

14 May 2010

To : Members of the PBC – Burundi Configuration

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

New York, 11 May 2010, 10.15-12.00 – Conference Room 3 NLB

Chair's summary

On Tuesday, 11 May 2010, an informal meeting of the Country Specific Configuration of the PBC on Burundi was chaired by H.E. Mr. Peter Maurer, Chairperson of the PBC Country -Specific Configuration of Burundi. The purpose of the meeting was to have a briefing on the most recent developments in Burundi and to update on the preparation for the 2010 elections.

After the introduction by the Chair, the Permanent Representative of Burundi, Ambassador Gahutu Zacharie made a statement in which he highlighted progress made in the peacebuilding process, including the transformation of the FNL in a political party and the preparation of the 2010 elections. He thanked regional and international partners for their support to the electoral process, and reaffirmed that many positive signs indicate that the elections will be conducted freely and fairly. Ambassador Zacharie recalled the attention on the other priorities that need equal attention for peace to be sustainable, including the socio-economic reintegration strategy in which the PBC is already engaged and long term priorities that were discussed during the meeting of the Consultative Group in Paris in October 2010 (energy, agriculture, infrastructure, information technology, the development of the private sector, tourism, water) and education and health. He reiterated the call for PBC help in attracting foreign investment to Burundi.

Charles Petrie, the Executive Representative of the Secretary-General (ERSG) in Burundi, addressed in his briefing mainly the issue of the 2010 elections. He indicated that the President of the Republic had set an encouraging tone in launching the campaign, encouraging all Burundians to approach the elections in a peaceful manner. Mr. Petrie suggested cautious

optimism in assessing the situation in Burundi . Optimism for all the positive signs and progress achieved during the preparation of elections. Cautious because the recent violence and suffering were still fresh in memories and because the dynamics that contributed to that spiral of violence are yet to be fully address ed. He specifically mentioned disarmament and the integration of returning refugees , internally displaced persons and the demobilized. Mr. Petrie stated that the success of the elections will significantly depend on the way the different actors will manage the results. . Given the positive signs, ERSG Petrie concluded that predictions are not very useful and that the focus should remain on our commitment to successful elections. On the funding of elections, he reminded the gap of 1.8 M USD and expressed his hope that this gap will be closed soon.

Australia, Belgium, Benin, Canada, Chile, Egypt, Indonesia, Japan, Kenya, Mexico, Netherlands, Nigeria, Norway, South Africa, the African Union, the European Union, the United States of America and FAO took the floo r. They all expressed satisfaction with the preparation of the 2010 elections and hope that the elections will be conducted in a free, fair, safe and transparent environment. In particular they pointed to the need of preventing risks of violence especially with the activities of the youth groups associated with political parties and the need to prepare for dealing with election-related disputes and to ensure that results of elections are accepted. Most renewed their commitment of support to the electoral process and to the long term development agenda. With regards to the funding gap in the budget of elections, Australia announced a contribution of 0.5 M USD.

In his feedback, ERSG Petrie thanked Australia for their contribution as well as other who had alrea dy contributed. He suggested a dedicated discussion with the PBC on the long term engagement after the elections. He suggested a paradigm shift in the way peacebuilding is currently defined to include economic development and capacity-building. In this regard he proposed to organize a high level conference towards the end of 2010 to start the process of shifting the focus from the short term perspective to the long term perspective.

In his closing remarks, the Chair thanked all partners who had contributed to the needs of the elections. Referring to the debate of the Security Council the day before in which members of the Security Council encourage the PBC to assist the Government of Burundi in laying the foundations for long-term development in Burundi and in mobilizing the support needed to consolidate peace and security, he suggested that the PBC would need to work on five types of coherence: (1) coherence of the short-term with the long term agenda, (2) coherence of public investment with private investment in peacebuilding, (3) coherence of the political and security approach with the socio-economic approach, (4) coherence of national, regional and international approaches, (5) coherence – or managing the tension - between the need to address multiple challenges and the need to prioritise. He mentioned the forthcoming opportunities during the course of this year for the PBC to contribute to this coherence and define its future engagement with Burundi, such as the preparatory process for the new PRSP cycle, the review of the Strategic Framework for Peacebuilding and the discussions with the Government on the future of the UN in Burundi.
