

AFRICAN UNION

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COMMUNIQUE

THE AFRICAN UNION REITERATES THE IMPERATIVE NEED FOR DIALOGUE AND CONSENSUS FOR A LASTING SOLUTION TO THE CRISIS IN BURUNDI AND ANNOUNCES THAT IT WILL NOT OBSERVE THE ELECTIONS SCHEDULED FOR 29 JUNE 2015

Addis Ababa, 28 June 2015: The Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union (AU), Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, reiterates the AU's deep concern about the serious political and security situation obtaining in Burundi. She stresses that the stalemate in the political process and the increase in acts of violence may undermine the important gains made following the conclusion of the 2000 Arusha Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation and the 2003 Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement, with serious implications for peace and security in Burundi and for the stability of the entire region.

Against this background, the Chairperson of the Commission recalls the communiqués adopted by the Extraordinary Summit of the East African Community (EAC), held in Dar-es-Salaam, on 31 May 2015, and by the meeting of the AU Peace and Security Council (PSC), held in Johannesburg, on 13 June 2015, which provide an appropriate framework for a lasting and peaceful resolution of the current crisis. She notes, in particular, the request made by the PSC for the consensual determination of the election date and the resumption of the inter-Burundian dialogue, with a view to creating conditions conducive to the organization of free, fair transparent and credible elections, as well as to finding solutions to all the issues on which the parties disagree.

The Chairperson of the Commission stresses the relevance of the proposal put forward by the International Facilitation, composed of the AU, the EAC, the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) and the United Nations and operating under the auspices of the current Chairman of the EAC, for the postponement of the local, legislative and presidential elections, which would have then taken place simultaneously on 30 July 2015. She deeply regrets that this proposal, submitted in accordance with the decisions of the Heads of State of the Region and of the PSC and which were formally communicated to all the parties, including the Government, was not accepted. She, again, urgently appeals to the Government and to all the other parties, to take a full measure of the dangers threatening their country, respond positively to the urgent calls for dialogue and restraint made by the region, the AU, the UN Secretary-General and Security Council, as well as by a number of international partners, both bilateral and multilateral, and to uphold the supreme interests of Burundi at this crucial phase of its history, including by agreeing to postponing the elections to the date proposed by the International Facilitation. She recalls their duty to spare their country and its people a new period of hardship, with incalculable consequences.

In conformity with the PSC communiqué of 13 June 2015, and noting that the necessary conditions are not met for the organization of free, fair, transparent and credible elections, in compliance with the relevant provisions of the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance, the AU Commission will not observe the local and parliamentary elections scheduled to take place this Monday, 29 June 2015. The AU, in support of the efforts of the EAC and the ICGLR and in close cooperation with the UN and other international stakeholders, will continue to do everything in its power to help the people of Burundi overcome the challenges at hand, in an effort to preserve the hard-won peace, reconciliation and stability in Burundi and to deepen democracy and the rule of law. She, once again, condemns all acts of violence and violations of human rights. She recalls that the PSC, in its communiqué of 13 June 2015, expressed its determination to take all necessary measures against all Burundian actors whose actions perpetuate violence and hinder the search for a political solution.

The Chairperson of the Commission reiterates her appreciation to her Special Representative, Ibrahima Fall, for his sustained efforts as part of the implementation of his mandate. She also commends the team spirit and solidarity shown by the members of the International Facilitation and their commitment to finding an early and lasting solution to the serious crisis facing Burundi.

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The African Union Reiterates the Imperative Need for Dialogue and Consensus for A Lasting Solution to the Crisis in Burundi and Announces That It Will Not Observe the Elections Scheduled For 29 June 2015

Peace and Security

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