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Regional Economic Integration Framework Between the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Government of the Republic of Rwanda

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REGIONAL ECONOMIC INTEGRATION FRAMEWORK

BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

AND THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF RWANDA

The Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and the Government of the Republic of Rwanda (Rwanda) (together, "the Participants")

Welcoming the Declaration of Principles signed by Foreign Minister Thérèse Kayikwamba Wagner of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Foreign Minister Olivier Nduhungirehe of Rwanda in Washington, D.C. on April 25, 2025;

Committed to supporting the implementation of the Peace Agreement dated June 27, 2025 between the DRC and Rwanda by preventing illicit trade from fueling violence or funding armed groups and building a future where cross-border cooperation enhances peace and prosperity for both countries;

Recognizing the potential for synergy with continental and regional organizations, including the possibility of revitalizing Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries (CEPGL);

Intending to chart a future of mutually beneficial partnerships, greater connectivity with international and regional economic development initiatives, and investment opportunities across sectors, including in mining, infrastructure, energy, industrial development, agribusiness, public health, and national park management.

Hereby establish a Regional Economic Integration Framework (REIF). The Participants reaffirm that these initiatives are to be carried out in full compliance with the sovereignty, laws, and regulations of each country. In addition to the Areas of Focus described below, the Participants intend that the REIF serves as a living platform that allows the Participants to add new mutually agreeable objectives and initiatives.

I. EXPECTATIONS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE PARTICIPANTS

The Participants affirm their common commitment to promoting peace, regional stability, and sustainable economic development. Rooted in the principles of sovereignty, mutual respect, and regional cooperation, this REIF outlines a shared vision for addressing long-standing challenges and promoting shared prosperity in the Great Lakes region.

As a priority, the Participants seek to combat and progressively eliminate illicit activities associated with the extraction, trade, movement, and processing of mineral resources, which undermine peace, security, and good governance in the region.

Participants recognize that energy and infrastructure development are the preconditions for industrialization, especially in the mining sector, and for uplifting the quality of life of communities.

The Participants aim to cooperate to promote a professional, rules-based, and productive regional economy, particularly with regard to mineral value chains, that benefits the people

of the region above all.

The Participants affirm that each country has full, sovereign control over the exploitation, processing, and export of its natural resources. Each country deserves to receive the appropriate economic returns from those resources through promoting industrialization of the mining sector consistent with the policies and legal frameworks of each country. Each country also stresses that the communities need to benefit from the revenues and other advantages derived from their extraction, processing, and commercialization.

In pursuit of greater transparency and value retention, the Participants intend to work jointly with relevant stakeholders to progressively eliminate barriers – whether reputational, technical, or commercial – that obstruct the direct and lawful export of minerals sourced in the region, notably tin, tantalum, tungsten, niobium, gold, and other minerals. By doing so, the Participants intend to create a conducive environment to attract investment in both countries and in the region.

The Participants recognize both the importance of developing mineral processing and transformation capacity within both the DRC and Rwanda, and the relevance of existing infrastructure and industrial platforms in the region. Building on these complementarities, the Participants undertake to promote a balanced and forward-looking framework for economic cooperation aimed at supporting formal mining activities, strengthening regional value chains, and ensuring the development and responsible management of new infrastructure, particularly in the logistics and energy sectors.

Lastly, the Participants express their intention to identify and promote common areas of cooperation in the Great Lakes region, including cross-border infrastructure, shared industrial zones, cross-border tourism, and transboundary markets, with a view to fostering deeper regional integration and sustainable growth as an anchor for lasting peace.

II. AREAS OF FOCUS FOR REGIONAL INTEGRATION

A) ENERGY

In coordination with neighboring countries in the Great Lakes and informed by the African Union's (AU) Continental Power Systems Masterplan, the Participants commit to the joint development of appropriate energy generation and transmission projects to meet the

needs of the region's residents and industries. The Participants intend to prioritize the financial close of the Ruzizi III hydropower project, as well as the cooperative and sustainable exploitation of methane gas from Lake Kivu for electricity generation and transmission. Both initiatives may benefit from the multilateral governance arrangements of the CEPGL, with the involvement of the Energie des Grands Lacs (EGL) and the International Electricity Company of the Great Lakes Countries (SINELAC). The Participants will also cooperate to ensure increased generation increases electricity access for both industry and households and identify prospects for a regional power pool.

Implementation Measures: In support of this effort, the Participants, in coordination with Burundi, intend to increase clean electricity from Ruzizi III and potentially other sources like additional hydropower projects, methane extraction from Lake Kivu, or new technologies such as small modular reactors to power each countries' households, commerce, and industry, including mining and minerals processing. The Participants, with support from the AU and partners, intend to work towards a regional power pool. Participants seek to increase access to electricity for households, schools, hospitals, businesses, and other institutions and may seek to employ public-private partnerships or joint venture agreements between their state-owned utilities and private sector participants to accelerate outcomes and strengthen operations. The Participants seek to ensure abundant and reliable energy supports local communities and the development and expansion of sectors targeted in the REIF. In furtherance of this shared vision, the Participants intend to implement the following measures, which are intended to be instructive and not prescriptive:

Phase 1: Utilizing existing structures, the Participants, in coordination with Burundi, prioritize taking the necessary measures, including the financial close, to develop the Ruzizi III hydropower project under the Community Investment Code of CEPGL. The Participants begin planning for coordinated exploitation of methane in Lake Kivu for power generation and other uses as outlined in the three relevant existing arrangements between the two Participants. In furtherance of these efforts, the Participants intend to cooperate to engage regional organizations, including CEPGL, private sector actors, and other experts.

Phase 2: The Participants prioritize implementing both the Ruzizi III and Lake Kivu projects, and explore other Ruzizi and Lake Kivu opportunities, including improving governance of Ruzizi I and II, rehabilitating Ruzizi II and pursuing the development of Ruzizi IV and other

power generation projects. The Participants, working with regional stakeholders, explore opportunities for transmission and distribution of electricity and expansion of substations to ensure households and industries have access to affordable and reliable energy.

