

Speech: Addressing Peacebuilding Efforts in Burundi

I thank the representative of Bolivia for his statement and I shall now make a statement in my capacity as a representative of the United Kingdom.

I'd like to thank our Special Envoy Kafando for his briefing and I also agree with my Russian colleague on the value of the Peacebuilding Commission and on Ambassador Lauber's work. He's unfortunately on vacation, but it is really important that we bring all elements of the UN's abilities and capabilities to bear in these situations.

The Arusha Accords brought peace to Burundi after over a decade of civil war and hundreds of thousands of civilian deaths. It is crucial for the long-term stability of Burundi that the spirit and the letter of the Accords are preserved. We welcome President Nkurunziza's announcement that he will step down at the end of this term. It was an important step and an important message for the people of Burundi, the region and the international community. A genuine, inclusive dialogue with all parties remains the only viable option to resolve the political situation. And so as President Kafando has made clear, progress on the EAC-led Inter-Burundian dialogue remains crucial for the future peace and security of both Burundi and the region.

We echo your call for the parties to engage openly and constructively and call upon the region and sub-region to remain fully engaged to ensure swift progress is made over the coming months and weeks.

The human rights situation in Burundi is deeply concerning. The United Kingdom urges the government of Burundi to take steps to make swift progress to improve the situation so the country is better prepared to move towards elections in 2020. Firstly, the government should signal its commitment to upholding human rights by completing its negotiations on an MOU with the OHCHR to allow that organisation to operate effectively in the country. And secondly, the government should implement Human Rights Council Resolution 36.2, endorsed by the African Group of States – including Burundi – and adopted at the 36th session of the Human Rights Council in September 2017. And we urge the government to engage with OHCHR to facilitate the return of the three human rights experts whose visas were revoked in April.

News story: PM call with Colombian President: 9 August 2018

A Downing Street spokesperson said:

"The Prime Minister and the President of Colombia, Iván Duque, spoke this afternoon following his inauguration this week.

"The Prime Minister congratulated President Duque on his election victory.

"They agreed the UK and Colombia were old friends who have grown even closer over the last two decades. They agreed that they had much to look forward to continuing to work together on, including security, trade, economic development and tackling climate change.

They agreed that there were many opportunities to develop future trade and in particular to strengthen ties in areas such as infrastructure, culture and the creative industries.

"They agreed co-operation on security issues such as countering drug trafficking. The Prime Minister said she was pleased to see development on a sustainable peace process in Colombia and that she hoped to see that continue. She also thanked President Duque for Colombia's support in strengthening the ability of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons to attribute responsibility for chemical weapons attacks.

"They ended the call by looking forward to meeting in person and to developing their working relationship further."

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Press release: PM call with President-elect of Mexico: 9 August 2018

A Downing Street spokesperson said:

“The Prime Minister and the President-elect of Mexico, Andrés Manuel López Obrador, spoke this afternoon.

“The Prime Minister congratulated President-elect López Obrador on his election victory and said that the UK supports many of his priorities, including fighting corruption, poverty and inequality, as well as improving the rule of law.

“Both leaders agreed that they looked forward to building on a bilateral relationship which is both economically ambitious and addresses important issues such as the climate and protecting the rules-based international system.

“The Prime Minister said it would also be important for the two countries to secure continuity of existing EU-Mexico [Global Agreement] trade arrangements ahead of the UK leaving the EU.

“They both looked forward to working together in future, and to seeing the friendship between Mexico and the UK continue to grow.”

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