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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL
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**MULTIDISCIPLINARY MISSION FOR EVALUATION OF
POST-CONFLICT RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT
NEEDS IN DRC (21 January – 13 February 2010) AND
BURUNDI (13-22 February 2010)**

MAJOR CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

INTRODUCTORY NOTE OF THE COMMISSION

1. At its 163rd Meeting held on 22 December 2008 devoted, *inter alia*, to the situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Peace and Security Council (PSC) requested (the Chairperson of the Commission) to “take necessary measures to significantly enhance the AU contribution to the post-conflict reconstruction efforts in the DRC, including by quickly dispatching a multidisciplinary Mission to assess the situation on the ground and make recommendations on the areas in which the AU Commission and Member States could provide an increased support to the reconstruction process and peace building efforts in the DRC”. In the same vein, at its 199th Meeting held on 17 August 2009 to examine the latest developments in the situation in Burundi, the PSC after welcoming the efforts deployed by the international community, in particular the United Nations, for post-conflict reconstruction in Burundi, “requested (the Chairperson of the Commission) to dispatch a multidisciplinary Mission to assess the socio-economic situation in Burundi and to make recommendations on the best ways and means for the AU to contribute to the peace building and the post-conflict reconstruction process in that country.”
2. Moreover, the Plan of Action of the Special Session of the Assembly of the Union on the Consideration and Resolution of Conflicts in Africa held in Tripoli, Libya, on 31 August 2009, provided for mobilization of “greater support from Member States towards post-conflict and development efforts in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Burundi, and requested the Commission to organize a pledging conference which would enable African countries to express their solidarity with these two countries, in accordance with AU Policy on Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development (PCRD)”.
3. Pursuant to the above decisions, the Commission fielded a multidisciplinary Mission to the Democratic Republic of Congo (from 21 January to 13 February 2010) and to Burundi (from 13 to 22 February 2010). The major conclusions and recommendations of the Mission are hereto attached. The Commission will, on the basis of the decision to be taken by the Peace and Security Council, undertake the necessary follow-up, especially through the organization of a Conference of African solidarity with the DRC and Burundi and the strengthening of its Liaison Offices in the two countries, thus enabling them to coordinate and facilitate the implementation of a post-conflict support programme, increased mobilization of Member States and the international community to provide the expertise and resources required for peace consolidation in the DRC and Burundi.
4. In considering the conclusions of the multidisciplinary Mission, it is needful to bear in mind the tremendous progress achieved by both Burundi and the DRC these past years. The

Commission continues to express its gratitude to the leaders and to all the concerned players in the two countries, for their commitment and determination to put an end to the conflicts that rocked their respective countries. Burundi and DRC are eloquent examples of what can be achieved in the domain of peace and security where there is the requisite political will.

I. INTRODUCTION

1. At its 163rd and 199th Meetings held on 22 December 2008 and 17 August 2009, respectively, the Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU) requested the Chairperson of the Commission to “take necessary measures to significantly enhance the AU contribution to the post-conflict reconstruction efforts in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Burundi, including by quickly dispatching a multi-disciplinary Mission to assess the situation on the ground and make recommendations on the areas in which the AU Commission and Member States could provide an increased support to the reconstruction process and peace building efforts in the two countries”.

2. The Special Session of the Assembly of the AU on the Consideration and Resolution of Conflicts in Africa held in Tripoli, Libya, on 31 August 2009 adopted a Plan of Action by which the African Union decided “to mobilize greater support from Member States towards post-conflict and development efforts in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Burundi, and requested the Commission to organize a pledging conference which would enable African countries to express their solidarity with these two countries, in accordance with AU Policy on Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development (PCRD)”.

3. Pursuant to the mandate given to the AU Commission, a multidisciplinary Mission of experts was in DRC from 21 January and 13 February 2010, and in Burundi from 13 February to 22 February 2010, to assess the political, economic, social, security and humanitarian situations in the two countries, identify the constraints and the challenges encountered in the mobilization of the resources indispensable for post-conflict reconstruction and development and define appropriate response strategies.

4. In the two countries, the Mission held talks with parliamentarians, members of the Government (at central and provincial levels), military chiefs, directors-general of Government agencies and public enterprises, political parties, the civil society, national and international NGOs, labor unions, the private sector, religious groups, national and foreign media, representatives of multilateral technical assistance and financing organizations (United Nations system, World Bank, African Development Bank and the European Union), sub-regional and regional cooperation organizations, embassies and bilateral aid agencies.

5. The multidisciplinary Mission expresses gratitude to all the groups and personalities met, the Chairperson of AU Commission, the Peace and Security Department of the African Union and to the AU Liaison Offices in DRC (Kinshasa, Goma and Bukavu) and Burundi. It also

thanks the Special Representative and the *Ad Interim* Executive Representative of the United Nations Secretary General in DRC and Burundi, respectively, the Commander of MONUC forces for his invaluable logistics support and the very useful briefings given by UN agencies and MONUC offices in Kinshasa, Goma and Bukavu, and the United Nations Integrated Office in Burundi and all United Nations agencies, for their support and cooperation.

II. DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

6. To portray the existing political-administrative and socio-economic situation in the DRC, it is needful to refer to its history, particularly the Berlin Conference of 1885 and to the policy of the former colonial power which tended to keep the country in a state of backwardness, thus facilitating the exploitation of its abundant natural resources. The regime of President Mobutu Sese Seko was characterized by bad political, administrative, economic and social governance with catastrophic consequences for the country's human, social, environmental, administrative and mining capital. As from 1993, the political upheavals, wars and various rebellions which erupted against the background of inter-ethnic and inter-community tensions, especially in the East of the country, culminated in reducing the Congolese State to its simplest expression. Wars, armed conflicts and rebellions with their trail of lost human lives, refugees and displaced persons, exacerbated individual and collective poverty and frustrations, human rights violations, the recourse to violence including sexual violence and the tendency to informalize the economy.

A) REFORM OF THE STATE AND CONSOLIDATION OF PEACE AND NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY

7. The DRC is currently faced with the need to undertake meaningful reform of a democratic and republican State. In this regard, there exist major constraints and challenges to the process of post-conflict reconstruction and development, as underscored by the following key issues:

(i) Citizenship, National Spirit and Inter-Ethnic Relations

8. The Constitution of 18 February 2006 inspired by the Inter-Congolese Dialogue and Law 04/024 of 12 November 2004, had the merit of recognizing as being of Congolese origin, any person belonging to the ethnic groups, including individuals and territories that were part of what became the Congo (presently DRC) at independence. This judicious combination of birthright and bloodline connection represents an appropriate response to the identity related

conflicts which for so long rocked and have continued to rock several regions of the country, Kivu in particular.