Phase 3: The Participants, in collaboration with other Great Lakes countries as appropriate, begin feasibility studies on additional opportunities for coordinated investment in energy generation, transmission, and distribution to include the building of appropriate infrastructure for cross-border power sales. The Participants increase electrification of border towns and other communities using interconnected power sources.

B) INFRASTRUCTURE

The Participants intend to cooperate to develop mutually beneficial infrastructure, especially transportation, logistics, and information and communications technology (ICT) infrastructure. The Participants commit to jointly develop passenger and cargo transportation infrastructure and warehouse, port, and market infrastructure and cooperate to attract and leverage private sector investment in infrastructure that enables economic growth in the Great Lakes region. The Participants commit to ensure these efforts connect with the Lobito Corridor, and advance both countries towards greater regional and international transportation, logistics, and ICT connectivity.

1) Transportation Infrastructure and Services:

a) Ground Transport: The Participants commit to enhance ground transportation infrastructure in their respective territories to support overall economic integration and growth and facilitate expansion of trusted communication lines and electricity transmission lines. The Participants will jointly explore and assess the feasibility of options to enhance road infrastructure for the safe and efficient transport of people and goods. The Participants commit to working together with the United States and relevant international partners on future connections to the Lobito Corridor.

b) Water Transport: The Participants commit to prioritize measures to improve passenger and cargo capacity on Lake Kivu, including port infrastructure, and improve passenger safety. Participants commit to revive and reinforce the framework for the 2017 Lake Kivu Integrated Transport Program under the Inter-State Council of Ministers of the Central Corridor to contribute to the reduction of transport costs, alleviate road

congestion, and foster trade and tourism. The Participants commit to facilitate the coordinated use of lake transport infrastructure without undue restrictions and identify and designate official ports of entry and exit, curbing illicit activities via the lake.

c) Air Transport: The Participants commit to develop joint training programs for aviation personnel and the modernization of air traffic control systems. The Participants commit to exploring options that will improve air connectivity to catalyze regional integration, support trade and tourism, and enable safe and efficient movement of people and goods.

2) Trade Facilitation, and Logistics, and ICT Infrastructure: The Participants commit to joint development of trade facilitation, transportation, and logistics, and ICT infrastructure to make cross-border trade and transit faster, easier, more transparent, and more cost-effective. The Participants commit to establish Trade Information Portals for cross-border traders and explore other cross-border digital tools, such as real-time route visibility or cargo tracking, to facilitate transparency and ease of doing business. The Participants commit to implement the World Trade Organization Trade Facilitation Agreement (WTO TFA), the COMESA Simplified Trade Regime (STR), Africa Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA), and relevant provisions and protocols of the agreements establishing CEPGL and East Africa Community (EAC), to facilitate the trade of goods covered by these mechanisms by small-scale cross border traders with simplified customs documents and capacity building, and increase coordination at one-stop border posts (OSBPs) in line with regional protocols, including EAC OSBP regulations. The Participants commit to coordinate to promote consistent and adequate investment in cross-border ICT infrastructure – including through government investments, public-private partnerships, and private sector investment – to support coordination, security and trade initiatives, including aligning with Lobito Corridor connectivity efforts. The Participants intend to coordinate on measures to curb illicit cross-border trade activities.

The Participants may explore expanding trade facilitation reforms to value chains, such as by incorporating mutual recognition agreements to reduce non-tariff barriers and increase trade volumes; establishing joint standards, certification, and export hubs; cooperating on finance, cross-border insurance, and financial technology for smallholders; developing systems for aggregation, storage, cold chain, packaging, processing, and logistics hubs, as applicable; and developing research, extension ,and workforce training opportunities. The

Participants may explore harmonizing sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) standards and other relevant protocols, which are critical for safe cross-border trade.

Implementation Measures: In support of this effort, the Participants aim to increase economic growth in eastern DRC, Rwanda, and neighboring Great Lakes countries by developing reliable access to efficient, well-planned infrastructure and low-cost export corridors linking the region to the major economies of the world, including through the Lobito Corridor. The Participants intend to develop efficient, safe, resilient, and transparent cross-border trade facilitation, logistics, and ICT infrastructure and policies, boosting both countries' economic competitiveness, enhancing market access, and ensuring goods and people can safely and easily move across the border. The Participants intend to ensure physical and digital infrastructure supports other sectors targeted in the REIF. In furtherance of this shared vision, the Participants intend to implement the following measures, which are intended to be instructive and not prescriptive:

Phase 1: The Participants develop a shared way forward on joint transportation, trade facilitation, logistics, and ICT infrastructure, in coordination with regional partners, the private sector, and other experts to identify priority projects. The Participants expand and reinforce existing local government coordination mechanisms for implementing transportation, trade facilitation, logistics, and ICT infrastructure projects, including on Lake Kivu, and accompanying policies and initiatives to enhance the safe, transparent cross-border movement of goods and people. The Participants assess expanding the OSBPs and seek to identify infrastructure investments that support the efficient passage of goods in the region. The Participants develop a road map to reopen the airspace and air transport services between the two countries.

Phase 2: The Participants coordinate to promote consistent and adequate investment in transportation infrastructure – including through government investments, public-private partnerships, and private sector investments – in the Great Lakes region in order to maximize the value generated by special economic zones and other mechanisms created under the REIF. The Participants create trade desks and digital tools, including information portals and digital trade facilitation tools. The Participants promote the development of digital infrastructure, including cross-border fiber links and last-mile connectivity, and coordinate regulatory alignment to ensure that interoperability among telecommunication systems is built into development plans, as appropriate. The Participants consult with the

United States and Lobito Corridor partners on establishing a plan for future connectivity with the Lobito Corridor, and coordinate on potential feasibility studies or other preparatory activities.

