

REPUBLIC OF BURUNDI



OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL AND SPOKESPERSON OF THE GOVERNMENT

COMMUNIQUE OF THE GOVERNMENT FOLLOWING THE DECLARATION OF 14 MARCH 2016 BY THE EUROPEAN UNION ON BURUNDI.-

1. The Government of the Republic of Burundi has taken note of the EU statement concluding consultations with Burundi under Article 96 of the ACP-EU Cotonou Agreement this March 14, 2016; a conclusion to suspend EU assistance for Burundi.

2. The Government regrets that the European Union, in taking such a conclusion has not taken into consideration the significant progress and efforts made in terms of security despite the challenges posed by terrorist groups that have chosen civilians and security forces as targets; a situation currently under control. The decision by the European Union may unfortunately **encourage** these terrorists who will interpret this gesture as **a reward** for their criminal enterprise.

3. The European Union did not either take into account the positive developments in connection with the inter Burundian inclusive dialogue underway, and the recent measures taken in relation to human rights including the pardon for more than 2,000 prisoners, the cancellation of arrest warrants against some personalities, the release of several detainees involved in the insurgency as well as the reopening of some private radio stations; all this following diligent investigation over their cases, on request of the Government.

4. However, the Government of Burundi, which strives for the welfare of the people of Burundi is delighted that the European partner has maintained financial support for the population and humanitarian aid, which is indeed the top priority of the Government.

5. In order to maintain full transparency and **prevent any potential laundering** of these funds and their fraudulent conversion to other suspicious activities, the funds dedicated the welfare of the population will have to go through the

accounts of the Central Bank in accordance with the relevant law in force over the matter, while remaining in their entirety at the disposal of the beneficiary population.

And to give more chance to the results of the Interburundian dialogue already initiated, as well as in order to consolidate the achievements of national reconciliation, the entities responsible for managing European-funded Projects must comply with the spirit of balances required by the Arusha Accord in recruiting staff.

6. For its part, the Government of the Republic of Burundi will continue, and without any compulsion, its work to improve the situation at political and security levels in the interest of the welfare of the people of Burundi, bearing in mind the national sovereignty, territorial integrity and good relations with its partners. No decision or proposal likely to question these sacred principles could receive the support of the Government of the Republic of Burundi.

7. Finally, the Government of the Republic of Burundi is grateful to all the countries of the European Union that refused to follow the position of an EU member which always seeks to meddle further in the internal affairs of Burundi and which is the source of many problems that mark the history of Burundi.

Done at Bujumbura, March 15, 2016

Philippe NZOBONARIBA
Secretary-General and Spokesman
of the Government.-