9. The rebellions and wars had the secondary positive effect of creating and/or enhancing the Congolese national spirit driven by clearly expressed commitment, notably by civil society organizations, to the territorial integrity of the DRC and to the preservation of national sovereignty over the country's natural riches. What is however lacking is the propagation and consolidation of civic spirit and the sense of belonging to the State in a section of the political class and in the population in general. Besides, land tenure related conflicts exacerbated by massive movements of people (refugees, displaced persons, etc.), modifications in the territorial space owing to geological phenomena and competition between alternative modes of exploitation or conservation of national resources, from time to time brought to the surface old rivalries between "natives" and "non-natives" or between "natives" and "rwandophones".

10. Recent events arising from attempts to re-establish an ancient kingdom known as *Dia-Congo*, the semblance of Katanga Province, with the aim of instituting entry visa requirement for Congolese nationals that do not hail from this province, and reserving jobs and public procurements only to the citizens of the said province, should propel the authorities, political class and the civil society to be vigilant vis-à-vis the forces of exclusion and, indeed, the forces of secession. Such vigilance is absolutely necessary especially as the persistent intra and inter-provincial transport and communication difficulties, the inadequate integration of the domestic market and the incomplete redeployment of the Administration and the basic public services, among other things, have continued to fuel regional and community divisions and barriers.

(ii) Security Situation and Consolidation of Peace and Human Rights

11. The security climate is relatively calm in the whole of the territory, but it must be recognized that peace and security are yet to be consolidated especially in the East and North of the country (Eastern province, Ituri, Equator, North and South Kivu). The recent Rwanda/DRC and MONUC/FARDC joint military operations and the ongoing joint operations by MONUC/FARDC joint brigades have no doubt largely contributed to weakening the FDLR as a war machine. Taking over from the *Umoja Wetu* (FARDC/Rwanda), Kimia I and Kimia II (MONUC/FARDC) joint military operations, the *Amani Leo* (Peace Now, in Kiswahili) involving MONUC/FARDC joint brigades is aimed at protecting the populations and destroying the residual forces of FDLR. At the same time, the political and diplomatic pressures generated by the most recent United Nations Panel of Experts report propelled certain western countries to arrest some senior officials and sponsors of FDLR residing in their countries.

12. However, arms have continued to circulate among the civil population despite the various arms collection operations (arms for bicycles, arms for roofing sheets, etc.). Certain sources affirm that FDLR and ex-CNDP combatants still possess a large cache of weapons. LRA elements have, for their part, also continued to carry out raids against the civilian populations in the Eastern Province. Consolidation of peace and security will, to a large extent, depend on more resilient and equitably shared economic growth, continued improvement in the relations with neighboring countries, the progress of regional and sub-regional integration and on the global geo-political climate affecting the DRC.

(iii) Reform of the Judicial and Security Sector

13. State reform in DRC is predicated on comprehensive reform of the three major corps, the behavior and performance of which to a large extent determines citizens' confidence and trust in the State, social peace, economic development, protection of the integrity of the territory and human rights. The corps in question are the justice outfit, the army and the police. Justice in the DRC is faced with serious difficulties, namely: i) lack of adequate infrastructure, updated equipment and documentation; ii) need for continued effort to enhance its independence; iii) non-coverage of the entire territory and concentration on the big cities; iv) insufficient number of judges and lack of qualified registrars; v) existence of several immunity acts; vi) corruption; vii) defiance on the part of population and viii) absence of transitional justice mechanism after the failure of the Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission.

14. Reform of the armed forces is imperative. Following the Sun City Agreement, the FARDC are a sedimentation of nearly 56 armed groups. These groups do not have the necessary technical and ethical training, military discipline or the requisite republican spirit. The FARDC have no barracks, and so move about with their families in theaters of operation. Their salaries are either paid late owing to the inaccessibility of the areas in which they operate, or simply misappropriated by the superior officers. The Ministry of Defense has come up with a preliminary draft roadmap for the reform of the armed forces but financing is far from certain. The issue is to bring the strength of the FARDC down to 100,000 men. Training and equipping the Congolese National Police constitute a vital component of the security sector reform.

(iv) Redeployment of the Administration and Rationalization of the Structures

15. Wars and armed conflicts have led to the withdrawal or implosion of the official administrative structures in most of the regions, creating a vacuum which rebel forces and other armed groups have filled, either by seizing control of State services (customs, tax administration, immigration, etc.) or by establishing their own parallel administrative

structures. In the areas not directly affected by the violence, the Administration was very quickly converted into a personal affair. The Sun City Agreement and subsequent agreements signed with the various armed groups, including the CNDP, resulted in a bloated public service establishment following the integration of elements of the rebel movements and the various armed groups without recruitment competition nor prior budgetary authorization. This situation underscores the need to restructure the public service.

(v) Decentralization and National Integration

16. The size of the DRC territory and the inadequacies of the communication infrastructure make administrative decentralization absolutely necessary. This was the option adopted by the Constitution of 18 February 2006. Actual implementation of decentralization is bogged down by the modest nature of budgetary resources and the lack of the requisite human and institutional capacities for general administration and development planning both at the centre and in the decentralized entities.

17. Two immediate challenges are currently being addressed: there is, on the one hand, the application of the fiscal federalism stipulated by the Constitution based on the benchmarks for national budget income distribution between the Provinces (supposed to retain 40% at source) and the central Government (supposed to allocate 10% of the outstanding 60% to a balancing system in favor of the most disadvantaged Provinces, the three provinces currently generating 80% of the internal budgetary resources). On the other hand, there is the challenge of transferring the central Government's human and financial resources to the provincial Governments in accordance with their specific or shared areas of competence recognized by the Constitution.

(vi) Elections and MONUC's Mandate

18. The local elections initially slated for 2006 are yet to take place. The presidential, parliamentary and provincial mandates expire in 2011. A new Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) which is yet to be established will have the responsibility to organize the elections in 2011, while the existing Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) will continue to be in charge of organization of the local elections. The external partners have recommended that updating the 2006 electoral registers be conducted at district level which accounts for 2,000 voter registration offices. The Government plans to decentralize voter registration to the regions; this will amount to 9,000 voter registration stations, thus resulting in huge additional expenses, financing of which remains problematic. The Government feels that it can bear the

cost of logistics and security arrangements for the presidential and parliamentary elections, and is thus requesting MONUC support only for the local elections.