Phase 3: The Participants coordinate on attracting and leveraging private sector investment in identified common infrastructure projects that enables economic growth in the Great Lakes region. Informed by the AU's Continental Power Systems Master Plan, guided by considerations of affordability, reliability of electricity, and environmental sustainability, and in consultation with the United States and regional economic bodies, the Participants continuously identify new priority infrastructure projects to enhance cross-border trade, regularize use of digital tools, and achieve more efficient coordination at the border. The two countries participate in joint investment in transportation, trade facilitation, logistics, and ICT infrastructure that allows them and others in the region to more efficiently export goods globally and facilitate travel, including trans-Atlantic direct flights to the Great Lakes region.

C) MINERAL SUPPLY CHAINS

The Participants commit to policies and legal frameworks in the mining sector that enable the growth of industrial mining investment, as well as improved management of an artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM) sector, which is transparent, traceable, and beneficial to local communities impacted by mining activity, whether ASM or industrial. These policies will aim to block the financing networks of armed groups, as well as those which enable any form of regional destabilization or insecurity in the future. Both Participants intend to work in their respective countries and in collaboration with each other to provide clean, regular mineral supply to international markets. The Participants intend to cooperate to address regulatory gaps in cross-border trade. The Participants intend to cooperate to ensure the minerals trade^[1] no longer provides funding to armed groups and to create a world-class industrial mining sector in the region from mine to end-users, delivering significantly more value from the mineral sector for both countries and improving the reputation of the sector. The Participants also commit to formalizing ASM, expanding opportunities for future alternative livelihoods, and undertaking joint initiatives to improve transparency and combat corruption and illicit trade, including by enhancing traceability and professional standards. The Participants intend to ensure better cross-border interoperability, including through enhancing border management, and promote

value sharing, including through industrial development initiatives. The Participants have a shared goal to create the conditions for global market-leading mining and processing firms to invest in the region.

1) Regulatory Initiatives to Improve Transparency and Licit Trade:

a) Preventing Conflict Financing: The Participants acknowledge the imperative of preventing conflict financing through end-to-end mineral supply chains to enhance lasting stability and prosperity in the region. As a foundational step toward deeper cooperation, the Participants commit to identifying, investigating, prosecuting, and excluding from participation any operators, including mining companies and cooperatives, petty traders, traders, and smelters or refiners – regardless of legal form or jurisdiction – who may have contributed to the financing of illicit armed actors, the fueling of regional tensions, or serious breaches of law. The Participants commit to prohibit, prevent, and sanction, including through strengthened law enforcement cooperation, any form of fraud or operation likely to reactivate the networks or dynamics that have historically contributed to inter-State tensions or to instability within affected communities.

b) ICGLR Regional Initiative and Cooperation to Improve Transparency Mechanisms:

The Participants, to build global market and consumer confidence, recommit to actively implementing the OECD Due Diligence Guidance, including Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Supply Chains of Minerals from Conflict-Affected and High-Risk Areas, and the six Tools of the ICGLR Regional Initiative against the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources (RINR), including through full application of the Regional Certification Mechanism, harmonization of relevant national legislation, implementation of a regional database on mineral flows, formalization of the artisanal mining sector, active participation in efforts to improve extractive transparency (including through the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) Standard), and utilization of a joint whistleblowing mechanism. The Participants commit to publish timely incident reports and undertaking appropriate investigations, including through cooperation with the OECD, ICGLR, or other existing international transparency mechanisms. The Participants commit to jointly reviewing, reforming, or, where appropriate, replacing existing regional transparency mechanisms to ensure their credibility, operational effectiveness, and full alignment with international standards and evolving field realities, including in consultation with the private sector and other experts.

c) Partnerships to Strengthen Credible and Transparent Inspections, Licensing, and Certifications:

The Participants commit to strengthen the capacity of their respective licensing and inspecting bodies, including through partnerships with third-party entities, in order to enhance the transparency, quality, and credibility of the regulatory functions in the minerals sector. The Participants commit to support the use of transparent and credible third-parties where appropriate for inspection and validation of mine sites, verification of smelters/refiners, audits, traceable chain of custody systems, and export certifications to improve traceability in the minerals trade from mine site to point of export and enhance transparency to normalize formal cross-border commercial activity. The Participants commit to regularly publish relevant mine inspection, licensing, certification, and mineral trade data on a platform accessible to all supply chain actors and investors. The Participants endeavor to leverage data-driven digital tools, including potentially developing end-to-end digital traceability infrastructure, and explore opportunities for interoperability across different public and private sector platforms across the border.

d) Harmonization of Tax Policies, Prohibition of Harmful Tax Competition, and

Combatting Illegal Levies Collected Locally: The Participants will endeavor to harmonize tax policies – including royalties, levies, and any other form of taxation or fees– to remove incentives for smuggling and to ensure the cross-border minerals trade is licit and economically beneficial to both countries. The Participants commit to refrain from engaging in harmful tax competition practices that could erode their respective tax bases, lead to distortions in the Great Lakes regional market, or undermine the objectives of the REIF. The Participants commit to uphold this commitment in other regional bodies to which they belong, so as to avoid the displacement of fiscal arbitrage practices to neighboring jurisdictions. The Participants also commit to combatting illegal levies collected at the local level.

e) Coordination with International Partners: The Participants commit to working with the United States and other international partners to develop additional regulatory initiatives or reforms necessary to de-risk private sector investment in a cost-effective manner.

Implementation Measures: In support of this effort, the Participants aim to increase economic prosperity through enhanced cooperation on minerals trade, increased cross-border transparency, and elevated global market and consumer confidence. The

Participants further aim to implement reforms that cut armed groups out of the minerals trade and prevent use of minerals to fuel conflict or human rights abuses. In furtherance of this shared vision, the Participants intend to implement the following measures, which are intended to be instructive and not prescriptive:

Phase 1: Each Participant establishes or reviews existing processes and minimum criteria/standards for inspection and validation of mine sites, verification of smelters/refiners, audits, chain of custody tracking, and export certification. A joint technical working group assesses key differences in tax policy that may incentivize smuggling or impede licit trade, including subnational tax rates and structures.

