

REPUBLIC OF BURUNDI

PRESIDENCY OF THE REPUBLIC
Secretariat-General of the State

**MEDIA RELEASE N°07 CONSECUTIVE TO THE CABINET MEETING
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 20 APRIL 2022**

A Cabinet meeting was held in Bujumbura on Wednesday 20th of April 2022, under the chairmanship of His Excellency Major General Evariste NDAYISHIMIYE, President of the Republic of Burundi.

After the presentation of the agenda, His Excellency the President of the Republic invited the Prime Minister to present the summary of the observations resulting from the preparatory meeting of the Council of Ministers which the Prime Minister chaired on Friday 15 April 2022, and which was devoted to the analysis of the same files on the agenda.

After restitution by the Prime Minister to the President of the Republic, the following issues were analyzed:

1. Draft Memorandum of Understanding between Kenya Investment Authority and the Burundi Development Agency, presented by the Services of the Presidency of the Republic.

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is concluded between Kenya Investment Authority and the Burundi Development Agency in accordance with the principles of equality, voluntary participation, honesty, reliability and mutual benefit.

The purpose of this memorandum is to establish closer cooperation for mutual benefit and to strengthen economic, technological and investment relations between the two institutions.

It also aims to define the mechanisms and modalities of cooperation in the promotion and facilitation of investments in Kenya and Burundi.

The signing of this memorandum of understanding and its effective implementation will therefore allow the two countries to:

- Strengthen economic cooperation between Burundi and Kenya;
- Create favorable conditions for making investments between the two parties;
- Exchange information on investment opportunities;
- Mutually inspire best practices in attracting and facilitating investors;
- Stimulate exchanges and economic initiatives and strengthen confidence in the field of investments;
- Strengthen bilateral investment relations between Burundi and Kenya;

At the end of the discussions, the Memorandum was adopted with the following recommendations:

- Prepare a French version of this Memorandum;
- Develop the field of foresight for good planning in order to anticipate the needs of the country.

2. Draft decree revising decree n°100/045 of March 05, 2019 on the creation, mission, organization and functioning of a national steering committee responsible for managing the implementation of development projects financed by partners in the framework of bilateral and multilateral cooperation.

3. Draft order revising joint order no. 120/121/VP1/VP2/04 of 20 May 2019 on the creation, missions, organization and functioning of a technical commission

responsible for monitoring development projects financed in the framework of cooperation between the Republic of Turkey and the Republic of Burundi.

These two projects were presented by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Development Cooperation.

The revision of these two texts is proposed in order to take into account the current structure of the Government resulting from the 2018 Constitution.

Indeed, as regards to the National Steering Committee in charge of implementing development projects financed by the partners within the framework of multilateral and multilateral cooperation, its coordination was ensured by the Second Vice-President of the Republic, a position which no longer currently exists according to the current Constitution. The draft proposes that the coordination be ensured by the Prime Minister.

Concerning the technical commission responsible for monitoring development projects financed within the framework of cooperation between the Republic of Turkey and the Republic of Burundi, it was set up by Joint Order of the First Vice-President of the Republic and the Second Vice-President -President of the Republic. It is a question of updating this Order so that it is signed by the Prime Minister.

Finally, for the two texts, it is a question of adapting them because certain ministries have changed their name.

After discussion and debate, the Council of Ministers reached the following conclusions:

- At the level of the draft decree, it is necessary to reformulate article 1, because the Committee already exists;

- The Committee will ensure, through the Minister in charge of Foreign Affairs and the Minister in charge of Finance, the vice-presidency so that coordination and steering are carried out at the sectoral level;
- As the steering falls to the sectoral ministries, the Order setting up the technical committee is not necessary because sub-committees at the ministerial level can be formed if necessary.

4. Bill on the peaceful use, safety and security of nuclear energy and ionizing radiation, presented by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Development Cooperation.

Burundi joined the International Atomic Energy Agency in 2009. But it was not until 2016 that regional and national projects using nuclear techniques and sciences began to be developed and presented to the Agency on behalf of Burundi.

Even before it joined the Agency, radioactive sources were sometimes used in Burundi in total ignorance and without control of their harmful effects on their users, the population and the environment.

