

Great Lakes Region



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1. Political, economic and poverty development; the Great Lakes Conference

The second Summit of the Great Lakes Conference finally took place 14–15 December 2006 in Nairobi (after successful elections in DR Congo).

The eleven so called core countries¹ participated as well as the “liased” countries² and the three African members³ of the Group of Friends. Other than that the Group of Friends, UN, EU, AU and some regional organisations participated.

The most important, not to say historic, result was the signing of the “Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region”. The “Stability Pact” is a form of non-aggression and development agreement between the core countries. It is accompanied by a number of protocols, action plans and institutions implying further commitments. The Action Plans encompasses four clusters:

- Peace and Security,
- Democracy and Good Governance,
- Economic Development and Regional Integration
- Humanitarian, Social and Environmental Issues.

A protocol on “Non-aggression and Mutual Defence in the Great Lakes Region” was signed under the Peace and Security Action Plan.

The meeting also decided to put up a new conference secretariat to follow up the conference. The new secretariat will be in in Burundi, replacing the present one in Nairobi. The new secretariat will be headed by an Executive Secretary, the Tanzanian diplomat, Ms Mulamula.

A special Reconstruction and Development Fund will be established under the African Development Bank. It is expected to be funded both by donors and the members of the Great Lakes Conference.

¹ Angola, Burundi, Central African Republic, Republic of Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, Rwanda, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia.

² Botswana, Egypt, Ethiopia, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia and Zimbabwe.

³ Gabon, Nigeria and South Africa.

2. Strategic Assessment and Considerations of continued Swedish Development Co-operation

One important outcome of the conference will be that some regional development programmes are identified in the clusters mentioned above. Underlying documents are now available to be studied further. In line with the Swedish Regional Strategy for the Great Lakes 2004–2008, Peace, Security, Democracy and Good Governance would be the most interesting areas for Swedish development co-operation.

These documents will be studied in early 2007 in order to decide upon any further support to the Conference and development programmes.

Any support to the Special Reconstruction and Development Fund under the AfDB should await further operationalization of the fund as well as information on the steering and management of the fund.

The humanitarian action plan should be considered within the framework of the regular humanitarian assistance in the region.

3. Swedish Development Co-operation – Overall Assessment of the regional programme

Swedish development co-operation has so far been halted since the Summit only took place late last year. However, in the mean time some regional programmes have been identified which are either linked to the Conference or have a regional impact in line with the regional strategy. During 2006 29.3 MSEK were disbursed. The following programmes were financed:

Peace and Security and the Humanitarian Situation

The Great Lakes Region in 2006 saw continuation of the trend towards peace. Nevertheless, humanitarian challenges remain. By mid-2006, over 4 million people were estimated to remain displaced in the region. In addition, 2006 saw the return of approximately 700 000 people, who will now face the challenges of reintegration, finding employment or other livelihood opportunities, accessing basic services, and recovering property. All countries have generalised HIV/AIDS epidemics. Sexual and Gender Based violence has been endemic and systematic in the conflicts of the region and one can in this regard talk of a culture of impunity.

The lion share of Swedish Humanitarian assistance to the Great Lakes Region was in 2006 channelled through Country CAPs.⁴ A minor contribution was however channelled within the regional CAP; Sida's contribution of 4 MSEK in 2006 went to OCHA (coordination and support) and FAO (protecting and promoting food security, nutrition and livelihoods of HIV/AIDS affected households and communities).

In support of the peace and security process in the Great Lakes region, Sida is supporting a multidonor regional programme for demobilization and reintegration of soldiers (MDRP). The programme is managed by the World Bank and financed by several donors as well as the partner countries themselves. Sida has totally paid 40 MSEK out of which 20 MSEK during 2006. The initial total budget was 500 MUSD which, however, will be expanded due to delays in the implementation and extension of the target groups.

The objective is to demobilize 413 000, reinsert 319 000 and reintegrate 399 000 soldiers by 2009. In January 2007 67, 72 and 39 per cent respectively of the targeted groups were reached. Sida's assessment is that

⁴ [UN] Consolidated Appeals Process. For the purpose of the CAP the Great Lakes Region is defined as Burundi (28 MSEK), Democratic Republic of Congo (100 MSEK), Rwanda (no CAP), the United Republic of Tanzania (no CAP) and Uganda (50 MSEK).

the relatively low implementation rate as regards reintegration is explained by the fact that the socio-economic reintegration in post-conflict countries are extremely difficult since the productive sectors are often destroyed. In some post-conflict countries the programme is completed or close to completion (Angola, Central African Republic, Rwanda, Uganda) whereas in countries where the peace processes are still young and tension still prevail (Burundi and DR Congo) the programme is lagging behind. Continued peace, democratization and reconciliation should enable a successful completion of the programme. In turn, the programme is an important contribution to that process as well as decreasing access to weapons in the region and, thus, security for the civilian population. Overall, the programme is on target but may need some additional financing if new target groups (rebel movements) are to be demobilized.