19. Analysis of the overall track record of MONUC has given rise to much controversy. Some criticize it for comporting itself as “godfather” and for having become a truly State-B and a duplication of State institutions. At the same time, most of the people with whom the Mission held discussions were at one in recognizing that the FARDC should be significantly strengthened to enable it discharge its mandate more effectively.

20. Meanwhile, as contribution to the redefinition of MONUC mandate and ahead of the latter’s withdrawal and disengagement, the United Nations system has started formulating an Integrated Strategic Framework covering the period 2010-2012 for all its agencies operating in the DRC. Consultations on the framework have already started with the parliament and the civil society.

(B) Economic and Social Reconstruction

(i) DDRRR Process

21. The post-conflict rehabilitation and reconstruction endeavors in the DRC have come up against the rather mixed outcomes of the disarmament, demobilization, rehabilitation, reintegration and repatriation (DDRRR) process financed by donors and the Government (the latter still has to release its national counterpart amounting to US\$ 2.5 million). In particular, the demobilization, economic and social reintegration and rehabilitation of the ex-combatants have continued to be problematic. Moreover, the payment of the modest demobilization wages does not seem to have prevented the remobilization of the ex-combatants in armed groups and militias, especially those active in the illegal exploitation of mineral resources.

(ii) Socio-Economic Outcomes and Combating Poverty

22. In the aftermath of the 2006 general elections, the Government in February 2007 announced a Priority Action Programme (PAP) anchored on the “five priorities of the President of the Republic”, namely: health, infrastructure, employment, electricity and education. The preparation of a Five-Year Plan 2011-2015 was supposed to be approved by the parliament in the form of a programme-law. Formulation of a long-term development vision, “Congo 2030”, is under way under the auspices of the Planning Ministry, with UNDP and ADB support. At macro-economic level, the Government achieved quite encouraging results. GDP growth which

was negative up to 2001 climbed from 2% in 2006 to 6% in 2008 before dropping to 2.9% in 2009 under the effect of the global economic and financial crisis.

23. Congo's external trade was characterized by the collapse of the export sectors including industrial produce (coffee, palm oil and cotton) and mining products. Imports including that of food products rose significantly. It is paradoxical, in this regard, to observe, given the country's vast hydrological network, that fish is the Number 1 import produce of the DRC followed by rice (accounting for over US\$ 800 million annually), chicken and eggs which occupy the 3rd and 4th positions, respectively. DRC's external debt amounts to about US\$ 13 billion representing 70% of the GDP. However, the country reached the point of decision of the HIPC Initiative in 2006. The point of completion which was initially scheduled for 2008 is now expected for June 2010.

24. Agriculture in broad terms suffered from the so called "Dutch syndrome" well known to countries which have abundance of mineral resources but have, by that very fact, neglected the other productive sectors. There is a need to formulate and implement a sectoral policy for agriculture and an integrated rural development approach to the demobilization, disarmament, rehabilitation, repatriation and reintegration programme through close coordination of the activities of the two relevant Ministries (Agriculture and Rural Development).

25. With so many challenges facing the DRC, the country will not be able to attain the MDGs by 2015. Consequently, vigorous macro-economic and sectoral policies oriented to combating poverty and youth unemployment are required to avoid, in more or less short-term, socio-political upheavals and aggravation of the insecurity. Only 6% of the Congolese population has access to electricity. The current electricity supply in the DRC is estimated at about 2,500 Megawatts. This supply is clearly inadequate in relation to the existing and projected needs of the mining sector and other socio-economic industries and activities.

(iii) Environment and Sustainable Development

26. The DRC can become a continental and indeed a world class country in terms of the environment, that is if it is not already so. The Government has a strong political will to act, and this has translated into a huge legal arsenal (water code, environment code, agriculture law...) part of which is already before parliament. The armed conflicts have had a negative impact on biodiversity (gorillas and elephants decimated, for example) and on the forests (15% of which is affected by deforestation). DRC is in need of technical assistance in the areas of forest eco-system, water and biodiversity management. Sustainable environmental management needs the best possible trade-off between conservation on the one hand, and meeting the economic, social and cultural needs of the population, on the other.

27. The country's mineral riches have been and continue to be one of the major sources of conflict and corruption. Far from contributing to improving the living standard of the population, mineral resource exploitation has instead culminated in general impoverishment. According to one of the hosts of the multidisciplinary Mission, "the Congo has everything underground but nothing on the ground". The formal mining sector is in full-blown crisis and the control of mining blocks has remained one of the major stakes in the conflicts especially in the East of the country.

28. With regard to the strategy to combat illicit exploitation and export of the resources of DRC, the multidisciplinary Mission noted: i) DRC's call to the international community to denounce and condemn such acts including imposition of civil and criminal sanctions against identified looters (individuals and companies) as well as the countries that provide them with sanctuary, following the observations and recommendations of the United Nations experts' panel; ii) the will to broaden the Kimberley process to include mineral products other than only diamond and its intelligent application so as to prevent the border lakes from being used to "launder" minerals. The direct export of this mineral by the DRC is regarded as "dirty", but would be "clean" when the operation is conducted from other countries, etc.

(iv) Health, Education and Training

29. The health system in the DRC was not spared from the conflicts, and its reconstruction therefore constitutes part of the priorities and a key challenge. The Panzi Hospital in Bukavu (visited by the AU multidisciplinary Mission) deserves special attention with respect to all its activities, but more especially the activities for addressing the medical and psychological consequences of sexual violence. Another element observed at the Panzi Hospital and to which great attention should be accorded was the need to provide female victims of sexual violence with legal assistance.

30. The DRC plans to launch a reform of the primary, secondary and higher educational systems to improve the school attendance rate, the quality of education and gender balance and promote scientific and technological subjects at all levels of education. The country also plans to introduce free primary education, establish school canteens and improve teachers' working conditions and remuneration. All these reforms are the subject of draft legislations already submitted or to be submitted to parliament in due course.

(v) Gender and Status of Women

31. The DRC has a sizeable institutional and legal arsenal geared to promoting the political, socio-economic and cultural advancement of Congolese women. However, Congolese women do come up against real difficulties in the actual implementation of this legal arsenal, especially as the Ministry responsible for Gender Matters, budget allocation of which is below 2%, is hampered by huge human and institutional capacity deficit. With regard to political participation, women account for up to 80% of political party militants, but are poorly represented in policy organs and have only the most meager slice of the list of candidates for various elective national and provincial positions, and this, despite the provisions of Article 14 of the Constitution.

