United Nations S/PV.7482

Security Council

Seventieth year

Provisional

7482nd meeting
Thursday, 9 July 2015, 10 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Van Bohemen	(New Zealand)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Lucas
	Chad	Mr. Cherif
	Chile	Mr. Barros Melet
	China	Mr. Zhao Yong
	France	Mr. Delattre
	Jordan	Mrs. Kawar
	Lithuania	Mrs. Jakubonė
	Malaysia	Mr. Ibrahim
	Nigeria	Mr. Laro
	Russian Federation	Mr. Iliichev
	Spain	Mr. González de Linares Palou
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Wilson
	United States of America	Ms. Power
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Méndez Graterol

Agenda

The situation in Burundi

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Electoral Observation Mission in Burundi (S/2015/510)

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15-21348 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Burundi

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Electoral Observation Mission in Burundi (S/2015/510)

The President: In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Burundi to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in this meeting: Mr. Tayé-Brook Zerihoun, Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs; and Mr. Zeid Ra'ad Zeid Al Hussein, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

On behalf of the Council, I welcome Mr. Al Hussein, who is joining today's meeting via video-teleconference from Geneva.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2015/510, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Electoral Observation Mission in Burundi.

I now give the floor to Mr. Zerihoun.

Mr. Zerihoun: I have the pleasure to brief the Security Council on the Secretary-General's report (S/2015/510) on the United Nations Electoral Observation Mission in Burundi (MENUB). The report provides an overview of the electoral process and the political and security situations up to the holding of the legislative and communal elections on 29 June. It also highlights the activities of MENUB and other United Nations entities working on Burundi.

As the Security Council is well aware, on 2 July MENUB issued a preliminary statement on the pre-electoral environment and the holding of the legislative and communal elections on 29 June. MENUB assessed that the legislative and communal electoral processes took place against the background of a political crisis and in a climate of widespread fear and intimidation in parts of the country. The fundamental freedoms of participation, assembly, expression, opinion and information suffered increasing restrictions during the campaign period and as election day grew nearer. MENUB observers were present in all 18 provinces, covering 50 of the 119 municipalities, and carried out observations in 145 polling stations.

While MENUB assessed that the Independent National Electoral Commission adequately handled the voter registration and the nomination of candidates, opposition parties repeatedly accused the electoral management body of lacking credibility and independence. Preparations and arrangements made by the Electoral Commission for election day was largely sufficient, and polling activities took place regularly in the observed polling stations. Nationwide, many Burundians went to the polls to cast their votes for the candidates of their choice. However, instances of violence and explosions preceded and in some cases took place alongside election activities, mostly in Bujumbura.

In view of its findings, MENUB concluded that the environment was not conducive to free, credible and inclusive elections. The African Union, the East African Community (EAC) and the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region expressed similar concerns. On 2 July, the Government of Burundi issued a statement in which it emphasized that the communal and legislative elections were conducted in a peaceful, calm and secure environment with a "massive" turnout of voters, and that the participation was free, despite planned efforts by some to undermine the voting process. The following day, the President of the Electoral Commission accused MENUB of observing the elections with "remote-controlled glasses". Some opposition political parties and civil society organizations, notably those opposed to a third term for President Nkurunziza, called the elections a sham and declared that they would not recognize the results.

Following the 29 June election, MENUB has closely monitored the poll counting and announcement of results in various provinces. According to the Electoral Commission, the preliminary results of the election showed that the Conseil national pour la défense de la démocratie-Forces pour la défense de la démocratie (CNDD-FDD) received 60.2 per cent, which corresponds to 77 parliamentary seats, and a coalition of independents led by Agathon Rwasa and Charles Nditije received 11.16 per cent of the votes, which account for 21 seats. The official wing of the Union

pour le progrès national (UPRONA), which is affiliated with the Government, received 2.49 per cent of the votes, which corresponds to two seats in Parliament. The Electoral Commission Chairperson reported on overall voter turnout as 74.3 per cent, with a much smaller turnout of 28 per cent in Bujumbura Mairie. In line with the power-sharing arrangements enshrined in the Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement for Burundi and the Constitution of Burundi, the Electoral Commission intends to assign 21 more seats to meet the requirements of 30 per cent women representation and to balance Hutu, Tutsi and Batwa seats. The results, as I mentioned, have been rejected by the opposition.

