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Chairperson: Mr. Seger (Switzerland)

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Strategic Framework for Peacebuilding in Burundi

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The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

1. *The agenda was adopted.*

Adoption of the draft outcome of the fifth review of the implementation of the Strategic Framework for Peacebuilding in Burundi (PBC/5/BDI/L.1)

2. **The Chairperson**, introducing the draft outcome document (PBC/5/BDI/L.1), said that it was based on the fifth report on the implementation of the Strategic Framework for Peacebuilding in Burundi. It focused on key areas in which the Peacebuilding Commission could make a difference and sought to combine peacebuilding with strategies to combat poverty.

3. **Mr. Nsanze** (Burundi), Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, introducing the fifth report on the implementation of the Strategic Framework for Peacebuilding in Burundi, said that it had been issued one year after the previous report in order to allow time for the 2010 national elections to take place and for the new Government to settle in. The success of those elections was one of the foremost achievements of the peacebuilding strategy. A fresh spirit of dialogue had enabled the stakeholders to reach a consensus on the electoral code and the Independent Electoral Commission. The appointment of an Ombudsman and the establishment of the Permanent Forum for Dialogue among Political Parties had further extended the scope for dialogue.

4. Consultations on the second-stage strategic framework for growth and poverty reduction had been held in the municipalities from 22 January to 24 February 2011, and were now taking place in Bujumbura with the participation of technical and financial partners. Private sector and civil society organizations, including women's groups, had taken part. The Forum pour le renforcement de la société civile (FRSC) (Forum for the Strengthening of Civil Society), which had previously been suspended, had resumed its work on 11 January 2011 pursuant to an order of the Ministry of the Interior.

5. The question of gender had been taken into account in every national programme and at every level. The 30 per cent quota for women, which had previously been in place for Parliament and the Government, had now been extended to municipal councils. Women now accounted for 40 per cent of

members of Parliament, 50 per cent of the elected members of the Senate and 43 per cent of cabinet members.

6. Local services had been strengthened, particularly local courts, buildings and equipment. The Government was redeploying basic teaching, health and justice staff in order to bring those services closer to their recipients. The institutions combating corruption had been consolidated, as had the Commission nationale des terres et autres biens (CNTB) (National Commission on Lands and Other Assets). In cooperation with civil society, the Ministry of Good Governance had put in place local good governance committees.

7. A policy of zero tolerance of corruption was being enforced, and the managers of certain public companies had been arrested on suspicion of appropriating public funds. Between June 2007 and November 2010, the Anti-Corruption Brigade had tackled 379 cases of corruption, recovering substantial Government funds. A Burundi Revenue Authority had been created, and a soon-to-be-finalized national strategy would help to consolidate anti-corruption mechanisms and agencies. Members of the Government were regularly called to account by Parliament, including through a performance report submitted to Parliament and the Senate every six months. The President held public meetings every three months, and each minister was expected to hold tri-monthly press conferences.

8. Defence forces were returning to their barracks and being replaced with the new National Police Force, whose members were clearly identifiable. Military and police codes of practice were being promoted, and relations between the police and the local population were being examined in 15 pilot municipalities. Burundian police and peacekeepers were displaying a high standard of professionalism. The campaign to disarm the civilian population was proceeding apace, and the small arms and light weapons that had been seized were secure and traceable.

9. Despite some occasional setbacks, the rule of law was becoming more firmly established. Several thousand judgements that had not been executed during the war were now in force. In order to reduce delays, each magistrate was expected to examine at least six cases per month. The penal code was being revised and strong penalties introduced for violence against

women. A national judicial unit for the protection of children had been founded, pending the establishment of special courts for minors. Focal points for minors had received training on the international legal instruments. An action plan had been adopted with the objective of reducing prison populations through amnesties and provisional release.

10. The Independent National Human Rights Commission had been created in January. Its members were being selected by Parliament and its operating costs had been included in the national budget for 2011. Transitional justice mechanisms were being developed: a report on national consultations had been submitted to the President in December 2010. In May 2011, the Government and the High Commissioner for Human Rights would discuss the pending issues, particularly the independence of the prosecutor of the Special Tribunal, the relationship between the Special Tribunal and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and the question of amnesty.

