

16 June 2010

To : Members of the PBC – Burundi Configuration

**Informal meeting of the Country Specific Configuration of the  
PBC on Burundi**

**New York, 09 June 2010, 01.15-03.00 – Permanent Mission of  
Switzerland to the United Nations**

**Chair's summary**

On Wednesday, 09 June 2010, an informal lunch meeting of the Country Specific Configuration of the PBC on Burundi was hosted and chaired by H.E. Mr. Paul Seger, new Ambassador of Switzerland to the United Nations and new Chairperson of the PBC Country-Specific Configuration of Burundi. The purpose of the meeting was for the new Chair to introduce himself and to exchange views with members on the situation in Burundi and the next steps of the Country Specific Configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission.

After his introduction, the Chair gave the floor to the representative of Burundi who gave an update on the elections. This update was complemented by the representative of the Secretariat, Department of Political Affairs. Both representatives highlighted the following facts with regards to the elections:

The Communal Elections were initially scheduled on 21 May and in the end they took place on 24 May. The slight postponement was due to difficulties with the delivery of electoral materials. The voter turnout was very high and there were no major security incidents reported. Late on 25 May some opposition parties issued a declaration questioning the fairness of the poll.

On 26 May, the Minister of Interior expressed his satisfaction with the conduct of the communal elections and congratulated the Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI), the security forces, as well as the population on their positive participation in the poll. He encouraged all political parties to follow established legal procedures for any electoral disputes that might arise. During a meeting with provincial governors and

communal administrators on 28 May, President Nkurunziza congratulated the administrative officials on their efforts in creating an atmosphere conducive for the elections. For their part, the governors indicated that the elections had been generally well conducted despite a few logistical problems.

On 28 May, the CENI announced the provisional communal election results: CNDD-FDD 64.03%; FNL 14.15%; UPRONA 6.25%; FRODEBU 5.43%; MSD 3.75%; UPD 2.21%; the other parties sharing less than 4% of the votes cast. The same day, 13 parties held a press conference during which they rejected the communal elections results, alleging fraud and irregularities, and calling for the replacement of the CENI.

The local consortium for the monitoring of elections, COSOME, and the European Union Electoral Observer Mission stated on May 27 that the process had, overall and despite some problems in some areas, taken place in “peace and serenity” and in accord with international norms. In a communiqué issued on 29 May, the Executive Secretariat of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, ICGLR declared that the communal elections had been peaceful and transparent, despite some irregularities.

On 1 June, five out of the seven presidential candidates pulled out of the presidential polls. These candidates announced to the press that the group of thirteen political parties challenging the communal election results would boycott the remaining elections. On 3 June, the group of 13 parties contesting the communal election results and calling itself “Democratic Alliance for Change in Burundi (ADC)”, wrote a letter addressed to President Nkurunziza, requesting him to dissolve the CENI. On the same day, international partners in Burundi issued a joint declaration observing that the elections were generally well conducted, encouraging opposition parties to engage in a dialogue with the CENI and to return to the electoral process, urging the Government to speed up investigations into alleged incidents of elections-related violence, and to prosecute those responsible.

While none of the 13 parties has changed position to date, the dispute remains mostly confined to the political realm. All political parties continue to assert their refusal of violence.

The Chair suggested that the PBC’s role in the election process is to encourage all stakeholders to continue on the democratic track, to maintain

dialogue and to use available legal means in addressing election-related disputes.

Australia, Chile, Egypt, Kenya, South Africa, Uganda, the United States of America and FAO took the floor. They all assured Ambassador Paul Seger of their full support and cooperation. They expressed satisfaction with the conduct of the communal elections and concerns about the withdrawal of the political parties from the presidential election. They stressed the importance of dialogue and inclusive approach. They indicated commitment for and support of a PBC response to the situation in coordination with the actions of other key actors including the Secretary General (who was visiting Burundi during the time of the PBC meeting), the regional mechanisms and the Security Council.

The Chair suggested to soon convene a meeting of the PBC Burundi Configuration. He informed members that he was discussing with the Government of Burundi the timing and the format of such a meeting. The Chair also envisages a visit to Bujumbura in early July. The purpose of both the PBC meeting and the visit is to support the democratic process and to foster dialogue among all political actors.

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