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Office of the Spokesperson and Media Relations

## PRESS RELEASE

### **MONUSCO denounces attack on helicopter which wounds two UN peacekeepers in North Kivu**

**Kinshasa, February 02, 2024:** A United Nations Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) helicopter carrying out a medical evacuation came under fire from suspected M23 armed group elements near Karuba in Masisi territory in North Kivu. The attack wounded two United Nations (UN) peacekeepers, one of them seriously.

The aircraft landed in Goma, where the two peacekeepers received medical treatment. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Head of MONUSCO, Ms. Bintou Keita, hoped for a speedy recovery for the wounded.

Ms Keita strongly condemned the attack on an aircraft bearing the United Nations emblem, which comes almost exactly one year after a similar incident resulted in the death of a South African peacekeeper. She also condemned the deliberate assaults on civilians since the intensification of fighting in North Kivu. Ms. Bintou Keita reiterates her call to the M23 to cease hostilities and unconditionally disarm in compliance with the terms of the November 23, 2022 Communiqué.

The M23 have also recently issued threats against MONUSCO and its peacekeepers. The Head of MONUSCO recalled that attacks against UN peacekeepers can constitute a war crime. MONUSCO calls on the Congolese judicial authorities to bring the perpetrators of this unacceptable act to justice. The UN Mission calls urgently for an end to such attacks, which hampers its ability to protect civilians and implement its mandate in the DRC.