The majority of these sources has been used since colonial times and are scattered throughout our territory. They deserve to be collected and kept in a safe place designed for this purpose, in order to protect the population from its harmful effects.

Unfortunately, until today, there are no specific regulations regarding the use of ionizing radiation or radiological devices. It is time to have this law.

For Burundi, the establishment of such a law is also justified by the following reasons:

- Burundi must adopt a nuclear law in the same way as the other member countries of the East African Community;
- Burundi is currently a member of the Board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for the period from 2021 to 2023;
- This law will allow the effective and efficient implementation of the National Framework Program (PCN 2021-2026) which was jointly signed by the International Atomic Energy Agency and Burundi in September 2021;
- Burundi has acceded to the new Regional Cooperation Agreement for Africa on Research, Development and Training in the Field of Nuclear Science and Technology (AFRA). Once adopted, the said law will allow the implementation of this Agreement in all areas, namely health, agriculture | livestock, energy and others;

- The national project relating to the establishment of a Center for the Fight against Cancer will benefit from assistance from the International Atomic Energy Agency in terms of staff training and equipment;

The Council of Ministers had analyzed this project and had returned it to be reworked by a Commission which had been set up for this purpose.

After analyzing the reworked project, the Council of Ministers found it consistent with the guidelines that had been given and adopted it.

5. Settlement bill and budget report, 2020-2021 financial year, presented by the Minister of Finance, Budget and Economic Planning.

The budget review and reporting bill has its origins in Organic Law No. 1/35 of December 4, 2008 relating to public finances which stipulates that “the draft budget review and reporting law is submitted to Parliament within 8 months of the end of the financial year”.

This is why the Ministry of Finance, Budget and Economic Planning has prepared this bill

The observation is that the budget was executed both in revenue and in expenditure in accordance with the prescriptions of Law No. 1/13 of May 15, 2020 fixing the General Budget of the Republic of Burundi.

Overall, at the level of resources as well as at the level of expenditure, the achievements have exceeded the forecasts.

During the 2020-2021 financial year, the amount of exemptions is 157,908,716,138 Bif compared to the planned budget of 18,000,000,000 Bif.

These achievements of excess exemptions are mainly due to the fact that it is difficult to make forecasts at the level of:

- Benefits given by the API to investors at the beginning of the financial year;
- Benefits granted to diplomatic representations at the beginning of the year;
- Construction and supply contracts for State services which are awarded during the financial year;
- Medication orders during exercise difficult to assess;
- Humanitarian actions of NGOs to be carried out during the year.

At the end of the analysis, the project was adopted with the recommendation that during the budgetary frameworks, the ministries make a realistic planning of their Work Plan and Annual Budget (PTBA) in order to minimize the overrun of the budgetary forecasts.

6. Trade Facilitation and Integration Project in the Great Lakes Region, presented by the Minister of Finance, Budget and Economic Planning.

The National Development Plan defines the country's national development program and makes the revitalization of growth sectors one of its main priorities.

It is in this context that the Government has undertaken to develop lake transport and other waterways, and to revitalize the trade sector.

Thus, in order to promote this sector, which is so useful for the recovery of the country's economy, Burundi and its development partners must analyze the substantial financial means. The Trade and Integration Facilitation Project in the Great Lakes Region is one of the responses to this concern.

This project, which will be financed by the World Bank and coordinated at the COMESA level, concerns Burundi and the DRC.

The total amount for Burundi is US\$90 million.

After analysis, the project was adopted with the following recommendations:

- Write “Gender dimension” instead of “sex”;
- Delete the “political reform” component that appears in the project;
- Activate the diplomatic channel to claim reimbursement by COMESA of the funds that Burundi has committed in the preparations for the COMESA Summit which was to be held in Burundi but which was held elsewhere.
- Ensure that project managers respect the pre-registered deadlines for their execution and carry out their mid-term evaluation for proper follow-up.
- Be attentive in the choice of project managers and identify competent people;
- Avoid automatic renewals of project managers.

7. Project to Support the Foundations of the Digital Economy "PAFEN", presented by the Minister of Communication, Information Technologies and the Media.

The importance of information and communication technologies is undeniable today in all sectors of life in the country.

