

CONFERENCE REPORT

BURUNDI IS READY FOR BUSINESS

WITH A WELL - ORGANIZED DIASPORA TO RESPOND
EFFECTIVELY TO ITS NEEDS FOR DEVELOPMENT

INTERNATIONAL ACTION for BURUNDIAN DIASPORA

June 20 - 21, 2013

Clarion Hotel Royal Christiania

OSLO - NORWAY



ORGANIZED BY

IABD

International Action for Burundian Diaspora

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THE NORWEGIAN MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

*The opinions expressed in the report are those of the authors and
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The IABD Executive Committee would like to thank everyone who, in one or another way, has participated in the preparation, implementation and success of the Fourth Conference of the Burundian Diaspora---first conference to be organized by IABD. IABD Executive Committee particularly wishes to thank the Government of Norway for the critical role it has played by financing the conference and for trusting AIBD.

We are also grateful to the Government of Burundi for its support and for sending a delegation to participate in the conference. This allowed the persons in charge--and having the major issues discussed in the conference in their professional portfolios --to be actively involved in the discussions, which certainly increased the quality of the debates.

Our deepest gratefulness goes also to the honorable Parliamentarians and Senators who travelled to Oslo, for their contributions, presentations and animation of the debates by giving satisfactory answers to the questions from participants.

Our sincere thanks goes as well to the business community from Burundi, who took the chance to come to Oslo to meet their counterparts, the civil society from Burundi and the media for their participation and perspectives.

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We also wish to thank all those who had liked to participate in the conference, but for reasons independent of their own will, have not been able to take part.

IABD Executive Committee

INTRODUCTION

This fourth International Conference of the Burundian Diaspora, which concentrated on business and investments in Burundi and on the Diaspora Bill, represents a major step forward towards full participation of diaspora organizations in the social and economic advancement of the home country. The main theme of the fourth conference was: “Burundi is ready for business, with a well-organized diaspora to respond effectively to its needs for development”.

Burundi became aware of the importance of making use of the skills and competencies present among Burundian Diaspora members. The National Migration Policy, NPRSP II and Vision 2025 have rightfully identified the Diaspora as one of the engines of Burundi's development. In spite of a history of fragmentation, the Burundian diaspora has made a great step to organize itself with help from various partners---among them the Norwegian Government. IABD wants to strengthen the network, assure continuity and influence decisions made by Burundian officials and legislators in favor of the Diaspora, in order to play its role in the country's development.

In this spirit the Burundian diaspora held its fourth conference, but the first one as a legal and registered network organization named IABD. It focused on structural establishment, on strengthening its normative role towards country member organizations, on seeking formal cooperation, and on an efficient and sustainable relationship between IABD and the government in Bujumbura in order to use its full development potential.

The main groups targeted by the fourth conference were (i) members of the Burundi Diaspora in Europe, USA, Canada, Africa and Australia and (ii) members of the Burundian Parliament and Senate. Other invitees were political parties and Nordic countries.

The main objectives of this conference were:

- 1 Meet and lobby invited government officials and legislators to pass the first Diaspora bill;
- 2 Create a meeting place between the Burundian and Norwegian business;
- 3 Strengthen the collaboration between the network leadership;
- 4 Identify and mobilize human resources that can contribute to Burundi's development;
- 5 Get consensus on priorities and plan for how the Diaspora can help to promote political stability and economic development in Burundi.

ORGANIZATION OF THE CONFERENCE: IABD

IABD Board members and executive committee (EC) came to Oslo on June 19, 2013-- one day before the conference-- for separate and common meetings. In the morning there were parallel meetings to discuss issues relevant to each body; in the afternoon the two bodies met in a board meeting to agree on issues to present before the General Assembly which took place one day after the Conference on June 22, 2013—also in Hotel Christiania, Oslo. The reports of these pre- and post-conference meetings can be found elsewhere.

The Oslo conference was financed by the Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (UD). The main theme of the conference was: “Burundi is ready for business, with a well-organized diaspora to respond effectively to its needs for development”. The conference was attended by more than 180 participants including representatives of the governments of Burundi, Norway, members of the senate of Burundi, representatives of Burundian associations in respective countries, private business owners, and representatives of political parties, civil society representatives, media and individual members of the Burundian Diaspora. Sessions included speeches, presentations, workshops, informal networking breaks, receptions and entertainment.

REPORT SUMMARY

The present report synthesizes the activities and results of the Fourth Conference of the Burundian Diaspora held in Oslo on June 20-21, 2013.

The report contains three chapters.

