

Chairman's Summary
Informal Meeting on the launch of the work of the Burundi CSM for 2008
6 February 2008

1. The purpose of the meeting was to **formally launch the work of the Burundi CSM for 2008** with a presentation of a proposed workplan, and updates on certain key peacebuilding issues, as identified in the Strategic Framework for Peacebuilding in Burundi. The items on the agenda included **2008 workplan and establishment of the Groupe de Coordination des Partenaires, conclusion of the sixth review under the arrangement under the PRGF, progress in the establishment of transitional justice mechanisms and implementation of the Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement.**
2. Representatives of the Government of Burundi, civil society organizations, the United Nations system and international partners in Bujumbura as well as the Resident Representative of the IMF in Burundi (from Washington) participated in the informal meeting via video link (see attached list of participants).
3. The meeting was **chaired by H.E. Mr. Johan L. Løvald, Permanent Representative of Norway to the United Nations.** In his introductory remarks, Ambassador Løvald noted that Burundi continues to face tremendous challenges in its efforts to consolidate peace, but underlined that the Peacebuilding Commission remained committed to support the country and its people in their pursuit for lasting peace and development.

2008 workplan and establishment of the Groupe de Coordination des Partenaires

4. **Ambassador Løvald** proposed that the **work of the Burundi configuration focus on two inter-related sets of activities:** 1) fulfilling the commitments made last year and 2) monitoring the peacebuilding process, progress towards reaching the benchmarks and providing advice to relevant stakeholders. Initial consultations have taken place on the workplan at expert-level during the month of January, and they will continue between the chair, members of the Burundi CSM, the United Nations system and other key partners during the implementation of the workplan. Ambassador Løvald indicated that he would work closely with PBSO on the preparations for the biannual reviews. In implementing the activities of the Burundi CSM, synergies will be sought with the chairs of the OC, the Working Group on lessons learned and the other two CSMs, so as to maximize time and resources for increased impact at country level.
5. **Ambassador Baza** gave an update on the ongoing process of establishing the “Groupe de Coordination des Partenaires – GCP” in Bujumbura. He made reference to the terms of reference and organigramme of the GCP, recalling that it was established to support coordination and monitoring of both the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) and the Strategic Framework for Peacebuilding. Most sectoral groups have been established for the PRSP, but delays are being encountered for the Strategic Framework. Although

sectoral areas have been identified (Land issues and socio-economic recovery; implementation of the comprehensive ceasefire agreement; Rule of Law; Good governance; Security Sector), the membership of the groups has not been established yet. The Government of Burundi is preparing a formal launch of the GCP by the President of Burundi or by one of the Vice-Presidents. The launch is expected to take place either at the end of February or at the beginning of March, depending on the availability of these senior leaders. In the meantime, information and training sessions have been organized for partners, including members of the new government, who were not involved in the development of the Strategic Framework and the Monitoring Mechanism last year.

6. **Belgium, China, Egypt, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the African Union** took the floor to welcome both the proposed workplan and the update on the establishment of the GCP. They underlined the importance of getting the mechanism up and running as soon as possible and the need to agree on benchmarks/targets to be achieved, both by the PBC and by the Government of Burundi, by June in the different priority areas. Critical financing gaps should also be identified in order to allow the Peacebuilding Commission to fulfill its mandate of marshalling resources. In this regard, members noted that they wish to receive information on the work of the GCP, and particularly the baselines and targets it will establish for the indicators of the Monitoring and Tracking Mechanism. They also underlined that it would be important to find ways for the PBC to participate in the work of the GCP so as to maintain dialogue and strengthen coordination. This could be done through PBC field visits, VTCs or any other means to be agreed on between Burundi and the PBC.