Currently, the objective set by the Government is to allow Burundi to benefit from a real technological leap likely to improve its economic growth, by allowing the development of activities in a secure legal framework, using information technologies and communication.

It is within this framework that the World Bank has just initiated a project which aims to lay the foundations of the digital economy in Burundi.

This project is of major importance insofar as it will increase access to high-speed Internet, in particular for the unconnected rural populations, the higher education sector and improve the capacity of the Government to provide public services through the use of digital technology.

Indeed, the digitization of public services would not be possible as long as all the municipalities of the country are not connected to broadband and have easy access to terminals. Likewise, since education is a fundamental basis on which the peoples of the whole world rely for socio-economic development, it is essential to provide university circles in general and those in the rural world in particular with high internet connectivity.

The source of financing for this Project is a donation from the World Bank in the amount of eighty million US dollars with the possibility of mobilization of private capital by the World Bank up to Eleven million US dollars, intended for the subsidy of the private sector operating in the information and communication technology sector.

The Council of Ministers analyzed this project and made, among other recommendations, the following:

- Align project components with government programs and priorities;
- Capitalize on the foundations of the digital economy that already exist in Burundi;

- Remove from the document all pejorative terms that give an incorrect image of the country as well as the false data that appears there;
- Remove from the text all the conditions imposed on the Government

A Commission was set up for this purpose and corrected the document taking into account the observations of the Council of Ministers.

It is this reworked document that was analyzed by the Council of Ministers.

After analyzing the corrected document, the Council of Ministers appreciated the work done by the Commission set up and adopted it.

8. Draft decree on the organization and functioning of the National Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless Persons, presented by the Minister of the Interior, Community Development and Public Security.

The National Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless Persons is rooted in Law No. 1/32 of November 13, 2008 on asylum and the protection of refugees.

This law did not specify the legal form of the text governing this Office. It was nevertheless set up by Ordinance No. 530/101 of September 29, 2008.

With the promulgation of Law No. 1/25 of November 5, 2021 regulating migration, the text organizing this Office was raised to the level of a decree.

This project is proposed to implement the law governing migration in Burundi.

Given the particularity of the Office, whose operation depends on the influx of refugees, which determines the level of UNHCR funding, staff employment contracts will be signed for a fixed period and according to needs, as well as availability funds from the budget.

After discussion and debate, the project was adopted.

9. Draft decree on the missions, composition, organization and functioning of the Advisory Commission for Foreigners and Refugees and the Appeals Committee, presented by the Minister of the Interior, Community Development and Public Security.

The Consultative Commission for Foreigners was established for the first time by Decree-Law No. 1/007 of March 20, 1989 regulating the access, stay, establishment of foreigners on the territory of Burundi and their estrangement.

This Commission was set up by Ministerial Ordinance No. 540/443 of April 07, 2009 on measures for the application of Law No. 1/32 of November 13, 2008 on asylum and the protection of refugees in Burundi.

Contradictions have appeared between Decree-Law No. 1/007 of March 20, 1989 regulating the access, stay, establishment of foreigners in Burundi and their removal and Law No. 1/32 of November 13 2008 on asylum and the protection of refugees in Burundi, with regard to the establishment of the Consultative Commission for Refugees and Foreigners.

The new migration law has removed these contradictions because it manages all issues relating to refugees, stateless persons and cross-border movements.

This law specifies that the organization, missions, composition and functioning of the Consultative Commission for Foreigners and Refugees and the Appeals Committee are determined by decree.

This draft decree determines the procedures for granting and forfeiture of the status of permanent resident, refugee or stateless person, the non-renewal of the establishment visa and the cases of expulsion, as well as the admissibility of applications for asylum.

At the end of the analysis, the Council of Ministers adopted this project.

10. Any Other Business.

His Excellency the President of the Republic has asked the members of the Government to prepare well for the new budget system (Budget-Programme) which will be implemented from the 2022-2023 financial year.

A team from the Ministry of Finance as well as other experts will provide training up to the level of the Communes to help all budget managers to assimilate this system.

Done at Bujumbura, 21 April 2022

Prosper NTAHORWAMIYE

Secretary-General and Spokesman.-