32. Congolese women have continued to be subjected to generalized and indeed systematic sexual violence perpetrated by some armed groups and elements which often use rape as an instrument of war. This scourge which has immeasurable physical, psychological and socio-economic repercussions continues even after the “official” end of wars and armed conflicts as evidenced by the Panzi Hospital in Bukavu which alone admitted 22,000 female victims of social violence in 2009. Yet, this already alarming figure is probably only the tip of the iceberg because for several reasons (fear of reprisals or stigmatization/victimization), many victims prefer not to talk about their ordeal.

(vi) Infrastructure and Urban Development

33. Infrastructure development and maintenance were seriously affected by the wars and the armed conflicts. There is currently a shared awareness and determination in the DRC and its partners regarding the strategic importance of this sector for economic development, cooperation, peace and security in the Great Lakes Region. It is important to ensure that the building of regional integration-related infrastructure is not at the expense of the infrastructures that meet the specific needs of internal economic, social and political integration in the DRC itself, and does not jeopardize the delicate balance between the East and West of the country.

34. In the face of high population growth driven by high fertility rate under the influence of armed conflicts and economic crisis, Kinshasa and certain other provincial capitals saw a high urban growth, but without urbanization. The basic urban services not only were unable to cope but also suffered from deterioration, dilapidation and from *informalization* of the urban economy, as anarchic occupations developed in the urban and sub-urban areas,. The city of Bukavu, for example, is today home to over 1.2 million inhabitants as against less than 240,000

before the start of the conflict. Kinshasa has become a megalopolis with at least 8 million inhabitants, accounting for one-eighth of the total population of the DRC.

(vii) Coordination of Aid and Relations with the External Partners

35. In 2006, the Government formulated for itself a Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy Document which inspired the Priority Action Plan, 2007-2011 supposed to serve as a reference framework for all assistance from external partners. There exists in addition to the Planning Ministry, a structure known as BCECO (Central Execution and Coordination Office) with responsibility to coordinate external aid and implementation of development projects.

36. However, the mechanisms described above do not amount to meaningful national ownership or real leadership by the State in terms of external aid. Innumerable project management units have continued to sidetrack the national administrative structures. Only one major bilateral partner has, all alone, more than hundred of such project management units positioned outside the national State/apparatus. Moreover, NGOs, local and foreign alike, keep themselves outside the ambit of State control, and no national structure (at both the central and provincial levels) is in a position to know, even in approximate terms, the volume and the sectoral or geographic points of application of the aid coming in through NGOs, and of the humanitarian assistance deriving from reconstruction or development interventions. The real impact of aid on the national or local economy and on poverty reduction is yet to be proven.

37. The issues surrounding the Chinese contract and the HIPC Initiative, and the statements which smack of paternalism, credited to certain non-African officials, illustrate the tensions and misunderstandings between a State that is certainly fragile but is bent on asserting its sovereignty. The State has more need for positive incentives than “lessons” and many citizens seem convinced that there is “an attempt to strangulate DRC”. There is, on the other hand, an intentional community that is not always animated by evil intentions nor a hidden agenda but does not seem to realize that it can often be perceived as “a burden” for transgressing the sovereignty of the country and placing itself in the position of “dispenser of lessons” even where it could be accused of being at the root of some of the inadequacies of governance.

(viii) Regional Integration and Relations with Neighboring Countries

38. The Democratic Republic of Congo is member of several regional and sub-regional organizations including COMESA, SADC, ECCAS, *CEPGL* and *CIRGL*. Given the fact that the so many armed conflicts and wars experienced by the DRC during the past 15 years had undeniable regional dimension, it is not surprising that the search for sustainable solutions to

the difficulties facing the country should also have regional dimension. It is recalled, on this score, that the diplomatic *rapprochement* between the DRC and Rwanda largely contributed to destroying the FDLR and CNDP war machines, integration of the latter into the national peace process and to the relative reduction of tensions in the two Kivus.

(C) SUMMARY OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS

39. The DRC achieved quite encouraging results in the field of peace and security consolidation, edification of a democratic state and in post-conflict reconstruction. This progress needs to be buttressed by voluntarist and strong actions on the part of all the concerned parties. The recommendations hereunder are designed particularly for the Government of the DRC and the African Union. Ahead of an eventual resource mobilization conference, these recommendations could be formulated in greater detail – and costed if need be – for assessment of the financing needs and definition of the operational modalities for their implementation.

(i) Government of DRC

40. The multidisciplinary Mission recommends as follows on the basis of the sustained and laudable efforts deployed by the Government of DRC and the talks the Mission had in the country:

➤ **Consolidation of Peace and Reform of the Security and Judicial Sector**

- a) Conclude the peace and security consolidation operations and the restoration of inter-community harmony especially in the East of the country, with special focus on the eradication of sexual violence against women, collection of arms, dismantling of the militias and the armed groups and combating abuses and inordinate behavior on the part of elements of the army and of the police;
- b) Conclude the DDRRR process, continue with the “vetting” exercise to flush out FARDC and PNC officers and men suspected of sexual abuse or of participation in the looting of natural resources; adopt the community and association approach to the socio-economic reintegration of ex-combatants, internally displaced persons, returnees and refugees and provide better security as well as food and socio-cultural care and support in internally displaced persons camps;

- c) Speed up the finalization of a comprehensive plan to reform the security sector (including training, building of barracks, etc.) and find the financing for this activity (national budget, donors, etc.);
- d) Dismantle the parallel administrative structures maintained by armed groups, speed up the redeployment of the Administration across the national territory, improve its capacity to ensure the security of persons and property and provide basic social and public services for the population;
- e) Establish an effective and credible transitional justice mechanism;
- f) Establish an independent and credible national human rights commission which publishes a report on the human rights situation in the DRC on annual basis;
- g) Reform the justice system, bring justice closer to persons undergoing trial and make the system capable of fighting corruption, sexual violence and human rights violations; incorporate in the reform the component of infrastructure building/renovation, improvement of documentation and monitoring of the justice system decisions and improvement of the remuneration of judges, registrars and other personnel of the justice and penitentiary administration.

➤ **With respect to the redeployment of the Administration and rationalization of the existing structures, the following measures will be necessary:**

- a) Retire the civil servants that have reached the age limit and concurrently introduce support measures (payment of retirement entitlements, training/skills upgrading/refresher courses for the rest of the staff, review the management systems and procedures etc.);
- b) Restructure and modernize national training, skills upgrading and retraining structures and programmes for State civilian and military personnel.

