

AFRICAN UNION

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P.O. Box: 3243, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, Tel.:(251-11) 551 38 22 Fax: (251-11) 551 93 21
Email: situationroom@africa-union.org, oau-ews@ethionet.et

PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL
199TH MEETING
17 AUGUST 2009
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

PSC/PR/BR(CXCIX)

PRESS STATEMENT

**PRESS STATEMENT OF THE 199TH MEETING
OF THE PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL**

The Peace and Security Council of the African Union, at its 199th meeting held on 17 August 2009, received a briefing by the Commission, as well as a communication by the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Burundi at the AU on the latest developments in the situation in Burundi.

Council, recalled paragraph 3 of decision Assembly/AU/Dec.252 on the Report of the activities of the Peace and Security Council and the State of Peace and Security in Africa, adopted at the 13th Ordinary Session of the Assembly, held in Sirte, Libya, from 1st to 3rd July 2009.

Council welcomed the successful conclusion of the implementation process of the peace agreements signed in Dar-es-Salaam in July and September 2006 between the Government of the Republic of Burundi and the PALIPEHUTU/FNL, as well as the Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) of *Front National de Libération (FNL)*.

Council commended the Burundian parties to the peace process for the political will they have shown and for the courageous compromises that allowed for the attainment of peace. In this regard, Council welcomed the change of name from PALIPEHUTU/FNL to FNL, in accordance with the provision of the Constitution, which conferred on it the status of a political party, on 21st April 2009.

Council expressed its gratitude to the Regional Initiative, the South African Facilitation and the Political Directorate, as well as to the United Nations and the international community, for their contribution to the peace efforts in Burundi.

Council welcomed the important work done by the AU to support the implementation of the 2006 agreements and paid tribute to the Chairperson of the Commission and to his Special Representative in Burundi, Ambassador Mamadou Bah, for the effectiveness with which AU has ensured the coordination of the efforts of the international community in supporting the peace process in Burundi.

Council expressed its gratitude to the countries that contributed military observers within the framework of the implementation of the 2006 agreements and recalled the contribution of the African Mission in Burundi (AMIB), made up of Ethiopian, Mozambican and South African contingents, deployed from 2003-2004 in support of the implementation of the agreements signed in October and December 2002 between the

Transitional Government of Burundi and some of the Burundian armed political movements. Council, also underlined the important role played by the Special Protection Force made up of South-African soldiers deployed under the mandate of the AU within the framework of the implementation of the 2006 Agreements, a Force which fully fulfilled its mission.

Council called on the international community to continue supporting Burundi in its efforts to consolidate peace and promote national reconciliation, as well as to assist in the socio-economic integration of former combatants;

Council welcomed, first, the establishment of the Partnership for Peace in Burundi, whose mandate is to monitor the situation, promote sustainable peace and to help create a conducive atmosphere for a period leading to elections and, second, an Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI).

Council called upon the Government of the Republic of Burundi and the Burundian political parties to create, through dialogue and consultation, the conditions for the holding of peaceful, fair and transparent elections in an environment of peace, security and stability.

Council requested the Chairperson of the Commission to take appropriate steps to support the electoral process in Burundi, including the dispatch of a mission to the Burundian parties involved in the elections of 2010. Furthermore, Council requested the Chairperson of the Commission to deploy in Burundi, in due course, an observer mission at all phases of the 2010 elections;

Council welcomed the efforts deployed for post-conflict reconstruction in Burundi by the international community, in particular the United Nations, through the Peace Building Commission. In this regard, Council requested the Chairperson of the AU 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.