

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) has committed to securing peace and facilitating the return of displaced people in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), according to Elias Magosi, the organization's executive secretary.

Speaking during a meeting with the governor of North Kivu, Magosi emphasized the SADC force's comprehensive mandate. "This SADC force comes with a mandate to secure this eastern part of the DRC," he declared. This, he added, includes guaranteeing the safe return of displaced individuals to their homes and supporting the vital work of humanitarian organizations.

Magosi expressed confidence in the force's track record, stating, "The SADC force has never failed any peace mission." He reiterated the organization's flexibility in tackling all aspects of the conflict, ensuring, "If this requires offensive forces, or diplomatic or political efforts which are already being made today, all these efforts converge to ensure peace in the East of the DRC."

The SADC deployment, which began in December 2023, will be augmented further. Magosi confirmed the upcoming arrival of additional troops to complement the already existing contingent. He also clarified the role of the UN peacekeeping mission, MONUSCO, stating, "When MONUSCO withdraws, the United Nations is committed to working closely with SADC to ensure this transition. We will be working closely with MONUSCO. We work with other actors, notably the United Nations."

Magosi's visit and the promised reinforcements signal SADC's increased commitment to stabilizing the volatile eastern DRC region. The success of this mission hinges on effective troop deployment, collaboration with existing forces, and addressing the underlying causes of the conflict. The people of eastern DRC can anticipate intensified efforts towards security and peaceful resettlement in the months to come.