The first chapter reflects the present Burundian business environment and contains all the interventions of the speakers, the reflections of the panel members, the discussions in the different working groups and plenaries of the case studies in relation to investments in Burundi and the commentaries of the participants. This chapter clearly reflects the political commitment of the government representatives as well as of the different interveners, each in his or her field of responsibility.

It was interesting to be informed about the ongoing reforms--engaged by the Government--favoring investments, but also about the methods used when applying these reforms. In this same first chapter it is striking to discover the investment possibilities existing in Burundi, the priorities opted for by Burundian and international business actors, the advantages of regional integration for investing in Burundi, but also the challenges the business world is confronted with.

The second chapter treats about issues specifically dealing with the concerns of the Burundian diaspora. The history of the Burundian diaspora until the creation of International Action of Burundian Diaspora (IABD) and the functioning of its structures, make evident the solidity of the organization of the Burundian diaspora and of its experience over time and space. In this chapter the participants offer their contributions from the viewpoint of their own professional experience and responsibilities, assisting as such the Burundian diaspora in its full self-actualization and in an efficient implementation of its projects. For the diversity of diaspora partners, advice has been formulated in such a way that it facilitates all their actions, as they are based on constructive attitudes or incentive measures.

Short reference is also made (i) to the content of a law that would benefit the diaspora, a law that would govern them and (ii) to the elements such a diaspora law would contain.

The third chapter is shorter and stresses the importance of political dialogue and of a pacific contribution of Civil Society to the construction of the country. This chapter is followed by overall conclusions, conference achievements and recommendations.

THE TOPICS

CHAPTER I: BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT IN BURUNDI

I. A REASSURING POLITICAL WILL

I.1 The Background

On behalf of the government of Burundi, Mrs. Annonciate Sendazirasa, Minister of Public Service, Labor and Social Security described the context within which the conference was organized: Burundi is recovering from a long period of conflict and crises which devastated the country and the economy, resulting in exacerbation of poverty for the majority of the Burundian population. In order to rebuild the economy and improve the living conditions of the people of Burundi, a strategic plan for growth and fight against extreme poverty has been adopted.

The framework consists of four pillars:

- (i) rule of law, good governance, fight against corruption and gender equity,
- (ii) economic growth and employment creation,
- (iii) improvement of access and quality of social services and social security,
- (iv) land management and sustainable development.

I.2 Initiated Reforms

Minister Annonciate Sendazirasa indicated that various reforms have been initiated regarding good governance, justice and gender equity, tax reforms and fight against corruption.

Highlights included the adoption of a minimum of 30% women participation in parliament and government, free access to healthcare for pregnant women, free universal healthcare for children under age 5, free universal primary education and more.

As the minister highlighted the Burundian government's will to create good conditions for investment, Mr. Antoine Kabura, CEO of API (Agence de Promotion d'Investissement) and Mr. Kieran Holmes, Commissioner General of Burundi's Revenue Authority (OBR) confirmed that the reforms initiated were working and improving.

I.3 Implementation of the Reforms

Mr. Holmes provided a history of the new fiscal institution in Burundi - since 2009, the important role that a fair, equitable and transparent tax system can play as a driver of change, and good governance by tackling corruption including staff appointments based on meritocracy. He spoke about the simplicity of the new tax system, with only two tax brackets and the growing consensus about a good fiscal system as an alternative to foreign aid.



OBR created the One Stop Shop for Business Registration (OBR, Commercial Tribunal TIN and API) and the One Stop Shop for land transfer (OBR, Land Registry Agency, City Hall). Practices and procedures have been improved. Permanent staff training, capacity building, outreach campaigns and improved infrastructures are continuously worked on.

He indicated that, while many reforms have been implemented, the OBR still has work to do and will continue to innovate in the integration of its IT systems. It will introduce the creation of a call center, the use of mobile phone technology for small tax payments, the start of a process towards fiscal agreements with Belgium and The Netherlands (in view of avoiding double taxation) and more. Mr. Holmes also acknowledged that the changes were not always easy but innovation was important for the economy and Burundian capacity for growth. An important change in the introduction of new fiscal laws was the adhesion of Burundi to the East Africa Community, the regional fiscal harmonization and improved trans-border commerce.

The Commissioner General affirmed that, after 50 years of political independence, it was time for Burundi's financial independence through economic growth. In the meantime, an international consensus is emerging about the critical role played by the performance of OBR in improving Burundi's 'doing business-ranking' by the World Bank. Recently good publicity was made by the British Parliament and compliments received from the UN Security Council about the impact of the OBR performance on the national economy of Burundi. Mr Holmes recognized the professionalism of his colleagues at OBR and invited the Diaspora to stay informed about new reforms through the OBR website. He invited the Burundian Diaspora to return to Burundi to invest and support reforms improving performance of the OBR in order to make it sustainable.