Phase 2: Regulatory bodies of the Participants publish on an accessible platform relevant mine inspection, licensing, certification, including beneficial ownership information, and data on the production, processing and export of mining products. The Participants take measurable steps to develop and/or improve systems for: mine site inspection and validation by the respective national mining authorities and/or designated transparent and credible third-parties; domestic and cross-border chain of custody tracking; audits; mineral export shipment certification; and data management and exchange with each other. The Participants work with third-party due diligence schemes to promote effective scheme governance and enhanced credibility of risk information generated by schemes and accuracy of production from mine sites. The Participants establish requirements for transparent assessment of all mining processors and traders by qualified OECD- and ICGLR-aligned programs. The Participants review and harmonize mining-related tax policies.

Phase 3: The Participants successfully implement the Regional Certification Mechanism and other elements of the ICGLR RINR. The Participants meet and report on performance against commitments to the ICGLR, including conformity to the OECD Due Diligence Guidance, and routinely share information related to mineral trade. The Participants jointly develop harmonized mining-related tax policies that enable legitimate cross-border trade and eliminate opportunities for illicit trade. The Participants maintain control over the minerals trade within their respective countries by requiring trade with authorized traders, mining processors, or other exporters and importers. The Participants publish up-to-date geological data when appropriate to improve transparency and de-risk greenfield investment.

f) Anti-Corruption: The Participants commit to mandating minerals-related transactions occur through, or are documented by, formal financial institutions. The Participants commit to enabling fair competition through consistent and transparent application of laws and regulations. The Participants commit to expanding information sharing on corruption investigations; cooperate on asset recovery; and share information on relevant production, processing, and export statistics. To improve management of revenue collected from the mining sector, the Participants commit to building the capacities and strengthening the independence of internal control and investigation bodies; expanding investigations and audits of relevant entities and services, including state-owned institutions, with the support of independent audit firms; and ensuring local governments receive their full domestic revenue entitlement under the law. The Participants commit to take appropriate legal action against individuals or entities engaging in corruption related to mining-related activities.

Implementation Measures: In support of this effort, the Participants aim to ensure corrupt actors, particularly those who contribute to armed conflict, are excluded from the minerals trade in their respective territories, and local governments receive their fair share of revenue from the mining sector. The Participants further aim to implement reforms that collectively result in the regional minerals supply chain becoming more transparent and traceable, allowing national governments to capture more revenue from mining-related economic activities occurring in their respective territories and enhancing the operating environment for credible investors. In furtherance of this shared vision, the Participants intend to implement the following measures, which are intended to be instructive and not prescriptive:

Phase 1: A joint technical working group with national and sub-national representatives – including law enforcement, security, and financial intelligence units (FIUs) – plans to facilitate cooperation on issues related to corruption and transparency in the mining sector.

Phase 2: The Participants, in accordance with national priorities and processes, draft complementary policies that stifle and deter mineral smuggling schemes. The Participants develop appropriate mechanisms to increase cross-border transparency in the minerals trade. The Participants may also develop or expand agreements with independent auditing firms.

Phase 3: The Participants, in accordance with national priorities and processes, implement appropriate reforms to reinforce the rule of law, expand financial transparency, and bolster investigative structures.

g) Customs and Law Enforcement Cooperation: The Participants commit to better cross-border interoperability, information sharing on mining statistics, economic integration, and enhanced traceability of minerals in accordance with applicable law. The Participants commit to enhance cooperation between their respective customs officials, law enforcement agencies and FIUs to identify the sources of financing for illicit mineral trade, whether such sources are in the informal or formal financial sector, and jointly prevent and combat illicit activities. The Participants commit to investigate and prosecute, and/or cooperate on investigations and prosecutions, and to enhance both Participants' respective efforts to prevent and combat, illicit activities as well as to cooperate with relevant international partners to that effect.

Implementation Measures: In support of this effort, the Participants aim to enact effective measures that prevent smuggling, the spread of contraband, and other illicit activities related to minerals, improving regional economic integration and reducing corruption. The Participants further aim to counter the use of minerals by criminal organizations and armed groups to finance illicit activities, including terrorism. Effective cross-border cooperation amongst law enforcement and FIUs leads to regular information sharing and joint operations, resulting in more successes in combatting crime, and improves both countries' international reputations for adequate money laundering controls. In furtherance of this shared vision, the Participants intend to implement the following measures, which are intended to be instructive and not prescriptive:

Phase 1: The Participants commit to identifying and designating additional OSBPs and providing resources to sustain existing posts. The Participants commit to identifying points of contact to establish cooperation between relevant law enforcement entities, and FIUs, including on Financial Action Task Force (FATF) compliance, with particular attention to the extractive sector.

Phase 2: The Participants engage with external experts for training and support as appropriate to ensure appropriate capacity for personnel, including in-country or jointly, with mutually agreed upon regional or international partners. The Participants' immigration officers, customs agents, and other border enforcement personnel conduct

quality inspection procedures at all border posts, including risk-based screenings (random checks, cargo inspection, secondary questioning) to balance efficiency with security. Oversight mechanisms are established to promote transparency and anticorruption. The Participants' law enforcement officials and FIUs cooperate to prevent and combat illicit activities.

Phase 3: The Participants apply international best practices and standards for joint border cooperation, allowing information sharing to manage cross-border flows collaboratively.