Conclusion of the sixth review under the arrangement under the PRGF

7. **Mr. Israel de la Piedra, the Resident Representative of the IMF in Burundi** (speaking from Washington on video link) informed the Burundi CSM that the Executive Board of the IMF completed the 6th review under the arrangement under the Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility (PRGF) on 16 January 2008. In undertaking the review, the Board also granted Burundi a waiver for the nonobservance of a quantitative performance criterion pertaining to a temporary accumulation of external payments arrears and a structural performance criterion on the establishment of a unified data file for computerized payroll management.
8. **Mr. de la Piedra** recalled that the delay in the completion of the review had been caused by governance problems that occurred in the first part of 2007, and noted that the IMF had worked closely with Burundian authorities and other international partners to address them. He indicated that the IMF Administrators acknowledged the efforts made by the Burundian authorities in meeting the requirements for the conclusion of the review. Efforts were therefore made by partners to release the bulk of budgetary support to Burundi before the end of year in order to allow the country to face essential public expenditures. The IMF continues to provide technical assistance to Burundi. In closing his briefing, he recalled that the IMF's Deputy Managing Director and Acting Chair, Mr. Murilo Portugal had said at the time of the completion of the review that "Burundi is in debt distress", and that progress toward the completion point under the Heavily Indebted

Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative had been slower than envisaged. Efforts in reaching the completion point need to be accelerated, debt-service payment procedures improved and recourse to external borrowing on non-concessional terms avoided.

9. The **European Commission** confirmed the improvement in the quality of the dialogue between international partners and Burundian authorities and the close collaboration among donors in resolving the issues that delayed the conclusion of the 6th review. The EC was able to release €14.5 million (out of a total of €15 million) at the end of 2007, in advance of the completion of the review in January 2008. The EC's budgetary support programme to Burundi will be continued. The EC will allocate €90 million to Burundi under the 10th FED starting in 2009.
10. It was agreed that factual information on Burundi's debt situation would be shared with members of the Burundi CSM.

Progress in the establishment of transitional justice mechanisms

11. **Mr. Pie Baribwegure, Chef de cabinet of the 1st Vice President** gave an update on the progress towards establishment of Transitional Justice mechanisms, focusing on the work of the tripartite steering committee (Government, Civil Society, United Nations) established for the popular consultation on transitional justice. He confirmed that an agreement on the establishment of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission and a Special Tribunal was still pending as the Government of Burundi would like such agreement to be based on the outcome of popular consultation on the subject. The issues of amnesty and the relations between the Prosecutor and the TRC are also still under negotiation with the United Nations.
12. Mr. Baribwegure noted that the establishment and work of a tripartite steering committee on popular consultations had been delayed for a number of reasons, including the late nomination of the members of the steering committee, delay in agreement on the terms of reference and in the development of a project document for submission to the Peacebuilding Fund. The latter was due to the need to train members of the tripartite steering committee on procedures and requirements of the PBF. He indicated that the Government had called upon the members of the steering committee to accelerate their work and that a project document had now been submitted to the local PBF's technical committee for review. Mr. Baribwegure stressed that his Government is committed to bringing the process to a successful closure and noted that the 1st Vice President is looking at ways to communicate more directly with the chair of the tripartite steering committee so as to remove any impediments to accelerated progress. The work of the tripartite steering committee is scheduled to commence in March with a three-month preparatory phase, which will include hiring experts, establishing offices at province and commune levels, adopting a methodology, training staff, identifying target populations, etc. Mr. Baribwegure noted that the Government of Burundi appreciated the support provided for this process so far, but noted that the establishment of the TRC and other

transitional justice mechanisms would require additional funding. As these will not be covered by the PBF, partners will be approached for their additional support.

13. **Belgium, China, France, Indonesia, Luxembourg, the Russian Federation and the European Community** thanked the government of Burundi for the update, noted the sensitive nature of the subject as well as the need to adopt a holistic approach to the issue, within overall peacebuilding efforts. The progress made by the Government of Burundi to date was noted by some of the members. **ASG Carolyn McAskie** confirmed that the project document developed by the tripartite steering committee had just been completed and that it would be submitted to New York after going through the local review process. She also noted that support for the operations of the TRC remained a funding gap.
14. It was proposed to hold a meeting in April to take stock of progress in the work of the tripartite steering committee. It was also agreed that a note outlining the different steps in the process of establishing transitional justice mechanisms in Burundi would be made available to the members of the Burundi CSM for the meeting.

