

19 July 2016

To : Members of the PBC – Burundi Configuration

**Informal meeting of the Burundi Configuration of the PBC, New York,
13 July 2016**

Chair's Summary

1. On 13 July 2016, the Burundi Configuration of the UN Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), held an informal meeting under the chairmanship of H. E. Mr. Jürg Lauber to discuss the situation in Burundi. PBC members were briefed by the Chair on his recent visit to Burundi and to Tanzania, and by the Permanent Representative of Burundi to the United Nations, H. E. Mr. Albert Shingiro, who had also travelled to Burundi with the Chair. The Assistant Secretary General for Peacebuilding, Mr. Oscar Fernandez Taranco, also briefed PBC members on the on-going support by the Peacebuilding Fund.
2. In his debriefing, the Chair noted that in Bujumbura he had had the opportunity to discuss developments in Burundi with the President, members of the Government, political parties, members of foreign and local business community, and various other national and international stakeholders. In Dar-es-Salaam, the Chair met President Mkapa, EAC-mandated Facilitator of the inter-Burundian dialogue, representatives of the Government of Tanzania, as well as representatives of the UN System and of the Diplomatic Community in Dar-es-Salaam. The Chair shared the following main conclusions on his visit to Burundi and to Tanzania [for more details, see the report of the visit]:
 - a) Since the Chair's last visit in February, there have been signs of progress that all need to be sustained. Security in the streets of Bujumbura seems to have improved, especially in terms of reduction of violent attacks; On the other hand reports about grave Human Rights violations continue, and the economic aspects linked to the crisis continued to worsen;
 - b) Donors and international partners are still in an engagement mood, and they are waiting for significant signals on the political front to reassess their cooperation & portfolios;
 - c) In light of the current situation, the Configuration may support the Government and people of Burundi in the following ways: i) Invite the donor organizations and countries to carefully consider the economic and fiscal situation of Burundi; ii) Support the implementation of the agreement between Burundi and the African Union to increase the number of AU military and HR observers to 200; iii) Encourage all

stakeholders to engage fully and participate without pre-conditions in the Burundi Dialogue led by President Mkapa; iv) reach out to the Government of Burundi to discuss how international partners can assist the implementation of the suggestions made by the research team from George Mason University to the National Commission for Inter-Burundian Dialogue, CNDI; these suggestions aim at strengthening the technical quality, inclusiveness, transparency, legitimacy and broad acceptance of the work of the CNDI.

3. The Chair further noted two developments & events that had occurred during the week that followed his visit to Burundi: i) he indicated that on 13 July he had learned through media reports that five political parties (FNL, FROLINA, Piebu Abanyeshaka, RADEBU and FRODEBU) had boycotted the talks over the inclusion of representatives of political parties and civil society organisations accused of human rights violations, and that the Government reportedly also refused to participate due to the inclusion of certain “opposition” figures in the dialogue. He indicated that he was very worried by the attitude of all parties involved vis-à-vis the efforts by President Mkapa; ii) the same day he had also received the very disturbing news that Hafsa Mossi, an East African Legislative Assembly MP, had been assassinated the same morning Bujumbura by two gunmen. The Chair expressed his condolences to the family of the victim.
4. In his briefing, Ambassador Shingiro, Permanent Representative of Burundi to the United Nations, emphasised that the security situation in the country was very good, and that the limited cases of crimes and violent incidents were being addressed by the authorities, through disciplinary measures and other appropriate responses. He referred to the EAC mission that had visited Burundi on 20-24 June and that had concluded that the security situation was normal in Bujumbura and in rural areas, recommending that EAC meetings scheduled to take place in Burundi should proceed. He recalled his Government’s position with regards to the UN police deployment, stating that such deployment should take into account the improvement in the security situation.
5. He indicated that the national dialogue was well under way; he noted that the report of the research team from George Mason University on the national dialogue process would provide partners with the assurance needed to encourage them to support the remaining phases of the national dialogue. He reiterated that, in line with the resolutions of the Security Council, the Government of Burundi was committed to the external dialogue and to the internal dialogue [he noted that both processes should complement each other], and that the Government was committed to inclusion with the exception of individuals involved in the failed coup of May 2015 and in acts of violence. He recommended that the international community should provide full support to President Mkapa. Ambassador Shingiro deplored some incidents during the last round of dialogue in which, as he said, some opposition members had tried to enter the talks fraudulently without valid invitations and passes; this situation had delayed the talks. He called on international partners to refrain from supporting such individuals.

6. With regards to international cooperation, he welcomed the meeting between the Government of Burundi and the EU Ambassadors in Bujumbura on 5 July, he welcomed the attention on the economic aspects of the crisis; he encouraged the advocacy work aimed at resuming aid and restoring trust between the Government of Burundi and its international partners.
7. Following the briefings, representatives of Belgium, Tanzania, the USA, the EU and PBSO took the floor to make comments, statements or ask questions. They expressed chock on the news of the murder of Afsa Mossi in Bujumbura, noting that this incident was an additional sign of a precarious situation. They reiterated support to the facilitation work being undertaken by President Mkapa; they urged the Government and the opposition to extend their full cooperation to President Mkapa, and to trust him to bring to the talks anybody he deemed should participate. Members further underscored the need for AU-EAC-UN cooperation in supporting President Mkapa, and for the Special Envoys to support President Mkapa and the dialogue process in a coherent manner. They welcomed the PBF support to women groups and their role in dialogue initiatives and conflict prevention at community level.
8. Members welcomed the Chair's discussions with the Government's authorities in charge of the economy and with the business community; they expressed concern about the economic situation, the decrease in spending on social sectors, and the situation of food insecurity. They encouraged the PBC engagement with the International Financial Institutions, the African Development Bank and the European Union; they encouraged a coordinated policy response by these partners. They welcomed the new coffee project supported by the World Bank.
9. The representative of Tanzania underscored his country's hospitality for the Burundian refugees, noting that this hospitality had limits, and that the best option was that the Government of Burundi takes care of its own people. He noted that the situation of refugees spoke to the urgency of ending the crisis and to the need of the dialogue in Arusha.
10. The Assistant Secretary General for Peacebuilding noted that it was encouraging to hear from the Chair that the Peacebuilding Fund remained relevant through the initiatives it was supporting, including the women mediators and the AU Human Rights Observers. He recalled that PBSO recently approved projects included i) Support to the dialogue, through support to the Special Advisor's team and to women's role in the dialogue process; ii) Youth engagement for community security and social cohesion through socio-economic opportunities and dialogue activities.
11. In concluding the meeting, the Chair indicated that he would share the detailed report of his visit with PBC members and with the Security Council as per established practice.
