

Peacebuilding Commission
Ambassadorial-Level Meeting on Burundi
6 July 2021
Chair's Summary

1. On 6 July, the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) held an ambassadorial-level meeting on Burundi chaired by H.E. Ms. Pascale Baeriswyl, Chair of the PBC Burundi Configuration. The meeting allowed member states to obtain an overview of the overall scope, the guiding principles and the objectives of Burundi's *National Programme on Peace Capitalization, Social Stability and Promotion of Economic Growth* and served to identify areas where the PBC can mobilize international support, in cooperation with other partners. It included discussion on how relevant UN agencies, funds and programs in the country are working in support of the Programme and addressing the needs of Burundi's most vulnerable.
2. In her opening remarks, the Chair welcomed the new Permanent Representative of Burundi to the UN, H.E. Mr. Zéphyrin Maniratanga as well as the briefers. She noted that, in recent months, there has been active regional and international diplomatic engagement on the part of Burundi, and that there had been continued efforts to move the country towards a peaceful and prosperous future, including the approval of the *National Programme on Peace Capitalization, Social Stability and Promotion of Economic Growth* ("the Programme"). The Chair highlighted that the Programme gives special attention to vulnerable populations such as refugees and those affected by natural disasters and other disasters due to climate change. The Chair indicated that the PBC could serve as a platform to mobilize support for the implementation of the Programme.
3. H.E. Mr. Zéphyrin Maniratanga welcomed the positive engagement of the Configuration on peacebuilding and socio-economic development in Burundi. The Ambassador stressed the importance of the Programme, noting that it accompanies the country's National Development Plan 2018-2027 (NDP) and aligns with President Ndayishimiye's strategic priorities. He further emphasized that its implementation will require the firm commitment of Burundi as well as bilateral and multilateral partners. The Ambassador noted the massive return of refugees in the region as indication of the calm and stable situation in Burundi. He recalled the removal of Burundi from the agenda of the Security Council in 2020, the closing of the UN Special Envoy's office in Burundi, as well as the removal of Burundi from the agenda of the African Union's Peace and Security Council and the termination of the mandate of the AU Human Rights and Military Observer Mission in Burundi. He updated on dialogue with neighboring countries to restore relations. He emphasized that the Burundian Government welcomes the resumption of cooperation with the Francophonie as well as the continued constructive political dialogue with the European Union. The Ambassador informed about national efforts and mechanisms to protect and

promote human rights and noted positive developments in media relations. He emphasized that Burundi continues its aim of building relations and cooperation based on mutual respect and sovereign equality of states.

4. Mr. François Nibizi, Chief of the Office of Strategic Studies and Development of the Presidency of the Republic of Burundi, provided an overview of the Programme. He emphasized that the Programme was the result of a consultative process and dialogue with partners. He reiterated that the Programme was aligned with the National Development Plan and the Sustainable Development Goals as well as President Ndayishimiye's strategic priorities and the four guiding principles for his mandate: accountability to the people; economic empowerment of the people; peacebuilding, security and economic growth; and good governance. The Programme's overall objective is to contribute to the economic growth of the country and improve living conditions for all Burundians and vulnerable populations in particular. He informed that the Programme's specific objectives included stimulating economic growth by investing in growth sectors; building institutional capacity; improving professional capacities of Burundians; and ensuring the economic inclusion of former combatants. Mr. Nibizi detailed the Programme's five pillars including the development of a responsible and dynamic private sector; the development of professional training and institutions; the enhanced access to socio-economic services and infrastructures; the accelerated and sustainable resettlement and reintegration of vulnerable persons; and the design and implementation of multisectoral and job-creating projects. He underscored that the Government, with this Programme, aims to help victims of climate change and other vulnerable populations; transform the agro-pastoral economy; restore water sources and improve power grids and other infrastructures; increase professional training and employment for women and youth; and enhance access to basic services for all Burundians. Mr. Nibizi emphasized a participatory, inclusive approach and informed of a monitoring and evaluation system to guide implementation. For the success of the Programme, he noted the importance of multi-stakeholder involvement and plans to engage line ministries, local government and community leaders, the private sector, NGOs, civil society and the media, as well as international partners to help mobilize financial resources.
5. Ms. Jutta Hinkkanen, Head of Office of UN OCHA in Burundi, briefed on the current humanitarian trends in Burundi, in particular those related to natural disasters and climate change as well as to the sustainable reintegration of refugees and returnees. Ms. Hinkkanen informed that climate shocks and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic have aggravated pre-existing vulnerabilities and increased humanitarian needs in Burundi. She updated that, according to the latest humanitarian analysis carried out jointly with the Government, 2.3 million people in Burundi are in need of humanitarian assistance. Ms. Hinkkanen further informed that the natural disasters linked to climate change in Burundi affect agricultural seasons and destroy crops, further weakening the nutritional status of the most vulnerable