11. The Strategic Framework had enabled the Government to assess the situation of land ownership with a view to the sustainable reintegration of those affected by conflict. The Government had adopted a new land code, which would soon be examined by Parliament. In April 2010, a Thematic Group on Land had been established as a forum for exchange among all stakeholders. The State had acquired new information technology and had organized and partially digitized its archives on land ownership. The various inventories had been analysed, and the information contained in the CNTB inventory had been compiled and updated.

12. In order to reintegrate the affected population, the Government had distributed food and other supplies in integrated rural villages, in addition to organizing training sessions on human rights and conflict prevention. Acting in cooperation with a range of United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the Government had built numerous integrated rural villages and distributed home construction kits for 25,000 returnees. In February 2010, the Cabinet had adopted a national strategy for the socio-economic reintegration of persons affected by conflict. An implementation plan had been prepared and would be submitted to the Cabinet for adoption.

13. Mechanisms for the mobilization and coordination of international assistance had been consolidated, and the relevant actors were now meeting regularly. In order to improve coherence, the Government had drafted an addendum to the project to strengthen national capacities for aid coordination. Several donors had expressed an interest in financing the implementation of that project through a joint fund of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The Government had begun to formulate a national policy on official development assistance (ODA) for the period 2011-2015 and had requested UNDP to conduct a benchmark study on its coordination.

14. The Government and its partners had agreed to focus on sustainable development without losing sight of the challenges still to be addressed. The key actors were aware of the need to integrate all aspects of peacebuilding into the second-stage strategic framework for growth and poverty reduction. At the institutional level, the harmonization process had already taken place.

15. The remaining challenges, which it would be useful to reflect when finalizing the second-stage strategic framework for growth and poverty reduction, were described in the draft outcome document before the Commission. The most urgent was the sustainable reintegration of persons affected by conflict. The Government had submitted to the Peacebuilding Support Office a programme that would require over US\$ 24 million in funding as part of the national plan whose total cost was estimated at over US\$ 260 million. The amount provided by the Peacebuilding Fund would therefore need to be supplemented from other sources. The Peacebuilding Commission was therefore called upon to play a greater role in mobilizing resources and promoting innovative South-South partnerships.

16. **Ms. Landgren** (Special Representative of the Secretary-General to Burundi) said that while the Commission helped to marshal international engagement and resources, the Government and people of Burundi were the drivers of peacebuilding. By prioritizing equitable growth and sustainable development, including the fight against corruption, the Government of Burundi had an opportunity to implement critical socio-economic reforms, thereby strengthening job creation and facilitating reintegration. Security, stability and development were mutually reinforcing. Efforts to strengthen the judiciary

and parliament, broaden political engagement, end impunity and support the country's role in the East African Community would help smooth the path to sustainable development.

17. Security Council resolution 1959 (2010) had encouraged the efforts of the Government of Burundi to create a space for all political parties and to continue improving dialogue between all actors, including civil society. Such participation should not be limited to the act of voting. There had been increasingly persistent calls for dialogue between the Government and the extra-parliamentary opposition. Both the Government and some members of the extra-parliamentary parties had indicated their readiness to engage in dialogue, and the United Nations Office in Burundi (BNUB) encouraged such efforts.

18. The Government had taken significant steps towards establishing the National Independent Human Rights Committee. BNUB expected to support that body by organizing training in human rights monitoring and investigation; offering assistance in the preparation of other training programmes, notably for national security forces; and developing a resource mobilization strategy.

19. The recently established Office of the Ombudsman had shown its potential by helping to find a temporary solution to a dispute between the Government and local motorcycle taxi drivers, many of them former combatants, who were not allowed to operate within Bujumbura. With regard to the strengthening of the judicial system, BNUB would work to support the execution of court decisions and the continued rehabilitation of the court infrastructure.

20. On 7 December 2010, the Tripartite Steering Committee had submitted to the President a report on national consultations on transitional justice mechanisms. BNUB was fully committed to supporting the implementation of a process that would meet both international standards and the expectations of the population, including victims. BNUB looked forward to discussions with the Government focal point regarding the forthcoming creation of appropriate mechanisms for truth and reconciliation. Strong international support was anticipated, and considerable preparation would be needed in order for the truth and reconciliation commission to work in a meaningful and sensitive manner.

21. Support for transitional justice was part of a broader effort to end impunity and strengthen the rule of law. In December 2010, the Security Council had noted with grave concern reports of continuing human rights violations, in particular extrajudicial killings, and further extrajudicial killings had been documented since February 2011. BNUB welcomed the establishment of a commission of inquiry in 2010 and other rapid steps to put an end to the killings.

