

REPUBLIC OF BURUNDI**PRESIDENCY OF THE REPUBLIC
Secretariat-General of the State****MEDIA RELEASE NO 27 CONSECUTIVE TO THE CABINET MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 14 OCTOBER 2021**

A Cabinet Meeting was held on Thursday 14th of October 2021, under the chairmanship of His Excellency 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 Monday 11 October 2021, 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 items were analyzed:

- 1. Draft decree amending Decree No. 100/107 of April 7, 2021 on the creation, management and coordination of the Economic Empowerment and Youth Employment Program "PAEEJ", presented by the Prime Minister's Services.**

The Economic Empowerment and Youth Employment Program "PAEEJ" was set up by decree n ° 100/107 of April 07, 2021.

This decree provides for a steering committee responsible for giving strategic and political guidance on the implementation of the Program as well as a technical committee.

It was noted, however, that the smooth running of the activities of this Program was hampered by certain challenges, in particular the delay in setting up this technical committee as well as the excessive number of members of this committee, which, according to the same decree, counts 37 members.

The proposed modification is made in order to have a reduced number of staff of the technical committee and to facilitate its operation.

This draft decree proposes a downward revision of members by province, to choose one representative per region instead of one representative per province.

Representatives of the most involved sectoral ministries will be added to the composition.

At the end of the analysis, the project was adopted with the following recommendations:

- Consider five regions like those of the National Police;
- The Committee will be composed of 9 members as follows:
- A representative of the Prime Minister's Office;
- Five representatives from the five regions;
- A representative of the Ministry in charge of youth;
- A representative of the Ministry in charge of finance;
- A representative of young entrepreneurs

2. Draft National Planning Guide, presented by the Minister of Finance, Budget and Economic Planning.

Since the colonial era, Burundi has always developed policies and development plans to address its socioeconomic situation.

But the results remained mixed, due to a gap in the orientation of socioeconomic development as management was marked by the short and medium terms.

This is why Burundi has opted for the formulation of a long-term vision for 2025. This vision was the tool that inspired the development of the National Development Plan.

Although Burundi has produced these various planning documents, it does not have a harmonized guide serving as a model in the planning process at the national, sectoral and local levels, which poses a problem in terms of the alignment of all stakeholders in national priorities.

It is within this framework that this Guide has been developed. It is a reference document that shows the process, the steps, the guiding principles of planning, as well as the monitoring and evaluation tools, in order to make a harmonized planning.

The Council of Ministers had analyzed this document and returned it for further study and enrichment by the various ministries.

This new document takes into account the comments made by the various ministries.

After analysis, the project was adopted with the recommendation to replace the terminology “Community development plans” by “Communal community development plans”.

3. Note on the ex-EPB / GPSB file, presented by the Minister of Finance, Budget and Economic Planning.

On March 03, 2021, the Council of Ministers analyzed a Note on the report of the Commission for the analysis and validation of the value of the assets of the former EPB and determination of the contributions of the State in the company Global Port Services Burundi.

On this occasion, the Council of Ministers recommended to:

- Gather all that is related to the disputes of the former EPB so that they are emptied as quickly as possible in order to facilitate its liquidation;
- Separate what should be considered as a contribution of the State as capital and what Global Port Services Burundi should rent.
- Recover state property held by the former EPB as soon as possible, including by duress if necessary;
- Review all contracts where the interests of the state have not been properly taken into account;
- Study the file further and produce a more detailed note to facilitate the decision of the Council of Ministers;

This Note provides answers to the concerns expressed by the Council of Ministers.

After analyzing the content of the Note, the Council of Ministers reached the following conclusions:

- Carry out the necessary checks to find out the circumstances which made the 18 boats that the Kingdom of Belgium ceded to the State of Burundi find themselves in the hands of the company ARNOLAC and take the appropriate measures;
- Check whether other existing boats belonging to individuals have not been generated by vessels belonging to the State of Burundi;
- Properly value state assets in order to accurately define state actions in Global Port Services Burundi;
- Monitor the progress of disputes involving the State of Burundi and carry out the execution of those who have been tried;
- Check the account through which the rents for buildings and other goods pass;
- To the Ministries in charge of Transport and Infrastructures, to check in their archives whether there are any elements that can shed light on the buildings and other property belonging to the State but now in the hands of individuals;
- Proceed with the seizure of property illegally held by private individuals;
- To the Ministry in charge of Justice and that in charge of Finance, to collaborate to value the assets and identify other assets belonging to the State;
- To the Ministry in charge of transport, to properly calculate the updated capital held by the State in Global Ports Services Burundi as well as that of this company and thus know what the State must claim from this company;
- The Prime Minister will steer a committee made up of representatives of the General State Inspectorate and the Presidency of the Republic which will liquidate the EPB and hand over to the State the property it held.

