

3. The situation in Burundi

During the period under review, the Council held three meetings in connection with the situation in Burundi. All meetings took the form of briefings.⁴⁶ More information on the meetings, including on participants, speakers and outcomes, is given in the table below. In addition to those meetings, the Council held informal consultations of the whole to discuss the situation in Burundi.⁴⁷

In 2019, briefings under this item were delivered by the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Burundi, the Permanent Observer of the African Union to the United Nations, the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support, the Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union and the Chair of the Burundi configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission. Invitations to those meetings under rule 37 were limited to Burundi.⁴⁸ The briefings during this period were focused on the political developments before the holding of general elections in 2020, the human rights and humanitarian situations in the country and the status of the inter-Burundian dialogue process led by the East African Community.

During his briefings in 2019,⁴⁹ the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Burundi focused on the activities carried out on behalf of the Secretary-General, including efforts to resolve the political crisis before the holding of presidential elections in 2020. He reiterated that an inclusive inter-Burundian dialogue remained the only viable option for a lasting political settlement for the country's future and noted the lack of progress, which he attributed to the lack of political will on the part of the parties or a firm commitment by States in the subregion. In both briefings, the Special Envoy expressed concern about the humanitarian situation and the deteriorating socioeconomic situation in the country. While acknowledging that the security situation had improved, he mentioned that abuses and other human rights violations continued to be reported. At all three meetings,⁵⁰ the Chair of the Burundi configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission reiterated that the Commission would continue to focus on elections and the persistent socioeconomic challenges facing Burundi. During his briefing in February, in reference to the Government's request for

the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to terminate its activities in the country and withdraw its staff, the Chair of the Burundi configuration emphasized that human rights were an important element of peacebuilding and encouraged the building of capacity for the protection of human rights. During his briefing on 14 June,⁵¹ the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support also mentioned that the human rights situation remained worrying in view of many violations of fundamental civic and political freedoms against the backdrop of the country's election plans. In their briefings,⁵² the Permanent Observer and the Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union shared their assessments of the political, humanitarian, human rights situation and socioeconomic situations in the country, reiterating the commitment of the African Union to continue its support for all efforts aimed at finding a lasting, peaceful and consensual solution to the situation in Burundi.

Council deliberations following the briefings were focused on the need to find a consensus-based and inclusive road map in preparation for general elections in 2020 and the need to uphold the Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement for Burundi. Council members held divergent views on the approach to the elections. While most Council members encouraged the Burundian authorities to continue the inter-Burundian political dialogue led by the East African Community and engage with the relevant partners, China and the Russian Federation affirmed the sovereignty of Burundi, emphasizing the Government's prerogative to take charge of managing the country's domestic affairs, cautioned against outside interference and hoped for assistance to the Government, as needed.⁵³

Divergent views were also expressed with respect to the continuation of the situation of Burundi as an item on the agenda of the Council. While some Council members called on the Council to seriously consider removing Burundi from its agenda, arguing that the situation in the country was generally calm and normal and did not pose a threat to international or regional

⁴⁶ For more information on the format of meetings, see part II, sect. I.

⁴⁷ See [S/2019/744](#) and [S/2019/1015](#).

⁴⁸ For more information on participation in meetings of the Council, see part II, sect. VII.

⁴⁹ See [S/PV.8465](#) and [S/PV.8652](#).

⁵⁰ See [S/PV.8465](#), [S/PV.8550](#) and [S/PV.8652](#).

⁵¹ See [S/PV.8550](#).

⁵² See [S/PV.8465](#) (Permanent Observer); and [S/PV.8550](#) (Commissioner for Peace and Security).

⁵³ See [S/PV.8465](#) (Russian Federation and China); [S/PV.8550](#) (China and Russian Federation); and [S/PV.8652](#) (Russian Federation and China).

peace and security,⁵⁴ others considered that Burundi needed to remain on the Council's agenda owing to the ongoing human rights and humanitarian crisis amid an unresolved domestic political crisis and regional tensions with the impending elections in 2020.⁵⁵

Concerning the human rights situation, some Council members expressed concern and called on the Government to fully cooperate with the United Nations human rights protection mechanisms.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ See [S/PV.8465](#) (Equatorial Guinea); and [S/PV.8550](#) (Equatorial Guinea, China and Russian Federation).

⁵⁵ See [S/PV.8465](#) (United States and United Kingdom); and [S/PV.8550](#) (Germany).

⁵⁶ See [S/PV.8465](#) (France and Poland); and [S/PV.8550](#) (Poland).

Meetings: the situation in Burundi

<i>Meeting record and date</i>	<i>Sub item</i>	<i>Other documents</i>	<i>Rule 37 invitations</i>	<i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Decisions and vote (for-against-abstaining)</i>
S/PV.8465 19 February 2019			Burundi	Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Burundi, Permanent Observer of the African Union to the United Nations, Chair of the Burundi configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission	All Council members, all invitees	
S/PV.8550 14 June 2019			Burundi	Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support; Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union, ^a Chair of the Burundi configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission	All Council members, all invitees	
S/PV.8652 30 October 2019	Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Burundi (S/2019/837)		Burundi	Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, Chair of the Burundi configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission	All Council members, ^b all invitees	

^a The Commissioner for Peace and Security participated in the meeting by videoconference from Montreal, Canada.

^b South Africa (President of the Council) was represented by its Minister of International Relations and Cooperation.