2. PLENTY OF OPPORTUNITIES AND A PROMISING BUSINESS CLIMATE

2.1 Facts and Reasons to Invest in Burundi

Minister Sendazirasa confirmed that "Burundi is ready for business" and listed many competitive advantages such as good business climate, new reforms for investments, taxation reform, tourism and other assets.

Mr. Antoine Kabura highlighted the major reforms initiated in Burundi to improve the investment climate and shared a 17 minutes video showcasing milestones associated with doing business in Burundi. We have attached to this report the slides of his presentation. A DVD recording API work is also available and has been put to participants' disposal. (See attached slides). Among reasons why to invest in Burundi, Mr. Antoine Kabura cited Burundi's strategic position, its access to a large domestic and regional market, a democratic environment and good governance, a country in full reconstruction, continuous improvement of the business environment, sound FDI attraction measures—Foreign Direct Investments and protection of investors.

Burundi also took new initiatives that earned Burundi high marks in the international market such as the establishment of One Stop Counter for business registration, Burundi's integration in East Africa with a potential customer base of 150 million people, untapped economic opportunities and more.



To get all the substance of CEO Antoine Kabura presentation, we would like to recommend you to consult the very well documented and presented slides attached to the present report or to view the DVD which is at the disposal of who wants to have it.

Mrs. Gloria Nyambok, Managing Director, Kenya Commercial Bank on her turn, highlighted major positive factors in Burundi such as available labor, good security, affordable housing, manageable cost of living, generous tax credit by the API, operational experience in Burundi much better than other countries in East Africa, especially in terms of labor laws.

Mr. Christian Nkengurutse, Secretary General of the Burundi Federal Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CFCIB) showed on his part how attractive Burundi ranked in comparison to the 'Switzerland of Africa' by its thousand hills and natural beauty with numerous opportunities in fishing-, tea- and coffee industries.

Mr. Arne Sylta, Co-founder of HMF (Hauge Micro Finance) emphasized the points and added with humour that Burundi is a wonderful country with a wonderful people.

2.2 The Priorities

Here again, we would like to refer to the attached slides from CEO Antoine Kabura.

Mr. Ola Napstad from Norfund has also pointed out priority sectors which are renewable energy, financial services and agribusiness. She assumes that the main sector of interest is renewable energy (wind, water, solar) in Africa. Norfund has four investment departments:

- (i) financial institutions,
- (ii) SME Funds —small and medium enterprise,
- (iii) Industrial Partnerships
- (iv) Renewable Energy.

Secretary General Christian Nkengurutse added that future major economic priority programs to invest in and to be supported are: the horticultural sector (cold room needed in airport), the mining sector (modernization), agriculture and livestock, fishing industry, an integrated tourism system, railways, Bujumbura Free-port, the promotion of competitiveness of SMEs and of visibility/attractiveness of products, a feasibility study for the creation of a guaranty fund (FIGA), etc.

The KCB and the HMF business cases proved that the financial sector is really a priority in Burundi. But parallel sessions and other presentations and discussions directed by Mr. Joseph Nduwimana, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture, Mr. Antoine Kabura, representing the Burundian Ministry of Energy, Mr. Rolf Forsdahl, Travel Trade Director, Legal Advisor, Virke, Mr. Christian Nibitanga, Chief Promotion Officer, Ministry of Trade, Industry and Tourism, it was made clear that agribusiness, tourism, renewable energy were also among the priorities



3 AN ADVANTAGEOUS REGIONAL INTEGRATION

Minister Sendazirasa, CEO Antoine Kabura and Commissioner General Holmes have underlined the advantages of Burundi integration in East African Community (EAC). Secretary General Nkengurutse recognizes also that major reforms have been implemented in the last 10 years, including (but not limited to) integration in the East African Community (EAC), the revision of the law of Commercial Companies, the creation of the API and the ongoing privatization of state owned companies. Some of these reforms have earned Burundi to be the 1st reformer in the EAC which should lead to a larger investment flow into Burundi. In addition to these reforms, speaker brought to participants' attention the competitive advantages of Burundi as "land-linked" country--linking the EAC to the Central and Southern African regions--with a potential large market of more than 400 million customers.

Mr. Eivind Fjeldstad, Managing Director of Norwegian-African Business Association (NABA) spoke also about business opportunities in the East African Community. He considered Burundi a vital part of East-Africa.

Mr. Fjeldstad stressed the need for dialogue at high level and said that NABA is planning to put on the agenda a meeting between the Ministers of Trade from Burundi and Norway. He insisted that people should drop their negative perceptions, go to Africa--because 'seeing is believing'.