2) Mining and Industrial Policies and Development Initiatives:

a) Mining Policy and Supply Chain: The Participants affirm that developing high-standard industrial mining and processing operations in the region, including subcontractors and other service providers to the industry, is essential to anchor peace and prosperity in the Great Lakes region for the long-term, and accordingly commit to support each other's mining and industrial policy objectives in this regard. The Participants commit to coordinate on a transparent, phased pathway to value addition within both countries building local capacities and maximizing market leverage. The Participants commit to prioritizing predictability and stability in their legal and regulatory regimes to improve the business climate.

b) Structuring Fair Value Sharing in the Regional Minerals Supply Chain: The Participants commit to forging economic linkages that leverage the respective assets of each country with the aim of positioning both countries as global leaders in responsible and ethical mining, processing, and refining. The Participants commit to working with investors to establish mineral processing plants in both countries, including through offtake-linked finance and blended finance vehicles, that support the development of licit chain of custody systems and transparent supply chains that facilitate legal cross-border mineral trade and processing, prioritizing tin, tantalum, tungsten, niobium, and gold. The Participants reaffirm their respective strategic objectives to develop their own mineral processing and refining capacities and to export mineral production directly to international markets. The Participants affirm there is no contradiction between these goals, but rather opportunities for synergy and cooperation that are mutually beneficial if appropriately structured and regulated. The Participants commit to encourage the conclusion of mutually beneficial and transparent arrangements and instruments – such as equity participation, royalties and revenue-sharing mechanisms – that ensure the value

generated through regional processing activities is shared in a fair and balanced manner and promotes equitable returns to the country of origin.

c) Special Economic Zones and Cross-Border Investment: The Participants commit to explore the development of joint cross-border special economic zones with private sector partners for mining and other relevant industries and developing the necessary infrastructure, linkages, and policy environment to ensure they stimulate industrialization and job creation throughout the cross-border value chain. The Participants endeavor to leverage tolling-centers to prevent revenue leakage, automate duty and tax remittances, and deter smuggling. The Participants commit to explore options – such as joint ventures, joint shareholding structures, joint blended finance initiatives, or closer coordination between their respective regulators or state-owned enterprises – to deepen both countries' shared stake in development and stimulate economic growth and promote equitable returns to the country of origin. The Participants commit to ratifying the Rwanda-DRC Bilateral Investment Treaty to stimulate private sector interest, investment, and assurance.

Implementation Measures: In support of this effort, the Participants aim to become an attractive and secure destination for mining investment to spur greater economic development within each country, in line with their respective roles and contributions to the value chain. The Participants further aim to benefit from expanded industrial development, responsible mining practices, improved labor and environmental standards, a high-level of mineral traceability, and a seamless cross-border customs system that allows both countries to benefit equitably from revenue generation through extraction and value-added processing. In furtherance of this shared vision, the Participants intend to implement the following measures, which are intended to be instructive and not prescriptive:

Phase 1: The Participants establish a working group to identify methods to support each other's mining and industrialization policies and develop each Participant's processing capacity, including the role of special economic zones, tagging/tolling facilities or other traceability measures, priority areas for industrial investment, and long-term pathways towards processing in both countries. The Participants will also begin assessing enabling policies needed to support the effort, and the feasibility of options for cross-border investment vehicles. The Participants engage the United States and other international partners, local and international private sector actors, and civil society.

Phase 2: The Participants conduct feasibility assessments to finalize the overarching framework, drawing on the work of other relevant technical working groups and subnational platforms. The Participants facilitate the establishment of cross-border investment vehicles in relation to priority projects to support the overarching framework.

Phase 3: The Participants finalize projects and initiatives of mutual interest, aligned with the principles of peaceful and sustainable economic growth in the Great Lakes region. The Participants may utilize cross-border investment vehicles and engage regional and international partners to channel international investment and assistance towards these efforts.

3) Artisanal Mining, Formalization, and Alternative Livelihoods: Making use of the Participants' national laws and regulations, the OECD Due Diligence Guidance, and the six Tools of the ICGLR RINR, the Participants commit to formalizing and professionalizing artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM) – including through public-private partnerships or partnerships with civil society – in ways that respect delineated boundaries for sites allocated for ASM, prioritize worker health and safety, and adhere to national regulations and mutually agreeable responsible sourcing standards, including OECD Due Diligence Guidance. Each Participant commits to improving mine site operating standards, chain of custody systems, worker health and safety, investment in licit trading systems, and regulated finance to de-risk international supply chains with regard to ASM production. The Participants intend to encourage third parties and investors to formalize ASM and capture ASM-produced materials to adhere to the rule of law; support full supply chain transparency, due diligence, and traceability; and comply with internationally recognized standards to ensure responsible mining and sourcing. The Participants also commit to formalizing artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM), expanding opportunities for future alternative livelihoods, undertaking joint initiatives to improve transparency and combat corruption and illicit trade, including by enhancing traceability and professional standards. The Participants commit to engage with the private sector and other stakeholders to address and mitigate human rights abuses commonly associated with ASM, including child and forced labor, violence against women and girls, hazardous work conditions, and other negative impacts to local communities. The Participants commit to explore partnerships with international partners to improve the global perception of minerals sourced respectively from the DRC and Rwanda.

a. Building Confidence in Cross-Border Transparency and Traceability: The

Participants commit to take reciprocal steps to improve confidence in each other's mineral production and export data and procedures. The Participants affirm the principle of public-private tolling centers – potentially leveraging OSBPs and/or special economic zones – to protect revenue and establish a coordination system to ensure legal transport of mineral commodities. Tolling centers are to be located in both countries to ensure that any unpaid tax and duty is remitted automatically back to the relevant jurisdiction, with oversight by mutually agreed independent verification partners, as a cooperative strategy to combat smuggling. The Participants strive to enhance oversight of the governance of ASM cooperatives to ensure that ASM cooperatives are owned and represented by cooperative members and not subject to undue influence by outside parties.

b. Supporting Local Communities through Transition: Given the economic importance of ASM to local communities, each Participant commits to explore within its own territory ways to support communities that rely on artisanal mining to formalize and professionalize their activities or transition to alternative livelihoods, such as professional small scale mining operations, agribusiness, and other sustainable activities, including by leveraging subnational platforms that can channel these communities' inputs into REIF efforts and by promoting the grouping of artisanal miners into cooperatives as a strategy to facilitate formalization and regulation. The Participants commit to improving economic benefit sharing by ensuring revenues generated from mining-related activities reach local communities, as appropriate, in an open and transparent manner to strengthen community capacity for resilience in furtherance of regional peace and stability efforts.**c. Skills Training to Ensure ASM Supply Chain Actors Benefit from New Job****Opportunities:** The Participants commit to promote skills training for those along the ASM supply chain and other professionalization and skill-building programs that create pathways to ancillary activities or alternative economic opportunities that can provide higher incomes and safer livelihoods. The Participants commit to encourage and incentivize current and future investors to implement workforce development and training programs in areas such as value proposition development; technical operations; implementation of labor and safety principles; utilization of traditional and digital traceability systems; and access to finance.

d. Unlocking Access to Financing and Land to Promote ASM Formalization: The

Participants commit to assess options – such as technical assistance, blended finance, or grant funding – to stimulate direct lending to licit, conflict-free ASM operators to enable them to enter the formal sector. The Participants commit, within their respective territory, to maintain transparency in conducting the geological, legal, and financial processes required to delineate geographic areas suitable for ASM. The Participants commit to allocate legal, productive sites to registered ASM operators in order to improve government oversight and civil society contributions to regulation of ASM activities according to relevant laws and regulations.