22. The President had declared a zero-tolerance policy on corruption, a commitment that was indispensable for economic progress and increased private investment. There was now widespread encouragement for Burundi to find practical ways to implement zero tolerance. BNUB would support national anti-corruption structures and promote training opportunities for members of civil society. In so doing, it would draw on the lessons of the Peacebuilding Fund project in support of the fight against corruption, which had been praised by a wide cross-section of the population.

23. By integrating the major priorities of peacebuilding, the second poverty reduction strategy paper would help to harmonize planning and monitoring, allowing for a better focus and the development of common indicators of success. The United Nations agencies in Burundi would work to align their policies with that document. The Peacebuilding Commission's advocacy for adequate resources was of paramount importance and should continue. BNUB would take action towards that objective, and would promote the reintegration programme that was currently being considered by the Peacebuilding Support Office.

24. *Document PBC/5/BDI/L.1 was adopted.*

Interactive dialogue

25. **The Chairperson** said that implementation of the plan set out in the draft outcome just adopted by the Commission would require additional funding, particularly to protect the most vulnerable. Further efforts were therefore needed to seek funding beyond that provided by the Peacebuilding Fund. He had had contact with the World Bank in that regard; it would also be advisable to see what the African Development Bank might be willing to do to support peacebuilding in Africa, given that there were similar concerns in the various countries where peacebuilding efforts were

under way. He had discussed with the World Bank the question of holding a donor conference in the second half of 2011 to support the Burundian Government's efforts to implement its poverty reduction strategy.

26. The Commission should continue to strengthen regional integration through support for the East African Community. Burundi would also benefit from the Trade Mark East Africa programme now being implemented. An effort by the Government to reduce administrative red tape and combat corruption would demonstrate its willingness to build a strong economy based on the private sector as the best way of achieving sustainable development.

27. With respect to transitional justice, the Minister would meet with the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in May, after which the Peacebuilding Commission should take stock of the situation and determine how it could assist in that area. He reiterated the Commission's readiness to provide support on the issues of good governance, anti-corruption and human rights.

28. Open and constructive dialogue would be crucial to furthering the implementation of the Strategic Framework. He hoped to establish a small steering group of Member States that wished to engage more fully in follow-up of the implementation plan and that would also be available to support those efforts financially.

29. **Mr. Briens** (France) welcomed the efforts that Burundi had made since the signing of the ceasefire agreement and the holding of elections in 2010 in such areas as combating corruption, protecting human rights and establishing the position of Ombudsman. Nevertheless, increased attacks by armed groups, human rights violations such as extrajudicial killings, restrictions on civil liberties and the slow pace of transitional justice procedures continued to give cause for concern.

30. The Burundian Government and the international community should continue to consolidate democratic advances through dialogue between the Government and the opposition and through institution-building. The international community had adopted a more balanced approach towards Burundi with the adoption of Security Council resolution 1959 (2010), which he hoped would yield improvements in governance and a transition from crisis to a peaceful democratic country

with rule of law, respect for individual rights and self-sufficient economic growth.

31. His delegation wished to have the Minister's views on the prospects for successful regional integration in eastern Africa.

32. **Mr. Barton** (United States of America) said that there had been significant change in Burundi since the establishment of the Burundi configuration, which was one of the Commission's oldest configurations. He wished to know whether there was a vision of the unique role that the Commission and the Peacebuilding Fund would play during the next stage in Burundi. In particular, he wondered whether the Commission should focus intently on reintegrating people affected by the conflict, which the Minister had indicated was a top priority, or whether there were other more significant issues that should be addressed. Was it the Commission's role to remain involved indefinitely merely to show that the international community cared, or should it seek to have a greater impact?

33. **Mr. Harvey** (United Kingdom) said that the draft outcome document before the Commission showed that significant political progress had been made in Burundi in recent years and contained recommendations that should be taken forward. Challenges and issues remained with respect to the security situation and human rights: his delegation was concerned at the recent upsurge of reports of violence, including extrajudicial killing, and at the information that the Forces nationales de libération militias were operating in South Kivu. Those issues underscored the importance of continued dialogue between the Government and opposition parties in order to sustain consent for the Government.

34. He welcomed the Government's policy of zero tolerance for corruption and other efforts to curb corruption, which would be critical for development of the Burundian economy and for ensuring that key services continued to be provided.