Preparations for the presidential election are ongoing. Ballot papers have been printed with all eight candidates approved by the Electoral Commission, including those who have announced they would boycott the election. The distribution of material to different parts of the country has started. Four presidential candidates have launched their campaigns, namely, CNDD-FDD, the Coalition for Peace in Africa, UPRONA and the Forces nationales de libération. The remaining four candidates have not launched their campaigns and belong to political parties and coalitions that have announced their intentions to boycott the polls.

The political and security situations in Burundi have remained tense and volatile since the holding of the legislative and communal elections. The killing of a police officer on 1 July by unidentified armed men sparked a new wave of violence and clashes between the police and residents of the neighbourhood of Cibitoke and Mutakura in Bujumbura. Police raided the area to carry out house-to-house searches, reportedly to disarm the population, which resulted in the killing of five civilians. The police operation took place while Burundi was commemorating its fifty-third anniversary of independence. In a further sign of potential escalation, one of the leaders of the failed coup recently claimed on a Kenyan television channel that his group was responsible for the wave of grenade attacks and security incidents in Burundi, and vowed to continue to use violence to overthrow the Government.

Since the suspension of the political dialogue led by the joint international facilitation team on 26 June, there has not been any formal forum for dialogue among Burundian stakeholders. However, some States members of the East African Community have continued to consult the parties following the decision of the Community on the proposal of its Summit on the formation of a Government of national unity.

The East African Community held its third Emergency Summit on 6 July in Dar es Salaam. In its communiqué, the Summit implicitly recognizes the shortcomings identified by the two previous EAC summits and adopted, among others, the following decisions: first, the postponement of the presidential elections to 30 July; secondly, the appointment of President Yoweri Museveni of Uganda as facilitator of the dialogue among the parties in Burundi; thirdly, the formation of a Government of national unity, involving both those who participated in the elections and those who did not; fourthly, the deployment of an East African Community election observer mission to observe the presidential elections; fifthly, the disarmament of the Imbonerakure and other armed groups and youth groups allied with political parties; and lastly, the deployment of military observers to oversee the disarmament process. So far, the reaction in Burundi has been relatively muted. The Government of Burundi has indicated that it would consider the recommendations, while some opposition members have expressed disappointment that the communiqué did not go far enough.

The Security Council has followed the situation in Burundi for many years through different reincarnations of the United Nations presence that have been dispatched to help implement the 2000 Arusha Agreement and to help consolidate peace and security in Burundi.

It is regrettable that the hard-won progress achieved by Burundians is in serious danger of slipping away. As the Secretary-General indicates in the report before the Council, Burundi is once again on the brink. The grave danger the country faces should not be underestimated, given the increasing polarization and the apparent choice of Burundian leaders to put personal interests before those of the country.

The East African Community summit communiqué provides a clear path forward. The United Nations remains ready to provide whatever support is needed. Burundian actors must accept that political dialogue and compromise is the only way out of the impending downward spiral. They must act responsibly. The Government, first and foremost, has the responsibility to protect all Burundian citizens and their fundamental rights. The opposition, for its part, also needs to disavow the use of violence and agree to enter into political

dialogue with the Government. Time is running out, and the Burundian leaders should do all they can to safeguard the hard-won peace and the letter and spirit of the Arusha Agreement.

The President: I thank Mr. Zerihoun for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Al Hussein.

Mr. Al Hussein: I thank the Council for giving me this opportunity to voice my concern about the deterioration of the human rights situation in Burundi. An escalating pattern of politically motivated violence, coupled with the country's history of recurring bloodshed and atrocities, should alert us to the potential for serious crisis. Already, more than 145,000 people have fled to neighbouring countries, and this movement has increased drastically in recent days. As they pack the few belongings they can carry and abandon their lands and homes, what the people of Burundi are telling us is that they fear their country is on the brink of devastating violence. The risk to human life and to regional stability and development is high.

The crisis arising from President Pierre Nkurunziza's decision to run for a third term of office has undermined a decade of steady progress in building democratic institutions and the precious gains achieved in the sense of a common national community. In the past six months, members of opposition parties, civil society activists and media figures who called for the President to respect the Arusha Agreement and the Constitution by standing down after 10 years in office have been targeted for intimidation, severe harassment and arbitrary detention. Peaceful protests have been met with unwarranted use of force, including lethal force, in violation of Burundi's obligation under national and international law to guarantee the right to freedom of assembly. Demonstrators have been imprisoned and subjected to torture and ill-treatment. We have also received reports of extrajudicial killings. To date, these violations have not been investigated, prosecuted or sanctioned.

