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# Prioritization and Sequencing of Security Council Mandates: The Case of MONUSCO

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STIMSON

On November 15, 2022, the International Peace Institute (IPI), the Stimson Center, and Security Council Report organized a workshop to discuss the mandate and political strategy of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO). This discussion was part of a series of workshops that examine how the activities included in peace operations' mandates can be better prioritized, sequenced, and grounded in a political strategy. This was the fourth consecutive year in which these partners convened discussions in support of the mandate negotiations on MONUSCO. The meeting note was drafted collaboratively by IPI, the Stimson Center, and Security Council Report. The meeting note summarizes the main points raised in the discussion under the Chatham House rule of non-attribution and does not necessarily represent the views of all participants. The project is funded with the support of the German Federal Foreign Office and the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs.

## Introduction

The UN Security Council is expected to renew the mandate of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) in December 2022. The upcoming negotiations among council members will unfold against the backdrop of renewed fighting between the Armed Forces of the DRC (FARDC) and the M23 rebel group. And while several regional diplomatic initiatives are underway, the security and humanitarian conditions continue to worsen in the eastern provinces of the DRC, with persistent threats to human rights and the protection of civilians.

In this context, the International Peace Institute (IPI), Security Council Report, and the Stimson Center co-hosted a roundtable discussion on November 15, 2022, to discuss MONUSCO's mandate renewal. This roundtable offered a platform for member states, UN officials, civil society stakeholders, and independent experts to share their assessments of the situation in the DRC in a frank and collaborative manner. The discussion was intended to help the Security Council make more informed decisions with respect to the prioritization and sequencing of MONUSCO's mandate and the mission's strategic orientation and actions on the ground.<sup>1</sup>

Participants agreed that MONUSCO's strategic vision and priority tasks are still relevant to the UN's overall engagement in the country. They also emphasized that the current mandate provides the mission with appropriate guidance to pursue the strategic direction provided by the Security Council, but some areas need to be refined for the mission to better address the ongoing crisis and new priorities. The mission will likely need to balance the following issues over the next mandate cycle:

- Strengthening MONUSCO's capabilities to conduct proactive, robust, and mobile protection efforts in eastern DRC;
- Bridging the expectations gap on the protection of civilians by communicating what MONUSCO can achieve under its mandate as well as the limits of MONUSCO's partnership with the FARDC;
- Establishing a constructive dialogue between MONUSCO and the East African Community's regional force to deconflict and coordinate operations on the ground while encouraging compliance with international humanitarian law and international human rights law;

<sup>1</sup> UN Security Council Resolution 2612 (December 20, 2021), UN Doc. S/RES/2612.

- Supporting the government's efforts to build national capacity to implement its Demobilization, Disarmament, Community Recovery and Stabilization Program (P-DDRCS);
- Capitalizing on its good offices to coordinate and harmonize the Luanda and Nairobi processes;
- Expanding civic engagement in the formal political process and making the process more inclusive; and
- Working with regional partners to lay the groundwork for balanced bilateral agreements fostering long-term sustainable economic cooperation.

## Conflict Analysis

The DRC's political, security, and humanitarian situation has rapidly deteriorated with the resurgence of the M23 in eastern DRC and its advances on Goma. Multiple regionally based diplomatic initiatives are underway to address the continued insecurity caused by fighting between the FARDC and the M23 and other armed groups in the eastern provinces. The deteriorating situation comes at a particularly sensitive moment for the country as general elections approach in 2023, MONUSCO is preparing for its gradual withdrawal, and there is deep public resentment toward the mission, reflecting broader frustrations with the UN and the government after more than two decades of the mission's deployment.

## Political Dynamics

The revitalized M23 insurgency in eastern DRC propelled the country to a new level of political fragility and seized much of the region's attention in 2022. The movement's reemergence has been driven by both domestic and international factors. It also precipitated a more aggressive posture by the FARDC in eastern DRC, as well as a breakdown in diplomatic relations between the DRC and Rwanda

after a period of gradual improvement.

