



**OFFICE OF THE SPECIAL ENVOY OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL
FOR THE GREAT LAKES REGION**

Elections and Political Transitions

<p>Summary of Facts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Burundian electoral crisis has triggered tensions in the country resulting in significant number of displacements, including a steady influx of refugees into neighbouring countries as well as killings and detentions. The efforts by the UN, AU and EAC to facilitate dialogue is yet to achieve the desired results. EAC led mediation, facilitated by President Museveni of Uganda, is about to commence. The President Nkurunziza was recently sworn in to a third term, and the opposition continues to oppose the third term mandate. ▪ Several PSCF signatory countries will have elections in the coming months. Of these, the DRC, Rwanda, Uganda and Congo-Brazzaville require special attention. ▪ In the DRC, although the Government has withdrawn draft laws aimed at postponing elections and refrained from amending the Constitution to remove the term limit, the passing of the Local Election Law raises suspicion of a de facto <i>glissage</i>. Furthermore, President Kabila commenced consultations for the establishment of national dialogue for consensus on political issues, including the conduct of forthcoming elections, a move seen by observers to indicate an attempt to extend the current regime in office beyond the constitutional limit. ▪ In Rwanda, the Parliament voted on 14 July in favour of a motion proposing amendment of article 101 of the Constitution which prescribes two terms for the President. Hence, President Kagame could seek a third term when his mandate ends in 2017. ▪ In Uganda, the Presidential term limit was removed in 2005. The upcoming presidential elections in which President Museveni will be a candidate is a source of tensions as illustrated by the arrest on 09 July 2015 of presidential candidates Amama Mbabazi and Kizza Besigye. ▪ In Congo-Brazzaville, after the national dialogue initiated by President Sassou Nguesso (13-17 July), it is likely that a new Constitution will be presented through a referendum. There is an expectation that both the age and term limits will be removed, thus paving the way for incumbent Sassou Nguesso to contest the 2016 presidential elections. Political opposition are opposed to the changes and tension is looming in country in this regard.
<p>Analysis</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The inter-Burundian dialogue aimed to de-escalate tensions, and facilitate the conduct of peaceful, inclusive and transparent electoral processes did



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	<p>not achieve the desired results.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional repercussions of the Burundian crisis should not be underestimated, including ongoing humanitarian crisis across the region and likely negative impacts on cordial relations in the country. This was quite evident from Special Envoys recent visit to Kigali, Rwanda during which the Government expressed grave concerns on the impact of the crisis. 	
Next Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a need for a lessons learned, informal after action review of the international community's response to mediation efforts in Burundi. Agreement on the distribution/division of labor within the E-team to assist ongoing efforts. Secure the Envoys support for O/SESGs proposals for sub-regional projects to promote democracy and governance. 	
Messaging	<p>Heads of state, leaders and stakeholders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate leadership (seek largest consensus possible) and respect the will of the people as well as the principles of the 2007 AU Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance. <p>Burundian Government and Opposition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The priority is the resumption of an EAC-led dialogue, supported by AU and UN to find a peaceful, political solution. The international community is unanimous in this regard. Respect for the Arusha Agreement including power-sharing remains of utmost importance. <p>Rwanda, DRC, Tanzania, Uganda</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Countries hosting former Burundian senior officials, who fled the country must ensure that these do not engage in activities which could further destabilize Burundi and damage regional relations. 	
	Drafted by	Distribution
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