Implementation Measures: In support of this effort, the Participants aim to take steps to ensure ASM production from the Great Lakes region is consistent with global market standards and expectations due to considerable improvements in regulation, end-to-end data availability, and adherence to due diligence standards, enabling increased international investment and a positive global perception and promotion of minerals sourced from Rwanda and the DRC respectively. The Participants further aim to ensure ASM workers are ready to work in other growing economic sectors, earning better pay to support their families and communities. The Participants further aim to encourage increased private sector investment, leading to prosperity across the region through thriving small, medium, and large enterprises. In furtherance of this shared vision, the Participants intend to implement the following measures, which are intended to be instructive and not prescriptive:

Phase 1: The Participants expand and reform process to permit ASM cooperatives. The Participants commit to identify priority areas for joint trainings or other programs for supply chain actors. The Participants begin to identify priority opportunities to unlock finance for licit, conflict-free ASM operators to formalize, engage international and private sector actors, and assess options for joint mechanisms to stimulate lending at scale and to harmonize regulatory regimes as needed.

Phase 2: The Participants expand application of high-quality mine site standards, prioritizing consistent inspections and audits, enhanced chain of custody systems, local governance models, financial inclusion, and improved occupational health and safety. The Participants regularly publicize production, trading partner, and export data via government publication systems and engagement in regional databases, with due regard

to confidential business information. The Participants benefit from improved governance and transparency of mining rights, and artisanal exploitation zone designation. The Participants begin to organize trainings or other programs to ensure workers impacted by ASM formalization have pathways to alternative livelihoods. The Participants deploy and expand financing to ASM operators, addressing remaining barriers to their financial inclusion. Participants demonstrate continuous improvement in efforts to formalize ASM supply chains and provide alternative livelihoods to local communities.

Phase 3: More legal, productive sites are available for ASM operators to exploit, with clear oversight from government and contributions from civil society actors. The Participants ensure ASM supply chain actors benefit from trainings, safer and more secure work environments, financial inclusion, and government support. The Participants work with international partners to scale up proven pilot models for ASM formalization and improvement. The Participants work with the private sector and other experts to ensure investment supports ASM formalization and community development through corporate social responsibility commitments as well as direct and indirect job creation in local businesses and upskilling of former ASM supply chain actors at scale. ASM formalization directly supports peacebuilding outcomes, including reduced violence and conflict financing, improved human rights performance, and greater community stability. The Participants verify local and national governments generate increased revenue due to enhanced traceability processes.

D) NATIONAL PARK MANAGEMENT AND TOURISM

The Participants intend to cooperate to strengthen cross-border conservation and park management activities and ensure science-based management of biodiversity and ecosystems. The Participants commit to developing an expanded cross-border security strategy across the transboundary landscape to improve coordination and cooperation related to threats within the respective parks through joint enforcement mechanisms and legal harmonization. The Participants commit to creating an enabling environment for the development of a sustainable cross-border tourism industry, and to support each other's tourism operators. The Participants further commit to empower and integrate communities in conservation through equitable benefit-sharing and sustainable livelihoods, such as introducing a harmonized tourism revenue sharing scheme and a standardized community livelihood development policy.

1) Virunga National Park and Volcanoes National Park: The Participants recognize that Rwanda's Volcanoes National Park and the DRC's Virunga National Park, along with bordering Ugandan conservation areas, form one vast ecosystem sheltering unique species and extraordinary biodiversity. In consultation with key partners, including with Uganda as appropriate, the Participants commit to enhancing existing joint mechanisms under the Greater Virunga Transboundary Collaboration (GVTC) to strengthen cross-border conservation and park management activities including implementing the One Health approach in the Greater Virunga Landscape. Under the GVTC, the Participants commit to developing an expanded cross-border security strategy across the transboundary landscape to improve coordination and cooperation across park managers, rangers, and law enforcement related to security threats and disease and pandemic outbreaks within and near the respective parks. The Participants further commit to develop a cross-sectoral One Health strategy to address zoonotic disease surveillance, vaccination campaigns, and health services in buffer communities, through inter-agency collaboration among health, veterinary, and conservation institutions. The Participants commit to creating an enabling environment through the formalization of a cooperation on the conservation of migratory and transboundary species; as well as the development of a sustainable cross-border tourism industry centered on the Volcanoes and Virunga National Parks that benefits both countries and the region. The Participants commit to explore opportunities to extend these areas of cooperation to Kahuzi-Biega National Park, Itombwe Reserve, Nyungwe National Park, and other conservation areas as opportunities arise, consistent with each country's legal framework. The Participants commit to increase private sector and international partner engagement, including with US Foundation for International Conservation, in management of nature reserves.

2) Promoting Tourism: The Participants commit to position the Greater Virunga Landscape as a unified, world-class ecotourism destination by leveraging shared assets and coordinated governance. In addition to tourism opportunities related to national parks, the Participants commit to using coordination mechanisms created under the REIF to explore ways to collaborate on other aspects of international tourism that are of mutual interest, including facilitating package tourism for visitors interested in travel to tourist sites in both countries and immigration coordination for special visa arrangements or logistics support and tourist safety protocols, potentially building on the Northern Corridor Integration Project Single Tourist Visa regime or a separate bilateral process. The Participants commit to coordinate on joint visa regimes for business travelers visiting

special economic zones created under the REIF and other investors pursuing projects of mutual interest.