The resurgence of armed group activities prompted a flurry of regional diplomatic initiatives. Since April, the East African Community (EAC) has been overseeing a two-track process referred to as the Nairobi process. The first track includes political dialogue between the Congolese government and armed groups, facilitated by an EAC-appointed mediator, former Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta. Despite the EAC's call for more inclusivity, the M23 rebel group has been expelled from the different rounds of talks following the resurgence of fighting in April 2022.<sup>2</sup>

The second track of this regional process includes the deployment of a regional force to neutralize the M23. Following President Félix Tshisekedi's request for support in addressing the resurgence of the M23, the EAC authorized the deployment of a regional force to eastern DRC in August 2022. The regional force is envisioned to comprise 6,500 to 12,000 troops with a mandate to "contain, defeat and eradicate negative forces" in four Congolese provinces: Haut-Uélé, Ituri, North Kivu, and South Kivu. Burundian troops were deployed to South Kivu on August 15<sup>th</sup> as the first contingents of the regional force; Kenya deployed soldiers to North Kivu in September 2022, followed by Uganda in November.<sup>3</sup> The regional force is deployed for an initial period of six months, after which the EAC will reevaluate its mandate.<sup>4</sup>

Meanwhile, the chairperson of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR), Angolan President João Lourenço, initiated a tripartite dialogue (the Luanda process) to ease tensions between the DRC and Rwanda. A first round of talks was convened on July 6<sup>th</sup> amid tensions over allegations that Rwanda is backing the M23, followed by a meeting between Presidents Tshisekedi and Paul Kagame, facilitated by French President Emmanuel Macron, in New York last September. The escalation of fighting between the M23 and the FARDC in October 2022 nevertheless stalled efforts to normalize relations between

<sup>2</sup> "DRC: M23 Rebels Absent as Peace Talks with Rebel Groups Continue in Nairobi," *Africanews*, April 25, 2022. The M23 was also not represented in the third inter-Congolese dialogue convened in Nairobi from November 28 to December 6, 2022. See: David Coffey, "Inter-Congolese Dialogue Opens as East Africa Community Seeks to End DRC Rebel Activity," *RFI*, November 30, 2022.

<sup>3</sup> South Sudan has also pledged to deploy troops under the EAC regional force. Koffi Sawyer, "Can the East African Community Stabilise Eastern DRC?" Institute for Security Studies, November 1, 2022.

<sup>4</sup> East African Community, "DRC President Presides over Signing of Agreement Giving Greenlight to the Deployment of the EAC Joint Regional Force," September 9, 2022.

## Rwanda and the DRC.<sup>5</sup>

While these high-level processes are welcome avenues for political dialogue, participants in the workshop regretted that efforts to systematically bring the Congolese population into these formal dialogues remain limited. Civil society organizations in Ituri and the Kivus had limited roles during the Nairobi process's early stages. The sensitive preelection context also disincentivized the Congolese government from publicly communicating about the nature of ongoing diplomatic initiatives. This has contributed to confusion, misperceptions, and a lack of public awareness of the peace processes.

These developments are unfolding in the context of preparations for the country's next general elections, which are scheduled for December 2023.<sup>6</sup> The 2023 electoral process will mark a "new critical stage" in the DRC's journey to democratic transition and stabilization.<sup>7</sup> Seeking a second term in office, President Tshisekedi is committed to delivering his pledge to bring about stability in the east, including by resorting to foreign assistance in the form of the EAC joint force. Many participants expressed concerns that heightened tensions around the elections would complicate the search for a political solution and the prospects of political engagement with the M23.

## Security Situation

The security situation in the DRC's eastern provinces has rapidly deteriorated in recent months due to persistent violence by armed groups against civilians and the resurgence of fighting between the FARDC and the M23. The M23's operations have accelerated since March 2022, culminating in the group's spread throughout parts of North Kivu and its contestation for control over the town of Rutshuru. These advances have effectively cut off the provincial capital of Goma from other parts of North Kivu, and in November

2022 the M23 threatened to launch attacks directly on Goma.<sup>8</sup> Multiple participants in the workshop highlighted that the increased fighting, combined with MONUSCO's resulting shift in operations, has negatively impacted the mission's efforts not only to protect civilians but also to ensure the safety and security of its own personnel.

The M23 has been accused of committing widespread abuses against civilians, including deliberate killings and indiscriminate shelling, among other possible war crimes.<sup>9</sup> Both the M23 and the FARDC continue to use heavy and explosive weapons, routinely attacking civilian infrastructure, including health centers and schools, and causing civilian casualties. While clashes between the FARDC and the M23 have preoccupied national and international attention, other armed groups operating in eastern DRC, such as the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) and the Cooperative for the Development of the Congo (CODECO), continue to attack civilians and internal displacement camps.

