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THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

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**MESSAGE TO MINI-SUMMIT OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
THE GREAT LAKES REGION
Kampala, 7-8 September 2012**

*Delivered by Mr. Abou Moussa, Special Representative and Head of the United Nations
Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA)*

I am pleased to send greetings to this important summit of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR), the third such meeting to focus on the situation in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) in the past two months.

I thank President Museveni for his stewardship in convening today's gathering. And I commend you, as leaders of the region, for your concerted efforts to find a way forward to resolve the situation. I also deeply appreciate the efforts of Roger Meece, my Special Representative and head of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO).

I remain deeply concerned about the security and humanitarian conditions in eastern DRC, resulting from the activities of the 23 March (M23) mutineers, as well as other national and foreign armed groups. The humanitarian situation remains dire, with over 226,000 people displaced in North Kivu alone in the past several months while over 57,000 Congolese have crossed into Rwanda and Uganda. The worsening security and humanitarian conditions continue to pose a threat to stability in the wider Great Lakes region.

While there has been a lull in military activities by the M23 in North Kivu since July, the situation remains very fragile, and I call for the group's immediate and complete cessation of all destabilizing activities. I once again condemn the violence and serious human rights violations committed by the M23, as well as other armed groups, against

civilians, which need to be thoroughly investigated by relevant institutions and the perpetrators held accountable.

I am deeply concerned at the continuing reports of external support to the M23, and call for an end to all such support without delay. Military deterrence alone will not resolve the current crisis. I strongly encourage continued and strengthened high-level dialogue at the bilateral and regional level aimed at finding a durable solution including through addressing the underlying causes of the conflict.

This Summit takes place at a critical juncture. I hope that further progress will be made in developing a roadmap of initiatives to address the situation in eastern DRC and look forward to the outcomes. The United Nations stands ready to provide support, as appropriate, in cooperation with the African Union and regional and international partners.

Building on your discussions, I intend to convene, on 27 September in New York, a High-Level meeting on the situation in eastern DRC in the margins of the General Assembly. This event would provide a platform for further dialogue aimed at reinforcing regional efforts to find a peaceful resolution to the crisis in eastern DRC.

In this connection, the Under-Secretary-General of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Hervé Ladsous, will be visiting the region from 9 to 15 September in preparation for the High-Level Meeting. I look forward to the participation of the ICGLR Member States and international partners at the meeting.

I wish you great success at today's important meeting and look forward to building on the results.