



NEWS RELEASE

International Partners Pledge Continued Support in Recognition of Burundi's Achievements and Commitments

NEW YORK, November 16, 2012 – At today's meeting of the Burundi Configuration of the UN Peace Building Commission in New York, the African Development Bank, the European Union, the International Monetary Fund, the United Nations Development Program, and the World Bank pledged their continued support to the country's achievements and commitments.

The statement by the five institutions comes shortly after the Conference of Burundi's Development Partners, held in Geneva, and attended by representatives of more than 100 countries and international organizations. During the October 29-30, 2012 conference, the Government of Burundi outlined its plans for development in the framework of its second Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, adopted earlier in the year after extensive consultations.

The country's development partners noted significant progress in recent years, notably in terms of restoring peace and stability following a lengthy civil war, while demobilizing former combatants and reintegrating them into communities. The partners also recognized progress in economic growth rates, advances in the delivery of basic social services to the population (in particular, by expanding health care and education for children and offering free maternal health care), improvements in the "doing business" climate, progress in public financial management, and addressing incidents of corruption. In addition, the development partners saluted Burundi's important contribution to stability in Somalia by contributing troops to AMISOM.

While recognizing the significant progress the country has made, the five international organizations and others also noted the many challenges that Burundi continues to face. These include an on-going and severe deficit in energy, an under-performing agricultural sector with threats of food insecurity and malnutrition, unchecked population growth, the need to strengthen capacity in a number of government administrations, and the need to continue to focus on poverty reduction and reach those who have yet to benefit fully from the dividends of peace.

The partners noted with appreciation the 2nd Vice President's commitment to the fight against corruption and impunity, and all incidents of violence, as well as to the orderly return of refugees. And, they noted the government's intention to reinforce gender equality.

The five organizations and donor countries also singled out the need to further intensify the fight against corruption and impunity, and to ensure an open dialogue with all actors in society. They noted with appreciation the commitments made by the Government of Burundi on these fronts, and requested that progress be monitored and reported along with the implementation of other priority reform programs of the country's new Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper.

The **African Development Bank, represented by Vice-President Zondo Sakala**, commended the Government of Burundi for the significant progress made over the past decade on the political, economic, and social fronts. However, it noted that Burundi still faces considerable risks as a post-conflict country,

as well as from external shocks. Therefore, as confirmed by the Burundi Second Vice President, reforms undertaken must be consolidated and deepened. For their part, the development partners should respond positively, timely, and in a coordinated manner in support of the government's growth and poverty reduction strategy.