The resurgence of fighting has also exacerbated humanitarian and socioeconomic conditions. Since October 20<sup>th</sup>, over 188,000 people (primarily women and children) have been displaced due to the threat posed by the M23 in Rutshuru.<sup>10</sup> Rising food prices and shortages resulting from the deteriorating security situation further threaten the lives and livelihoods of millions.

## Public Perceptions

Anti-UN sentiment among the Congolese population has risen throughout 2022, punctuated by violent demonstrations during the summer in the cities of Goma, Beni, and Butembo in North Kivu.<sup>11</sup> Persistent violence against civilians has fueled public perceptions that the mission is not effectively addressing the threat of armed groups despite its two-decades-long presence in the country. Public anger especially rose following

5 The Luanda mini-summit held on November 23<sup>rd</sup> resulted in the two countries agreeing to normalize diplomatic relations and reactivate the joint verification mechanism to address allegations. Neighboring countries present in the talks, including Rwanda, also signed a cease-fire agreement demanding that the M23 withdraw from its positions. See: "Congo's M23 Rebels Ask for Dialogue after States Declare Ceasefire," *Reuters*, November 26, 2022.

6 "Congo Schedules Presidential Elections for Dec 2023 amid M23 Unrest," *Al Jazeera*, November 26, 2022.

7 UN News, "New Mission Chief Points to Opportunities ahead of 2023 Election in DR Congo," March 30, 2021.

8 International Crisis Group, "CrisisWatch: November Alerts and October Trends," November 2022.

9 Human Rights Watch, "DR Congo: Resurgent M23 Rebels Target Civilians," July 25, 2022.

10 Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect, "Atrocity Alert No. 326: Democratic Republic of the Congo, Myanmar (Burma) and Mali," November 16, 2022.

11 "5 Killed as Anti-UN Protesters Spread in East DR Congo," *France24*, July 26, 2022.

statements from UN officials conceding the limits of MONUSCO's mandate and ability to defeat the M23 insurgency, sparking protests demanding the immediate withdrawal of the mission.<sup>12</sup>

The rise of anti-MONUSCO sentiment speaks to the gap between populations' expectations of MONUSCO and the limitations it confronts in delivering on its protection of civilians (POC) mandate. Some participants claimed that this expectations gap partly comes from a lack of general understanding of MONUSCO's mandate. In addition, participants were concerned that the current preelection context is exacerbating the tendency of political actors to scapegoat MONUSCO for reasons of political expediency, including by spreading disinformation. Some Congolese politicians have also blamed the mission for the government's failure to fulfill its responsibilities to provide security or public services.

## Extension and Restoration of State Authority

Participants acknowledged that these recent developments reflect deeper governance and socio-economic issues with local, provincial, national, and regional dimensions. According to one participant, despite some progress on governance reforms, the government of the DRC is failing to fulfill its basic functions and the restoration of state authority is necessary to address underlying challenges. One point of discussion was the government's new attempt to address ex-combatants' grievances while preserving the agency of victims of armed group violence during the reintegration process. The new Demobilization, Disarmament, Community Recovery and Stabilization Program (P-DDRCS) breaks with previous disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) efforts by decentralizing decision making to provincial and local authorities and fostering the active participation of civil society.<sup>13</sup> This new strategy is also important in the context of the renewed M23 insurgency, as one of

the public grievances put forward by M23 combatants is that they have not benefited from DDR efforts since 2013.<sup>14</sup>

Participants also acknowledged the regional economic dimensions of the conflict. They questioned whether bilateral agreements signed between the DRC and neighboring countries following the DRC's ascension to the EAC enhance sustainable economic cooperation or fuel competition over the control of natural resources in the DRC. In the past, the DRC's neighbors have repeatedly undermined stability in the east by arming proxy fighters to access and extract mineral wealth such as cobalt, coltan, and gold. Some participants thus feared that increased regional integration under the EAC framework, including through the deployment of foreign troops in the DRC, may fuel turmoil by allowing regional powers to continue pushing their own agendas.