35. Like the representative of the United States, he would appreciate further clarification of the key benchmarks that were to be achieved with the support of the Peacebuilding Commission. While the review set out clear goals in the recommendations, there was a need for greater precision on key items that the Commission must deliver on and the Government's commitments in such areas as socio-economic reintegration, security and rule of law.

36. **Mr. Rugunda** (Uganda) said that Burundi was a successful example of United Nations peacebuilding efforts from which the international community could draw lessons. The people of Burundi were now consolidating their gains; the international community should follow through on its promises of support and ensure that future support was predictable. Burundi had regained its rightful role in the region, as demonstrated by its contribution to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and the President's chairing of an East African Community summit meeting. Continued international support for Burundi would ensure that it remained a shining example of how a people could overcome challenges and steer their country towards progress.

37. **Mr. Nsanze** (Burundi), responding to the questions and comments of the representatives of Member States, said that, despite the Government's efforts to overcome a number of problems, it had not made progress in every area. Certainly, it had succeeded in regaining its place in the international sphere. Nevertheless Burundi required continued support to consolidate its advances and prevent any slippage in the progress achieved with the assistance of the Peacebuilding Commission. Burundi would soon regain the position it had held before the war and would go further by becoming a viable country that would attract investors.

38. With respect to regional integration, Burundi had become a member of various regional organizations, most notably the East African Community, to which it had acceded in 2007. Although it was the "poor relative" among member States, Burundi had been received with respect by its counterparts and was viewed as a full partner, as evidenced by its holding of the presidency in 2011. With assistance from international organizations and countries, provisions had now been made for Burundi's entry into the Community's common market, which should be of substantial benefit. The conclusion of the Trade Mark agreement had been a further sign of support from Burundi's partners.

39. While Burundi continued to face challenges, the Government was striving not to lose ground and in time those challenges would be overcome. Clear goals had been set, but it was difficult to identify benchmarks against which to measure progress, which often became evident only at the end of the process. The important thing was to observe what the

Government was doing. It was engaging in efforts to end the culture of corruption, which had existed since the colonial era, through State entities and by means of a public campaign urging people not to heed officials who asked for bribes and warning corrupt officials that they would face penalties. Anti-corruption proceedings were under way and large sums had been recovered. While no specific measures of progress were available, tangible results would become evident in time.

40. On the issue of violence and extrajudicial killings, he noted that Burundi was consolidating its institutions after emerging from a war that had lasted over 10 years. The entire peace process would fail unless the State could build institutions strong enough to address all of society's problems. The Government must take stringent measures against individuals who refused to lay down their arms and renounce violence. Private radio and television stations now existed that criticized those measures, but as in any democracy, media criticism of the State must not deter it from its duty of responding to acts of violence.

41. He welcomed the comments by the representative of Uganda, who was well aware of the way in which the regional initiative was helping to address the problems faced by Burundi. His Government looked to Uganda for support to ensure its successful regional integration, which required ongoing efforts. Integration into a common market might eventually be followed by the political integration of the five States members of the East African Community.

42. **Ms. Jiménez** (Spain) welcomed Burundi's decision to include peacebuilding issues in its poverty reduction strategy, which would help harmonize planning. She concurred with other speakers who had alluded to the importance of dialogue in resolving political problems. The recommendations set out in the draft outcome before the Commission were an important basis for future peacebuilding efforts.

43. **Ms. Rulumeni** (South Africa) said that her delegation welcomed the progress made by Burundi and the plan to take forward the priorities set out in the Strategic Framework. She was also aware that challenges would remain. South Africa had emerged from conflict through political dialogue and believed that an all-inclusive approach to resolving differences was the best way to further peacebuilding. Burundi was moving swiftly towards post-conflict development despite a lack of resources to implement national

priorities; the international community should maintain its support to the Burundian people as they sought to achieve sustainable peace and development.

44. The improvement of trust between the police and the people was a good foundation for peace. Their active participation in the reconstruction of the country would give rise to a sense of national ownership. Her delegation also supported the effort to establish a truth and reconciliation process in Burundi.

45. **Ms. Sommer** (Germany) said that the draft outcome's two-track approach to addressing political and institutional as well as socio-economic issues was a good basis for future peacebuilding efforts. She urged Burundi to finalize its poverty reduction strategy by mid-2011.

