



THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

30 November 2015

Dear Mr. President,

By its resolution 2248 (2015), the Security Council requested me to update the Council on the situation in Burundi and present options on the future presence of the United Nations in the country. On 18 November 2015, I dispatched my Special Adviser, Mr. Jamal Benomar, to conduct consultations with key interlocutors in the region and in Burundi. Based on these consultations, I provide herein a review of the situation in Burundi and propose options for the consideration of the Council.

Situation in Burundi

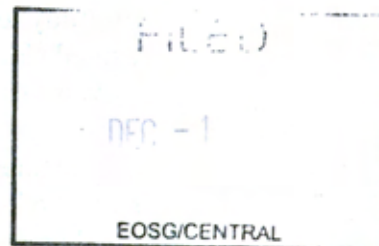
Burundi has been a topic on the agenda of the Security Council ever since the tragic events surrounding the coup d'état in October 1993 that sparked a decade-long civil war in which hundreds of thousands of people lost their lives.

The United Nations has worked determinedly through different configurations to provide essential support to the Government and people of Burundi in order to help the country fulfil its aspirations and turn the page definitively on the violence of much of its past.

During this time, an impressive array of achievements was registered in the areas of democratic process, human rights and security sector reform, though numerous challenges remained.

The United Nations Office in Burundi (BNUB) closed on 31 December 2014, following a request by the Government of Burundi. Pursuant to Security Council resolution 2127 (2014), the United Nations Electoral Observation Mission in Burundi (MENUB) was established on 1 January 2015 to follow and report on the electoral process. The mandate of MENUB expires on 31 December 2015.

His Excellency
Mr. Matthew Rycroft, CBE
President of the Security Council
New York



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Political discord and violence erupted in April of this year when President Pierre Nkurunziza announced his intention to run for another term. While the crisis crystallized around the elections, it has deeper political roots. Violence in Burundi has since reached alarming levels. Armed elements have been launching deadly attacks in urban neighbourhoods in Bujumbura that risk spreading. These attacks are being met with reprisals by the security forces. Serious human rights violations and abuses are being committed in this context. Burundi stands on the brink of another armed conflict that could unravel years of painstaking work to consolidate and preserve peace and have potentially disastrous effects in an already fragile region.

It is my firm conviction that politically motivated violence and human rights violations and abuses in Burundi will not be halted without the prospect of an inclusive political settlement and without accountability. However, until now, there has been very limited progress in launching a credible and transparent process that enjoys the confidence of all Burundian stakeholders and would allow for political differences to be resolved through dialogue. Launching such a dialogue must be the absolute priority while we continue to find ways, with our partners in the region, to stop the deterioration of the security situation and prevent massive violence and a possible full-blown civil war.

Visit to Burundi and the region

My Special Adviser provided a detailed briefing to the Council today, 30 November 2015 on his consultations in Addis Ababa, Kampala and Burundi, which took place between 19 and 27 November 2015. In Addis Ababa, interlocutors from the African Union highlighted the need for the United Nations and the African Union to join efforts to support the peaceful settlement of conflict in Burundi. Given the role of President Museveni as the facilitator mandated by the East African Community for the dialogue, my Special Adviser further discussed with senior Ugandan Government officials the importance of a transparent, genuine and inclusive dialogue and our support to their efforts.

I wish to express my appreciation to the Government of Burundi for its cooperation with my Special Adviser and his delegation during their visit to Bujumbura. The mission met with key Government representatives, including President Nkurunziza, as well as with a wide range of Burundian stakeholders, political parties and civil society organizations. My Special Adviser listened carefully to their assessment of the current situation in Burundi and how the United Nations can assist them in building a peaceful and stable society. The Government and other national stakeholders explored with my Special Adviser ways in which the United Nations could assist in supporting dialogue and disarmament. Mr. Benomar will continue to work closely with the Government and all other concerned stakeholders in providing support to national efforts to build and sustain peace.

The Special Adviser also used the opportunity of his visit to Burundi to hold detailed consultations with the United Nations country team, representatives of the African Union and the diplomatic community. All interlocutors provided constructive inputs on how the United Nations could best support Burundi in the current situation.

Options

During these extensive consultations, the following options were explored:

Option 1: A Multidimensional integrated peacekeeping operation under Chapter VII

Subject to conducive political and security conditions, the United Nations could deploy a multidimensional integrated presence under Chapter VII of the Charter. The United Nations peacekeeping operation would: (a) support the political process; (b) carry out security-related stabilization tasks; (c) provide support to the Government in its Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) and Security Sector Reform (SSR) efforts; (d) protect civilians; (e) monitor and promote respect for human rights; and (f) create the conditions for the provision of humanitarian assistance and the return of displaced persons and refugees. As called for in resolution 2248 (2015), contingency planning would continue and deepen based on different scenarios with various models of cooperation with the African Union and other relevant partners.