and causing food insecurity. She noted that the voluntary return of Burundian refugees from neighboring countries significantly increased in the second half of 2020, with approximately 500 returnees per week. She underscored that the most important reintegration challenges are shelter, livelihood opportunities, and access to social services. Ms. Hinkkanen emphasized the importance of reintegration programming and support to host communities. She informed that the 2021 Burundi *Joint Refugee Return and Reintegration Plan* (JRRRP) projects 143,000 returns in 2021 with financial requirements of \$104.3 million USD. She underlined the importance of strengthening advocacy and resource mobilization efforts to provide financial contributions to the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) 2021, and the JRRRP 2021, as well as to initiatives that promote and expand social cohesion and dialogue among stakeholders at the community, provincial and national levels. In order to strengthen the humanitarian and development nexus she recommended broader and stronger collaboration between the government, development, humanitarian and environmental actors to adequately respond to cyclical crises and develop long-term solutions.

6. Member States welcomed the briefings and made the following observations:

- They commended the Government of Burundi's efforts to strengthen resilience and advance socio-economic development as well as promoting peace and national reconciliation. They welcomed the new National Programme and its focus on the country's most vulnerable as well as its alignment with the National Development Plan 2018-2027 and the Sustainable Development Goals.
- They called on bilateral and multilateral partners to support the implementation of the new National Programme, recognizing the necessity of partnerships between Burundi, the United Nations Country Team, regional bodies and international financial institutions and the private sector. They welcomed that the PBC continues to serve as an important platform to mobilize support for national peacebuilding and development efforts, including through the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF). They further underscored the importance of coherence among partners. Some member states updated on their bilateral cooperation with Burundi, in areas such as education and vocational training, capacity building, private sector engagement, health and women empowerment.
- They expressed concern about the significant humanitarian needs in Burundi, exacerbated by climate shocks and the COVID-19 pandemic, and called upon the international community to support the JRRRP 2021 and the HRP 2021.
- They encouraged the Government implement the new National Programme through an inclusive and participatory approach and commended the focus on women's and youth employment/entrepreneurship as well as support to returning refugees. They further iterated the importance of the full, effective, and meaningful participation of women

and youth in all peacebuilding processes. In this context, some highlighted the relevance of the PBF and its Gender and Youth Promotion Initiative.

- They encouraged the Government to continue its reforms and efforts related to the protection of human rights of all Burundians, good governance and rule of law, and welcomed recent positive developments related to human rights and media freedoms.
7. Responding to the discussion, the briefers thanked the member states for the interest and support expressed for the new National Programme and for the strong partnership between the United Nations and the Government of Burundi. The Permanent Representative of Burundi welcomed the contributions to the discussion by member states and appreciated the opening of a new era for partnership. The Chair closed by thanking briefers and member states for the fruitful discussion, which exemplified the importance of effective partnerships at all levels to support peacebuilding and socio-economic development in Burundi. She recognized the important contribution of the PBF, including in support of returnees and host communities. The Chair took note of the interest expressed by member states in focusing on youth engagement and women's empowerment in future meetings of the Configuration. She further informed of her wish to visit to Burundi, as soon as conditions permit and in close consultation with the Burundi authorities, in order to meet with the authorities and a broad range of interlocutors from Burundian society and public life, as well as international partners present in the country, on future support by the PBC to their priorities.