3) Combating Illegal Natural Resource Exploitation: The Participants commit to enhance cooperation on monitoring and law enforcement within shared protected areas to combat illegal activities, including related to mining, deforestation, charcoal production, and wildlife trafficking.

Implementation Measures: In support of this effort, the Participants commit to working together to protect their shared areas of responsibility in the Virunga and Volcanoes national parks, through a unified transboundary management plan and implementing reforms that allow locals and international visitors to the region to enjoy one of the planet's premier tourism destination, with unique opportunities to safely and sustainably visit mountain gorillas and other wildlife, explore pristine forests and wilderness, and hike volcanoes on both sides of the border. In furtherance of this shared vision, the Participants intend to implement the following measures, which are intended to be instructive and not prescriptive:

Phase 1: The Participants expand and reinforce existing working-level mechanisms for transboundary cooperation on conservation, security, investment, and park management in and around the Virunga and Volcanoes parks. Without duplicating existing bodies such as the GVTC, the Participants create a government-to-government National Parks and Tourism technical working group that meets quarterly. The Participants establish data sharing protocols provide to enhance information exchange and provide access to key partners, including the United States, to enable these partners to evaluate conditions along the Rwanda-DRC border and provide accurate travel warnings for citizens interested in visiting the border regions based on the security environment on both sides of the border as appropriate. The Participants strengthen surveillance, enforcement, and joint biodiversity monitoring.

Phase 2: Guided by the National Parks and Tourism working group and other coordinating bodies, the Participants begin discussions to expand cooperation on conservation, security, and park management, with consideration of prospects for joint exercises such as wildlife censuses involving private sector actors and their respective rangers and other conservation staff, including researchers. Under the auspices of the National Parks and Tourism working group, the Participants create a bilateral commission advised by private

sector and other experts to begin discussions on how to facilitate safe, sustainable, and responsible cross-border tourism in and around each party's national parks, to include preliminary discussions on unified approach to tourism standards, joint parks' product pricing and revenue sharing from park fees, joint investment in necessary infrastructure to facilitate parks' operations, cross border tourism, and enabling private investment in cross border tourism. The Participants begin preliminary consultations on the creation of joint visa regimes for tourists visiting Great Lakes sites.

Phase 3: In phases, the Participants launch programs for reciprocal visits or exchanges between their rangers, researchers, and other conservation staff, joint training activities for rangers, researchers, and other conservation staff, and joint transboundary ranger patrols. The Participants jointly convene experienced tourism companies and associated industries (i.e. logistics, transportation, and insurance) to discuss prospects for development of a cross-border tourist industry through a harmonized tourism strategy. The Participants work with experienced private tourism operators to jointly brand Greater Virunga Landscape as a single tourism destination with joint marketing campaigns, joint participation in international tourism fairs, and pilot cross-border tourist visits. The Participants ensure local communities benefit through employment opportunities, equitable revenue sharing, and alignment of tourism investments with conservation and community development plans, and seek opportunities to extend successful conservation cooperation to other areas, like Kahuzi-Biega National Park, Itombwe Reserve or Nyungwe National Park.

E) PUBLIC HEALTH

The Participants intend to cooperate to strengthen cross-border cooperation to prevent and control the spread of diseases and promote enhanced public health. The Participants commit to ensuring joint efforts in the cross-border area effectively prevent outbreaks, pandemics, and epidemics, and exploring options for information sharing to promote scientific research and health-related commercial opportunities.

Implementation Measures: In support of this effort, the Participants aim to significantly reduce the spread of disease and the prevalence of outbreaks and improve public health indicators. The Participants achieve better health outcomes for humans, animals, and the environment for the region using the One Health Approach. The Participants intend to facilitate mass immunization against infectious diseases, epidemic response, improved

sanitation and access to clean water, and other public health community campaigns to strengthen regional health security. In furtherance of this shared vision, the Participants intend to implement the following measures, which are intended to be instructive and not prescriptive:

Phase 1: The Participants' respective national public health services establish cross-border communication channels to share information on potential outbreaks, including to share alerts and protocols to ensure consistent, evidence-based measures are implemented in screening travelers for signs of illness. The Participants begin sharing best practices on laboratory biosecurity and management, staff training, and protocols on pathogen handling, testing, and waste disposal.

Phase 2: The Participants make progress towards enhancing cross-border health surveillance to contain infectious disease outbreaks would mutually benefit both countries. The Participants establish or reinforce the One Health Cross-Border Coordination Committee by establishing or updating clear terms of reference, including mandate, responsibilities, power, membership/composition, meeting schedules, and reporting. The Participants engage international and regional partners, including the World Health Organization Africa Regional Office, Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), U.S. CDC, and the private sector, to explore opportunities to enhance or expand joint public health activities, including through harmonized drug and food regulation.

Phase 3: The Participants utilize success on these activities to set the foundation for partnering on data sharing, joint training, complementary policy development, scientific research, and commercial arrangements. The Participants encourage technical experts from both countries to explore areas for technical exchanges, joint capacity building, or other healthcare assistance that can protect and enhance the wellbeing of communities on both sides of the border and contribute to developing the pharmaceutical and biotechnology sectors in both countries.

F) OTHER OPPORTUNITIES TO EXPAND COOPERATION

The Participants intend to cooperate to continue to adapt REIF efforts and identify new opportunities for joint initiatives as they arise. The Participants commit to exploring options to accelerate mutual trade liberalization and integration. The Participants commit to ensure the REIF remains a living platform that can continue to support deepening

economic interdependence and shared prosperity. The Participants commit to continue identifying new opportunities for cooperation as they arise, including in water, sanitation, agribusiness (including livestock), education, and sports and entertainment, among others.

1) Water and Sanitation

- a. The Participants may explore developing cooperation on water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH).