4. CHALLENGES

Even if the economy is growing at a 4% rate, Minister Sendazirasa admitted the existence of some challenges. Among the challenges, the minister noted the need for modernization of agriculture, insufficiency of energy; need to improve basic infrastructures and high demographic growth as a serious threat.

Talking about the private sector in Burundi, Secretary General Nkengurutse provided important statistics, indicating the dominance of informal small businesses (SMEs), an absence of long-term loans for women entrepreneurship, a need for stronger infrastructure--to link major economic centers to local communities, increasing trade flows--and an overall need for private sector revitalization and reorganization in order to improve the business environment.

He singled out access to capital as the biggest obstacle to the private sector because financial markets are dominated by commercial banks, while there is a pressing need for more development banks to provide mid- to long-term loans. A case in point was that only 1.1% of loans were being issued to the agriculture sector--the most important sector in the economy of Burundi. Another important issue is the need for improving the infrastructure.

The Commissioner General on his part indicated that, while many reforms have been implemented, the OBR still has work to do and will continue to innovate in the integration of its IT systems. It will introduce the creation of a Call Centre, the use of Mobile phone technology for small tax payments, the start of a process towards fiscal agreements with Belgium and The Netherlands (in view of avoiding double taxation) and more. Mr. Holmes also acknowledged that the changes were not always easy but innovation was important for the economy and Burundian capacity for growth.



An important change in the introduction of new fiscal laws was the adhesion of Burundi to the East Africa Community, the regional fiscal harmonization and improved trans-border commerce. The Commissioner General affirmed that, after 50 years of political independence, it was time for Burundi's financial independence through economic growth.

For Managing Director Gloria Nyambok, challenges include low financial literacy and lack of IFRS (International Financial Reporting Standards). Efficiency can be improved. There are issues around long-term financing, lack of stock exchange--where bonds could be issued to raise long term capital, high transport costs, and high inflation rates (but came down from 25% to 5%) and lack of availability of foreign currency.

Mr. Arne Sylta named crime, corruption, political risks, legal rights, security, and protection of investment, low level education and currency weakness as possible threats for business in Burundi.

Chapter conclusion

All the different speakers and all who intervened in whatever form agreed on the fact that Burundi is a country that can strongly be recommended to any investor who is worried about working in a comfortable climate and a favorable environment. It appeared that there are investment possibilities in many domains, but the investment sectors on which the interveners and participants all agreed were the financial sector, agribusiness and the various forms of renewable energy. Through the establishment of regional integration, the market became much larger, subsequent reforms are continuously undertaken in order to modernize the economy and to adapt it to the new realities. Interesting study cases such as the ones from KBC and HMF unmistakably showed the effectiveness of investing in Burundi, proving over again that Burundi is ready for business.

CHAPTER 2 : BURUNDIAN DIASPORA BILL

I. BURUNDIAN DIASPORA: A WELL ORGANISED AND ACTIVE DIASPORA

Since the last conference in Bujumbura in 2012, International Action for Burundian Diaspora (IABD) has carefully lobbied for its first proposed Diaspora bill and has established the network. IABD is a network of Burundian organizations from 5 continents. It is composed of two governing committees democratically elected.

- (i) an Executive Committee for the day to day organizational work with the responsibility to implement IABD projects and activities. This Committee is composed by 8 members from 5 different countries;
- (ii) the IABD Board in charge of controlling IABD's actions, and approving IABD's work and actions. It is composed of 5 members from different countries. The board works closely with country representatives from many countries from 5 continents. This collaboration is important in order to democratize the network and assure ownership, participation and inclusion.

Diaspora is un-doubtable, one of Burundi's engines of development. Millions of dollars are being transferred annually to Burundi. In addition to the transfer of money, there are several projects implemented by individuals and Diaspora groups geared for socio-economic development. It is therefore evident that the diaspora includes human capital, financial and social development of its different communities in Burundi. In turn, the Burundian authorities have a crucial role to play in creating enabling conditions to forward initiatives, energy and resources of the diaspora to Burundi's economy and society as a whole and to create institutional links between the Diaspora and socio-economic development.

The principal task of the IABD network therefore is to:

- (i) facilitate the transfer of knowledge,
- (ii) help and support initiated local organizations,
- (iii) leveraging the playing field for diaspora action in Burundi,
- (iv) learn from and preserve the larger diversity that compose the network,
- (v) initiate and facilitate best practices exchange between members,
- (vi) influence government and legislators' decisions in favor of the Diaspora,
- (vii) advocate for and make sure that the Diaspora's interests are fairly defended,
- (viii) encourage and give technical support to country members and individual Diaspora organizations.

