

PBC Ambassadorial meeting on Burundi

06 March 2019

Chairperson's summary of the Discussion

1. On 06 March 2019, the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) held an Ambassadorial-level meeting on Burundi. The meeting was chaired by **H.E. Mr. Jürg Lauber**, Chair of the Burundi Configuration of the PBC. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the socioeconomic situation with a focus on the National Development Plan of Burundi 2018-2026 (NDP), the United Nations Development Assistance Framework 2019-2023 (UNDAF) and the World Bank Country Partnership Framework 2019-2023 (CPF). In this regard, PBC members were briefed by H.E. Mr. Albert Shingiro, Permanent Representative of Burundi to the UN, Mr. Garry Conille, UN Resident Coordinator for Burundi, and Mr. Nestor Coffi, Country Manager for the World Bank Group in Burundi.
2. **H.E. Mr. Albert Shingiro, Permanent Representative of Burundi to the UN**, underscored that the NDP aims for Burundi to reach a growth level of emerging countries by 2027, with 10.7 per cent GDP growth rate per year. To achieve such a goal, the NDP focuses on dynamic transformation of the economic, demographic, and social structures. The plan contains specific objectives under priority areas identified; these include reducing inequality, development of private sector, job creation, youth and women empowerment, healthcare promotion, natural resources management, as well as fight against poverty and climate change. He indicated that inclusive growth, governance and resource mobilization are among the major challenges for implementing the plan. He noted that the financial resources needed for the implementation of the plan are estimated at \$20 billion; of which 70 per cent will be mobilized internally through the expansion of the fiscal base and the strengthening of the Burundi Revenue authority, OBR; 20 per cent will be mobilized from external resources; and 10 per cent is expected to be generated through public private partnerships. In this regard, he reiterated Burundi's appeal to the international community to support the NDP.
3. **Mr. Garry Conille**, UN Resident Coordinator for Burundi, recalled the preparation and guiding principles of the UNDAF. He noted that the vision of the UNDAF is to contribute to eliminating poverty, reducing inequalities and vulnerabilities in Burundi through a sustained approach of resilience, as well as to ensuring the prosperity and well-being of people, while protecting the planet and strengthening the foundations of peace. He underlined the alignment of the four pillars of the UNDAF with the priorities of the NDP. The UNDAF outlines the effects which shall guide the programmatic activities in each of the four pillars (i) People (through quality education, health, nutrition, hygiene, water and sanitation, empowerment and social protection); (ii) Planet (environment, resilience); (iii) Prosperity (agriculture, food security); and (iv) Peace (governance, justice and human rights). The total budget of the UNDAF is \$784.4 million, of which 54 per cent remain to be mobilized.

4. **Mr. Nestor Coffi**, Country Manager for the World Bank Group in Burundi, outlined an overview of the WBG program in Burundi and its linkages to the NDP under two focus areas: (1) Building human capital and inclusion; (2) Strengthening the foundations for economic and social resilience; all supported by a cross-cutting foundation to restore macro-economic stability and governance. With an active portfolio of \$700 million commitments in investment projects, complemented by a wide range of analytical works, the current program is supporting social protection, notably for women and most vulnerable households, access to quality education, health, food security and nutrition, youth skills development and improve access to energy. He noted that the program is implemented in close collaboration with key development partners including the African Development Bank, the European Investment Bank, EU, UN agencies, private sector, and local and international NGOs. He underlined that the CPF 2019-2023 is fully aligned with the NDP, citizen-centred and aims to promote an inclusive and integrated approach to improve human capital outcomes.
5. Member States welcomed the briefings and made the following observations:
 - They welcomed the PBC meeting as timely and comprehensive, expressed their appreciation for the Chair's leadership, as well as for the presentations by the briefers. Participants welcomed the linkages between the three planning instruments presented in the briefings, and encouraged an integrated approach to peacebuilding, linking economic, social and political dimensions.
 - They welcomed the issuance of the NDP by the Government of Burundi and expressed support to the economic and social development agenda in Burundi. Member States underlined their readiness to engage in a substantive dialogue with the Government of Burundi on how to support the implementation of the NDP.
 - They called for the international community to provide assistance with a view to helping the country addressing major challenges it is facing. Some participants highlighted the important role played by international NGOs in the delivery of assistance.
 - They noted the overall calm situation in Burundi, and H.E. Mr. Pierre Nkurunziza's decision of not seeking re-election in 2020. Some participants commended the return of refugees as a positive signal; the call for the international community's support in view of voluntary return and sustainable reintegration was also reiterated.
 - They expressed their support for the mediation efforts led by the East African Community and underlined the importance of free, fair, inclusive and peaceful elections in 2020.
 - They welcomed the value added by the Peacebuilding Commission in providing a unique platform for engagement and dialogue between Burundi and international partners. Member states encouraged the Chair to pursue his engagement with a broad range of interlocutors to promote dialogue in the socioeconomic dimension and to support Burundi on the path towards free, fair, inclusive and peaceful elections in 2020. The sustainable and catalytic role of the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF), in particular with respect to women's and youth empowerment, was also highlighted.

- Some Member States expressed their regret over the closure of the UN Human Rights Office in Burundi at the request of the Government and invited Burundi to continue the dialogue with UN bodies and international human rights mechanisms in order to strengthen the promotion and protection of human rights.
6. **PBSO** commended the lively discussion among Member States as an essential driver for the reform of the United Nations, which could fuel further inspiration for the other configurations and also for future intergovernmental work. The PBF has been able to play a catalytic role in Burundi, with over \$87 million investment since 2007, and will continue to support the NDP in priorities areas, namely Localized Conflict Resolution and Prevention; Empowerment of Youth and Women; Alleviating the consequences of displacements and returns; Strengthening the rule of law and good governance.
 7. The Chair called on stakeholders to continue supporting the authorities in Burundi on their path towards building capacity for the protection and promotion of the full range of human rights, i.e. civil and political, as well as social, economic and cultural rights. He expressed his appreciation for the presentations, which confirmed the rationale to pursue the conversation on the socioeconomic situation. Thanking the Member States for their contributions, he noted the readiness to engage in a constructive dialogue on how to support Burundi in the implementation of the NDP as a promising sign. The Chair reiterated his gratitude to former President H.E. Benjamin Mkapa for his efforts as facilitator of the EAC-led mediation process and expressed full support for any follow up undertaken by the Heads of State of Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania. In his concluding remarks, the Chair announced that he planned to visit Burundi around late April/early May, subject to consultations with the authorities in Bujumbura, with a focus on the following issues:
 - The socioeconomic dialogue with the Government and its international partners with the objective of discussing how to support the Government in the implementation of the NDP and of finding ways to improve and extend cooperation with their multilateral and bilateral partners.
 - The preparations for the 2020 elections, by underscoring the need for free, inclusive, peaceful and democratic elections when engaging with different interlocutors and reiterating the readiness of the Commission to facilitate support for Burundi on this path.
 - National reconciliation and dealing with the past, including the opportunity to follow-up on several developments such as changes to the mandate and composition of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.
 - Complementarity of all PBC activities to any political efforts undertaken on sub-regional, regional and international level.