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Conseil de sécurité

**Débat ouvert
sur**

Situation au Burundi

**Déclaration prononcée par
Mme Heidi Grau
Chargé d'affaires a. i.**

Mission permanente de la Suisse auprès de l'Organisation des Nations Unies

New York, le 10 mai 2010

Check against delivery

Security Council

**Open Debate
on**

Situation in Burundi

**Statement by
Mme Heidi Grau
Chargé d'affaires a. i.**

Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations

New York, 10 May 2009

Monsieur le Président,

unofficial translation

Mr. President,

I appreciate that Burundi as well as the chair of the the country-specific meeting on Burundi of the Peacebuilding Commission are invited when the Council discusses the situation in Burundi. I have the honour to read this statement on behalf of Ambassador Peter Maurer, the chair of the country-specific meeting on Burundi, who had to leave New York on urgent matters.

I thank ERSG M. Charles Petrie for his briefing. The Burundi configuration will have a meeting tomorrow to hear first-hand from Mr. Petrie and to discuss the situation at the eve of the elections

Later this month Burundi embarks on a 5-stage national election cycle that will last until early September and will renew all elected positions at all levels of government in the country. In all our contacts with the Burundians they expressed their hope and aspiration that this extended exercise in electoral democracy will provide new legitimacy for their institutions and will produce the comprehensive political stability necessary for further building peace and a sustainable economic future for the country.

Since our last meeting, a delegation of the Burundi configuration had visited the country at the end of February. The delegation met with all stakeholders, including the President and it assisted in the preparation of the 4th biannual review of the Strategic Framework for Peacebuilding in Burundi, which was completed on 24 March with the adoption of

recommendations and conclusions. The delegation's assessment of the overall situation is positive

I do not close my eyes at the numerous pitfalls and challenges awaiting Burundi on its way to consolidate peace. But over the course of now three visits of the Chair to the country we have seen progress. Important issues that were feared to have the potential to derail the process have been tackled. This goes particularly for the creation of an “environment conducive to the holding of free, fair and peaceful elections” that the configuration continuously insists on. We saw difficulty in producing means of identification for citizens willing to vote, and this difficulty has been overcome. We continue to see widespread concern about political youth groups spreading fear and intimidation among people of different political persuasions. In our meetings with the ministers concerned we were assured the willingness of the government to tackle the issue.

Burundi together with the Peacebuilding Commission has successfully worked on the financing of the elections: it was possible to mobilize almost all the resources needed. I would like to thank all member states and international institutions that made this possible, and I would like to appeal to potential donors – traditional and non-traditional – to contribute to close the remaining gap. I would also like to thank the Government of Burundi, the Independent National Electoral Commission, the political parties and the media for their role in the successful preparation of the electoral process.

Mr. President

Successful elections in Burundi will be key to solidify the political foundation for peace and economic development in Burundi. Burundi is the first among a number of countries in this region to hold elections this year. With successful and peaceful elections Burundi can lead by example. There should be a peace dividend for this particular contribution to peace: Burundi will need investment far beyond the over 40 Mio US dollars used for the elections: It will need

- Ø investment into the socio-economic integration of the hundreds of thousands of IDPs, returnees and demobilized fighters,
- Ø investment into labor-intensive infrastructure and agriculture projects,
- Ø and investments into developing economic sectors that can provide the jobs, livelihood and futures for the millions of Burundians living in poverty.

Given the budgetary pressure mounting in most member states, and particularly among traditional donors, it will be necessary to reach out to private investors willing to take a risk with Burundi.

The Configuration will continue to hold an international spotlight on Burundi as it evolves in building peace. The PBCommission should stand ready to help in building partnerships with International Financial Institutions, with regional entities and with representatives of the private-sector willing to explore opportunities in Burundi.

The Burundi configuration remains available as a political platform for all stakeholders. And finally, it remains the Configuration's task to watch that no peacebuilding issue falls on the wayside.

We have in this year a good opportunity to reflect together with Burundi on how to further integrate the international support for peacebuilding and development. We will have to renew existing frameworks:

- Ø The Burundi Government, supported by the World Bank, is developing a new Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper,
- Ø The Security Council will decide on a new mandate for BINUB,
- Ø The Peacebuilding Commission will review its engagement with Burundi.

Taking the case of Sierra Leone as an example, it would be desirable to streamline and harmonize these efforts and to aim at merging the new PRSP with a new Framework for Peacebuilding. It is important for essential peacebuilding issues to be identified and addressed in all three contexts named. It might be helpful to institute a regular exchange on these matters and it might be useful to start exploring possibilities at an early stage.

Mr. President, I thank you.