



**JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ ON THE OCCASION OF THE STATE VISIT BY HIS EXCELLENCY DENIS SASSOU N'GUESSO, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF CONGO, TO THE REPUBLIC OF RWANDA**

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1. At the invitation of **His Excellency Paul KAGAME**, President of the Republic of Rwanda, **His Excellency Denis Sassou N'GUESSO**, President of the Republic of Congo, undertook a State visit to Rwanda from 21<sup>st</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2023.
2. The main purpose of the visit was to take stock of the current state of bilateral relations between the two countries following last year's State visit to the Republic of Congo by His Excellency President Paul KAGAME. It was also an opportunity to explore other areas of mutual interest and benefit for the peoples of Rwanda and Congo.
3. **His Excellency Denis Sassou N'GUESSO** was accompanied by a high-level delegation, including Government officials and members of the private sector.
4. On 21<sup>st</sup> July 2023, **President Denis Sassou N'GUESSO** addressed Members of both Chambers of the Parliament of Rwanda and highlighted the need to harmonize our efforts towards lasting peace and security in Africa as well as

sustainable development for the benefit of African citizens. During his address to the Parliament, **President Denis Sassou N'GUESSO** also reiterated the need to protect and preserve Africa's ecosystem, especially rainforests which continue to play a critical role in mitigating climate change.

5. **President Denis Sassou N'GUESSO** and **President Paul KAGAME** held high-level talks in Kigali on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2023. The Heads of State commended the historical and continued good relations between the Governments and the Peoples of the Republic of Rwanda and of the Republic of Congo, and reiterated their desire to continue working jointly towards enhancing political, economic, and social cooperation. In this regard, the Heads of State emphasized the need to accelerate the implementation of signed agreements as well as ongoing economic projects. To this end, the two leaders directed the respective Ministers to ensure the implementation of Agreements and MoUs signed as well as decisions taken.
6. Deliberations between the Heads of State focused on bilateral, regional, and international issues of mutual interest. Both countries are promoters of a stronger Africa and hold a common vision for the development and Renaissance of Africa as encapsulated in Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want.
7. To further strengthen cooperation between the two countries in trade and investment, the Heads of State presided over the signing of the "*Memorandum of Understanding on Accelerating the Implementation of AFCFTA Agreement between the Government of the*

*Republic of Rwanda and the Government of the Republic of Congo*". This agreement will ultimately facilitate more trade and investment between the two countries as well as between countries in the region and beyond.

8. Both Heads of State have noted that the process of ratification of the *"Agreement on Visa Exemption for Holders of Ordinary Passports"* by the Government of the Republic of Congo is well underway.
9. His Excellency Denis Sassou N'GUESSO thanked his counterpart, President Paul KAGAME, for the National Order of Honor, "AGACIRO", awarded to him for his exemplary leadership in promoting Pan-Africanism.
10. At the conclusion of the state visit, His Excellency Denis Sassou N'GUESSO expressed his profound gratitude and appreciation to His Excellency Paul KAGAME, the Government, and the people of Rwanda for the warm reception and hospitality extended to him and his delegation.
11. President Kagame thanked President Sassou N'GUESSO for undertaking the State Visit to the Republic of Rwanda and for his assurance to continue working closely to strengthen bilateral relations between the two countries.

Kigali, this 22<sup>nd</sup> of July 2023