2. BURUNDI GOVERNMENT POSITIVE STEPS AND GOOD WILL

Minister Annonciate Sendazirasa reiterated the necessity for Diaspora engagement as a catalyst for economic growth and the commitment of the government of Burundi to involve the Diaspora. She indicated that in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation a new Directorate for Diaspora has been put in place; this, in order to facilitate participation of Diaspora in the development of Burundi by reducing barriers and creating incentives for transfer of resources--whether financial, scientific or technological.

Ambassador Gaspard Musavyarabona, who is in charge of the Directorate for Diaspora, said that the Government continues to strengthen his support to diaspora and précised that, in the shorter run, there are needed: a permanent framework for dialogue between Government and Diaspora, tax exoneration and customs clearance facilities, investment promoting measures, return-encouraging measures, and adequate information equipment.

He stressed that priorities are: a permanent framework for dialogue, organizational strengthening of the Diaspora structure, financial transfer facilitation, promotion of Diaspora interests, mobilization of diaspora youth and women around Burundi, strengthening of the Diaspora Direction at the Ministry and the creation of an institutional frame for a diaspora policy.

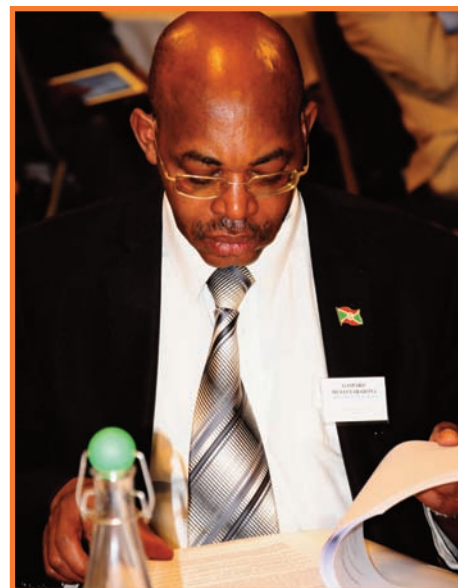
He highlighted some challenges which could be the lack of good statistics, lack of cohesion in the diaspora, lack of information on the situation in Burundi, the need for a federal organization, the absence of an institutional coordinating body, the lack of sufficient resources of the diplomatic missions, the insufficient mastering of new communication technologies, the lack of knowledge of the Kirundi language, and the need for recognition as diaspora.

Participants were free to express their disagreement with these remarks on challenges and they made it clear in their comments and questions addressed to him in panel session.

Ambassador Musavyarabona was asked why the Burundian Ministry of External Relations and International Cooperation takes time to convey to proposal of law on partnership between Burundi Diaspora and the Government of Burundi, when even the President of the Republic of Burundi recognizes that diaspora has now democratic representative structures and elected leaders.

They also asked him that the approval procedures for IABD be accelerated so that legal recognition of IABD would be a fact as soon as possible. He replied that the Ministry recognizes IABD and its efforts to unite all Burundians of the diaspora and that since IABDU was created, a lot of positive developments are noted all over the world and appreciated. He also said that the most important is to continue the good work and that the Government will facilitate as much as possible.

The senators and parliamentarians promised to help and push forward the approval of the IADB approval as soon as possible if it comes on their tables. The Burundian government's representatives at the Conference took very positively the diaspora preoccupation about the passport issue and promised to help as much as they could to solve the issue. It was the same with the issue of participation of the diaspora in elections and other activities of national life.



3. DIASPORA CONTRIBUTION IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF BURUNDI

3.1. Burundi Diaspora experience

Ambassador Gaspard Musavyarabona said that, the diaspora is important because of its financial transfers, its investments in real estate, its contribution to community development and poverty reduction, its transfer of technology and competences. He added that diaspora promotes ideas, attitudes and values contributing to a constitutional State governed by rule of law. They are carriers of a development dynamic and promote good governance, justice, democracy and human rights. He said also that Burundians abroad are ambassadors of their country.

3.2. Inspirations from the conference

Mrs. Norunn Grande, Special Advisor, Nansen Centre for Peace and Dialogue (NCPD), Mrs Tove Heggli Sagmo, Researcher at PRIO (Peace Research Institute Oslo) and Mrs Marit Linnebo Olderheim, Africa Start Up – Gambia have shared their experiences to help to inspire the participants on diaspora management.

Mrs. Grande shared some of the potentials, obstacles and limitations in diaspora engagement for peace but she précised that they can be different from a country to another. She said that remittances and aid, academic cooperation, civic participation with dual citizenship should be welcome and emphasized the importance of a “do no harm” policy.

To the host country she recommended: sharing, humility and cultural respect. To the country of origin; she quoted seminar participants: “One person who comes with good intentions can play an important role” and “Help us form a new vision, we are stuck”.

