

**THE FACILITATOR'S SUMMARY OF THE 4TH SESSION OF
THE INTER – BURUNDI DIALOGUE HELD FROM 27TH
NOVEMBER TO 8TH DECEMBER 2017, NGURDOTO
MOUNTAIN LODGE, ARUSHA, TANZANIA.**

The Facilitator of the Inter-Burundi Dialogue convened the 4th Session of the Inter – Burundi Dialogue from 27th November to 8th December 2017 at Ngurdoto Mountain Lodge, Arusha, Tanzania and invited participants representing the Government of the Republic of Burundi, Political Parties registered in Burundi, key political actors, religious groups, civil society, women, youth and the media.

The dialogue was intended to be all inclusive with the exception of some of the individuals under arrest warrants and was driven by the expressed need by the Burundi to find a home grown lasting solution to the impasse. However, some invited participants did not honour the invitation citing, among other reasons, lack of prior consultations, ignorance on the parameters of the dialogue and what was alleged to be lack of inclusivity. There were also security concerns raised by some of the invitees.

At the opening session, the Facilitator emphasized that, the session was meant for the participants to engage each other to dialogue and not negotiate with a view to finding solutions to issues of common interest to the Burundi. In this regard, participants were urged to form groups representing political actors on one hand and civil societies on the other side. Two groups were formed but due to sharp differences amongst the participants, they immediately broke down into four groups which were: Government and allied political parties, the opposition, religious groups and civil society organizations allied to Government and Civil society organizations allied to the opposition. The Former Presidents and the Ombudsman remained to play a moderating role.

In their separate groups, each produced positional papers that were presented to the Facilitator. The groups maintained divergent

positions in the documents they produced as well as in the informal consultations they had with the Facilitator and his team. This obtained despite the efforts by the Facilitation helping them to exchange their documents and reiterating the need for them to engage directly. Thus the primary objective of the session, namely direct exchange between the parties was not realized. However, from the documents produced by the groups, the facilitator and his team identified issues of convergence which may form the basis of an agreement and issues of divergence which may be subject of the future dialogue and negotiations.

The participants held convergent views on the following issues;

- a) Confidence in the Mediator, H.E Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, and President of the Republic of Uganda and in the Facilitator, H.E Benjamin William Mkapa, Former President of the United Republic of Tanzania,
- b) The sovereignty of the Republic of Burundi and the political, economic and social rights of all Burundians.
- c) The commitment to the Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement on Burundi and the Constitution as the foundation for sustainable peace, security and stability.
- d) The political nature of the Burundi crisis and the need for a political solution,
- e) The negative impact of the crisis on the social and economic well-being of the people of Burundi,
- f) End of impunity and rejection of all forms of violence, including the use of hate speech, as a means of settling political disputes,
- g) Need for a roadmap towards peaceful, credible, transparent, free and fair elections in 2020,
- h) Respect for the rule of law and promotion of good governance.
- i) Observance and adherence to the tenets of human rights.
- j) Inclusion and participation of women and youth in national politics, peace building and national development.
- k) The independence of the Electoral Management Body (CENI) and inclusion of political parties and other stakeholders in the

composition of its management in order to build confidence in its neutrality and credibility.

- l) Promotion of unity, national reconciliation and peaceful co-existence among all Burundians.
- m) The need for legislative, regulatory and institutional reforms touching on electoral management to guarantee free, fair, transparent and credible elections.
- n) Strengthening political parties, including re-unifying and rehabilitating those disenfranchised, to enable them carry out their functions freely.
- o) Establishment of a political party development fund so as to strengthen the political parties and entrenching the culture of democracy.
- p) Government to work towards improving relations with neighbours and the international community.
- q) Maintaining the ethnic balance in the public service and security organs as provided for under the Provisions of the Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement for Burundi of 28 August 2000.
- r) Develop a post-conflict reconstruction and development roadmap for Burundi with the aid of development partners to address the negative impact the crisis has had on the socio-economic and humanitarian situation,
- s) Creating a secure and enabling environment for the return and reintegration of refugees and exiled political actors as well as resettlement of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), with the support of other stakeholders and the international community.

The participants held divergent views on the following issues

From the reading of the documents submitted by the participants, the Facilitator identified the following contentious issues which may be subject to further dialogue.

The participants expressed divergent views on the following issues;

- a) De-politicization and promotion of professionalism in the public service including the security organs
- b) Guaranteeing and upholding basic freedoms for individuals and legally organized groups such as: freedom of association, assembly, speech and movement.
- c) Encouraging the Justice System to expeditiously identify political prisoners and facilitating their release.
- d) Respect the sovereign right of Burundians to amend the Constitution. However such amendments should be inclusive and a product of consensus.
- e) Amendment of laws in parliament to provide for a simple or qualified majority rule in passing laws instead of the two-thirds majority as provided for by the Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement on Burundi, 2000.
- f) Improving the security situation and promote the disarmament of illegal armed civilians and groups.
- g) Guarantee personal security and protection of property belonging to returning exiled political actors.
- h) The need for continued security sector reforms including training and professionalization of security agencies.
- i) Engagement with armed groups which are ready to renounce violence and pursue a peaceful settlement.
- j) Opening up of the political space.
- k) Lifting of arrest warrants and amnesty to political detainees.

The divergent issues require further engagement among the stakeholders to facilitate an urgent comprehensive solution to the Burundi political impasse. These views will however be shared with the Mediator and the EAC Summit of Heads of State for further guidance.