

The Minister received Mr. Karl Dhaene, Special Envoy of the Ministry of Foreign affairs of Belgium

January 13, 2009, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, Hon. Rosemary MUSEMINALI received in her Office the Special Envoy of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Belgium, Mr. Karl DHAENE and his delegation.

Mr. Dhaene who was on his tour in the region and particularly going to meet FNL officials in Burundi, said it was a good timing to make a courtesy visit to our minister as he proceeds to Burundi. He was particularly interested in knowing Rwanda's feeling and appreciation of the on-going talks in Nairobi and all the efforts to bring security in the Great Lakes region.

Minister Rosemary welcomed him and asked him to convey the message of congratulations to the Prime Minister and the Foreign Affairs Minister of Belgium for their new positions after the recent election that took place in Belgium.

Regarding security situation in the region, the Minister said that it is now quiet and calm and expressed optimism in the improvement in case the parties implement what they agree upon and sign.

Concerning the talks between Rwanda and the DRC, the Minister mentioned a number of achievements that have been made and such include; a Joint Military Plan to disarm, uproot and dismantle FDLR head quarters that has been approved; the efforts to restore diplomatic relations particularly the process to revive the CEPGL and reopening of the embassies in either countries. There has also been a meeting of Foreign Affairs Ministers' in Bujumbura last December and is expected to pave the way for people to people interactions such as businessmen to businessmen, local leaders and parliamentarians to their counterparts in either countries.

Mr. Dhaene also mentioned Mr. Obasanjo's optimism in the outcome of the ongoing peace process in the region. Concerning the issue of the internal disagreements between CNDP leaders, Hon. Minister Rosemary Museminali said that these may be for better –in case the parties remain committed to their pronouncements or for worse –in case the parties resort to fighting among themselves and that the later may slow down the negotiation process. "All they want is to make peace in Congo, we feel that they will reach a compromise that will make the peace process successful" she added.

Mr. Dhaene, expressed the Belgian interest in reviving the Bank of CEPGL and Hon. Minister said that currently, CEPGL activities are aimed at putting the basics right and that ultimately partners will get together to look into the re-launch of the Bank since the buildings are still there. The Minister also applauded the way some of the CEPGL activities such as SINELAC project, that have been operating amidst the conflicts and stressed the revival of CEPGL as a crucial tool for restoring peace in the region.