46. Without dialogue and an inclusive political process, instability might recur. The Government should therefore reach out to all actors, notably in the opposition, to ensure that they were able to express their views and prepare for the next elections in 2015. The opposition should join constructively in the political process and refrain from any action that would hamper dialogue. Civil society and human rights organizations, which had played an important role in the 2010 elections and were invaluable partners in the fight against corruption, should be strengthened.

47. The lack of progress on transitional justice was a matter of concern: the people had high expectations for the truth and reconciliation process. Political will was needed to establish the appropriate mechanisms to address an issue that was crucial for long-term stability.

48. A multilayered security policy and political inclusiveness were key to guaranteeing security, particularly in the province of Bujumbura Rural. Much more must be done to swiftly investigate crime and killings and bring perpetrators to justice. The Government should address those issues as they also affected efforts to attract investors and foster sustainable development.

49. Lastly, she wished to know about any specific proposals for future projects to be supported by the Peacebuilding Fund.

50. **Mr. de Klerk** (Observer for the Netherlands) said that the Netherlands would do its share to support peacebuilding; its embassy in Bujumbura was assisting with the security sector and was exploring such areas

as agriculture and food security. He welcomed the development of the Burundian Government's new poverty reduction strategy paper and its intention to integrate poverty reduction and peacebuilding issues, which had undoubtedly been a direct result of the Commission's engagement in Burundi.

51. He welcomed the Government's continued commitment to its policy of zero tolerance for impunity, which would strengthen confidence in the rule of law and governance and thus enhance the environment for private sector investment. He trusted that action would soon be taken on major corruption cases, as any further delay would jeopardize the credibility of that political commitment. He also hoped that the commission established to take action against State agents accused of human rights violations, torture and extrajudicial killings would present results in the near future. His delegation was concerned at recent cases of police brutality that had resulted in fatalities. The police should be a neutral enforcer of the law; he trusted that the incidents would be investigated and appropriate action taken.

52. He wished to hear from the Special Representative of the Secretary-General about the transition from the United Nations Integrated Office in Burundi (BINUB) to BNUB, which should be finalized in the upcoming months. He hoped that she would address the issue of recruitment, a lengthy process that left important functions unperformed while positions were being filled, resulting in the diminished visibility of BNUB during discussions in Burundi.

53. Lastly, he wished to hear details of current plans for the second allocation of funding from the Peacebuilding Fund to Burundi, including amounts and focus areas.

54. **Mr. Adala** (Kenya) welcomed the successful completion of the fifth review of the implementation of the Strategic Framework for Peacebuilding in Burundi. The important work of the United Nations, the European Union, the African Union and other international partners in the four preceding reviews had ensured progress in consolidating peace gains in Burundi and enabled the renewal of commitments in addressing outstanding challenges.

55. Some areas still required attention in order to ensure the successful implementation of long-term peacebuilding initiatives for sustainable peace in Burundi. A donor trust fund for continuity should be

created as Burundi progressed towards graduating from the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission. In order to ensure continued progress in institutional strengthening and capacity-building, the donor group should provide the necessary time and space for democracy to fledge.

56. The intent to consolidate the Strategic Framework for Peacebuilding and the poverty reduction strategy paper was welcome. It was important to ensure that priority-setting remained a local endeavour and the core principles of national ownership, mutual accountability and sustained partnership remained pertinent.

57. Kenya, as a member of the East African Community (EAC), supported Burundi in ensuring that its economy was well-anchored within that of the wider Community. Indeed, Burundi's assumption of the EAC presidency was testament to the Community's support. The onus was on the Peacebuilding Commission and other partners to redouble their efforts to assist Burundi in building strong national institutions, without which the country might not be able to optimize its effective participation in regional integration.

58. **Mr. Vanden Bulcke** (Belgium) welcomed the progress that had been made in Burundi in recent years, in particular the conclusion of the peace process, the holding of successful elections the previous year, despite the opposition party's boycott, and the Government's efforts in terms of socio-economic development and good governance. He noted however that work still needed to be done to combat corruption.

59. The high number of extrajudicial killings in recent weeks gave cause for concern; the authorities must investigate those incidents as soon as possible. There had also been some worrying reports that a new rebellion was forming in South Kivu in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The authorities and partners in the region should take appropriate initiatives to engage all parties in dialogue and resolve the situation.

