

GREAT LAKES CONTACT GROUP COMMUNIQUE

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The following information was released by the U.S. Department of State:

Meeting in Washington D.C. on November 16, the Great Lakes Contact Group welcomed the Joint Communique issued in Nairobi on November 9th, 2007, by the Government of the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Government of the Republic of Rwanda. This Communique lays out a common approach to end the threat posed to peace and stability in both countries and in the region by illegal foreign and domestic armed groups, in particular former Rwandan Armed Forces and the Interahamwe militia responsible for the 1994 genocide in Rwanda. Among their commitments, both governments agreed to refrain from making statements in support of, and from providing assistance to, any armed group in the Congo. The Contact Group affirmed the importance of building upon the positive momentum of the Communique.

Contact Group members emphasized that both of the concerned governments must now move quickly to implement the actions agreed in their Communique. Noting that the Communique acknowledges the importance of the international community in supporting the two signatories' implementation of the Communique, the Contact Group voiced its intent to cooperate fully in this effort.

The Great Lakes Contact Group is composed of representatives of Belgium, France, The Netherlands, the United Kingdom, the United States, the European Union, and the United Nations. The MDRP/World Bank participated as an observer. The Contact Group meets regularly to address political, diplomatic, security, and development issues in the Great Lakes region of Africa.

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