Implementation of the Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement

15. **Ambassador Løvald** gave an update on the most recent developments in the implementation of the Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement between the Government of Burundi and PALIPEHUTU-FNL. He recalled that the implementation had been stalled since July 2007 and that a Political Directorate, composed of the facilitator, the AU, the regional initiative and BINUB had been established to explore ways of moving the process forward. The Facilitator met with the FNL leadership in Dar-es-Salaam on 28 January and subsequently attended the African Summit in Addis Ababa, where he discussed with the leaders of the Regional Initiative the outline of an overall plan towards the full implementation of the Ceasefire Agreement. The Regional Initiative renewed the mandate of the Facilitator and it is hoped that ongoing efforts on the part of the Facilitation and the Political Directorate will create the necessary political space for the FNL to engage in discussions with the Government. Discussions between the Facilitator and FNL leadership were to continue that week.
16. The Facilitator has planned a meeting of Special Envoys and Representatives for Burundi on 22 and 23 February in Cape Town, South Africa. Ambassador Løvald will attend the meeting in his capacity as Chair of the Burundi configuration of the PBC. He will brief the members of the Burundi CSM upon his return. He noted that the overall security situation in the country had continued to deteriorate in recent weeks, resulting in an increase of the United Nations security phase to III. He underlined that the finalization of the Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement is of utmost importance for the overall peace consolidation and socioeconomic development efforts in Burundi and that the PBC would remain seized of the matter as long as it is unresolved. He informed members of the Burundi CSM that he is in close contact with DPKO and others on this matter and that he has expressed the PBC's readiness to use its advisory role to support political efforts when ever this is seen useful by the parties, notably the Regional Initiative.

17. **South Africa** reaffirmed its commitment to supporting the implementation of the comprehensive ceasefire agreement and confirmed the information provided by the Chair on recent activities undertaken by South African Minister for Safety and Security Charles Nqakula in Dar and Addis Ababa. South Africa confirmed that the mandate of the facilitator which had expired at the end of December 2007 had been renewed for one year. The facilitator's plan for the next six months is to proceed with the implementation of the DDR process, starting with SSR. The FNL is expected to return to the JVMM by the end of February while the leadership of the movement is expected to return to Burundi by the end of March. The PALIPEHUTU-FNL is expected to have a representative on the Political Directorate in order to address issues that fall outside of the military negotiations.
18. **Tanzania** noted that the Minister C. Nqakula had also met with the Tanzanian Minister of Foreign Affairs on 5 February, and that A. Rwasa had agreed to return to Burundi and resume negotiations with the Government of Burundi. The Facilitator and the Tanzanian Minister of Foreign Affairs also agreed to meet again in March. Tanzania appealed both the Government and the PALIPEHUTU-FNL to act in good faith, to meet without any pre-conditions and to participate in the meeting that will be called by the facilitator.
19. **China, Italy, Jamaica and the European Community** welcomed the updates given by the Chair, South Africa and Tanzania as well as the positive news conveyed. They noted that the invitation to participate in the upcoming meeting of special envoys in Cape Town was recognition of the relevance of the work of the PBC and of the efficient and able leadership of the Chair of the Burundi CSM. **Italy** suggested that the Chair brief the Security Council upon his return from the meeting. Jamaica underlined the need to continue to balance attention to both peace and security on one hand and medium to longer term support to socio-economic development on the other hand. Responding to a question on the situation of FNL dissidents, **ERSG Y. Mahmoud** noted that the international community was waiting for the return of the Facilitator to Burundi before examining modalities of possible humanitarian support to the alleged FNL dissidents.
20. In his closing remarks, the Chair thanked members of the CSM for attending the meeting, and partners and colleagues in Bujumbura for their updates.

PBSO, New York
7 February 2008