## MONUSCO's Transition

Recent developments threaten to slow down MONUSCO's withdrawal process. The mission and the Congolese government, in consultation with relevant UN organizations, developed a progressive, phased, and context-specific joint transition plan in September 2021 with eighteen benchmarks to guide progress through 2024. MONUSCO has been flexible in adapting this plan based on its continuous assessment of security needs, particularly given concerns about the protection of civilians, which remains one of the core benchmarks.<sup>15</sup>

Following the wave of violent anti-MONUSCO demonstrations this summer, the government of the DRC urged the mission to review and accelerate the implementation of the joint transition plan. MONUSCO took note of this request, which it hopes will serve as an opportunity to "identify... concrete steps that must be taken, as a matter of priority, to create the minimum-security conditions for the Mission's responsible,

<sup>12</sup> "DRC Expels Monusco Spokesman over Deadly Anti-UN Protests in Eastern Kivu Provinces," *RFI*, August 4, 2022.

<sup>13</sup> Carine Tope, "DRC: MONUSCO Supports the New Demobilization Program for Ex-combatants," MONUSCO, April 1, 2022.

<sup>14</sup> Sam Mednick and Claude Muhindo Sengenya, "Fourth Time Lucky? The Challenge of Demobilising Rebels in DR Congo," *New Humanitarian*, November 16, 2022.

<sup>15</sup> Given the conditions on the ground, a residual complement of twenty-nine MONUSCO staff and a temporary force presence will remain in Bendera to support the UN country team. See: UN Security Council, *United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo: Report of the Secretary-General*, UN Doc. S/2022/709, September 22, 2022, para. 68.

conditions-based exit from the three conflict-affected provinces that constitute the focus of its operations.”<sup>16</sup> MONUSCO recently convened a meeting with the prime minister of the DRC to begin reassessing the transition plan in light of recent developments and to move the discussion in a positive direction.

## Prioritizing and Sequencing MONUSCO’s Mandate

Ultimately, participants agreed that MONUSCO’s mandate remains relevant and that its strategic priorities still reflect the areas where the mission can make the most impact.<sup>17</sup> It was acknowledged, however, that certain parts of the mandate need to be adjusted and refined to adapt to the changing political and security dynamics. In particular, the mandate renewal was perceived as a good opportunity for the Security Council to articulate how the mission will engage and coordinate with the EAC regional force and to define guiding priorities and principles. Participants stressed the value of the council’s continued unity behind MONUSCO’s mandate and emphasized the importance of leveraging member states’ influence in support of ongoing diplomatic initiatives. Many participants agreed that it is still premature to change mandate language on the transition plan but emphasized that key messages need to be reinforced.

### Support to Diplomatic Processes

Many participants agreed that the mission should prioritize leveraging its good offices to ensure the coordination and harmonization of the Nairobi and Luanda processes, with some encouraging MONUSCO to act as a bridge builder between the two high-level diplomatic initiatives. While participants acknowledged the existing shuttling efforts between Angolan Foreign Minister Tete António and the mission, as well as various meetings between Kenyatta and his Angolan counterparts, to improve coordination and cross-fertilization between the two complementary initiatives, they also noted room for improvement. At one of the

most recent summits on the margins of the 2022 UN Climate Change Conference (COP27), the possibility of merging the processes was explicitly acknowledged. MONUSCO should work to provide consistent support on the ground and connect diplomatic initiatives with the broader international community.

Some participants also identified a discrepancy between the national focus of MONUSCO’s mandate and the regional dynamics of the conflict in eastern DRC. They encouraged the mission to anchor its strategy in a more regional outlook that accounts for cross-border challenges. MONUSCO could leverage its good offices to further integrate and harmonize efforts between different actors operating in the region, in line with an overarching regional strategy.

The discussion also stressed the imperative of unified support from the Security Council and the DRC’s international partners for a clear political direction spanning different diplomatic, military, and demobilization initiatives. One participant emphasized the need to ensure that the ongoing military responses—whether by the EAC joint force, the FARDC, or the MONUSCO force—are connected to political and diplomatic processes. Participants acknowledged that there may be opportunities to ensure that the political strategy drives the military component, not the reverse.

This discussion raised questions on how to engage politically with the M23 and other armed groups. Wary that concessions to the M23 would undermine the government’s negotiating stance toward other armed groups, a participant insisted that there was no room for negotiation and called for a more robust MONUSCO mandate to fight the insurgency. Others suggested that MONUSCO and other partners invest in operationalizing Kinshasa’s new DDR strategy, which is still in its early phase of implementation. Congolese authorities need to be supported in their efforts to establish a mechanism that addresses some of the armed groups’ underlying grievances and offers alternatives to the battlefield through a transition to civilian life. In that regard, MONUSCO could use its good offices to encourage regional and national partners to

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., para. 91.