60. He encouraged the Government of Burundi to put in place appropriate measures for a transitional justice system, which should be monitored by the United Nations Office in Burundi (BNUB), in accordance with its mandate. Belgium supported the convening of a meeting in New York in May to discuss that issue.

61. **Mr. Huang** Hongjiang (China) welcomed the adoption of the outcome of the fifth review of the

implementation of the Strategic Framework for Peacebuilding in Burundi. As a result of the joint efforts by the Government and people of Burundi, important progress in its political process, national rehabilitation and reconstruction had been made. Elections had been successfully held in 2010, and the country had assumed the EAC Presidency and participated in United Nations peacekeeping operations. That set a good example for other countries emerging from conflict.

62. Nonetheless, many challenges remained. The United Nations and the international community should continue providing assistance, with a particular focus on the consolidation of the political process, institutional capacity-building, socio-economic development, the development and implementation of the poverty reduction strategy paper and youth employment. In providing support for reconstruction and development, all sides must respect Burundi's sovereignty and ownership and listen to the views of its Government and people. The Peacebuilding Commission and BNUB should enhance their communication and coordination with the Government.

63. With the support of the international community, all parties could work together to achieve durable peace, stability and sustainable development in Burundi. China would continue to support Burundi in any way possible.

64. **Ms. Satomi** (Japan) welcomed the adoption of the outcome document of the fifth review and praised the commitment of the Government of Burundi. She expressed gratitude to the Government for its contribution to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM).

65. She would appreciate additional information from Mr. Nsanze and Ms. Landgren about specific activities and partnerships they would like to see the Peacebuilding Commission undertake in the coming years.

66. **Mr. Nsanze** (Burundi) thanked Commission members for recognizing the progress that had been made in Burundi. He stressed the need for support, including bilateral assistance in specific areas. A particular priority was reintegrating the populations affected by the crisis. Former combatants needed to be reintegrated and displaced persons needed to return to their normal lives and homes. Those returning from other countries, the United Republic of Tanzania in

particular, needed support to re-establish themselves and make a decent living. Returning children would need an education, health care and hope for the future.

67. Support was also needed to enable the country to develop effectively. Burundi had economic potential and its Government was working to create conditions conducive to investment, for example by simplifying the procedures for authorization to establish enterprises and make investments in the country. The increased stability was already bearing fruit — many Burundians were developing their own income-generating activities.

68. Great efforts had been made to establish an inclusive political dialogue, which must be continued if peace was to be restored. All parties were not yet in agreement on the way forward, but there was no intention to let the country slide into dictatorship — they had chosen democracy and wanted to see it succeed.

69. The objective of a truth and reconciliation commission would be to re-establish balance in society following the conflict. Thus far the process had been mostly successful. Further discussions on the establishment of the commission would soon take place with the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Geneva. The commission should be in place by the end of the year and have an impact within two years; it could serve as a vital complement to political dialogue. Much was being expected of it and he asked for the support of the Peacebuilding Commission to ensure the success of its work.

70. With regard to Belgium's concerns over increasing violence, he said that there was no rebellion forming in South Kivu. Despite the presence of many uncontrolled armed groups in that region, no rebellion against Burundi was forming. In any case, Burundi's security forces had demonstrated their capabilities and could face any threat to the country, including serious security issues.

71. The police should be a neutral force. A number of countries, including Belgium and the Netherlands, were helping to train the security forces in Burundi and had been very effective in keeping the peace during the election. Burundi had also sent troops to Somalia and other African countries, demonstrating solidarity with other countries in crisis.

72. He supported the proposal to hold more regular meetings in New York to discuss the progress being made in Burundi, the only caveat being that provision should be made for the Burundian delegation to attend. His Government would also be happy to host meetings in Burundi. Indeed, he invited members to visit the country, where they would be able to see first-hand the progress that had been made.

73. **Ms. Landgren** (Special Representative of the Secretary-General) welcomed the support provided by the Fifth Committee for the transition from the United Nations Integrated Office in Burundi (BINUB) to the United Nations Office in Burundi (BNUB) and the resulting significant reduction in staff. The three-month transition and liquidation period had begun at the end of March with the departure of the BINUB staff, and every effort was being made to maintain the momentum of the work being done on important issues during that period. Recruitment for BNUB and the disposal of excess assets would be completed by the end of the transition. An agreement had been reached with the Government of Burundi on the appropriate distribution of assets and with the closure of four logistics bases in Bujumbura the previous month, the mission footprint had already been significantly reduced. In an effort to strengthen the independence, transparency and fairness of the recruitment process, the support of a team from the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) had been gratefully received. The implication of the job losses entailed by the transition was not being underestimated; indeed, it was a tribute to the work of the national staff association and relations with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that the transition process had thus far proceeded without the threats to or attacks against BNUB that had occurred when the United Nations Operation in Burundi (ONUB) was terminated. That in itself was a positive indicator for the country.

