



Press release on PBF support to AU in Burundi

UN Peacebuilding Fund Finances African Union Human Rights Observers in Burundi

New York and Addis Ababa, 3 May 2016 – Thirty-two (32) African Union human rights observers will be able to continue their work in Burundi for another six months after the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) transferred \$2.26 million to the African Union Commission late last week, the AU and the PBF announced today.

This is the first time the PBF provides direct support to the African Union Commission and it represents a move toward strengthened cooperation between the UN and the AU in peacebuilding, in line with the resolutions adopted by the UN General Assembly and Security Council last week, calling on the UN to strengthen its cooperation with the AU and other regional organisations.

In this latest round of financing, the PBF also supports the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in Burundi with just over \$300,000 for training and joint monitoring missions with the AU.

The observers were deployed in response to the decisions of the African Union Peace and Security Council of 14 May 2015 and 13 June 2015, expressing its concern with the increased cases of human rights abuses in Burundi. They are tasked with observing, monitoring and documenting human rights violations in the country as well as human rights advocacy with the government.

The observers have been deployed since July 2015 with funding support from the European Union, which is also supporting the AU military experts in Burundi. The PBF funds cover 32 human rights observers' presence from April to September 2016. Their deployment is the second step in the AU's planned deployment of 100 human rights observers and 100 military experts.

This support builds on existing PBF financing for human rights in Burundi. Human rights have been one of the key areas of PBF support to Burundi from the initial stages of PBF engagement in 2008. The AU and the PBF welcomed this fruitful cooperation and hope that the presence of the AU human rights observers will help to reduce the violations of human rights in Burundi.

For further information, please contact:

- AUC contact : AU Situation room, Tel.: (+251-11) 5513 822
- Gianluca Rampolla, UN Peacebuilding Support Office, Tel.: (+1) 9173675568

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