

PBC Burundi Configuration: Informal/informal experts-level meeting
Friday 05 February 2010, 8.30 to 10.30 am; Swiss Mission
Summary of discussions and action points

Purpose of the meeting: discuss the 4th review of the Strategic Framework for Peacebuilding in Burundi and continue the preparation for the upcoming visit to Burundi

1) Update on the preparation of elections

An update was provided by Albert Shingiro, Second Consellor at the Permanent Mission of Burundi to the United Nations.

The voters' registration is under way; so far 2,5 millions voters have been registered out of a total of 3,5 millions targeted. A two days extension has been granted to the registration exercise, which should help to register 95% of the total voting population. To facilitate the registration, the Government has been distributing identity cards to those who didn't have it: one million ID cards have been distributed. In the meantime, and to address the issue of those who still remain without valid ID cards, CENI is issuing a temporary ID to voters. The Government is still committed to free, fair and democratic elections.

The Government has a security strategy that will help addressing the specific challenges of the period before and after the elections.

2) Visit of the PBC to Burundi

The objectives of the visit are 3 fold: i) Follow up on the preparation of elections and pursue engagement with key stakeholders; ii) Follow up on the socio-economic reintegration strategy; iii) Co-lead with the Government of Burundi the final steps of the 4th review of the Strategic Framework for Peacebuilding in Burundi.

The visit is scheduled on 23 Feb – 01 March, including travel time.

With regards the participants, the Chair's preference is to be accompanied by his pairs Permanent Representatives or their Deputies. Moreover, the Chair insists to have a reasonable size of the delegation. Two regions are still to nominate their representatives: African States and Latin American & Caribbean States. They were given an additional deadline of Friday 05 February. The delegate of South Africa requested that her region be given until Tuesday 09 February to finalise the nomination of their representative.

The following inputs for key messages were suggested by participants:

- Discuss how to handle the period after elections, i.e transparency and publication of results, protection of those who might not be satisfied with the results.
- Encourage and sustain dialogue, using among other mechanisms the newly agreed Forum for Dialogue and promote mutual understanding.

- Speed up the process of replacement of the ERSG and discuss the issues around Government/UN relationships (look beyond the nomination and discuss how to ensure mutual understanding and sustain the confidence].
- Discuss the security strategy, specific aspects of security of elections and the long term security sector reform; further discuss concerns raised by different reports on youth movements and clashes that involve some political parties.
- Observation of elections: what is being done to invite more observers' missions and to facilitate/coordinate their work? In this context, the European Union will provide support through a team of observers, in addition to their financial support. The African Union is also planning to send observers to Burundi.
- The visit should be linked to the biannual review of the Strategic Framework for Peacebuilding with a view to agree on specific deliverables to which the different stakeholders will mutually commit over the next six months. These should consider issues beyond financing.
- In discussing the socio-economic reintegration strategy, keep in mind food security as a key priority for the Government of Burundi and the role of food security in peacebuilding. FAO will provide more detailed messages on this issue.
- Use the visit to further listen to Burundians and frame the dialogue on the real situation and issues beyond the elections.

3) Fourth review of the Strategic Framework for Peacebuilding in Burundi

The review has been initiated in Bujumbura. It will go through the following key steps:

- The first draft of the report has been prepared by Bujumbura
- This draft will be shared with New York for comments and inputs by members
- Bujumbura will also prepare a draft of the conclusions & recommendations with inputs from New York
- The report and the recommendations of the review will be discussed by Political Forum 26 February. The PBC delegation will attend this meeting.
- The Chair's report of the visit will focus on the conclusions and recommendations of the review.

Participants made the following suggestions: a) the review should come up with specific recommendations (in order to ensure mutual accountability); b) the review exercise could elaborate a matrix with a timeline; c) this review exercise should be linked with the work of the Security Council; d) this kind of review is laborious and one could consider extending the periodicity to one year.
