



INITIATIVES TO AVOID A NEW CIVIL WAR IN BURUNDI

*Adopted at the YEPP Council Meeting, Kyiv, Ukraine
On the 5th of December 2015*

Recognising:

- That President Nkurunziza's intention to seek a third term in office is against the Arusha Peace agreement and is unconstitutional; therefore President Nkurunziza no longer represents the people of Burundi;
- That the presidential elections which took place in Burundi on the 21st of July 2015 were not considered free and fair by the UN;
- That civilian and opposition protests against the unlawful government plunged the country into a political crisis, including violent clashes between protesters and security forces;
- The political murders of important leaders of the opposition and the Tutsi minorities, such as Patrice Gahungu and Welly Fleury Nzitonda, as well as high ranking government officials like army General Adolphe Nshimirimana;
- That for the first time since the civil war over 250,000 Burundese people are fleeing to neighbouring countries out of fear, the majority of whom are women and children;
- The dangerous context and history of civil war in Burundi due to the rising tensions between the government and the opposition;
- The UN Security Council resolution of the 12th of November 2015, calls on the political leaders of the US, the UK, France, Belgium and the EU for an immediate end to hostilities and a transition towards a sustainable and democratically elected Burundese government.

Acknowledging:

- The fragile balance in ethnic differences amongst the people of Burundi;
- The unlawful and shocking execution of 9 people in a bar in Bujumbura on the 6th of November 2015 that could be judged to be a dangerous escalation;
- The recent declarations of President Nkurunziza and the president of the Burundi's senate Mr Ndikuriyo that remind us of a very dark but recent past as President Nkurunziza publicly declared that the security forces would use violent methods to search homes for weapons and opposition figures, hereby creating a risk for more bloodshed;

- That unacceptable ethnic radicalism and hate speech was used by high ranking members of the Burundese government when Mr Ndikuriyo used terminology such as “exterminate” and “wipe them all out”;
- The current tension could jeopardise the important gains recorded following the signing of the Arusha Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in Burundi and the Global Ceasefire Agreement of 2003, affecting the stability of the entire region;
- The European and bilateral support of the economic development of the region must rely on common values such as protection of human rights and respect for the constitution.

YEPP calls on:

- The High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Federica Mogherini, to speak more firmly and condemn all human rights violations in Burundi and to urge the government to stop using violence against political opponents;
- The EU, its Members States and the African Union to condemn the violence used by the police and the army toward protesters;
- An immediate return by all political parties, the government parties CNDDFDD and the main opposition parties, to a peaceful, inclusive and comprehensive political dialogue to end the political deadlock facilitated by the East African Community;
- The immediate release of political prisoners;
- The European Union to condemn all unlawful arrests and restrictions to journalists and NGOs to operating freely;
- The European Parliament to condemn those responsible for human rights violations, to hold them individually responsible and to bring them to an international tribunal under the patronage of the United Nations;
- The European Commission and the Member States to suspend all projects involving the current government and an asset freeze of the unlawful President Nkurunziza;
- The EU to increase support to the refugee camps outside Burundi to assist the people of Burundi who, once again, have to flee their own country and who are victims of this political tragedy.
- The Burundese government to prepare new democratic presidential elections in 2016.