



PRESS RELEASE

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Special Envoy Djinnit meets with President Nkurunziza and key stakeholders in Burundi, stresses the need for inclusive political dialogue

Bujumbura, 19 October 2014 - The UN Special Envoy for the Great Lakes region, Said Djinnit, visited Bujumbura on 17 October as part of his regional tour since his appointment last July. Mr. Djinnit met with President Pierre Nkurunziza as well as with key political figures, a cross section of Burundian women, and the UN Country Team.

In his meeting with President Nkurunziza the UN Envoy expressed his commitment to work closely with all 13 signatory countries of the Peace, Security and Cooperation (PSC) Framework agreement, including Burundi, as well as with all the regional and sub-regional mechanisms, such as the African Union (AU), the International Conference for the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR), and the Southern African Development Community (SADC), in order to reach lasting peace for the people of the Great Lakes. Mr. Djinnit conveyed to the Burundian President his hope for the Great Lakes region to overcome its painful past of conflicts and human sufferings, and pave the way for the more pressing issues of development, youth employment, women's empowerment and long-term stability.

The UN Special Envoy later met with Pascal Nyabenda, the national chairman of the country's ruling party, National Council for the Defense of Democracy-Forces for the Defense of Democracy (CNDD-FDD), and Leonce Ngendakakumana, leader of the opposition coalition. He encouraged both leaders to work toward opening the political space and promoting inclusiveness, the best way to achieve lasting stability.

Mr. Djinnit also exchanged with a cross-section of Burundian women groups, and informed them of the establishment of a Great Lakes coalition of civil society actors spearheaded by his Office to develop and coordinate a regional approach for the monitoring and evaluation of the PSC Framework's implementation.

The Special Envoy had discussions with the representatives of the UN Country Team and assured them of his willingness to carry on his predecessor Mary Robinson's initiatives, particularly for

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women and youths. With this in mind, he stressed the centrality of the role for women and youths in the PSC Framework. Under the direction of former Special Envoy for the Great Lakes, Mary Robinson, the Women's Platform for Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework made a commitment to ensure that women in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and the region are engaged in the implementation of the 2013 Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework.

The PSC Framework is a hallmark peace agreement intended to bring sustainable peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Great Lakes region of Africa after 17 years of war.

Special Envoy Djinnit concluded his visit with a meeting with Ambassador Boubacar Gaoussou Diarra, African Union Special Representative for the Great Lakes Region.

After Bujumbura, Mr. Djinnit made a stop-over in Kinshasa on his way to Luanda to take part in the 3rd Joint International Conference of the Great Lakes Region/Southern African Development Community Ministerial Meeting.

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