Mrs. Tove Heggli Sagmo dealt with the results of a research project looking at migrants in five countries; among them Burundi migrants in Norway and the UK.

In the Experiences there were eight factors of importance the researchers looked at:

- (i) Security (psychological—insecure feeling--and physical—feeling targeted);
- (ii) Timing of return—how one feels about the return process;
- (iii) Preparation of the return--some would leave at once, others would first make one or more short trips to Burundi before taking the decisive step;
- (iv) Resources—education, what awaits them back home?
- (v) Right contact;
- (vi) What preceded the return?—exile feelings, with or without a job, limbo-feeling;
- (v) Local population;
- (vi) Identity/attachment feeling—alienated or not, ‘do you belong here?’ etc.

Concerning the Remarks, the key element seemed to be Trust. One needs to trust the government, the environment, the community.

Mrs Marit Linnebo Olderheim’s main focus was business training and education, making extensive use of ecological technology. She went on advising that change shouldn’t be forced but inspired and that youth should be empowered to create their desired future. She gave an example that she had set in Gambia by creating a project called My Farm, a project she called “a journey from seed to business”. The success of

the project was mostly attributed to empowering young people with global awareness, best farming techniques and business principles. She promised that she could do the same in Burundi if she gets donor support.



3.3. Incentive measures for Burundi Diaspora

Mr Kieran Holmes, Commissioner General, Burundi's Revenue Authority (OBR), announced in the title of his presentation that he would explain what the diaspora could expect from Burundi's Revenue Authority, but it was not possible to get exactly the interest of the fiscal reforms for diaspora.

The Government has not talked about the incentives for the diaspora, but the parliamentarians and the senators who were attending the conference did. They encouraged repeatedly the concerned authorities to encourage with incentives the diaspora in the good job it is doing.

It was Mrs. Nyambok from KCB who came with concrete incentives. She started by stressing the importance of the remittances sent by Burundians last year totaling 140 million Euros or 22.8 % of its Gross Domestic Product. For Rwanda it was 112 million, Tanzania 236 million, Uganda 484 million and Kenya 601 million Euros. She summed up the needs of the Diaspora: (i) to send money home safely, and (ii) cheaply; (iii) to ensure the money is invested, and (iv) the ability to transact on the account—see statements, payments. In Burundi no loans are allowed in foreign currency—so mortgages are to be in BIF (Burundi Francs). A problem is the short term nature of BIF savings.

KCB offers (i) diaspora banking for individuals working and studying abroad, (ii) the opportunity of banking back home to East Africans residing abroad. KCB launched in May 2012 in USA in October 2012. KCB offers the possibility of having accounts in major international currencies easily accessible through internet and mobile phone banking. The customer service line is +25771288440 and can assist you with investment opportunities. The link is <http://diaspora.kcbbankgroup.com>.

All over East Africa KCB has KCB Advantage Centers (premium banking).



In the KCB Burundi portfolio one can open four types of accounts.

- (i) A Diaspora Current Account which is a flexible checking transnational account operable in BIF or foreign currency; no minimum balance required, cheque book, internet banking and ATM card on application.
- (ii) A Diaspora Investment Account is another possibility. Interest is paid bi-annually; no monthly charges—major foreign currencies available
- (iii) A Diaspora Junior Account is also available.
- (iv) Escrow Account Services helps with big projects such as building a house—funds are then held and administered by KCB according to personal wishes and agreements.

Mrs. Nyambok then explained in detail how to open an account on the website. Money can be sent through e.g. Swift or Western Union. Future services are investments in shares and bonds as well as in real estate through partnerships. Business banking should be located in Burundi (current and investment accounts, loans and overdraft facilities, fixed deposit accounts). She thanked the audience, expressing the hope that Diaspora will encourage investments in Burundi and gave detailed contact information of the KCB Diaspora Relationship Manager.



3. 4. Diaspora Bill

Dr. Herman Lauwerysen, Development Consultant/Anthropologist made a synthesis of the advantages of a Diaspora Bill – regulating, and defining the nature of, the relationship between Burundi and the Diaspora. A bill creates goodwill toward the home country in the diaspora world: knowledge, skills, brains, investments are transferred to the homeland. The lives of many families become more secure through easy-flowing remittances. Trade and commercial links are facilitated between the home and host country. A Diaspora Law facilitates participation in broader networks: at regional level and broader, at world level, such as GMDF: the UN Global Forum on Migration. A Diaspora friendly climate in the home country will strongly improve communication, perception and image of the home country abroad as well as of the home government. A Bill increases the feeling of trust, security, protection: 'I can count on my home country'.



