

**Mr. Melchiade Bukuru**, is currently the Chief of the Liaison Office of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) at the Headquarters of the United Nations in New York. He attended negotiations leading to the adoption of UNCCD in 1994, its entry into force in 1996 and he contributed to the universality of the Convention (194 Parties) during a steady ratification campaign.

Mr. Bukuru was in charge of involving the Global Environment Facility (GEF) in opening a new window on sustainable land management, developing an operational programme, and making the GEF a financial mechanism of the Convention. At the World Summit on Sustainable Development, he advocated for the UNCCD to be recognized as one of the tools to eradicate poverty and hunger, and thus to reach the Millennium Development Goals.

Before joining the United Nations in 1996, Mr. Bukuru, a career Diplomat from Burundi, worked at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as Counsellor to the Permanent Mission of Burundi to the United Nations where he served several times as Head of Mission. He specialized in sustainable development issues and advocated during the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, for a legally binding treaty to address desertification.