Burundi has confirmed that on 4th March 2023, will deploy troops to the East African Regional Force in the troubled Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), in line with the roadmap set by the EAC military Chiefs recently in Nairobi, Kenya. All other EAC troops contributing Partner States will shortly deploy within the agreed time frame.

The deployment is part of the implementation of directives by the 20th Extra-Ordinary Summit of EAC Heads of State held on 4th February 2023, in Bujumbura, Burundi. This was followed by a meeting of the EAC Chiefs of Defence Forces/Staffs (CDF/CDS) on 9th February 2023 in Nairobi, Kenya; and Mini-Summit on Peace and Security in Eastern DRC held on the sidelines of the 36th African Union Summit on 17th February 2023, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

The timeline of constituting and deploying the EAC Monitoring and Verification Mechanism (EAC-MVM); to monitor and verify the ceasefire and withdrawal by all Armed Groups, was set for 28th February 2023.

EAC Partner States have since identified members of the EAC Monitoring and Verification Mechanism (EAC-MVM) who will join other existing mechanisms such as the Ad-hoc Verification Mechanism and Expanded Joint Verification Mechanism in Eastern DRC.

Burundian President and EAC Chairperson, Évariste Ndayishimiye, on 2nd March 2023, held a consultative meeting with the Commanders of the Verification Mechanisms, with a view to review the progress and set up a joint verification framework in line with the directive of the Mini-Summit on Peace and Security in Eastern DRC held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

EAC’s quest to find a sustainable solution to the restoration of peace and security in Eastern DRC has received support from across the globe. During the just concluded 36th African Union (AU) Summit, the African Union Peace and Security Council committed funds to support EAC peace-making efforts in Eastern DRC, from the African Union Peace Fund. Other development partners and global bodies have also committed to continuing supporting the process.

The EAC says it remains committed to the utilization of existing regional and global frameworks to address the security crisis; and reiterates the EAC Heads of State’s call for immediate ceasefire, withdrawal of all armed groups in eastern DRC and embracing of dialogue.