



## PRESS RELEASE

### THE AFRICAN UNION STRONGLY CONDEMNS THE ACTS OF VIOLENCE IN BURUNDI

#### **The AU reiterates the need for dialogue and consensus**

**Addis Ababa, 24 May 2015:** The Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union (AU), Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, has learned with dismay of the assassination of Mr. Zedi Feruzi, leader of the Union for Peace and Development (UPD) Zigamibanga, and his bodyguard, in Bujumbura, on 23 May 2015. She strongly condemns this cowardly and odious act, as well as the criminal grenade attack at the Bujumbura central market on 22 May 2015 that killed two people and injured several others.

The Chairperson of the Commission expresses the AU's heartfelt condolences to the families of the victims, and wishes speedy recovery to the injured. She calls for an independent and credible inquiry to shed light on these criminal acts and bring the perpetrators to justice. She calls on the Burundian authorities urgently to take all necessary measures to ensure the safety of the leaders of political parties, as well as of those of civil society organizations and the media. She recalls the imperative to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The Chairperson of the Commission stresses that the acts of violence of the last few days, as well as those that have marred the demonstrations organized by the opposition and civil society, have taken place at a time of sustained efforts to overcome the serious crisis facing Burundi. She notes, in this regard, the consultative political dialogue facilitated by the United Nations Special Envoy for the Great Lakes region, Said Djinnit, together with the representatives of the AU, the East African Community (EAC), the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR).

The Chairperson of the Commission urges the Burundian parties to demonstrate renewed commitment to find a political and consensual solution to the crisis facing their country, create the necessary conditions for the holding of truly free and transparent elections, and preserve the fundamental achievements made thanks to the Arusha Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in Burundi, of which the AU and other international actors are Guarantors. She reiterates the AU's determination, in close cooperation with the region and other international actors, to continue to do everything in its power to contribute to the speedy resolution of the current crisis. In this regard, she renews her appreciation to the AU high-level mission led by Mr. Edem Kodjo and including Professor Ibrahima Fall, for its sustained efforts and commitment.

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