➤ **Public finance, State portfolio and combating corruption**

- a) Speed up the reform of public finances (organic law on State finances, public procurement code, VAT, provision of security for the expenditure and incomes chain, resolve the issue of constitutional benchmark for distribution of budget incomes

between the central Government and the Provinces, and introduce the “matching funds” method);

- b) Implement fiscal reform to diversify the tax system, more effectively control the taxable base, simplify the procedures, stop tax fraud and evasion, increase budget incomes and encourage productive investments;
- c) Endow the country with a budget that promotes infrastructural development and post-conflict reconstruction and, where appropriate, obtain adequate budget space from the Bretton Woods institutions;
- d) Implement measures to sanitize the business climate and other measures required to attain the point of completion of the HIPC Initiative by June 2010;
- e) Deepen the use of banking facilities in the economy, including the promotion of micro-finance in urban and rural areas;
- f) Conduct operational audit with a view to restructuring/merging the Customs and Excise Department and the Congolese Control Office, provide increased and better equipment for customs offices and stations (scanners, weigh bridges, means of communication, computerization and interconnection with other concerned State services, single customs clearance window, etc.) at the country’s land, maritime, lake and air borders, and ensure the effective application of the presidential decree limiting to 4 the number of State services authorized to operate at the borders;
- g) More effectively wage the combat against corruption (both small time and big time) and impunity.

➤ **Coordination of Aid and Natural Resource Management**

- a) Strengthen the national and provincial aid coordination mechanisms, redefine the functions of BCECO for greater empowerment of the sectoral Ministries;
- b) Design and implement economic and social reforms as well as sectoral strategies, with the stamp of national ownership and leadership, oriented to local development of natural resources and job creation (especially for urban and rural youth in a way that offers them credible and sustainable alternatives to enrolment in armed groups and participation in illegal exploitation of mineral resources);

- c) Put in place, via a review of the Mining Code, more effective incentive and repressive measures against illegal exploitation and export of mineral resources and significantly enhance the capacities of the Ministry of Mines and the Ministry of Finance in this regard;
- d) Formulate and implement an agricultural strategy that helps to minimize the impact of the “Dutch syndrome” in respect of mineral resources, and promote a Congolese biological agriculture label.

➤ **Transport, Urban Development and Energy**

- a) Design and implement public/private partnerships for controlled urban development programme (social housing, urban transport, sanitation, markets and collective cultural, sporting and social facilities, etc.);
- b) Launch a national rural electrification programme and ensure that hydro-electric energy export takes into account the economic and social needs of the populations;
- c) Organize strategic surveillance of international meetings on Inga dam (Great Inga);
- d) Build development planning, management and monitoring-evaluation capacities in the Provinces and strengthen the capacities of the central Government for regionally balanced and integrating development;
- e) Design and implement a comprehensive national multi-modal transport and communication infrastructure programme with a view to creating a national internal market and enhancing across the Provinces the feeling of belonging to one and the same national entity and a to common national future.

➤ **Regional Integration**

- a) Design and implement regional and sub-regional integration strategies and programmes to supplement and strengthen the national domestic market integration strategies and programmes;
- b) Create balanced frameworks and modalities for cooperation with neighboring countries for mutually beneficial exploitation of cross-border mine and mineral resources.

➤ **Women, Gender and Sexual Violence**

- a) Upscale the budgetary resources as well as the human and institutional capacities of the Ministry of Gender;
- b) Create a special fund for medical, psycho-medical and legal assistance to women victims of sexual violence and for their socio-economic rehabilitation;
- c) Launch a special micro-finance and micro-production programme for women;
- d) Generalize sex education programmes in schools; and
- e) Mainstream the gender dimension in the Strategic Framework for combating poverty, in the Vision Congo 2030 and in future Five-Year Plan, and ensure that their monitoring and evaluation takes gender specific data into account.

➤ **Health, Education and Training**

- a) Generalize school canteens (to be stocked by the national agricultural production) in line with the free primary education policy, promotion of school attendance for girls and of technical, scientific, technological and professional education;
- b) Create an autonomous national institute for analysis and evaluation of development policies and programmes and strengthen the national statistics outfit;
- c) Ensure that the “Congo Vision 2030” exercise culminates in the accession of Congolese people to a new Global Reformist Pact (GRP) between the State and the citizens.

➤ **MONUC and Elections**

- a) Finalize the process of redefining MONUC’s missions with a view to its gradual withdrawal and disengagement.
- b) Establish a clear-cut timetable for organization of the local elections originally slated for 2006 and agree with the donors on the modalities of organizing the 2011 elections, including the plan to update the voters’ registers and the financing plan;

- c) Prepare a realistic, credible and consensual electoral calendar which allows for the conduct of the 2011 presidential, legislative and provincial elections on the dates set by the Constitution and establish the new INEC;
- d) With respect to the 2011 elections, promote gender mainstreaming in political parties' lists of candidates and try applying SADC gender quota for positions of responsibility.

➤ **Public Administration**

- a) Introduce comprehensive administrative reform with a view to professionalizing the central and provincial Public Administration, strengthening its capacities to formulate and execute programmes of public interest, dialoguing with the citizens and the civil society, shielding it from political interference and inculcating into it the spirit of public service, transparency and accountability; while introducing significant improvement to the remunerations and social cover of State officials and ensuring effective distribution of resources (including personnel) and responsibilities between the centre and the provinces;
- b) Speed up the "revisiting" of illegal mining contracts and forestry concessions;
- c) Finalize the process of accession to the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative and widen the Kimberley process to include other minerals.

(iii) **African Union (Commission, Liaison Offices and Member States)**

➤ **Consolidation of peace, MONUC and the 2011 Elections**

- a) Carry out proactive advocacy action to enlist international community technical, material, logistics, security and financial support to the 2011 elections;
- b) Get involved in the consultation expected to culminate in a redefinition of the mandate of MONUC in the lead up to its gradual disengagement;
- c) Continue to support bilateral and regional/sub-regional initiatives for consolidation of peace and security in the Great Lakes Region and help clarify the roles of and the complementarity between CEPGL, CIRGL and the Regional Communities of which the DRC is member, especially with regard to infrastructure and development projects in general.