4. Note on Burundi's application for membership of the East African Development Bank, presented by the Minister of Finance, Budget and Economic Planning.

On April 10, 2015, the Board of Governors of the East African Development Bank met in Arusha, Tanzania to consider the Republic of Burundi's membership application.

This Council unanimously resolved to admit the accession of Burundi as a class A shareholder, subject to compliance with the share subscription requirement set out in the Bank's treaty.

The total number of shares to be subscribed is 22,800, made up of 3,800 shares to be paid up and 19,000 callable.

The cost of a share is US \$ 17,300.

The Director General of the Bank requests confirmation of Burundi's intention to subscribe to the capital of the Bank, confirmation of the number of shares to which Burundi will subscribe as well as the subscription deadline.

After discussion and debate, the Council of Ministers gave its consent for Burundi to join this Bank and instructed the Minister in charge of finance to study ways and means of finding the necessary financing.

5. Draft decree establishing the protocol guide for Burundi, presented by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Development Cooperation.

Good protocol practice, as observed in Burundi since its independence, is lacking due to the lack of an appropriate legal framework.

The establishment of a protocol manual for Burundi aims to eliminate the hesitations, clumsiness and confusion that lead to dysfunctions in the country's protocol practices.

It aims to adopt a reference relating to the various activities in Burundi, and promotes the acquisition of knowledge and capacity building for protocol officers.

This reference document also highlights the procedures and protocol practices relating to diplomatic and consular missions, as well as to international organizations accredited to Burundi.

One of the innovations brought by this Manual is to adapt to the multiple changes observed in the country since the establishment of the democratic system in 1993 and to the effects of certain protocol principles in force around the world.

The other innovation is the establishment of a top-down precedence list, taking care to include locally elected officials.

The Council of Ministers had analyzed this text which had been presented in the form of a bill, and among other observations and recommendations had emerged:

- Ensure that the matter is within the domain of the law with regard to the Constitution;
- State general principles only and reserve details in other application texts;
- Ensure that the protocol manual complies with laws, customs and Burundian culture;
- Establish compulsory training on protocol uses for persons assigned or appointed to functions relating to the Protocol;
- For some functions that may change name at any time, find a rather general name;

A team had been appointed to finalize the text by referring to the Burundian constitution, customs and culture and the Vienna Convention on diplomatic and consular relations.

It is this reworked draft which is proposed for second reading.

At the end of the debate, the Council of Ministers adopted the project with, among other recommendations:

- For the use of the Halls of Honour, add the spouses of the personalities who have access to them;
- Check the numbering of the chapters:
- On the list of precedence:
- The President of the Constitutional Court comes directly after the President of the Supreme Court, followed in turn by the Leader of the Party in power;

- The Directors of Cabinet of the Vice-President of the Republic and of the Prime Minister come directly after the Heads of Cabinet of the President of the Republic;
- The general officers and the Police Commissioners come directly after the Heads of the Defense and Security Corps;
- The OBR Commissioner General comes directly after the Governor of the Bank of the Republic;
- The heads of academic and university establishments come directly after the Directors General and the Directors of Ministries and parastatal organizations;
- The Bishops come after the Leader of the Political Opposition
- Check repetitions;

6. Proposal for the method of financing the UVINZA-MUSONGATI railway project, presented by the Minister of Trade, Transport, Industry and Tourism.

The Note includes proposals as well as observations made by the Ministries concerned by the file for the implementation of the Uvinza-Musongati railway project. Several financing options are possible:

- 1 ° the bank loan at 100% of the cost of the project;
- 2 ° the bank loan for a part and own funds up to 20 to 40% of the cost of the project;
- 3 ° the joint Burundi-Tanzania request to donors for 60% to 80% of the cost remaining to be mobilized;
- 4 ° the financing of the project by a mining concessionaire (Musongati nickel);

After analysis of the various options proposed, the combination of options, namely the mobilization of internal financing, the request for reorientation of certain grants and projects, as well as bank loans, was chosen as the mode of financing.

