



EASF POLICY ORGANS MEETINGS

MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE OF EASTERN AFRICA CHIEFS OF DEFENCE STAFF BUJUMBURA, BURUNDI

26th OCTOBER, 2016

OPENING REMARKS BY THE GUEST OF HONOUR

The Chairperson of the Chiefs of Defence Staff of the Eastern Africa Region;

Distinguished Chiefs of Defence present
Distinguished Delegates,
The Director EASF Secretariat;
Members of the Diplomatic Corps;
Ladies and Gentlemen;

Welcome to Bujumbura, Burundi for this Ordinary session of Chiefs of Defence Staff of the Eastern Africa Region. Once again, The Republic of Burundi is honored to host this Meeting. I would like to thank all of you for sparing time off your very busy schedules to participate in this meeting. I also take this opportunity to sincerely appreciate the Director, Eastern Africa Standby Force and his team for organizing the meeting.

Distinguished Chiefs of Defence,

As the Chiefs of Defence Staff, your participation in this important meeting has never been more critical than today. This comes at a time when the Eastern Africa region continues to face serious security challenges which require collective and maximum attention.

Conflict remains a painful reality in some parts of the Eastern Africa region. We continue to face the recourse to armed rebellion to further political claims, and other threats, including terrorism, transnational organized crime, piracy, and radicalization activities. We have a collective responsibility to address these issues and to continuously identify and implement workable solutions. As such, we cannot over-emphasize the need to have a robust peace and security mechanism to prevent and resolve conflicts in this region.

Distinguished Chiefs of Defence,

Commendable strides have been made in the operationalization of the Eastern Africa Standby Force. We have at our disposal an instrument upon which we can build to further structural conflict prevention and sustain peace where it has been achieved. On the ground, the region through our individual Member States are showing greater pro-activeness in dealing with current conflict and crisis situations, with encouraging results. I call on all our member States, to lend a helping hand to collectively push the scourge of conflict inflicting misery and suffering on our people into oblivion once and for all.

Distinguished Chiefs of Defence,

Let me now recognize the role of the Friends of EASF and partners for supporting EASF over the years. Your active participation in strengthening EASF is very highly appreciated.

Finally, Distinguished Chiefs of Defence,

With these few remarks, it is now my pleasure and honor to declare the 20th Ordinary Meeting of the Committee of Eastern Africa Chiefs of Defense Staff officially open.

I wish you fruitful deliberations

I thank you.