➤ **Investment and AU Visibility in DRC**

- a) Encourage African States to ensure that African companies and other investors in the Continent participate in the restructuring of public enterprise portfolio in the DRC;
- b) Enhance the human and institutional capacities of the Liaison Office in Kinshasa;
- c) Create (within the Liaison Office in Kinshasa) a multi-sectoral unit for support to governance and dialogue on development policies;
- d) Establish a section on gender matters in the Liaison Office;
- e) Ensure that the Liaison Office works closely with the ADB Resident Mission in Kinshasa especially with regard to dialogue on the policies;
- f) Speed up the establishment in the Commission, of a special fund for women and ensure that Congolese women expeditiously benefit from such fund;
- g) Deploy in the DRC an experts' (1 or 2) mission to help the Gender Ministry and the Minister of Justice to draw up an inventory of the laws and practices discriminatory to women and introduce the required changes;
- h) Provide appropriate support (ambulances, psycho-medical and legal assistance, rehabilitate the access road, etc...) to Panza Hospital and encourage all AU Member States to emulate the example of the Ethiopian Medical Mission;
- i) Encourage DRC to establish a permanent quadripartite (Government/European Union/China/USA) framework for dialogue with the ADB and the Breton Woods Institutions as technical and financial partners, and AU as "honest broker".

➤ **The Environment and Exploitation of Natural Resources**

- a) Support efforts geared to ending illegal exploitation and export of the mineral resources of the DRC;
- b) Undertake advocacy action vis-à-vis the World Bank, ADB and UNCTAD to enlist substantial technical and financial support to the DRC with a view to "revisiting" illegal mining contracts.

➤ **Integration and Regional Security**

- a) Closely monitor all matters relating to the referendum on South Sudan and anticipate their possible implications;
- b) Encourage Member States of CEPGL (eventually enlarged to include other countries) to organize youth exchange programmes;
- c) Create a corps of African volunteers for the Great Lakes to enhance the capacities of the Congolese customs and beef up DRC's teaching and medical corps during the 5 to 10 years transition period;

D) CONCLUSION

41. The situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo underscores the dynamics and complexity of the management of the continuum between humanitarian emergency, reconstruction and development. The DRC first and foremost and its partners, at the top of which is the African Union, have to respond simultaneously to these challenges with the greatest possible sense of urgency and efficacy, more so as the populations are waiting impatiently to reap the "dividends of peace". The recommendations put forward in this report are intended to enlighten decision-making and policies formulation by the Government and other Congolese players, the African Union and its Member States as well as all Africa's development partners who believe in the future of Congo.

III. REPUBLIC OF BURUNDI

42. The African Union multidisciplinary experts' Mission visited Burundi in a context marked by three successive key events in the life of the country. The first relate to the restoration of a climate of peace, which reflects the successful outcome of the efforts leading to the signing of the Arusha Agreement in August 2000, the formation of transitional Governments between 2002 and 2005 and the approval of a new Constitution in February 2005. This paved the way for the successful organization of democratic elections, the first in over 12 years, and for the establishment in August 2005 of presidential and parliamentary institutions acceptable to all the stakeholders. The second event was the conclusion, in the spirit of consensus, of the negotiation with *Palipehutu-FNL* (National Liberation Forces, the last of the armed rebel movements) which resulted in the cessation of hostilities in Burundi and the transformation of this movement into a political party. The third event was the start of a long electoral process

spanning the period May to September 2010, expected to culminate, for the first time since the country's independence, in a peaceful renewal of all the elective public offices by legal means.

(A) Update and Major Political and Security Challenges

(i) Political and Security Issues

43. On the political front, the post-conflict peace and reconstruction process achieved very encouraging results. All the stakeholders agree that there is a need to consolidate peace and create frameworks for dialogue and consultation so as to strengthen the democratic process. The Mission noted that preparations for proper conduct of the electoral process are well underway with: i) the consensual adoption of an electoral code; ii) the consensual establishment of a permanent Independent National Electoral Commission and its regional outreach offices; but the organizational and managerial capacities of the new INEC are yet to be tested; iii) identification of voters and their registration in the voters' register and, lastly, iv) the availability of electoral materials. Fears however persist in regard to the security climate that will prevail during the elections, especially the period following the proclamation of the results. These fears largely explain the firm request by the authorities, the political class and the civil society for foreign and national observers to be deployed prior to, during and after the voting.

44. On the security front, despite the undeniable return of peace across the country - to the credit of the Burundian parties who, to put it rightly, demonstrated tremendous commitment and determination - latent insecurity was observed. This is due to indiscipline on the part of some elements of the Police and, to a lesser extent, the army, the mixed outcome of the DDRRR process, land tenure related conflicts and the propensity on the part of many citizens to resolve even family conflict with violence. This insecurity is nurtured by arms which are in circulation, of which 20,000 of the 100,000, representing 20%, are reportedly yet to be collected.

45. The DDR process came to an end without about 10,000 demobilized ex-combatants being reintegrated or rehabilitated into the economic and social fabric of the country, owing to lack of financing. The national army has embarked upon measures to intermingle and train the ex-combatants from former rebel groups. The new national police resulting from the integration of various police and *gendarmerie* units and elements of ex-combatants, is consolidating its ranks through the training, equipping and deployment of local units.

46. On regional front, Burundi is member of the peace and security systems of CEPGL, ECCAS and COMESA. Part of the mandate of CEPGL, the most immediate cooperation framework, is to strengthen governance, peace and democracy.

(ii) Justice and Human Rights

47. The justice sector continues to face several challenges, including lack of infrastructure, equipment and human resources required for its proper functioning. A bill on transitional justice which has been the subject of debate between justice adherents and reconciliation partisans has been submitted to parliament, but the Government has decided to organize a national consultation on this issue, widened to include the Diaspora. The results of this consultation were expected for late December 2009, but were yet to be published as of the visit of the multidisciplinary Mission. The justice sector is currently beneficiary of a capacity-building programme for the residency tribunals and the prisons.

48. The latest problems were the hasty expulsion of foreigners in “irregular” situation, difficulty of access to justice, infringement of the right to property and to the physical security of the person, trafficking in human beings, rape and violence against women, as well as laws deemed discriminatory to them (including the right of succession). Burundi has however ratified most international human rights instruments and created a Ministry for the Rights of the Person and Gender. Mention should however be made of the persistence of practices such as violation of individual and collective freedoms by local administrators and some other agents of the State, without it being established that these practices have been ordered or encouraged by the national governmental authorities.

(iii) Situation of Women

49. On the legislative front, legal texts have been formulated and enacted with a view to improving the situation of Burundi women. The Constitution of 8 March 2005 embodies the various international human rights texts ratified by Burundi. The country has ratified the Convention of the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAF). The private sector plays a very vital role and women’s associations often organize awareness-raising workshops on the rights of women. However, in Burundi legislation, there are still laws discriminatory to women. For example, the tax code taxes married women as an unmarried person without dependent children, and the succession system continues to be governed by custom.