<sup>17</sup> UN Doc. S/RES/2612, para. 24.

clarify the links between the Nairobi political track, the EAC regional force's mission, and the new demobilization strategy.

## Protecting Civilians while Responding to the Deteriorating Security Situation

Participants highlighted that the upcoming mandate renewal could help reinforce MONUSCO's response to deteriorating security conditions. The protection of civilians (POC) is the first of MONUSCO's strategic priorities, and participants emphasized that the current mandate provides a comprehensive list of detailed POC considerations to inform the mission's operations. Although there may not be a need to make significant revisions to the mandate text, participants highlighted three political and operational realities the Security Council and MONUSCO will need to grapple with.

First, participants emphasized that MONUSCO will need to confront heightened expectations to protect civilians during this period of crisis. One participant called for MONUSCO to shift toward a more robust posture against armed groups as part of its continued support to the government's protection efforts. Other participants disagreed with this approach, noting that MONUSCO already has a comprehensive mandate to protect civilians and that UN peacekeepers are facing heightened risks to their own security and protection. As the FARDC and regional partners are likely to conduct more offensive operations in the same environment where MONUSCO operates, the mismatch between the population's expectations about MONUSCO's protection role and the limitations the mission faces will only grow. To this end, participants highlighted that discussions about POC should shift away from revising mandate language toward supporting the mission in operationalizing these priorities.

Second, participants grappled with how to address the rise in threats to civilians during a period when the mission is undergoing a transition. With the mission's reduced geographic presence and the gradual transfer of its mandated tasks, participants called upon the entire UN system in the DRC to embrace its role in protecting civilians. They

highlighted that the mandate helps align the roles of MONUSCO and the UN country team on core protection issues but urged the council to reinforce MONUSCO's role in coordinating all UN entities in the country that contribute to protection. Ultimately, it was acknowledged that responsibility for protecting civilians rests with the Congolese government, whose capacities need to be enhanced throughout the transition process.

Third, MONUSCO is still facing capability shortfalls that impact its ability to fulfill its protection mandate. Specifically, the Ukrainian aviation assets that were withdrawn from the mission following the Russian invasion of Ukraine in early 2022 have not been replaced. Participants highlighted that the UN Secretariat and some UN member states (including the DRC) have made direct pleas to their partners to help the mission urgently replace these capabilities.

## Cooperation with Regional Forces

Participants highlighted that the upcoming MONUSCO mandate will likely need to lay out strategic and operational considerations for how the mission will engage with the EAC regional force. At the political level, some participants urged Security Council members and mission leadership to work closely with EAC member states to ensure that the international diplomatic process guides the operations of both the mission and the regional force. Multiple speakers expressed concern that robust operations against armed groups like the M23 may end up superseding coordinated political engagement, resulting in operations that only stem the short-term manifestations of violence and not their underlying drivers.

At the operational level, multiple participants noted that the mandate will likely need to detail the parameters of operational coordination and information sharing between MONUSCO and the EAC regional force. They highlighted that council members will also need to discuss the extent to which MONUSCO will provide operational or logistics support to the regional force. Multiple speakers also mentioned that the mandate should reinforce the UN's obligation to respect the Human Rights Due Diligence Policy when coordinating

with the regional force and to lay down markers for the EAC regional force on international human rights law, international humanitarian law, and civilian harm mitigation. One speaker mentioned the language from the council's resolution on UN operational support to the G5 Sahel as a possible model.

## Strategic Communications

Concerned that the growing mistrust and deteriorating relationship between the population in eastern DRC and MONUSCO pose a serious challenge to mandate delivery, participants agreed on the urgent need to improve strategic communications. Strategic communications should aim to close the expectations gap by improving understanding of the mission's mandate and limitations among civilian populations. Communications efforts should focus on reconnecting the mission to the population, acknowledging that the recent resurgence of the M23 brings back trauma from a decade ago. Some participants were optimistic that MONUSCO could regain the population's trust, as it did in 2013 following the successful campaign against the M23. Others noted that expectations will also have to be managed with regards to MONUSCO's robust posture against armed groups.