Apparently determined to ignore every warning signal, the Government pushed through parliamentary and local elections on 29 June, despite pleas by the Secretary-General, the East African Community, the African Union, the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region and multiple other international actors, including the most recent international team of facilitators, for a delay to allow space for dialogue and inclusion. The elections were boycotted by opposition parties and took place in an atmosphere that was far from conducive to a free, fair and inclusive vote. There have been outbreaks of violence, including small arms and grenade attacks, and tension is palpable. Burundians appear to be braced for an explosion of the murderous violence, which has so frequently engulfed the country.

I travelled to Burundi in April and met with the President and top officials of the Government, the Constitutional Court and other key bodies. I noted then the widespread and alarming violence attributed to the Imbonerakure militia, which has been linked to the President's political party. Immediate action must be taken to curtail those assaults and to stem incitement to violence and hatred. In line with the recommendation made during the third emergency summit of Heads of State of the East African Community on the situation in Burundi, I urge the Government to disarm the Imbonerakure militia immediately. All political parties, the President of the Republic, the police and the military should place the well-being of their country above their own political ambitions and interests and take the path of peace and rule of law.

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights field office — which we have reinforced — has documented dozens of killings in the past two months, most of them shootings of demonstrators and human rights defenders by members of the Imbonerakure militia and security forces. I draw the Council's attention in particular to the assassination, on 26 May, of Zedi Feruzi, a vocal opposition leader who opposed a third term for the President, and to the attempted assassination of the wife of Agathon Rwasa, another leading political opponent. Some security personnel and Imbonerakure militia members have also been killed.

Contrary to some recent reports, the massive outflows of refugees appear to have been sparked not by rumour but by precise and targeted campaigns of intimidation and terror. Refugees interviewed by my Office in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda and Tanzania continue to refer to the Imbonerakure militia as the main threat, but some have also stated that militants from other groups are also employing violence — a new and disturbing development.

My Office has also documented over 300 cases of arbitrary arrest and detention of demonstrators, human rights defenders, political opponents and journalists,

some of whom have since been released. We have noted numerous cases of torture and other forms of ill-treatment in detention. A severe crackdown on independent media has led to the closure of most private media and radio stations, with some being burned down. Large numbers of journalists have fled Burundi for fear of reprisals, as have many human rights defenders. Recently we have also seen key members of the President's own political party and Government fleeing the country.

Frequent grenade attacks in public neighbourhoods and a campaign of intimidation of ordinary people by Imbonerakure militia members have created an atmosphere that is grim with fear and panic. Many hard-won gains in inclusive services, institutions and freedoms for the public are also breaking down. Numerous schools have closed, and, in any case, lack of security prevents schoolchildren from attending. The humanitarian impact of the crisis now includes a cholera outbreak among refugees in Tanzania.

Since the 1960s, repeated cycles of uncontrollable violence have devastated Burundi. Although all the country's communities speak the same language and have for centuries lived together in the same hills and communes, these recurring spasms have, in recent decades, laid down a pattern of mistrust, bitterness and pre-emptive violence. In a concerted effort to rebuild social institutions that can effectively mediate differences and address grievances, the international community and regional and national actors came together in Arusha 15 years ago to rebuild an architecture of sustainable peace, with emphasis on the rule of law, observance of human rights, access to effective judicial and other institutions, and participatory democratic governance. Slowly, the country has inched back to greater confidence, more openness and far more inclusion.

Today, however, that effort is in peril. After years of deep work to weave together the fabric of society, communities are reverting to fear. The Secretary General's Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, Adama Dieng, has noted the risk that what has, to date, been primarily a political crisis could escalate to a level that would pose a high risk of atrocity crimes. The nightmares of Burundi's recent past are close at hand, and among them we must count the massive impact of past episodes of violence on regional development and security.

The people of Burundi and the region deserve far better than these recurring cycles of impunity, suffering and destruction. They have a right to go about their lives peacefully, in freedom, equality and dignity, without fear, and with equitable access to their country's many resources and opportunities. They look to the Council to exert its authority to ensure a speedy political solution to this dreadful crisis.

I ask Council members to bring to bear all possible influence to restore a sense of responsibility among key actors in Burundi. Accountability for all gross human rights violations, including those that have occurred over the past six months, must be ensured. Justice must be served and reason must prevail so that Burundi can return to the path of the rule of law and democracy, stability, confidence and peace, including through elections that are inclusive, transparent and fair. The Arusha Agreement sought to reconstitute a society in which differences, whether political or communal, could be accommodated, and in which the protection of the State could be counted as secure for all. That is the path of development and hope, and it is Burundi's future. To close off that path would be a monumental error that would be remembered for generations.