Option 2: A fully-fledged integrated Special Political Mission

An integrated Special Political Mission would focus on the following key areas: (a) good offices and support to an inclusive national dialogue process; (b) monitoring and promotion of respect for human rights; (c) support to the authorities in strengthening the areas of rule of law and security; (d) support to DDR; (e) broader issues of governance; and (f) socio-economic development. The Special Political Mission could operate in parallel to an African-led operation in the country. Contingency planning for a possible transition from a Special Political Mission to a Peacekeeping Operation would also continue, as warranted by evolving conditions on the ground.

Option 3: A Support Team to the Special Adviser

The two principal objectives of the Team would be: (a) to work with the Government of Burundi and other stakeholders to support a credible, inclusive and nationally-owned political dialogue process; and (b) to advise the Burundian authorities on strengthening security and rule of law institutions and protecting populations from human rights violations and abuses in line with international standards, as well as advise on the design and implementation of a credible disarmament programme.

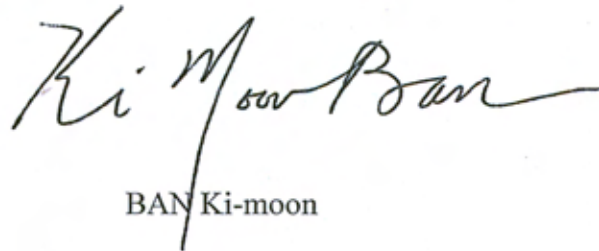
The Team would report to the Special Adviser, and coordinate and develop partnerships with regional and subregional actors, namely the African Union, the East African Community and the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, to promote coherent international responses to the situation in the country. The Team would monitor closely the situation on the ground to provide reporting and situational analysis to facilitate United Nations planning efforts.

The Team would cooperate with the United Nations country team already on the ground, including the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. The deployment of a small team to Burundi, as mandated in paragraph 7 of resolution 2248 (2015), could serve as an advance deployment under this option.

Given the existing political realities and security conditions on the ground, I recommend that the Council consider authorizing option 3. I also recommend that the Council review the mandate of the United Nations presence as the situation on the ground evolves.

I should be grateful if you would bring this letter to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

Please accept, Mr. President, the assurances of my highest consideration.



BAN Ki-moon



To: CDC (through ODSG),


URGENT

Please find attached for your review and approval a draft SG letter to the Security Council presenting options for a future UN presence in Burundi.

The letter was drafted by SA Benomar on the basis of his consultations in Addis Abbaba, Kampala and Bujumbura. It presents three broad options: (1) a multi-dimensional peacekeeping operation under Chapter VII of the UN Charter; (2) a full-blown SPM; and (3) a *Support Team to the Special Adviser* that would focus on supporting political dialogue and advising the Government on the strengthening of its security and rule of law institutions, as well as the design of a credible DDR programme. Given the existing political realities and security conditions on the ground, the letter recommends that the Council authorize option 3.

The options were endorsed by the Burundi IATF at the principals' level. The letter has been closely consulted with DPA, OHCHR and DPKO and PU. It is due to the Council today to coincide with SA Benomar's briefing.

Received in ODSG

30 Nov 2015
Political Unit
30 November 2015

Seen by:

RF 72.

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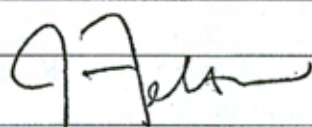
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TO/A: The Deputy Secretary-General				
CC: Edmond Mulet, Chef de Cabinet				
THROUGH/WISE PAR:				
FROM/DE: Jeffrey Feltman, USG, DPA 				
Date: 30 November 2015		Ext: 3-5055		Room No. – No de bureau: S-3516
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DEPARTMENTS CONSULTED

EOSG ☐ OIOS ☐ OLA ☐ ODA ☐ DPKO ☒ DFS ☐ OCHA ☐ DESA ☐

DGACM ☐ DPI ☐ DSS ☐ DM ☐ UNDP ☐ Other: OSISA Benmar, OHCHR

SUBJECT/MESSAGE:

Please find attached a draft letter of the Secretary-General to the Security Council with options for future UN presence in Burundi, drafted pursuant to Security Council resolution 2248 (2015).