

The United Nations stabilization mission in Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO) will not leave Kivu and Ituri, said the special representative of the UN Secretary General in the country, Ms. Bintou Keita

Ms. Keita made the observations before the UN Security Council on Wednesday, underlining that MONUSCO is preparing for a withdraw from Kasai region and that it thinks it can do the same in Tanganyika next year.

However, she further underlined that, the deeply rooted and complex conflict dynamics in Kivus and Ituri mean that they are not yet at the stage of considering the withdrawal of MONUSCO from these provinces, given the extremely serious security challenges, “protection and humanitarian aid that remain there”,

“To silence the guns, there is no military solution, but political strategies”, Ms. Keita underlined.

According to her, these strategies must take into account and respond to numerous social, economic and governance needs.

“Underlying challenges such as land tenure insecurity and improving transparency and accountability in the mining sector also need to be addressed”, she said.

If an important guarantee of military and police security is necessary to maintain a space for political solutions, the main element of the effort must be political, insisted the special representative who recalls the need to fight against networks at national and local levels that support the activities armed groups and profit from a war economy.

Moreover, according to Ms. Keita, the recent accession of Congolese President Felix Tshisekedi to the presidency of the African Union (AU) constitutes another important opportunity.

“This presidency not only symbolizes the return of the DR Congo to the concert of nations, but it must also make it possible to show the commitment of the country and the region to silence the guns once and for all in this part of the world,” said the special representative.

“It is essential that we support the commitment of President Tshisekedi and his presidency of the African Union in order to firmly and definitively anchor the Great Lakes region in a dynamic of peace, security and inclusive and sustainable regional

economic development” Added the head of MONUSCO

Ms. Keita has pledged to redouble efforts alongside the UN Secretary-General’s Special Envoy for the Great Lakes region.