been put in place to prevent new cases from occurring.

X. Safety and security of United Nations personnel

86. During the reporting period, MONUSCO registered 297 security and safety incidents. These affected 78 United Nations personnel, including 14 women. They are divided as follows: 167 armed attacks, 67 crime-related incidents, 29 civil unrest cases and 34 cases of hazards.

87. In North Kivu, MONUSCO continued to maintain the mitigation measures implemented following the anti-MONUSCO demonstrations in July 2022, including restrictions on movement and the use of unmarked vehicles. MONUSCO convoys were fired at on several occasions, including by non-State armed group members and uniformed subjects. On 4 April, the MONUSCO Force's blocking positions north of Sake were fired upon, causing MONUSCO troops to withdraw from those positions and return to Sake. In addition, there were a total of 13 cases of MONUSCO units or personnel being fired upon and 9 recorded cases of stone-pelting of MONUSCO vehicles or convoys, or obstruction of the latter.

88. Meanwhile, MONUSCO continued to support the judicial authorities in investigating and prosecuting suspected perpetrators of crimes against peacekeepers. On 9 April, the Congolese judicial authorities interviewed six MONUSCO staff members as witnesses in relation to the attack on a MONUSCO convoy at Kanyaruchinya locality in Nyiragongo territory on 7 February 2023 by alleged M23 elements.

XI. Observations

89. I note the formation of the new Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo that will take on the urgent task of addressing the pressing challenges facing the Congolese people, in particular the deterioration of the security situation in the eastern provinces. I welcome the appointment of Judith Suminwa Tuluka as the first female Prime Minister, together with 17 women as part of the Government, which marks a milestone in the promotion of women in key positions in national institutions. Progress on key governance and security reforms remains critical, and I reiterate the readiness of the United Nations to support the Congolese authorities in their efforts to place the country on a path towards sustainable peace, stability and development.

90. I condemn the events of 19 May and the attempt to destabilize the democratic institutions in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and call upon the Congolese authorities to prosecute, in a manner consistent with national and international law, those involved and investigate accusations of arbitrary arrests and reported killings following these events.

91. I am deeply alarmed by the territorial expansion of M23, the continued intensification of conflict in North Kivu and the spillover already affecting parts of South Kivu. I urge M23 to withdraw fully from all occupied areas and abide by the provisions of the Luanda road map and international law. I am equally concerned about the recent expansion of ADF and the significant increase in civilian casualties linked to the group's activities in North Kivu and Ituri. I strongly condemn the despicable acts of violence committed by ADF and other armed groups in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo and reiterate my call upon all Congolese and foreign armed groups to unconditionally lay down their arms.

92. Continued attacks on displacement sites, together with the proliferation of weapons within those sites and restrictions of humanitarian space, are of great concern. In this context, I condemn in the strongest terms the indiscriminate attack on 3 May on the camps for internally displaced persons in Lac Vert and Mugunga and express my deepest condolences to all the victims and their families. I call on all parties to immediately stop targeting civilians, respect international law and take the measures necessary to preserve the civilian nature of sites for internally displaced persons. I remain committed to supporting judicial investigations opened by Congolese authorities in cases of attacks against civilians.

93. While national and regional efforts to address the situation in the eastern provinces are commendable, they must be redoubled if they are to bring peace. I remain deeply concerned about the risk of the imminent, fully fledged regionalization of the conflict in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. The sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Democratic Republic of the Congo must be respected. I strongly urge countries of the region to put aside their differences and play a constructive role towards peace and security in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. I reiterate my call for all stakeholders to fully engage in the Luanda and Nairobi processes and reaffirm the determination of the United Nations to support ongoing efforts to de-escalate regional tensions and find lasting political solutions.

94. The international community must also continue to support regional peace efforts, including through support for the SADC Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which can contribute to creating an enabling environment for the implementation of regional initiatives. The United Nations is committed to providing support in a manner that prioritizes political solutions to the conflict and is consistent with its human rights due diligence policy on United Nations support to non-United Nations security forces. In the context of preparations for the forthcoming report requested by the Security Council by 28 June 2024, enhanced coordination and

information-sharing between the SADC Mission and MONUSCO are essential to deconflict operations and mutualize efforts for the protection of civilians. Collective support is instrumental in creating conditions for meaningful dialogue and lasting political solutions to the current crisis.

95. I commend the initiative of the Government that has led to the signing of an agreement to cease hostilities between several armed groups operating in Ituri. This agreement constitutes an important milestone to address insecurity in Ituri, although underlying challenges remain, including long-standing root causes of intercommunal tensions. I call on all signatory groups to respect their commitments and take steps to build mutual trust. I encourage the Congolese authorities to take measures to enable the implementation of the agreement, including through the deployment of additional security forces and the operationalization of the disarmament, demobilization, community recovery and stabilization programme.

96. I am deeply troubled by reports of MONUSCO assets being targeted by sophisticated weapons systems and condemn the recent series of attacks on MONUSCO positions in and around Goma and Sake. I recall that attacks against peacekeepers may constitute a war crime and I urge the Congolese authorities to uphold their responsibility to ensure the safety and security of United Nations personnel and installations.

97. I welcome progress towards the timely withdrawal of MONUSCO from South Kivu and also welcome the measures taken by the Government to strengthen its presence, including the simultaneous deployment of its defence and security forces. I call on relevant partners to provide the financial support necessary to ensure that United Nations agencies, funds and programmes and relevant stakeholders, who will remain in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, continue to support the peace and stabilization efforts of the Government while consolidating the gains achieved during the Mission's presence.

98. MONUSCO remains committed to an accelerated drawdown. I encourage the Congolese authorities to advance the implementation of the national disarmament, demobilization, community recovery and stabilization programme and forge consensus on a national vision for security sector reform. Effective and responsible security and defence forces are needed to reduce violence affecting civilians and allow the Government to assume full responsibility for the protection of civilians in areas from which MONUSCO has withdrawn or will be withdrawing.

99. The protracted and complex humanitarian crisis requires a stronger and better coordinated international response. The persistent lack of funding restricts humanitarian assistance amid unprecedented needs. Greater investments and efforts are urgently required to address conflict drivers and operationalize the peace-humanitarian-development nexus and durable solutions for internally displaced persons. To this effect, I welcome the progress made in the planning process of the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework for 2025–2029, an essential reference to guide future cooperation between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the United Nations system in the context of the MONUSCO transition and disengagement.

100. I firmly condemn any act of sexual exploitation and abuse by United Nations personnel and reaffirm my commitment to zero tolerance for such incidents. MONUSCO civilian, troop and police contingents and the United Nations country team will continue to enhance preventative and response measures and strengthen survivors' assistance.

101. I wish to express my gratitude to the Special Representative for her determined leadership and persistent efforts and to all MONUSCO personnel, members of the

United Nations system, troop- and police-contributing countries and the Office of the Special Envoy for the Great Lakes for their continued efforts towards lasting peace and stability in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

