



PRESS RELEASE

THE AU REITERATES THE NEED FOR DIALOGUE AND CONSENSUS IN BURUNDI

Addis Abeba, 13 May 2015: The Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union (AU), Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, continues to follow closely the developments in Burundi, which have the potential to further destabilize the country and the region, and to complicate the search for a solution to the current crisis. It is in this regard that she participated in the extraordinary summit of the East African Community (EAC) which took place today in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

The Chairperson recalls the AU's principle rejecting unconstitutional changes of Government and its commitment to the rule of law and democracy, as enshrined in the Constitutive Act and the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance. In this respect, the Chairperson condemns in the strongest terms today's coup attempt in Bujumbura, calls for the return to constitutional order and urges all stakeholders to exercise utmost restraint and refrain from any act of violence likely to lead to further loss of lives, population displacement and destruction of property.

The Chairperson of the Commission expresses the AU's full support to the efforts of the leaders of the EAC, in particular, the steps agreed upon at the Dar es Salaam Summit, including (1) the call to Burundian authorities to postpone the elections for a period not beyond the mandate of the current government; (2) regional efforts aimed to restore peace and stability so as to ensure the return of refugees and the holding of elections in a peaceful, free, fair, transparent and inclusive manner; and (3) the cessation of violence by all parties.

The Chairperson of the Commission reiterates the AU's appeal to all the Burundian stakeholders, within the framework of the country's constitution, laws and in the spirit of the Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement, to accept the recommendations of the EAC summit, end all acts of violence and intimidation, respect fundamental human rights and freedoms, and engage in a genuine dialogue which will contribute to peace and stability in Burundi and create conditions conducive to the holding of free, fair, transparent and inclusive elections.

The Chairperson of the Commission pledges the AU's commitment to continue to work with the EAC leaders, as well as with other international stakeholders, to contribute to the search for a peaceful and lasting solution to the crisis.