50. The Government is yet to ratify the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa. Whereas Burundi women are represented in Parliament (National Assembly and Senate), in Government or the Cabinet of the President of the Republic in accordance with constitutional prescriptions, the situation is not the same with regard to many other important positions in the central and provincial public Administration. As regards the 2010 elections, women have a common vision, namely, "democratic, peaceful and fair elections". In 2008, the Government adopted a national strategy to combat gender-based violence. Moreover, law 1/05 of 22 August 2009 on Review of the Criminal Code punishes violence against women and the girl child. With regard to the economy, women participated in the formulation of the Strategic Framework for Combating Poverty. They also occupy at least 40% of the seats on the Development Committees established at the level of the *collines*.

(iv) Governance

51. Considerable effort has been invested to ensure compliance with the balances set forth in the Constitution, but the benchmark for ethnic and gender-specific distribution is often difficult to implement and should therefore be fine-tuned. With regard to regulatory and auto-regulatory instruments, the lack of a national programme framework (good governance programme), and the systematic reform of the Administration (including comprehensive introduction of the New Information and Communication Technologies – NICT), was noted. The Central Bank has been reformed to make it more independent in the conduct of monitoring policies and application of the prudential rules governing the banking sector and other financial institutions. The process of decentralization which has been in progress since 2005 is yet to be finalized.

(v) Major Political and Security Challenges

52. The success of the elections will depend on addressing three major challenges; first is the mobilization of financing: on this issue, of the US\$ 44 million required to organize the elections, US\$ 30 million have been raised going by the pledges made by donors, but the amount actually released (about US\$ 6 million) remains modest. Then, there is the issue of security arrangements for the electoral process, particularly after the proclamation of the results, the risk being that the youth could be used by the political parties to serve their personal agenda; and lastly, there is the challenge of providing a strong and sufficiently dissuasive presence of foreign observers before, during and after the elections.

53. Despite the end of the conflict in its political-ethnic and military configurations as was the case during the past two decades, a number of challenges have to be overcome if there is to be definitive consolidation of peace, particularly the land tenure issue, the development of organized crime aggravated by land tenure-related conflicts (fuelled by the return of refugees, including the 1972 refugees), extreme poverty, youth unemployment, high human population density, the numerous weapons in the hands of the population and, lastly, the question of combating impunity in respect of the serious crimes perpetrated during the 40 years of political/ethnic crises. In the medium and long-terms, these challenges are exacerbated by the imperative need to enhance the capacities of the Burundi Administration to implement institutional reform and development programmes.

(vi) Recommendations

54. In the short-term, the Mission recommends as follows:

➤ **For the Burundi Government**

- a) Accede to the African Charter on Democracy and Good Governance;
- b) Announce a clear-cut timetable for the end of the ongoing national consultations on transitional justice and for publication of their outcomes;
- c) Accede to NEPAD/AU APRM;
- d) Take all the measures required to ensure peaceful conduct of the elections as well as freedom of action and freedom of speech for the political parties, including through equitable coverage of their activities and campaigns by the State media;
- e) Sensitize the political parties to the need to mainstream the gender dimension in their programmes and candidates' lists;
- f) Speed up the adoption of the law on succession to end the discrimination against women;
- g) Ratify the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (pursuant to the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality adopted in 2004 by the Heads of State and Government).

➤ **For the African Union**

- a) Monitor the preparations for the elections in Burundi and support national efforts at ensuring that the elections are held in the requisite conditions of freedom, transparency and equity;
 - b) Ensure the significant presence of AU observers before, during and after the entire election process;
 - c) Create a section for gender matters in the Liaison Office in Bujumbura;
 - d) Support inclusive DDRRR programmes particularly with respect to women and children, and raise international community awareness to enlist full financing for the programmes;
 - e) Raise international community awareness, including African countries' awareness, on the need to help Burundi to fill the US\$ 14 million gap for financing the 2010 elections;
 - f) Help train the Burundi police and army, including through the Member States.
55. In the medium and long-term, it is recommended that Burundi take action as follows:
- a) Increase the budget of the Ministry of Gender and carry out an inventory of all the laws discriminatory to women with a view to introducing the necessary changes;
 - b) Formulate a national strategy for promotion and protection of human rights and, in this regard, establish a national Democracy and Human Rights Observatory;
 - c) Promote the use of the new information and communication technologies in the public Administration, the civil society and the private sector;
 - d) Ensure that all development and poverty reduction programmes embody gender disaggregated data for monitoring and evaluation of the impact of such programmes on women;
 - e) Combat corruption with greater determination through rationalization and building of the capacities of the structures created for this purpose;

- f) Accord an important position to youth civic education.

(B) Post-Conflict Socio-Economic Reconstruction

(i) Update

56. Whereas post-conflict countries are marked by a spectacular statistical surge in the immediate aftermath of conflict, Burundi resumed growth at a slow pace with rates oscillating between 3% and 5% from 2005 to 2009, as against a two-digit average inflation rate of over 20% in 2008. Agriculture which provides employment for over 90% of the population with about 46% contribution to the GDP was characterized by poor performance. The institutional, human and material capacities of the Ministry of Agriculture remained limited. Besides, the sector was negatively affected by the high demographic pressure (over 350 inhabitants per km²) on land, thus sparking land tenure related conflicts stoked by migratory flows (refugees, returnees, displaced and demobilized persons).

57. With 37% contribution to the GDP, the services saw relative growth largely driven by the public services, whereas industry which was embryonic in the 90s was significantly affected by the crisis in terms of huge production capacity losses. Recovery of the economy was greatly hampered by electric energy deficit of about 25 MW with installed capacity of 32 MW, as against the exploitable potential of over 300 MW. Less than 3% of the population has access to electricity. The business climate which has remained uncompetitive does not also enhance the expansion of the productive sector, and this, despite the improvements introduced in the investment code, the new structure of the Chamber of Commerce and the ongoing effort to upgrade the legal climate (review of the investment code, the mining code and the public procurements code) and to clear State arrears of debt to the private sector. Production and construction enterprises have been stifled by lack of access to bank credit, a situation which enhances commercial and speculative activities.