Support to the development of media

In the strategy for Swedish support to the African Great Lakes region the point of departure is the attainment of peace and security, an absolute precondition for the reduction of poverty. There is also an obvious connection between reduced poverty and democracy characterised by transparency and respect for human rights. Support to media is a key to attain the above objectives and is mentioned in the strategy both as a goal in itself and a means.

Sida co-operates with International Panos Paris in the endeavour to support an independent and pluralistic media in the region. During 2006 2 MSEK were disbursed. The programme is focused on five main areas; Legislation and regulation; Organisation of the profession; Strengthening the enterprises; Enhancing professionalism and; Participation and media literacy.

The results of the programme during 2006 can be seen in the field of strengthening media structures and networks. Burundi, a country often quoted for its relative press freedom, has had a strong backlash – threats and imprisonment of journalists. The work of Institut Panos contributed to the strengthening of the professional organisations (Press House, ABR, l'Association burundaise des radiodiffuseurs etc). A counterforce has been created and a determination of the media to continue their independent role of providing information to the public in spite of political pressure.

In Rwanda, 2006 can be seen as the first year of media gaining credibility, after more a decade of decomposition of the media sector. The press organisations, like the ARJ, Rwanda Association of Journalists, with the support of Panos Paris, have been asked to read and comment on the new media law.

On a regional level results can be seen in the growing cooperation between journalists from the three countries. Joint reporting, press and radio, has brought a greater understanding between journalists about the differences and resemblances in the three countries and thus paved the way for less tensions, fear and misunderstandings among journalists and public in the region.

Support to democratic governance and human rights

In order to fulfill immediate needs for regional integration, democratic culture and human rights in the Great Lakes region a programme with the UNDP has been initiated to support its so called Action 2 programme on mainstreaming human rights across the UN at country

level. The aim of the programme in the Great Lakes region is to build the capacity of the UN country teams to understand the linkages between human rights, human development and humanitarian action. The idea is to work with their national partners in strengthening national human rights, protection and promoting systems. During 2006–2008 Sida co-operates with UNDP on this programme. A yearly amount of 10 MSEK is foreseen.

During the first year the three country teams (Rwanda, DR Congo and Burundi) will meet to create a common platform for future work. UNDP has placed a regional human rights advisor in Yaoundé, Camerun to assist the country teams. An another post is within the country team of Rwanda. Together with UNDP in New York and OHCHR in Geneva they will work out a regional mechanism. A proposal for the work during the following period will be presented to Sida in early 2007.

Annex 1:

Strategic Documents Received 2006

Country report - Reg Great Lake

Outcome and forecast in TSEK

Country report - Reg Great Lake		Delimitation:					
Outcome and forecast in TSEK		Status: I, P, A and C (agr end > 200600 or Outcome < 0) Region/Country: Reg Great Lake Other:					
Responsible Unit	(All)						
Allocation Frame	(All)						
		Data					
Allocation Account	Main Sector	Status	Outcome 2006	Outcome 2007	Forecast 2007	Forecast 2008	
155035 Great Lake Regional	04 HR & Democratic governance	Agreed	9 300		14 000	10 500	
	04 HR & Democratic governance Total		9 300		14 000	10 500	
155035 Great Lake Regional	Total		9 300		14 000	10 500	
15571 Humanitarian assistance	06 Humanitarian assistance	Agreed	2 003		0		
	06 Humanitarian assistance Total		2 003		0		
	(blank)	Indicative	0		0		
	(blank) Total		0		0		
15571 Humanitarian assistance	Total		2 003		0		
Grand Total			11 303		14 000	10 500	

Country report - Reg Great Lake

Outcome and forecast in TSEK

Delimitation:

Status: I, P, A and C (agr-end > 2006000 or Outcome <> 0)

Region/Country: Reg Great Lake

Other:

Responsible Unit (All)

Data			Outcome 2006	Outcome 2007	Forecast 2007	Forecast 2008
Allocation Frame	Allocation Account	Main Sector				
Outside country allocation	155035 Great Lake Regional	04 HR & Democratic governance	9 300		14 000	10 500
	155035 Great Lake Regional	Total	9 300		14 000	10 500
	15571 Humanitarian assistance	06 Humanitarian assistance (blank)	2 003		0	
	15571 Humanitarian assistance	Total	2 003		0	
Outside country allocation Total			11 303		14 000	10 500
Grand Total			11 303		14 000	10 500

Halving poverty by 2015 is one of the greatest challenges of our time, requiring cooperation and sustainability. The partner countries are responsible for their own development. Sida provides resources and develops knowledge and expertise, making the world a richer place.



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