

COMMUNIQUE OF THE GOVERNMENT FOLLOWING THE 26TH ORDINARY SUMMIT OF HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT OF THE AFRICAN UNION

1. On 30 and 31 January 2016, the 26th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of African Heads of State and Government of the African Union Summit was held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Among other issues discussed, it was to approve or reject the unilateral decision taken by the Council of Peace and Security of the African Union to propose the sending of a military force of 5,000 men in Burundi called "African Mission for Prevention and Protection" MAPROBU in French acronym.
2. The Government of Burundi welcomes the wise decision of the Summit of Heads of State and Government of the African Union not to send such troops without the request or consent of the people of Burundi who judged inappropriate such a deployment inasmuch as the defense and security forces of Burundi are capable to secure the entire territory and the entire population, even beyond the borders of Burundi at the request of the international community.
3. The Government of Burundi also welcomes the decision by the African Union to send a high level mission to Burundi. This mission had yet been repeatedly requested by the Government of Burundi because it is the only sure way to realize the political and security reality prevailing in Burundi, after visiting the country and its people. And it is by this that the African Union's Peace and Security Council should have started before taking on the basis of erroneous and manipulated reports, inappropriate decision to send the MAPROBU, a force that could not know where to deploy and especially between which belligerents since there not any.
4. With regard to this manipulation, the Government denounces and condemns the persistence of opinions, for whom sending these foreign forces in Burundi remains a major concern and which do not hesitate to resort to dishonest maneuvers such as the production of completely falsified reports including the production and distribution of faked images in order to influence the decisions of International bodies.
5. The most striking example is the recent publication by the NGO Amnesty International, of images which they said were taken by a spy satellite, images the NGO describes as possible evidence of mass graves in Burundi, two days before the summit of Heads of State in Addis Ababa which was supposed to decide whether to deploy the MAPROBU in Burundi.
6. The NGO Amnesty International has only followed in the steps of other similar initiatives. To highlight the above mentioned, one would recall that on the eve of

the arrival of a UN Security Council delegation sent on January 22, 2016 to report on the prevailing security in Burundi as well as on the need for the deployment of MAPROBU, the TV channel "France 3" broadcasted very violent and gruesome excerpts from a video on alleged crimes committed in Burundi, specifically in the central district of Karuzi ; a video attributed to the Burundian security forces and to the youth wing of the ruling party called Imbonerakure. The fabricated video was provided to "France 3" by Maître Bernard Maingain, a Belgian lawyer defending the cause of the radical opposition and especially the putschists of 13 May 2015.

The dissemination of this video was meant to disrupt the visit of the UN Security Council delegation and attempt to negatively influence its findings, but fortunately without success.

7. The Government of the Republic of Burundi would like to remind national and international opinion that the NGO Amnesty International is not at its first attempt to produce negative reports on Burundi. Indeed, following the attack in the western district of Cibitoke at the end of 2014 by terrorists coming from the east of the DRC, the NGO did not hesitate to release a false and overwhelming report against the law enforcers and the attacked population, but saying nothing about the attackers, let alone to condemn them. It should be stressed that the attack was intended to disrupt the elections of May 2015 which were in full preparation.
8. The Government of the Republic of Burundi condemns this new attempt by Amnesty International to tarnish once again the image of Burundi, and finds that the dissemination of these alleged satellite images - showing disturbed earth or sand, in mainly agricultural areas, does not in any way constitute material evidence of the existence of mass graves in Burundi. The choice of the date of publication clearly shows that the NGOs wanted to raise emotion in the Heads of State to influence their decision.
9. If Amnesty International are sincerely working for human rights as they claim and if they really want to help the cause of peace in Burundi, they should direct the spotlights and aim the cameras of their spy satellites at recruitment and training camps of Burundian refugees in neighboring Rwanda, activities that even involve child soldiers, something considered in other places as a crime against humanity.
10. The Government of Burundi welcomes once again the wisdom and the pragmatism shown by the Heads of state with regard to all these manipulation attempts, favoring the best interests of the sovereignty of a member state and its people.
The African leaders have understood that after Burundi, there is no doubt that other African states are on the destabilization waiting list.
11. Furthermore, the Government of Burundi welcomed positively the recommendation of the Summit to continue the inter Burundian Dialogue already

launched under the auspices of President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni of Uganda. To this end, the Government wishes to recall that it has always emphasized the dialogue and it only awaits the arrival in Burundi of a Ugandan delegation to discuss the practical modalities for dialogue continuation so as to reach constructive conclusions.

12. The Government reiterates its firm commitment to protect all Burundian citizens and foreigners living on its territory, with due respect for the rights and dignity of the human being and to work with all its partners, including the African Union, to find a solution to the problems facing Burundi, yet in the due respect of its sovereignty.
13. Finally, the Government wishes to reassure once again the national and international community, that there will be no genocide in Burundi and that the people of Burundi will oppose by all means all those who wish to impose this genocide by any means whatsoever, as a pretext for establishing a government that has not been the emanation of the democratic commitment of the people of Burundi.

Done at Bujumbura, February 01, 2016
Philippe NZOBONARIBA
Secretary-General and Spokesman
of the Government.