

**Statement of the Chair of the Burundi Configuration of the Peacebuilding  
Commission to the Security Council**

**09 November 2015**

Mr. President

Distinguished Members of the Council

I welcome the opportunity to brief the Security Council on my first visit to Burundi in my capacity as the Chair of the Burundi Configuration of the UN Peacebuilding Commission.

The objective of my visit is to establish contacts with the Government of Burundi and other key stakeholders, to gain a first-hand understanding of the current political crisis, and to learn of the Government's plans on how to address it. I am also exploring opportunities for the PBC's future engagement and the possible contributions it could make to lower tensions.

Today was the first day of my visit, and I'd like to give an account of the meetings with representatives of the Government, the United Nations, the Special Envoy of the African Union as well as members of the diplomatic community.

I had open and substantial discussions with the Second Vice President and the Minister of External Relations and International Cooperation which focused on the security situation, on efforts to initiate a political dialogue between Burundians, the socio-economic situation of the country and partnership with regional and international actors.

I encouraged the government to intensify its engagement with the international community, namely with the EAC, the AU, the EU, the bilateral partners and of course the United Nations.

I also expressed my hope that the government will engage in an inclusive and genuine dialogue process in order to restore trust among the Burundian people.

I encouraged my interlocutors to accept offers of international assistance for de-escalation measures such as the disarmament of armed groups.

I also expressed my concerns about inflammatory rhetoric which could incite hatred among different groups of Burundian society.

Both the Second Vice-President and the Minister reiterated the Government's interest to continue cooperation with the PBC Burundi Configuration.

Continuing violence, insecurity and ongoing human rights violations appeared to be key concerns for my UN interlocutors who highlighted that the situation also impacts the operations of the United Nations in Burundi. Let me express my deep regrets at the death of 2 UN staff members who became victims of this violence. I would also like to seize this opportunity to commend the work that the United Nations team on the ground is doing under difficult circumstances.

Mr President,

Tomorrow and on Wednesday I will meet with the First Vice-President and different stakeholders including civil society actors, political parties, as well as the Commission for Inter-Burundian dialogue and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. I will also meet with representatives of International Financial Institutions. An audience with the President of the Republic is scheduled for Wednesday.

As I continue consultations, I will reiterate my appeal to all stakeholders to refrain from violence, both physical and rhetoric. I will further discuss the impact of the current situation on the economy of Burundi.

I will then continue my trip to Uganda, where I will meet with the Minister of Defense, Crispus Kiyonga, who has been charged by President Museveni with facilitating the EAC-mandated dialogue among Burundians. On Friday, I will meet representatives of the Government of Tanzania, the World Bank, the United Nations and the East African Community in Dar es Salaam before returning to New York.

Mr. President,

Upon my return to New York, I will prepare a report which will outline inter alia peacebuilding challenges emerging from the current crisis as well as opportunities and priorities for PBC engagement in 2016. The report will be shared with the members of the PBC Burundi Configuration at a debriefing on the 18<sup>th</sup> of November, as well as with the Security Council, as per established practice and in line with the advisory role of the PBC [vis-à-vis the Security Council]. The report will also inform the workplan of the PBC engagement with Burundi in 2016.

Thank you.

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