2) Agribusiness

- a. The Participants may explore cooperation to develop and formalize forest value chains through strategic partnerships that can bolster the production and processing of complementary crops such as coffee, cocoa, quinine, and vanilla.
- b. The Participants may explore partnerships to bolster food security and nutrition, agricultural resilience, and poverty reduction by connecting smallholder communities and businesses to market demand in larger population centers.
- c. The Participants may explore cooperation on agroforestry and sustainable land management, including through joint reforestation programs in border areas to restore degraded lands and cross-border agroforestry initiatives to promote responsible farming practices.

3) Education: The Participants recognize the importance of capacity building across sectors to enable successful implementation of the REIF and to utilize education and training to ensure REIF efforts create opportunities for local communities.

- a. The Participants may explore expanding access, including cross-border access, to technical and vocational education and training (TVET) and university programs; establishing centers of excellence based on their respective linguistic and institutional strengths; promoting research collaboration and qualification recognition to improve labor mobility; and collaborating on refugee inclusion in education systems

4) Sports and Entertainment

- a. The Participants may explore partnerships to promote peace and stability through sports and entertainment activities, including athletic exchanges, trainings, and cross-

border marathons, that can bring together athletes, youth, and other community members.

III. COORDINATION MECHANISMS

The Participants will establish standing coordination mechanisms to implement the REIF. They may invite other public and private actors, as mutually determined, to participate in the meetings. Where possible and appropriate, the Participants will utilize existing bilateral or regional mechanisms to advance REIF implementation, including CEPGL, EAC, Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), ICGLR, African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), and the AU. The Participants commit to regularly coordinate with local communities to ensure REIF efforts are locally owned and continually improve their safety and wellbeing, and to coordinate with private sector actors to provide policy stability, regulatory predictability, and transparent enforcement to attract long-term, high-quality investment at scale.

The Participants will utilize coordination mechanisms to facilitate the implementation measures outlined in this document. The Participants intend for the implementation measures to be non-exclusive and recognize that the Participants may agree on additional or modified implementation measures. The Participants further intend for a phased approach to such activities, but do not intend for the recommended phases outlined in the implementation measures to be prescriptive. The implementation measures, and the recommended phases for such measures, may be adjusted through REIF coordination mechanisms. The Participants intend for the REIF to be a living, dynamic framework and thus commit to continually identify opportunities to expand cooperation in areas of shared interest.

A) Annual High-Level Regional Economic Integration Summit: The Participants commit to hold an annual high-level summit on regional economic integration to oversee overarching progress across different lines of effort. The Participants may invite third-party States or institutions – such as the United States, neighboring countries, or other actors contributing to the implementation of the REIF – to participate as observers in relevant sessions, in a manner consistent with the principles of transparency and mutual respect. The location of each convening will be determined by mutual agreement of the Participants, with the first summit not later than six months following the signing of the REIF.

B) REIF Steering Committee: For the effective implementation of this REIF, the Participants establish a REIF Steering Committee. Members of the REIF Steering Committee include the Participants and any other that they may invite. The mandate of the REIF Steering Committee includes: oversight of implementation measure; preparation of the Annual High-Level Regional Economic Summit; the appointment of Technical Working Groups; and other tasks as may be assigned by the Summit. The first meeting of the REIF Steering Committee will be held as soon as practicable but not later than 30 days from signature of the REIF.

C) Technical Working Groups: The Participants, through the REIF Steering Committee, will establish appropriate technical working groups to implement the REIF, with the option to invite international partners, within 45 days of the signing of the REIF. The technical working groups will include a group focused on developing a REIF financing strategy to mobilize private investment, leverage donor support, and direct international financial institution finances in coordination with the United States, other international partners, and the private sector. The working group will also develop and maintain an effective project pipeline aligned with REIF objectives, utilize blended financial tools, encourage donor and international financial institution funding to build the necessary capacity, and coordinate closely with the Private Sector Input Mechanism.

D) Subnational Coordination: The Participants commit to including appropriate provincial authorities and communities in regional reform and cross-border cooperation initiatives to support consistent monitoring and implementation at the local level and encourage local-level ownership of the coordination process. The Participants commit to utilizing, or establishing where necessary, local input mechanisms aimed at encouraging subnational cross-border cooperation among public, private, and civil society actors; enabling public reporting, whistleblowing, and communication of grievances; and providing direct input into the technical working groups, REIF Steering Committee, and the Summit. The Participants will endeavor to identify opportunities for REIF efforts to benefit local small and medium-sized enterprises, with the goal of ensuring long-term development of Great Lakes local private sector actors and ecosystem.

E) Coordination with International Partners: The Participants commit to coordinate with international partners as well as regional and multilateral financial institutions to develop priority investment opportunities.

F) Private Sector Input Mechanism: Recognizing their role as central to the success of the REIF, the Participants commit to jointly solicit private sector and other expert input to ensure orderly and timely consideration of governance or other issues impeding private investment. The mechanism should work with appropriate international partners to engage companies whose past and present conduct reflect a commitment to professionalism, integrity, and compliance with applicable laws.

IV. ENTRY INTO FORCE

The provisions of this Framework take effect upon satisfactory execution of the Concept of Operations (CONOPS) set out in Appendix A of the Peace Agreement between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Republic of Rwanda, done at Washington, June 27, 2025 and the Operation Order (OPORD) negotiated at the Joint Security Coordination Mechanism (JSCM) meeting of September 17-18, 2025 and approved by the Joint Oversight Committee (JOC) of the Washington Agreement on October 1, 2025. Satisfactory execution of the CONOPS and OPORD is to be determined by the JOC.

The Participants shall refrain from engaging public communication or other initiatives contradicting the provisions of this Section IV.

Signed at Washington, December 4, 2025, in triplicate, in the English and French languages, both language texts being equally official.

**FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF THE
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO**
Thérèse Kayikwamba Wagner
Foreign Minister

**FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC
OF RWANDA**
Olivier Nduhungirehe
Foreign Minister

1. For purposes of the REIF, “minerals trade” includes trade in mining products. [↑](#)

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