

At this meeting we must put an end to the widely publicized view that the Facilitation and Mediation process is either stalled or at a dead end. We must demonstrate that on the contrary, progress has been made in creating conditions to bring the political contestants together, to enrich and harmonize the internal and external findings on the path to 2020 elections. To this end I hope at the end of this meeting we can declare consensus on the following issues:

1. To uphold the principles and spirit of the Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement, which provided the foundation for sustained peace and security in Burundi and ensured certain, assured, political, economic, and social rights of all Burundian citizens.
2. That we recognize, affirm, and respect that the Republic of Burundi is a sovereign nation.
3. That we further recognize that the current crisis, while rooted in history and in political and electoral disagreements, has resulted in substantial displacement of persons, exiled political actors, targeted violence, international sanctions, and freezing of Aid. We call on the concerned parties to reconsider and ease their stance.
4. That we denounce all forms of violence as a means of settling this political dispute and social political change. We affirm dialogue, with the implied give and take, as the only viable means to achieving sustainable peace and economic prosperity.

5. That we pledge to seek with great urgency to reach consensus on the central pillars of the evolution towards the 2020 Elections to create a more conducive environment for the peaceful contestation of political space and related electoral processes therein.
6. In the light of the proposals by the internal dialogue regarding constitution changes, and acknowledging Burundi's sovereign right to do so, we should draw attention to the fact that there is a general consensus among the Regional and International community that fundamental constitutional amendments should not be advanced until the situation has stabilized. Stability must be the First concern!
7. Climate Change and a severe drought in parts of the country has led to a serious food deficit. We appeal to members of the international community and international aid agencies, such as the World Food Programme, to move quickly to fill in the food gap.

The fate of Burundi is in your hands; you must make the decision. The EAC countries are your neighbours. They have helped and will continue to help and defend your sovereign rights. But the basic obligation to state, argue and defend it is yours. You are the principal stakeholders.

Help us to help you!!