Recognition of foreign diploma's and degrees creates new possibilities at home for diaspora members. The Burundi Diaspora is the greatest offshore asset of Burundi, in terms of human and financial capital. A bill would help to mainstream Diaspora Burundians into the national development process and Burundi migrants abroad will have a positive impact on the development process at home. If including a form of inter-ministerial coordination, such a bill would greatly diminish the administrative burden for returnees or visiting diaspora members. Commuting between the home- and host country would become easier and increase tourist revenues of the country. It would benefit the home economy due to matching of local entrepreneurs with diaspora business persons. Burundian diaspora in important capitals of the world are critical perception builders: a diaspora bill would make them advocates of how the world perceives Burundi---which in turn could lead to more investments (because of an increased trust base). Last: the Diaspora members are emotionally attached to Burundi, their home country; this constitutes a strong power and a basis for progress.

Chapter conclusion

One can say that, with the creation of IABD—International Action for Burundi—the Burundian diaspora has taken an important organizational step. In spite of all the problems encountered by newly formed organizations, IABD has been able to strengthen its structures which, today, are functioning in a regular way. The Fourth International Conference, which was organized by IABD, constitutes a powerful sign of its performance capacity and of its sweeping resolve to contribute to the development of Burundi. It strongly and convincingly sends an inviting signal to all partners, including the Government of Burundi, to play their role efficiently, so that IABD can continue to play its own. A legal frame for diaspora action---which precisely sketches the status of the diaspora and of the advantages it could benefit from---must urgently be established, as well as a permanent consultative body for exchange between the Burundian diaspora and the Government of Burundi. The Burundian diaspora itself should redouble its efforts to multiply the friends of Burundi ready to invest in Burundi. Also the Diaspora itself- by using modern production methods and through the exploitation of new and renewable energies--should invest in Burundi, in particular in areas benefitting directly the most needy.

CHAPTER 3 : DEMOCRACY AND POLITICAL DIALOGUE

1. POLITICAL DIALOGUE

Those who have expressed themselves on the subject of political dialogue, either in the workshops, or in the plenaries, are of the opinion that political dialogue is based on the acceptance of differences in opinion and even in approaches. These differences, expressed in the confrontation of opposing ideas, constitute a source of more energy and light as a good democratic exercise that Burundi need to strengthen throughout its democratization process. As the saying goes: "Light originates in the clash of ideas". Differences of opinion do not necessarily lead to any form of violence.

Mr. Emmanuel Miburo, representative of the opposition parties, when expressing himself in the conference on the role of the opposition, declared that it was their role to construct and not to destruct to have issue based dialog and debates on societal challenges and propose solutions. He said that the parties have a need to associate with other citizens in order to contribute to the development of the country. He underlined, however, that the Government has, in first instance, the responsibility for maintaining peace and public security, so that a political dialogue can take place under favorable conditions. It was Mr. Miburo's opinion that participation in political life is a responsibility of everybody and the Government has to create enabling conditions to make it happen. He expressed the wish that the opposition would always be associated and invited for the exchanges and discussions related to the development of the country. Or, as a participant in the conference—who wanted to underline political pluralism to be a major asset—expressed it in his own words: "All this is implied in the putting into practice of democracy based on tolerance and transparency."



2. CONTRIBUTION OF CIVIL SOCIETY

The dominating viewpoint in the conference, during the exchanges about the importance of everyone's participation (in political life), was that the Civil Society must play a major power role in the life of the country. A consequence of this is Civil Society's obligation of a positive and constructive contribution. In the eyes of some participants, the Government should not only be object of critique or exclusively a problem-solver. It needs support from everybody to find and propose solutions. Youth organizations were mentioned by one of the participants as being organizations that, in case they are not graciously listened to, can only lament and complain. The youth should be listened to. They are capable of bringing in creative and innovative solutions to problems and they can take initiatives nobody would have even thought of. The example of the Youth Conference



in April in Gitega was given as a completely positive experience, conference co-financed by Norway. Relations between Civil Society and Government differ from country to country. Each country has its own particularities and according to its own history. The most important element is to work with all NGO's who have members representing them. It is not important whether they are close to the Government or not; the most important is that they really represent a number of people.

According to President Kenneth Kaunda, cited by Mr. Terje Vigtel, the Director of Civil Society Department at Norad, the role of Civil Society is not to oppose the Government; the civil society has the important mission to be complementary to the Government. Therefore Civil Society has the right to be informed and to know what the Government is doing (and planning to do). This helps to create an efficient participation in the distribution of power. Mr. Terje finished by suggesting that indeed the Civil Society can cooperate with the Government on unbiased basis without being obedient to it.

3. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMANDATIONS

Conclusions

The Fourth International Conference of the Burundian Diaspora has been above all a step forward and a conclusive experience on the maturity of the Burundian Diaspora.

