



## **SADC CONDEMNS RECENT ATTACKS ON THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY MISSION IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO BY THE M23 ARMED GROUP**

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) has noted with concern the recent attack on the Southern African Development Community Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (SAMIDRC) from Wednesday, 22 January 2025, by the M23 armed group.

SADC unequivocally condemns this act of aggression by the M23 operating in the Eastern DRC adding that such actions undermine the sovereignty, territorial integrity, and peace and security of the DRC and the SADC region.

The pursuit of territorial expansion by M23 only exacerbates the already existing dire humanitarian and security situation in the Eastern DRC, which has left thousands of people dead and forced millions in North Kivu, particularly women, children, the elderly and persons with disabilities, to flee their homes.

The rebel group M23 attacked the SAMIDRC in Goma to which SAMIDRC retaliated and successfully repelled the armed group. SADC commends the actions of the brave men and women from SAMIDRC who sacrificed their lives for the Region.

The actions of the M23 armed group contravenes the Nairobi Peace Process and is a clear violation of the agreed Ceasefire brokered through the Luanda Process led by His Excellency João Manuel Gonçalves Lourenço, President of the Republic of Angola in his capacity as the African Union Champion for Peace and Reconciliation in Africa. We, therefore, call on all parties in the conflict to adhere to their obligations in the Ceasefire, calling for immediate cessation of hostilities and atrocities perpetrated by M23 as well as unconditional withdrawal from all occupied positions.

SADC further encourages all parties to the conflict in Eastern DRC to comply with the terms and conditions of the existing peace agreements and engage through dialogue for everlasting peace, security and stability in the DRC and the Region.

SADC reaffirms its unwavering commitment to continue supporting the DRC in its pursuit of safeguarding its independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity, as well as sustainable peace, security, and development. To this end, the SAMIDRC will remain resolute in supporting efforts aimed at addressing the unstable and deteriorating security and humanitarian situation prevailing in the Eastern DRC.

We call upon the international community, including the United Nations, to join us in denouncing these unlawful actions by the M23. SADC Region reiterates its solidarity with the people of the DRC and commends them for resilience against brutal actions perpetrated by the M23 and other armed groups.

SADC wishes those who were injured a speedy recovery and sends its heartfelt condolences to the countries and families of the deceased.

**ISSUED BY THE SADC SECRETARIAT**

**25<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2025**

**GABORONE BOTSWANA**