

UN chief confirms the remains found in DRC those of the two missing experts

29 March 2017 – United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres has confirmed the deaths of Michael Sharp and Zaida Catalan, two members of the Group of Experts on the Democratic Republic of the Congo who had been missing since 12 March, and vowed that the Organization would do everything possible to ensure that justice is done.

In a statement late yesterday, the UN chief expressed his deepest condolences to the families, loved ones and colleagues of Mr. Sharp (United States) and Ms. Catalan (Sweden) and said that the Organization will honour their memory by continuing to support the work of the Group of Experts and the whole UN family in the DRC.

Michael and Zaida lost their lives seeking to understand the causes of conflict and insecurity in the DRC in order to help bring peace to the country and its people, said Mr. Guterres.

He also called on the national authorities to continue to search for the four Congolese nationals who were accompanying the experts and said that the UN would cooperate with them in the continuing search.

Also in the statement, the Secretary General underscored that the UN will conduct an inquiry into the deaths.

In case of criminal acts, the UN will do everything possible to ensure that justice is done, he stressed.

Mr. Guterres also expressed hope that the cause of their deaths will be determined following a thorough examination and that the Congolese authorities will conduct a full investigation into the incident.

On Monday, peacekeepers from the UN Mission in the country (MONUSCO) discovered the two experts' remains outside the city of Kananga in the DRC's Kasai-Central province.

The Group of Experts on the DRC has been supporting the work of a Committee established by the Security Council to oversee sanctions measures, including arms embargo, travel ban and assets freeze imposed upon armed groups in the country.