



Promoting Peace, Security,
Stability and Development in the
Great Lakes Region

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PRESS RELEASE BY THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE FORUM OF PARLIAMENTS OF THE GREAT LAKES REGION (FP-ICGLR), AMBASSADOR DR. DEO MWAPINGA, FOLLOWING A MEETING WITH RT HON. MUSSA ZUNGU, SPEAKER OF THE PARLIAMENT OF TANZANIA

Dar es Salaam, 30 January 2026

The Secretary General of the Forum of Parliaments of Member States of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (FP-ICGLR) expresses his **profound appreciation to the National Assembly of the United Republic of Tanzania and to the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania, under the leadership of H.E. Dr. Samia Suluhu Hassan, President of the United Republic of Tanzania**, for agreeing to host the **Women's Parliamentarian Conference for a peaceful and developed Great Lakes Region**, which is scheduled to take place from 2 to 5 November 2026 in Dar es Salaam.

This decision exemplifies the leadership, regional solidarity, unwavering support, and genuine commitment of the Government of Tanzania to advancing the agenda of women, peace, security, and good governance in the Great Lakes Region. It should be recalled that Tanzania, through the Dar es Salaam Declaration on Peace, Security, Democracy, and Development in the Great Lakes Region in 2004, then-involving a total of 11 countries at that time, laid the foundation for the



establishment of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR), which today comprises 12 Member States, and thereafter its parliamentary Forum, the FP-ICGLR.

The Great Lakes Region is an area with significant potential for sustainable development opportunities, yet it continues to face multifaceted challenges that disproportionately affect its populations, particularly women.

Women in the Great Lakes Region continue to face numerous challenges, including underrepresentation in decision-making mechanisms, protracted armed conflicts, insecurity, gender-based violence, economic barriers, as well as social and cultural norms/stereotypes that curtail women's voices from being fully heard.

While progress has been made in legal and policy reforms in some Member States, significant implementation gaps persist. Low levels of women's parliamentary representation in certain parts of the region continue to undermine inclusive approaches to peacebuilding, security, and development.

It is in this context that the 15th *Ordinary Session of the Plenary Assembly* of the FP-ICGLR held in Luanda, Angola, in April 2025, under the theme "*Inclusive Leadership and Collective Decision-Making in the Great Lakes Region*", resolved to organize a dedicated conference for women parliamentarians aimed at enhancing their engagement in leadership and decision-making processes across the Region.

Accordingly, the **Women's Parliamentarian Conference on Peace, Security, and Development in the Great Lakes Region** will serve as a significant platform for member states to share best



practices, exchange experiences, and collectively address challenges through transparent dialogue and realistic strategies.

Through this conference, the first ever to be held in Tanzania and the first to be organized by the FP-ICGLR, it will provide an opportunity for women parliamentarians and leaders to achieve the following objectives:

- Learning best practices for increasing women's representation and influence in parliaments.
- Share legal and policy experiences in protecting women's rights.
- Establish regional networks for parliamentary diplomacy on peace, security, and conflict prevention.
- Strengthening the capacity of women parliamentarians to fully participate in decisions shaping the future of our countries.
- Adopt the Dar es Salaam Declaration on women's protection, peace and security, and development, which will be accompanied by an action plan for its implementation.

The FP-ICGLR is vital inter-parliamentary mechanism for the Member States of the Great Lakes Region, its role is to serve as a common platform for dialogue, solidarity, and joint action in addressing regional challenges.

Through the **FP-ICGLR**, we ensure that representative groups, including women parliamentarians, youth, and special groups, are provided with space, voice, and capacity building opportunities to fully participate in addressing the challenges facing our societies. Parliaments are



uniquely positioned to bridge national policies with regional agendas, advancing the common good of our citizens.

It is important to recognize that **no country from another part of the continent or the world will be able to solve the Great Lakes Region's challenges on our behalf.** The solution to address our challenges must be rooted in regional cooperation, transparent dialogue, and context-responsive leadership.

That is why the FP-ICGLR continues to emphasize parliamentary diplomacy as a vital tool for building sustainable peace, strengthening good governance, and promoting inclusive development. By strengthening cooperation between our parliaments, we lay a solid foundation for addressing the root causes of regional challenges beyond symptomatic measures.

The Secretary General of FP-ICGLR once again expresses his sincere gratitude to the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania for its historic decision to host this conference. He is confident that the conference will serve as a catalyst for positive change, not only for women parliamentarians but for the future of the entire Great Lakes Region.

The FP-ICGLR stands ready to work closely with the Parliament of Tanzania and other member parliaments to ensure that this conference yields effective and lasting results for women, parliaments, and our people.

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