The President: I thank Mr. Al Hussein for his briefing.

I now give the floor to the representative of Burundi.

Mr. Shingiro (Burundi) (*spoke in French*): Allow me to begin by thanking you, Sir, for convening this important meeting dedicated to the political situation in Burundi, and to congratulate you on your country's accession to the rotating presidency of the Security Council for July. I would also like to thank all the other members of the Council for their ceaseless and most outstanding efforts to help resolve the crisis in Burundi. I also congratulate and thank Mr. Zerihoun and the High Commissioner for Human Rights for their briefings, which have given us more information about that crisis, although my delegation cannot agree with certain implications.

My delegation notes the content of the Secretary-General's report on the United Nations Electoral Observation Mission in Burundi issued on 7 July. I will not refer to it in detail because it covers the period before the elections of 29 June. Certain passages of its 66 paragraphs are therefore no longer relevant, and new information regarding positive developments has

become available. I will therefore address the Council on the current situation, as demanded by recent events.

Before I do so, however, I will make a short comment on the passage in the report regarding the excessive use of force by the national police of Burundi. That accusation is no longer valid, because one of those involved in the abortive putsch of 13 May, a certain Léonard Ndikumana, has just publicly claimed responsibility for the grenade attacks and other violence committed against the police and the civil population during the uprising intended to prepare the way for the coup d'état and, after the putsch, to prevent and torpedo the elections. The claim was made through a Kenyan television company and was relayed by a number of western networks, including Radio France Internationale, TV5 and Deutsche Welle.

By publicly taking responsibility for the attacks that took place in the country, including the grenades mentioned by the High Commissioner for Human Rights, which were thrown at women selling fruit next to the central market, those behind the putsch have proved once again that the international community missed the mark when it blamed the attacks on young people affiliated to the ruling party and the national police. Responsibility for the grenade attacks has been claimed and the perpetrators are known. The entire international community should condemn such mindless violence, for which responsibility has been publicly claimed, and demand the immediate arrest of those behind the putsch in the countries that are sheltering them. Now that the perpetrators are known, they must be held responsible for their acts and answer for them in court.

To return to the present, as I had occasion to say on Friday before the Council (see S/PV.7473), on the eve of the legislative and communal elections of 29 June my Government faced a difficult choice between two options: to postpone the elections, as certain partners were requesting, and voluntarily agree to enter an institutional vacuum, with all of the attendant consequences; or to proceed with the elections forthwith and give the country democratic institutions in line with the Constitution of Burundi.

In view of the risk of a constitutional vacuum, my Government decided to proceed with the elections, which allowed the people of Burundi to vote freely on 29 June. As we all saw, the elections took place as planned in a calm and tranquil atmosphere, and no major incidents were reported on election day. All national and regional observers, in particular those from neighbouring countries, gave favourable reports on the conditions in which the elections were held. A single observer mission expressed doubts in its report, for reasons known to all. I will not return to that case; I spoke of it yesterday to the Burundi configuration of the Peacekeeping Commission.

We thank the people of Burundi for turning out in force for these two elections, at which they chose their local councillors and their members of parliament. The turnout of 75 per cent sent a clear message, not only to all Burundians but also to Burundi's partners, that the silent majority, which did not participate in the violent demonstrations designed to make media headlines, was eager to vote. The message is also that nothing other than voter turnout can confer legitimacy on an election. The people of Burundi have spoken, and their voice must be respected.

As I said earlier, peace, calm and security characterized the double election, which certain detractors of Burundian democracy had described, for several months before it was even held, as not being credible.

Participation in the elections of 29 June was impressive, even massive, and free, transparent and peaceful. It was eloquent testimony to the resolve of the Burundian people to restore the country's institutions so as to ensure that mandates were upheld pursuant to basic national law. In the capital, in spite of a few isolated incidents of deliberate intimidation in recently restive neighbourhoods — which, happily, were foiled by law enforcement agents — residents were able to vote freely, thanks first and foremost to the relocation of certain voting centres, which limited major incidents on election day.

In the interior provinces and the 1,001 hills of Burundi, the behaviour of consitituents surprised many national and international observers. Indeed, by noon of election day, more than 95 per cent of registered voters had already voted. That, too, sent a message that our people yearned to vote and that they had done so early in the morning before going to work in the fields. It also proved that what was being demanded in the endless reports had taken hold of the silent majority who wanted to vote come what may.