74. Many people around the world regarded Burundi as a peacebuilding success story; the speedy integration of its security forces had indeed been exemplary. It was important to make the new Burundi known and she had recently met with the Minister for Regional Integration to that end. Using benchmarks and identifying exactly when a country could graduate from the Commission would be helpful; the country should work closely with the Peacebuilding Commission.

75. With regard to private investment, the President of Burundi had recently been in Dar es Salaam to

attend the 9th Africa Investment Forum and would also participate in the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, to be held in Istanbul in May. Attracting private investment to Burundi was crucial; that issue was also being discussed in other forums.

76. The process of establishing transitional justice mechanisms might be long and would require considerable support. In the national consultations, it had been recommended that a review should go as far back as independence, spanning some 50 years. A commitment had been made to write the common history of all Burundians. In that regard, Burundi had the potential to set a global example in the field of transitional justice.

77. **Mr. Otobo** (Peacebuilding Support Office) said that the outcome document provided clear guidance on many issues, including the periodicity of review. Experience in other configurations suggested that it might be difficult to hold a review more than once a year.

78. Paragraph 3 of the outcome document made it clear that the priorities it proceeded to set out would form the basis for the Commission's engagement and be included in the poverty reduction strategy paper. The Peacebuilding Support Office was already working on benchmarks for transition out of the Peacebuilding Commission and would share them in the forthcoming months. A study from one mission alone contained 48 benchmarks divided into six clusters, which was an indication of the complexity of the issues involved in transition.

79. The outcome document outlined four specific areas of engagement for the Peacebuilding Commission in Burundi: providing support for regional integration efforts; improving governance, especially by supporting the Government's zero-tolerance policy against corruption; encouraging transitional justice and political dialogue; and facilitating the socio-economic reintegration of former combatants, communities affected by conflict, and returnees and displaced persons. The tools needed would vary for each.

80. With regard to the Peacebuilding Fund and its projects, he said that the Peacebuilding Support Office had received from the Special Representative of the Secretary-General a project document requiring \$24.08 million in funding, which was enormous in comparison to the first tranche of funding given to Burundi and what remained in the Peacebuilding Fund. The Peacebuilding Fund had already contributed

approximately \$40 million to both Burundi and Sierra Leone. The second tranche of funding allocated to Sierra Leone had been far less than that entailed by the new projection for Burundi, and the equal treatment of countries was important to bear in mind. The Minister had said that support from the Peacebuilding Fund should be supplemented by contributions from Member States, particularly members of the Burundi configuration, and the Chairperson had added that resources should be mobilized from the international financial institutions, especially the African Development Bank and the World Bank, in order to meet the needs of the Government of Burundi. Since the overall cost of the reintegration project would be around \$200 million, greater efforts were needed if they were to raise even a fraction of that.

81. **The Chairperson**, responding to questions about Burundi's graduation from the Commission, said that that was the ultimate goal; however, the country itself should decide when that time had come and when it considered itself to be sufficiently independent. Dialogue should continue, but Burundi was approaching the final straight and it would not be long before the Commission could say it had accomplished its work.

82. With regard to the question of benchmarks, the priorities included in the outcome document should also be used as the benchmarks for measuring the results of the Commission's work. Promoting a peaceful, interactive and inclusive political climate in the country would be an important achievement, as would reintegrating vulnerable groups and providing a stable economic life sufficient to prevent a return to violence. Once democratic institutions had been created and strengthened by good governance and public order and the citizens of Burundi continued to feel safe, the Commission's work would be complete. There was still work to be done, but with cooperation, the Commission could succeed.

83. **Mr. Nsanze** (Burundi) thanked the members of the Burundi configuration for their work and encouraged them to visit Burundi so they could see the issues for themselves and speak on the country's behalf. The country would not always need the Commission, as it was making progress and had its own strengths and economic potential. Burundi would soon become a viable country that the Peacebuilding Commission could be proud to have supported.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.