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AFRICA/ RD CONGO - "Integrate Framework Agreement for Congo" say NGOs

Kinshasa (Agenzia Fides)- The appointment of a special high profile UN envoy with power to mediate at the domestic and regional level; the inclusion civil society and Kinshasa 's principal donors partners in the proposed oversight mechanism; and the tying of donor aid to clear and agreed benchmarks and genuine collaboration between government, donors, and civil society. These were the proposals put forward by a number of NGOs (including Jesuit Refugee Service) to integrate a Regional Framework Agreement to put an end to conflict in the east of the Democratic Republic of Congo, signed yesterday Sunday 24 February, in Addis Ababa. The agreement, signed in the presence of UN Secretary General , Ban Ki-moon, by 11 countries of the Great Lakes region, entails strategic revision of the UN Mission in Congo (MONUSCO, with 17,000 troops) which will be integrated with a brigade of 2,500 men with peace-enforcement tasks (MONUSCO 's mandate is only peace-keeping).
In a statement sent to Fides, the NGO stresses the need to find "a new approach, a peace process based on the principles of justice". "Past peace deals have often closed their eyes toward impunity, allowing war criminals to be integrated into the army, police and security services. This has undermined the legitimacy of the peace process and the reputation of the security services, including the judiciary.". Bearing this in mind NGOs call for greater efforts for negotiations with armed groups , "which avoid the impunity which characterized previous agreements" and an agreement to increase regional economic integration to guarantee stability in the area. (L.M.) (Agenzia Fides 25/2/2013) "

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