



PRESS RELEASE

The African Union Strongly Condemns the Assassination of Brigadier General Athanase Kararuzza, Senior Security Advisor to the Vice President of Burundi and Former Deputy Force Commander of MISCA and MINUSCA

Addis Ababa, 26 April 2016: The Chairperson of the African Union (AU) Commission, Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, strongly condemns the assassination on 25 April 2016 in Bujumbura, Burundi, of Brigadier General Athanase Kararuzza, Senior Security Advisor in the office of the Vice President of the Republic of Burundi and former Deputy Force Commander of the African-led International Support Mission to the Central African Republic (MISCA) and the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in CAR (MINUSCA). The late Brigadier General's wife perished in the attack and his daughter was severely injured.

The Chairperson presents the AU's sincere condolences to the family of the deceased and wishes speedy recovery to his daughter. She stresses that this despicable act and the numerous other acts of violence recorded in recent months illustrate, once again, the seriousness of the situation prevailing in Burundi and the potential of further escalation, with catastrophic consequences both for the country and the region. In this context, she reaffirms the AU's total rejection of violence and condemns all abuses of human rights and other violations of civil liberties. She calls for a transparent and credible investigation to identify the perpetrators of these murders and swiftly bring them to justice.

The Chairperson is also particularly concerned about the tone and content of recent communiqués of the Burundian ruling party CNDD-FDD and inflammatory declarations made by some Burundian political leaders, and calls on all stakeholders to refrain from such divisive statements. She further calls on the Burundian parties to refrain from any actions or statements that could threaten peace and stability in the country and the region.

The Chairperson once again stresses that only genuine and truly inclusive dialogue, without preconditions, based on the letter and the spirit of the Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement (Arusha Accords) and the Constitution of Burundi, will allow the Burundian stakeholders to overcome the serious difficulties facing their country.

The Chairperson reiterates the AU's commitment to support the Burundian political dialogue process in close coordination with the East African Community (EAC) and other partners. She welcomes the announcement by the EAC facilitator, former President Benjamin Mkapa, of the resumption of mediation efforts on 2-6 May 2016 in Arusha, Tanzania, and urges all Burundian parties to fully cooperate with the Mediator.