The following conclusions and observations were also made:

- The railway is one of the engines of development which will allow Burundi to revive its economy;

- It is necessary to finalize the road map for the construction of this railway and transmit it to the Tanzanian part, thus signifying the commitment of Burundi in this Project. In the meantime, the Minister of Foreign Affairs will send a Note Verbale to his Tanzanian counterpart confirming Burundi's commitment to this Project;
- The Ministers in charge of finance of the two countries will jointly analyze the financing modalities proposed by banks such as DTB and CRDB which are ready to finance this project;

7. Bill governing betting and gambling, presented by the Minister of Commerce, Transport, Industry and Tourism.

The Burundi National Lottery was created in 1985. Until 2000, only the instant scratch card game was offered to the public. It was during this year that another partner in the field of gambling started its activities with an exclusive concession contract to operate slot machines and other betting games.

In 2018, the Ministry in charge of finance lifted the exclusive operating rights of slot machines.

Today, the gambling industry is experiencing increased demand for licenses to operate various games.

The texts governing the national lottery and the contracts signed between it and the partner do not respond to all the concerns of the field of gambling, in particular the regulation and control of games, the settlement of disputes, administrative and penal sanctions, regulations games, etc... This bill fills this legal void.

At the end of the analysis of this project, the Council of Ministers noted at first glance that certain games of chance are prohibited in Burundi. By creating the Burundi National Lottery, the objective of the Government was to collect money which will be redirected in development projects. Before putting in place a law governing these games of chance, it is necessary to clearly define what the Government wants to achieve.

It was therefore recommended to first develop a policy that shows the vision and objective of the Government in terms of games of chance as well as the ways and means to achieve them.

8. Draft decree revising Decree No. 100/090 of May 30, 1991 reorganizing the National Institute of Public Health "INSP", presented by the Minister of Public Health and the Fight against AIDS.

Since its creation in 1991, the National Institute of Public Health has continued to grow and expand its activities. The internal and external legal environment has continued to evolve.

The laws and regulations governing higher education in Burundi in general, and those governing higher medical and paramedical education, the provision of health care and services in particular, have changed a lot.

This draft decree is adapted to this new legal framework. This project also modernizes the internal administrative organization of the Institute as a higher education institution with related services.

After discussion and debate, the project was adopted with the following recommendations and observations:

- The presence of the Director of Academic Services alongside the Director General on the Board of Directors is not justified;
- The Scientific and Educational Council must be chaired by someone who is appointed by decree;
- Deadlines should not be set for the responsible minister to react to the decisions of the Board of Directors;
- Correct formal errors.

9. Bill on the ratification by the Republic of Burundi of the grant agreement for the financing of the Support Project for the Improvement of Skills and the Employability of Women and Youth (PACEJ), presented by the Minister of National Education and Scientific Research.

This project involves a financing agreement of a grant of 80 million US dollars granted by the International Development Association.

It will be implemented over a period of five years and carried out throughout the national territory. It is structured in three components, namely:

- Improve the development of skills relating to the labor market;
- Promote youth entrepreneurship;
- Strengthen data systems for market-oriented skills development, project management and monitoring and evaluation.

The objective of the project is to improve access to supported opportunities in entrepreneurship skills development training for young people, especially women and refugees and to improve their skills in the labor market.

After discussion and debate, the project was adopted with the following recommendations:

- Ensure that this funding does not disrupt the existing education system;
- Check that this program is in line with other on-going training programs for young people, in particular the Economic Empowerment and Youth Employment Program "PAEEJ";
- Prepare an implementation plan for this project for the Council of Ministers to ensure that it is compatible with the priorities of the Government;
- In the future, ensure that important projects funded by partners are first validated by the Council of Ministers;
- Get more involved in monitoring the implementation of projects executed in different ministries.

10. Any Other Business

The Council of Ministers reiterated the need to sensitize the population to compliance with barrier measures against corona virus, and to be screened regularly, because it is the only effective means against its spread compared to vaccination, the effectiveness of which being not yet been proven.

On this occasion, the Minister of Public Health and the Fight against AIDS informed the Council that doses of vaccine, donated by the People's

Republic of China are now available, while the first batch on a donation promised by the World Bank is expected between the dates of October 25 and November 15, 2021.

He said the vaccine will only be given to whoever wants it after registering.

It was also recommended that strategies be put in place to do routine screening for someone traveling from one province to another.

Before closing the meeting, His Excellency the President of the Republic reminded members of the Government to be more present on the ground to ensure that their services are meeting the expectations of the population.

Done at Bujumbura, October 15th, 2021

**Prosper NTAHORWAMIYE
Secretary-General and Spokesman.-**