Overall, participants agreed that improving public perceptions of MONUSCO through better strategic communications should be a priority both for the mission and for the government of the DRC, thus requiring collective efforts.

## Stabilization and the Restoration of State Authority

MONUSCO's mandate should continue to prioritize security sector reform (SSR) and disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) processes as key parts of the mission's stabilization efforts while clearly reaffirming the government's responsibility and ownership in these domains. Concerned by the lack of progress on SSR and DDR despite the mission's decades-long efforts, participants stressed that a sustainable transition process

hinges on these core priorities. They urged Congolese authorities to demonstrate more political will to assume core security responsibilities in eastern DRC. To this end, the mission should ensure that the government takes the lead. For example, the mission can support the professionalization of the FARDC and the police through its good offices but should let the government lead the process and avoid "the trap of creating new expectations that it can't fulfill."

Support to the rule of law and the 2023 elections also intersected with discussions about accountability and the restoration of state authority. One participant urged the Security Council and the mission to provide strong support to the launch of transitional justice mechanisms in the DRC, which are still in their infancy. MONUSCO should ensure that the national roadmap on transitional justice developed by the joint committee is anchored in international human rights standards.<sup>18</sup>

Recognizing the fragile political landscape and the sensitive transition context, participants acknowledged that MONUSCO's role in the upcoming elections should be limited to technical assistance and good offices. Overall, participants stressed that much of the UN's work on the rule of law, SSR, DDR, and stabilization depends on the effective integration of efforts by MONUSCO and the UN country team. Mandate language could reinforce the importance of integration to make sure these efforts are sustainable.

## Adjustments to the Transition Process

Overall, many participants agreed that MONUSCO should welcome the call from Congolese authorities to reevaluate the transition plan while preserving its underlying principles and approach. The call for revision provides an opportunity for the Congolese government, MONUSCO, and relevant partners to jointly focus on concrete steps toward the realization of the eighteen benchmarks. Their focus should be on ways not only to strengthen joint evaluation with the Congolese authorities but also to include provincial voices and

<sup>18</sup> A series of popular consultations were launched in March by the joint committee charged with developing a national roadmap on transitional justice. See: Nada Al-Nashif, "Update on the Democratic Republic of Congo," statement to the Human Rights Council, Geneva, Switzerland, March 29, 2022.

civil society in the assessment of the situation on the ground. Despite mandate language on this, civil society has only had a limited role in formal national processes for monitoring the transition plan.

Multiple participants nevertheless insisted that discussions on fine-tuning the transition plan should preserve the plan's approach to ensure the process is driven by the evolving situation on the ground. In particular, they warned that the mission's withdrawal hinges on progress on POC and the restoration of state authority, which should be the main focus of joint efforts by the UN and Congolese government (corresponding to benchmarks 1–4).

Another element of the discussion was the need for all partners, including the Congolese government, to better communicate the transition plan to demonstrate genuine commitment to full withdrawal amid the rise in anti-MONUSCO and anti-UN sentiment.

## Conclusion

The renewed turmoil in eastern DRC could jeopardize the conduct of the 2023 elections and undermine the political stability of the DRC. While MONUSCO is only one stakeholder in the broader constellation of national, regional, and international partners supporting efforts to address the conflict, it continues to play an invaluable role in protecting civilians and providing good offices. Workshop participants agreed that MONUSCO's strategic

vision and mandated priorities continue to steer UN engagement in the right direction. However, they highlighted several areas requiring revision in the mandate language to strengthen the mission's contributions in the coming months:

- Strengthen MONUSCO's capabilities to provide proactive, robust, and mobile protection in eastern DRC;
- Bridge the expectations gap on the protection of civilians by communicating what MONUSCO can achieve under its mandate as well as the limits of MONUSCO's partnership with the FARDC;
- Establish a constructive dialogue between MONUSCO and the EAC regional force to deconflict and coordinate operations on the ground while encouraging compliance with international humanitarian law and international human rights law;
- Support the government's efforts to build national capacity to implement its Demobilization, Disarmament, Community Recovery and Stabilization Program (P-DDRCS);
- Capitalize on the mission's good offices to coordinate and harmonize the Luanda and Nairobi processes;
- Expand civic engagement in the formal political process and make the process more inclusive; and
- Work with regional partners to lay the groundwork for balanced bilateral agreements fostering long-term sustainable economic cooperation.



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