



09 November 2010

To : Members of the PBC – Burundi Configuration

**Informal meeting of the Country Specific Configuration  
of the PBC on Burundi, New York 03 November 2010**

**Chair's Summary**

On Wednesday, 3 November 2010, from 10:00 am to 01:00 p.m, in Conference Room 4 of the Temporary North Lawn Building, an informal meeting of the Country-Specific Configuration on Burundi of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC Burundi Configuration) took place under the chairmanship of, H.E. Ambassador Paul Seger, Chair of the Burundi Configuration. In addition to members of the Configuration, the Department of Political Affairs and the Peacebuilding Support Office attended in New York. The government of Burundi, representatives of the International Community in Burundi, representatives of the civil society and BINUB attended from Bujumbura via videolink.

The purpose of the meeting was to receive a briefing by a representative of the Government of Burundi on the most recent developments in Burundi following the completion of the 2010 elections, to be updated on the current processes of redefining the strategy of the UN engagement with Burundi including the preparation of the post BINUB mission and to discuss next steps of the configuration. A work plan of the chair was distributed before the meeting.

**Briefing by the Government of Burundi:** The Minister of External Relations and International Cooperation Augustin Nsanze stated that the newly mandated institutions of government have assumed their responsibilities and are engaged in the preparation of a new phase of development of the country. Minister Nsanze addressed the security situation which is an issue of concern to many. He assured participants that the security situation was good, as assessed by the President with his

experts [a day before this meeting]. The minister stated that there were groups of bandits attacking individuals in their homes, that the majority of networks behind those groups were dismantled and that the authorities were confident to have all security problems resolved over a short time. The minister also informed the meeting that the government is in discussion with the UN about the future UN engagement in the country. Mr. Nsanze stated that the government of Burundi expects BINUB to close after its mandate expires on 31 december 2010 and that the nature of the relationship between Burundi and the UN will change accordingly from an approach based on monitoring and reporting to a model based on consultation and cooperation. Minister Nsanze rejected the notion of a continuing transition and insisted on entering a new phase of establishing a normal development partnership between Burundi and the UN. Burundi envisages BINUB to be replaced by a light structure of 55-80 UN staff plus locally recruited staff. The mandate of the new structure, its name and the title of the Head of the Mission are under discussion, as well as the question of use and transfer of BINUB assets. Minister Nsanze underlined that in the view of the government of Burundi there should be a role for a continued engagement of the Peacebuilding Commission in Burundi. Minister Nsanze confirmed Burundi's willingness to assume the Presidency of the East-African Community (to be decided upon in December) and asked for support from international partners in this regard.

**Briefing by the Department of Political Affairs:** Joao Honwana, Director of the Africa I Division of the Department of Political Affairs, briefed on the Secretariat's assessment of the situation and on the status of preparation for a successor mission to BINUB. Mr. Honwana stressed that despite the boycott of elections by some political parties and a fear of ensuing violence, Burundi was able to undergo the elections in stability and calm. The political landscape after the elections is characterized by an absence of a political opposition. President Nkurunziza's stated intention to govern in a spirit of inclusiveness and to build political bridges is taken as an encouraging sign. DPA identifies two fundamental risks to stability, one being the absence or a delay in the materialisation of "peace dividends", and the other being a lack of political space for the extraparliamentary opposition to communicate with the government. Regarding the status of planning for the future UN engagement, a strategic assessment report, based on a mission on the ground in August, has been finalized and will be considered by the Secretary General's policy

committee shortly. It will be taken into account by the Secretary-General's report to the Security Council on BINUB due later this month. In October, a technical design mission was deployed to Burundi to finalize details on shape and size of a BINUB successor mission.

**Changes in the leadership of BINUB:** In the meeting, it was confirmed by the representatives of the Secretariat, that ERSG Charles Petrie will stay at his post until the end of the year. His deputy, Bintou Keita, has left her post in October. In a letter to the Secretary-General, the chair has asked for a timely appointment of new UN leadership at this critical juncture.

**Assistant Secretary-General Judy Cheng-Hopkins,** Head of the Peacebuilding Support Office, highlighted the spirit of optimism she encountered during her visit in Burundi last August. She highlighted the high percentage (50%) of women elected to Parliament and the active civil society, in particular the quality of the work being done by the anti-corruption organization OLUCOME. She identified two specific risks. One is corruption which is a disincentive to foreign investment. The other one is the specter of reemergence of armed conflict, as raised by recent comments of former FNL leader Agathon Rwasa and fueled by any lack of long-term perspective for demobilized combatants and associated groups. Ms. Cheng-Hopkins underscored the need to address the latter issue.

**Briefing by the Chair on World Bank visit:** With a view to make the PBC Burundi available for incorporating sensitive peacebuilding issues into the new Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper to be prepared by the government of Burundi, the chair on 6 Oct visited the World Bank. A summary of the visit is attached.

**Questions and Comments:** The following members took the floor: representatives of Mexico, Belgium [both in Bujumbura and New York], Netherlands, Norway, EU, UK, AU, and a representative of the Civil Society in Bujumbura. All congratulated Burundi on the successful completion of the elections. Several participants underlined that the elections have produced a momentum that should be capitalized on, and concurred with the proposal made by the Chair to undertake a stock taking exercise with a view to draw any relevant lessons learned, both for Burundi and for the international community. Several participants raised

concerns about the security situation, and one member pointed in particular to recent cases of violence against Albinos. The government's response, such as the creation of a Commission to investigate extrajudicial killings, was saluted. Members endorsed the work plan proposed by the chair and welcomed the chair's intention to focus the work of the PBC Burundi on the new PRSP as a peacebuilding tool as well as on supporting the BINUB successor in implementing the mandate defined by forthcoming the Security Council resolution. In terms of peacebuilding priorities, it was suggested to focus on strengthening institutions, mechanisms of dialogue, transitional justice, human rights as well as the mobilization of resources including private investment. It was suggested that the new PRSP could include a set of guiding principles such as the role of the civil society and the media, dialogue and human rights principles . Other areas mentioned to merit sustained attention were Security Sector Reform, agricultural development and the reintegration of particularly vulnerable groups. Great importance was attached to the perspective of regional integration, in particular the East-Africa Community. Regarding dialogue between the authorities and the extraparliamentary opposition, one delegation pointed out that potential extraparliamentary partners should receive a clear message of a responsibility to refute violence. Regarding the sequencing of the preparation for the post-BINUB Mission, one delegate expressed a preference for reaching agreement on the mandate of the follow-up mission first, and discussing its shape and size second.

A representative of the civil society supported the integration of peacebuilding into the new PRSP. The civil society organizations that are taking part in the monitoring of the Strategic Framework for Peacebuilding in Burundi are preparing their inputs for the PRSP process.

**Next Steps:** The Chair will continue to engage with the Security Council on the definition of the mandate of the post BINUB Mission. The Chair will also be guided by the workplan as endorsed by members of the Configuration. A key upcoming task of the Configuration is the completion of a 5th biannual review of the Strategic Framework for Peacebuilding in Burundi. This being the final review of the current strategic framework, it is the intention of the chair to use the recommendations and conclusions as the basis for a continued PBC engagement with Burundi and as a guide for the PBC input to the PRSP process. Preparation of the 5th biannual report in Burundi has started and PBC members in Bujumbura and in New York

will shortly be requested to provide their input. It is the intention of the Chair to visit Burundi in January 2011 to participate in the final round of the 5<sup>th</sup> review of the strategic framework that will take place in a meeting of the “Political Forum of the Partners Coordination Group”. The Chair invited those members interested to accompany him on this trip to Burundi.

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