58. Despite the existence of a strategy document on the use of the information technologies, a well-defined implementation plan and of the will to bolster the sector through reform of *ONATEL*, the creation of the conditions for access to broadband high speed output does not seem to be on the agenda, at least in the short-term. Burundi experiences below average fiscal pressure (18%). Public finances are more or less 60% dependent on international financial assistance and the budget set aside for public investment is quite limited. The possible exclusion of Burundi from benefiting from the World Bank post-conflict financing facility in 2011 would be dangerous because it is fraught with the risk of compromising the country's development.

(ii) **Socio-Economic Reforms**

Development Planning

59. Efforts are underway to ensure control of the planning process within the framework of Vision 2025, the medium-term expenditure framework and the communal development plans. The key goal of Government remains poverty reduction and reduced regional disparities through attainment of the MDGs. A growth and poverty reduction framework was adopted in 2006. The strategic framework for peace consolidation embodies land tenure issues, community development matters, implementation of the Agreement concluded with *FNL*, the rule of law, good governance and security.

Macro-Economic Management

60. Public finance management was marked by a series of reforms aimed at rationalizing State expenditure and up-scaling internal budget incomes. The measures geared to improving the incomes include the introduction of VAT, adoption of a new public procurement code, a customs code and the establishment of the Burundi Revenue Office (*OBR*). Application of VAT which took effect from June 2009 resulted in a relatively significant increase in fiscal incomes estimated at 38%. The Government is preparing a project for reform of the financial system with the express intention to promote a modern banking system using effective means of payment, including electronic banking based systems. Regulation and promotion of the decentralized (micro-credit) systems such as public-private partnership, form part of the strategy to mobilize domestic savings.

61. Foreign aid has continued to be a critical element in Burundi's development. In late 2007, the Government put in place an aid coordination system built upon four structures, namely: a public forum, a strategic forum, a monitoring/evaluation panel and a permanent secretariat. The multidisciplinary Mission welcomes the will of the authorities and donors to position their dialogue and partnership in a structural framework from experts' level to the level of policy-makers.

Promotion of Growth Sources

62. The Consultative Group on Burundi meeting in Paris in October 2009 highlighted four sources of growth for the coming years: energy, agriculture, mines and tourism. The major challenge however remains the eradication of corruption through improved efficiency and working conditions of the Administration, as well as enhanced capacities for the justice system.

With respect to social policy, the Government has opted for a generous social policy effective 2005, putting to use the advantages of external debt cancellation. The job creation policy initiated with municipal roads paving activities, was hampered by discontinued financing.

63. Some progress was made in the demobilization of ex-combatants, repatriation of refugees and reintegration of internally displaced persons. However, reintegration, though properly oriented to a pragmatic socio-economic reintegration approach with the objective to rehabilitate the victims of conflicts (returnees, displaced persons and ex-combatants) in conditions similar to that of their host community or by improving these conditions and avoiding their stigmatization in the eyes of the host community, was hampered by financing deficit and management problems.

Regional Integration

64. Burundi was involved in the reactivation of CEPGL in 2007 and acceded to the East African Community (EAC) in the same year. The country's membership of COMESA and EAC is rationalized thanks to the SADC-COMESA-EAC Tripartite arrangement. The imminent entry into force of the common market of the East African Community will represent a competitiveness challenge for the countries that are already technological ahead of Burundi.

65. Burundi hosted a donors' conference, the objective of which was to examine a long list of projects presented by the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICRGL). At that Conference, the Group of Friends was reportedly rather reluctant to finance ICRGL operational projects, on the grounds that the projects in question would be more easily implemented by the existing economic communities. They further noted that the projects presented were not accompanied with project specifications and that donors had not been briefed thereon prior to the start of the meeting.

(iii) RECOMMENDATIONS

66. For the Burundi Government, it was recommended as follows:

- a) Gradually verge towards the target budget allocations agreed by the African Union, for agriculture (10%) and health (15%), and generalize school canteens;
- b) For all the sectors, adopt a capacity-building policy, and ensure that training becomes a transversal priority ;

- c) Embark upon aggressive initiative for development of energy supply through public-private partnership and via REGIDESO, and establishment of a rural electrification agency;
- d) Initiate agriculture intensification policy compatible with environmental preservation and the resources of small-scale farmers;
- e) Accede to NEPAD/AU African Peer Review Mechanism to consolidate political and economic governance and boost the confidence of national and foreign investors.

67. The following recommendations were made for the attention of the African Union:

- a) Support the regional projects that would enable Burundi to boost its regional level competitiveness: energy production projects (RUZIZI III and IV and RUSUMO Falls), as well as transport (road and rail) projects in East Africa and the DRC;
- b) Undertake advocacy action vis-à-vis the World Bank for the maintenance of post-conflict financing facility for Burundi for the period 2011-2015 as well as vis-à-vis IMF for relaxation of the macro-economic guidelines to enable the country to have a larger “budgetary space”;
- c) Also undertake advocacy action for the opening of regional banks credit lines for the national private sector affected by the political-military conflicts.

68. For the attention of the regional and sub-regional communities of which Burundi is member, it is recommended that speedy consultation be carried out under AU auspices to promote the following initiatives in Burundi.

- a) Infrastructure development and electricity inter-connectivity;
- b) Small-scale irrigation development;
- c) New information and communication technologies development;
- d) Enhancing fiscal management capacities as support measure for Burundi’s accession to the liberalization programme (customs union and common market) of COMESA and EAC;
- e) Improve the business climate and upscale the capacities of the investment promotion agency.

69. For the attention of the international community, it is recommended that efforts be deployed to improve the comportment of aid in relation to the monitoring indicators of the Paris Declaration.

(C) CONCLUSION

70. For Burundi and its people who have suffered so long and are impatiently waiting with great hope to finally reap the dividends of peace and democracy, the 2010 elections represent an ample opportunity, for the first time since the country's accession to independence, to renew all the elective offices by legal and peaceful means and on the due dates, based on free and transparent expression of popular will. At this historic juncture, the African Union which invested so much to secure an end to the civil war and in the consolidation of peace and security both in Burundi and in its geographical neighborhood, i.e. the Great Lakes Region, has before it a unique opportunity to assert, if still necessary, before the whole world that Africa and its continental, regional and national institutions can assume the necessary leadership to deepen peaceful political and economic governance that will usher in concrete solutions to the specific problems facing the Continent. The support of the African Union and Member States and the relations of cooperation and mutual trust which are incumbent on the Government to nurture with its neighbors and external partners would be an invaluable contribution to Burundi's internal efforts to successfully conduct free, transparent and peaceful elections and turn resolutely towards a future of peace, security and national harmony.