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PRESS RELEASE

The Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and MONUSCO sign a disengagement plan for the withdrawal of the Mission

Kinshasa, 22 November 2023 : On Tuesday, 21 November, in Kinshasa, the Congolese Vice Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Francophonie, Mr Christophe Lutundula, and the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Head of MONUSCO, Ms Bintou Keita, co-signed a note on the accelerated, gradual, orderly and responsible withdrawal of MONUSCO from the DRC, containing a plan and a timeline for the complete disengagement of the Mission in the country.

Last September at the United Nations, the Congolese Head of State, H.E. Mr Félix Antoine Tshisekedi Tshilombo, and his Vice Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Francophony, Mr Christophe Lutundula, reiterated their country's desire to accelerate the withdrawal of MONUSCO from the DRC starting in December 2023.

Following the Security Council Presidential Statement of 16 October, this disengagement plan was developed by joint technical teams bringing together Government and MONUSCO counterparts. The plan will be jointly implemented in three phases, with the support of the DRC's international and national partners.

"We want this withdrawal to be a model that will give us greater international respectability and help us improve our country's image. This document contains a plan for the disengagement of the MONUSCO Force, and a plan for transferring tasks and responsibilities from MONUSCO to the Government of the DRC. We also foresee a quarterly evaluation mechanism to enable regular stocktaking of the situation and minimise any sudden disruptions that could lead to a security vacuum," Mr Christophe Lutundula said.

"We thank our Congolese partners for signing this disengagement plan, which marks the end of a long process. We remain determined to work with the Congolese authorities towards an accelerated withdrawal of MONUSCO that consolidates the gains made during the Mission's presence in the DRC. We have worked together in a constructive spirit of collaboration and mutual respect to achieve this objective set by the Security Council», the Head of MONUSCO, Ms Bintou Keita, declares.



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After the Mission's departure, the United Nations system will continue to support the development efforts of the Congolese Government and people, with the aim of sustaining peacebuilding and security gains in the country.