We note the participation of several political and independent parties on election day. Some of these sought to play what I would call an in-and-out game

by pretending to boycott but also going door to door to convince Burundians to vote for them. That door-to-door exercise has also been noted by the United Nations Electoral Observation Mission in Burundi (MENUB) report (S/2015/510). I wish to stress that the Independent National Electoral Commission never received from any of the parties, coalitions or independent candidates formal requests for the withdrawal of their candidacies for the Communal Council or the legislative election.

Thus, some parties, coalitions and independent candidates had voters who voted for them despite the so-called boycott announced through the media. In upholding civil and political rights recognized in the Burundian Constitution, in particular the right to elect and to be elected, the Commission attributed votes and distributed seats in line with the votes cast. If a political party, coalition of parties or independent candidate does not claim the seat obtained, for whatever reason, the Electoral Code will be applied in line with article 138 of the Electoral Code for the National Assembly, article 185 for the Communal Council, and article 143 for the Senate. In brief, the call for a boycott by the Abibenga Amizero y'Abarundi coalition, headed by Agathon Rwasa, was simply a tactical ploy compounded by nefarious speculations.

Regarding the outcome of the legislative elections, according to a report issued by the Independent National Electoral Commission of 7 July, the incumbent party — the Conseil national pour la défense de la démocratie-Forces pour la défense de la démocratie — took 77 of the 100 seats, the Union pour le progrès national took 2, and the Amizero coalition took 21. Although this makes a total of 100 seats, in order to adhere to the Arusha Agreement, a number of new seats will also have to be assigned so as to balance the parliamentary membership along gender and ethnicity lines. We hope that Agathon Rwasa will not make the same mistake he made in 2010 by renouncing the seats he had obtained due to political capriciousness. That would be a serious error for that politician to make, and would represent total disdain for his constituents. We count on our partners to advise him not to tilt further towards the wrong side of history.

I take this opportunity to thank the entire Burundian people, the territorial administration, and the law enforcement and security forces for their joint efforts to ensure the security of voters and voting sites on electional day. I also thank and congratulate the many national, regional and international observers who remained in the hills and neighbourhoods in order to closely follow the elections of 29 June. More than 200 regional and international observers, in addition to those of MENUB, enjoyed national accreditation, as did thousands of national observers. We therefore believe that the accredited electoral observers contributed significantly to strengthening peace and democracy in our country.

We thank the Foreign Ministers of the Central African Republic, the United Republic of Tanzania, the Republic of Uganda and the Republic of Kenya, who, through a political statement, congratulated the Independent National Electoral Commission on having organized and led the first communal and legislative elections in full transparency and with exemplary freedom, and in which all political partners were invited to participate. The statement demonstrated that the Burundian people did indeed want elections and democracy.

In this regard, I would make my usual point underscoring respect for the regional dimension. It is difficult for us to understand the disconnect between the perceptions inside and outside Africa regarding the assessment of the elections in my country. In the future, we shall have to try to reconcile the positions of New York with that of the region. As I said, the report of the regional observers reinforced the role of regional actors and the importance of respect for the regional dimension on the part of those outside the continent.

At the same time, I would be remiss were I not to thank all the countries and international organizations that had the courage to support the national sovereignty and the legitimate right of the Burundian people to democratically choose its own representatives to various instituituions, and to promote the regional dimension here at Headquarters. The representatives of those countries know who they are. I also deeply thank the civil society and religious organizations that courageously supported the elections and acted as observers with true professionalism and neutrality. We especially thank those the observers from the political parties, who braved hunger and exhaustion for the love of their country in order to monitor the elections throughout the cycle, from beginning to end.

We further thank the countries that hosted Burundian refugees during a media and political onslaught that was rife with lies and rumours calling on Burundians to flee their country. We call on those countries to assist Burundi in the repatriation of

those refugees by showing them that peace has been restored and that the reasons for which they fled were not founded. My Government is of course determined to establish conditions conducive to the return of our compatriots who ran away on the basis of those rumours.

We take this opportunity to thank those thousands of Burundian refugees who are returning to the country. They were not mentioned by the High Commissioner for Human Rights, but we believe that approximately 40,000 of them have already returned to the country. The international community is often interested in those who flee countries, but not in those who return. Intellectual honesty requires me to stress the many who have already returned.

