



**COUNCIL OF MINISTERS OF DEFENCE AND
SECURITY OF THE EASTER AFRICAN REGION**

22TH AUGUST 2014

KIGALI, RWANDA

OPENING REMARKS BY THE CHAIRPERSON

- ✓ Honorable Ministers of Defense and Security,
- ✓ The Distinguished Chiefs of Defense Staff, IGPs,
- ✓ Representatives of Ministries of Foreign Affairs,
- ✓ The Director EASFCOM,
- ✓ Excellences Members of the Diplomatic Corp,
- ✓ Distinguished Experts,
- ✓ Members of the press,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. Let me take this opportunity to once again welcome you all to Kigali, Rwanda and to our 17th Ordinary Policy Organs Meeting.

2. Allow me to congratulate all our Member States for a successfully concluded 3rd Extraordinary EASF Assembly of Heads of State and Government meeting that was held on 28 June 2014, in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea on the sideline of the 23rd African Union Summit. All the Council Decisions made since the 2nd Extraordinary Assembly of Heads of State and government in January 2011 were all approved by the Assembly. This marks the end of one phase and the beginning of another in the life and history of the EASF, as we become Fully Operational to address security of our people.

3. I would like on behalf of Council of Ministers, to commend the good work done by the Committee of Chiefs of Defence Staff and our Experts Working Group, for the successful meeting they have held over the last four days. Their recommendations are aimed at implementing the decisions of our Heads of State and

Government, toward addressing the security challenges faced by are respective countries and the region. I also take this opportunity to thank the Inspectors General of Police and representatives of Ministries of Foreign Affairs for having participated in these Policy Organs Meetings.

4. Our countries and the region continue to face security challenges. Intra-State conflicts, Asymmetrical threats mainly caused by negative forces that include FDLR, Al Shabab, LRA, ADF-NALU and terrorism among others, impede peace that our people deserve and an obstacle to our countries' development. Insecurity in one country affects all of us. Our collective action under EASF is therefore essential.

5. The Committee of Chiefs of Defence Staff meeting in the last two days has come up with concrete recommendations to Council of Ministers to be able to confront the security threats in our region. They have successfully conducted a Force Pledging Conference as per the directives of our Presidents. The have pledged troops, Police and Civilians to deploy in a Peace Support

Operations at a short notice of 14 days. I congratulate our respective countries for making this commitment to put a peacekeeping force at the disposal of protecting our region.

6. The financing recommendations under the established peace fund will be carried forward. I will call upon our member states and international partners to contribute generously when we approach them. I will also request our respective parliaments to ratify the EASF Agreement so that we are ready to meet our set timeline of Full Operating Capability by December 2014.

7. It is encouraging that the international community has taken a move to support the African endeavor after we took the initiative to face our own security challenges. I thank our partners for that support.

8. It is my sincere hope that, thanks to our collective efforts and commitment, the region will make further progress in its quest for lasting peace, security and stability.

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen

9. As you all recall, we have made a decision based on a sense of urgency and the need to ensure that this important pillar of our Peace and Security Architectures indeed fully operational by Dec 2014. Building on the progress made, we are compelled to do more in the next three months. In concrete terms, this means more energy and focus, dedication and commitment of more resources.

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen

10. We are at the precipice of realizing a dream we have held for the last ten years. This is the final and critical stage of the preparation process towards attainment of FOC 2014. We will be conducting a Command Post Exercise at the end of the year. This Exercise should set the stage for the validation and our declaration of attaining FOC by Dec 2014.

11. We have all illustrated a high level of commitment and dedication throughout the process, and I am

confident that our joint efforts will definitely give us favorable returns.

12. With these remarks, I declare the Council of Ministers of Defence and Security of the Easter African Region Meeting Open.

Thank you for your attention.