

Roeland van de Geer was appointed EU Special Representative for the **Great Lakes Region** on 14 February 2007. Running until 31 August 2011, his mandate is to focus on stabilisation in the African Great Lakes countries. A key objective is contributing to the post-transition phase in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), with particular emphasis on the reform of the security sector and the fostering of democratic institutions. Another important aspect of his work is the consolidation of the democratic process in Burundi as well as ensuring constructive cooperation with Uganda and Rwanda in regional matters.

1. EU Special Representative for the African Great Lakes Region



Mr Roeland van de Geer received in Kigali by the President Kagame (Rwanda)

Mission statement

In recent years, developments African Great Lakes region have been encouraging. Following the genocide in Rwanda in 1994 and a long period of war in the region, we are now witnessing a gradual return of peace and stability. Much of the current improvement is due to the signing of the Pact of the Great Lakes Conference in Nairobi in December 2006, paving the way for a regional peace process and symbolising the beginning of a new phase of social and economic development.

In the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), an elected parliament and a newly formed government are cooperating constructively to consolidate law and order and to initiate the urgently needed process of national reconciliation and reconstruction. There is still much to be done and particularly in the East of the Congo the political and security situation remains precarious. There too, however, prospects for improved security are emerging.

In Burundi, the peace process is well advanced and the last remaining armed group that is still active is expected to opt for a political settlement in the near future. The events which took place in Rwanda in 1994 will continue to cast a shadow over the country for a long time. Nevertheless, great progress has been achieved and further efforts are being made to achieve lasting national reconciliation. In Uganda, there has been promising progress in ending the decades-long conflict in the north, where the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) has been terrorising the population and preventing social and economic development.

Against this background, the European Union is contributing to further improvement in the Great Lakes region by supporting political dialogue in the region as well as by supporting regional cooperation and integration. The EU's approach combines political and diplomatic instruments, development cooperation and military cooperation, notably in the DRC where two European missions, EUPOL and EUSEC, assist in Security Sector Reform, concentrating on the police and the armed forces respectively.

For the EU's involvement in the African Great Lakes region to be successful, well-coordinated support must be delivered, in close cooperation with other international partners. This is what I consider to be one of my key tasks as EU Special Representative.

Roeland van de Geer's appointment and mandate are set out in Joint Actions [2007/112/CFSP](#), [2008/108/CFSP](#), [2009/128/CFSP](#) and Council Decisions [2010/113/CFSP](#) and [2010/440/CFSP](#)

[EUPOL RD Congo](#) and [EUSEC RD Congo](#)

- ▶ [Interview of Roeland van de Geer published in the newspaper "Potentiel" on 29 October 2007](#)
- ▶ [Communiqué de presse sur l'attaque terroriste contre des déplacés du Nord Kivu, Goma, le 5 juin 2008](#)

Roeland van de Geer
EU Special Representative for the African Great Lakes Region

PLACE AND DATE OF BIRTH: Amsterdam, 19 February 1953

NATIONALITY: Dutch

EDUCATION

Public Administration, Political Science and International Relations, Free University, Amsterdam, the Netherlands, 1970 – 1978

Language fluency: English, French and Dutch

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

2006 – 2007

Ambassador of the Netherlands in Afghanistan

2005 – 2006

Visiting Professor, teaching in Europe, Africa and Latin America

2002 – 2005

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Netherlands, Africa Director

1998 – 2002

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Netherlands, Western Hemisphere Director

1994 – 1998

Ambassador of the Netherlands in Mozambique

1991 – 1994

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Netherlands, Head Southern Africa Department (Development)

1990 – 1991

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Netherlands, Head Northern Africa Department (Development)

1986 – 1989

Free University, Amsterdam, Centre for Development Co-operation Services

Deputy Director and Head, Natural Resource Development Section

1982 - 1986

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Netherlands, Southern Africa Department (Political)

1978 – 1982

Free University, Amsterdam on secondment to the National University of Lesotho and the Government of Lesotho

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