Regarding the follow-up to the process and the Emergency Summit of the East African Community (EAC) held on 6 July in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, I should like to inform the Council that we welcomed the conclusions of the Summit. Burundi participated actively at the Summit, during which the region's leaders issued pertinent resolutions to find a peaceful solution to the crisis in Burundi, which we were pleased to welcome as a whole. We also welcome the fact that President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni was named to guide the inter-Burundian dialogue. Similarly, we are very pleased that the East African Community has taken the lead at the highest level, which serves to strengthen coherence and a focus on regional issues in resolving crises and differences in Africa.

The Council is not unaware that the United Nations is well positioned to promote greater coherence among subregional, regional, continental and international aspects in response to the resurgence post-conflict crises. Experience on the ground in Burundi in recent times has proved that greater regional and subregional coherence is a key element is supporting efforts to resolve differences and crises. It continues to be crucial to integrate a regional and subregional perspective in the mediation efforts.

Many countries, including Burundi, prefer to receive assistance and advice from neighbouring countries and regional organizations, which know our country, culture and political history and are better placed to provide quite effective advice to find appropriate solutions to the crisis in Burundi. Under the principles of proximity and subsidiarity, the African Union is called upon to support subregional initiatives and once again cede the leading role to subregional actors in the East African Community in carrying out the dialogue.

I should like to mention that the appointment of a presidential-level mediator and the EAC's leading role in the inter-Burundian dialogue is in line with the operational part of the African Union Peace and Security Council communiqué adopted at its five hundred and fifteenth meeting, wherein the Council calls on the Chair of the African Union Commission immediately to launch consultations for the operationalization of international facilitation under the aegis — and I emphasize this — of the East African Community.

With regard to the postponement of the elections proposed by the Summit, the date of 30 July has been put forward. While the Government welcomes that recommendation, I would like to point out that the provisions of the Constitution of Burundi do not allow a postponement to that date. In line with the Constitution, the country's President must be elected one month prior to the end of the preceding mandate. The term of office of the current President will end on 26 August, which means that the next President must be elected no later than 26 July. In addition, 15 days must be factored in for a second round of voting — that is, between 15 and 26 July. We are quite willing to accept a week's postponement — say, 21 or 22 July, which would pose no problems pursuant to the Consitution. Burundi is currently discussing this with the leaders of the region, and I think a compromise will in fact be achieved on the exact date for the elections.

Before concluding, let me say that we often talk about the crisis and the political problems; but we must also discuss the economic problems Burundi will face in the coming months. And I would also like to mention the immediate challenges the Government must face in the next few days.

The first challenge is to restore confidence among Burundians. We must continue to undertake extraordinary efforts to bolster national unity. To that end, the inter-Burundian dialogue will have to continue beyond the elections. A week or two is not a long time, and we cannot expect things to be resolved by magic. The Government is fully prepared to do that, which is also in line with the call made by EAC Heads of State.

In addition to national unity and the restoration of trust among Burundians, we must also restore trust between the Government of Burundi and various partner countries that have taken staunch positions on

the Burundi crisis. Given the evolution of events, we should act in line with political reality to restore trust with our partners. The next Government will therefore have to take steps to bring our partners together and regain that lost trust.

We will also face the challenge of proceeding with the disarmament programme. Disarming the civilian population is very important. We have a major disarmament programme in place but, given the electoral context, it must be sped up vis–à–vis all groups. No one group is to be singled out. We are talking about overall disarmament of the civilian population.

We will have to strengthen the private sector in order to generate jobs. We must find alternatives to violence for young people. People with jobs do not turn to violence. Most of the young people one sees in the street are unemployed. We must therefore also have the support of our partners to boost the private sector, create employment and help youth find alternatives to violence.

The foregoing also applies to Burundi's politicians, most of whom expect to hold on to their political posts forever. But not everyone wins elections. We have to start to think about how to find other employment for politicians who lose elections, so that they can find alternatives in the private sector rather than turning to violence after they leave office.

I should like to conclude with a brief comment on something said by the High Commissioner for Human Rights. In speaking about disarmament, I thought he singled out a particular group — young people. I emphasize that disarmament is about everyone. With regard to young demonstrators throwing grenades, they were not thrown by youth of the party in power. Those were claimed from Nairobi, and we know who is responsible. But I repeat, disarmament is about everyone. Singling out just one group is counterproductive.

The President: I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion of the subject.

The meeting rose at 11 a.m.