On the one side it was the first international conference organized by the Burundian Diaspora itself, with its own human resources---thereby managing, in a transparent way, the funds put at its disposal by Norway, a friend-Government of Burundi.

On the other side it was an experience proving that it is possible for a mix of Burundians from all tendencies to sit together, non-biased, as friends, as country men and women and to exchange ideas on the development of Burundi, which means: on the very essence of the life of the country.

This conference has put in the spotlight the numerous positive realities of Burundi, a country with multiple investment possibilities, a country with a good labor environment and work ethos, a country with set priorities undertaking consequent reforms in view of eradication of all forms of poverty.

The conference was professionally well organized and its content was relevant to all participants. However, political parties and civil society expressed their hunger to discuss more and it seemed that there was not enough time allocated for these two categories. The conference was clearly a demonstration of mobilization and reaching out efforts to different stakeholders around Burundi's development. A meeting place that facilitated dialogue between Diaspora, government, civil society, political parties and media both formally and informally. In addition, the conference allowed for the first time the IABD leadership to meet, work together and strengthen their network.

However there were many IABDs organizational and structural issues that didn't get enough time to be pondered and agree on in order to continue with organizational stabilization and strengthening. Many IABD members expressed the wish to get more time to discuss these above issues in the next conference. IABD managed to discuss and lobby members of the government and senate to pass a Diaspora bill to facilitate their contribution and participation in democratic process, political stability and development debate. This lobbying was focused as well on leveling the playing field for Diaspora actions in Burundi both from members and non-members of IABD.

IABD managed to create an added value to the Diaspora traditional conference by adding business theme to it. The theme did not only create a meeting place between Burundian and Norwegian business people, it also created business opportunities between the two business communities and was as well a chance to sell Burundi to Norwegians who didn't know Burundi and its Diaspora organization and the opportunities its presents.

The Conference certainly had its more shadowy areas. A number of challenges remain to be taken on: at the level of the private sector, of access to capital, of management of the Burundian Diaspora. But the Conference also shed light on exit roads out of these pitfalls. The recommendations of the Conference give an indication of these new potentials and prospects.

Conference achievements

According to the objectives set by the IABD in its project proposal, following outcomes were registered during the conference:

1. The conference created a meeting place between Burundian politicians, civil society, Diaspora and media and enabled dialog on how to participate in the development of Burundi. The experience proved that Diaspora as bridge builders can gather a mix of Burundians from all tendencies to sit together, non-biased, as friends, and to exchange ideas on the development of the Burundi on the very essence of the life of the country.
2. The Burundian Diaspora managed to invite academics, civil society, research institutes, development agencies and Norwegian business community from host country; where it introduced the organization and created a network for further cooperation and mutual learning. From Burundi, politicians from governing party and opposition, civil society, media and business community managed to mingle and create a local network that is critical for future IABD project implementation in Burundi.
3. The conference allowed for the first time the IABD leadership to meet, work together and strengthen their network. This was a very critical step towards organizational stabilization and strengthening.
4. IABD managed to discuss and lobby members of the government and senate to pass a Diaspora bill to facilitate their contribution and participation in democratic process, political stability and development debate. This lobbying was focused as well on leveling the playing field for Diaspora actions in Burundi both from members and non-members of IABD.
5. The conference made it possible to have a political dialog between opposition representatives, government, civil society and media on the role of each body in the coming national elections in 2015, how to create and maintain political stability before, during and after elections.
6. IABD managed to create an added value to the Diaspora traditional conference by adding business theme to it. The theme did not only create a meeting place between Burundian and Norwegian business people, it also created business opportunities between the two business communities.
7. The conference created an opportunity as well to sell Burundi in a positive way to Norwegians who didn't know Burundi and its Diaspora organization and the opportunities its presents.



Recommendations

1. To the Burundian Government

1. Maintain peace and security to make easier the implementation of development projects.
2. Create an institutional framework for a Diaspora policy.
3. Create a permanent framework for dialogue.
4. Facilitate financial transfer and fiscal facilities.
5. Promote Diaspora interests like participation in the life of the country and access to travel documents.
6. Strengthen the Diaspora Direction at the Ministry of External Relations and International Cooperation.
7. Visit Burundian communities.

2. To the Diaspora

1. Strengthen the IABD structures and remain open to all diaspora organizations
2. Mobilization of funds, fundraising and training in fundraising for IABD (in view of financing IABD projects/ structure/core personnel);
3. Lobby for the diaspora bill: Get a legal recognition of IABD by the Burundi government.
4. Data base/Identification of capacities/skills/qualifications present amongst diaspora members (per member country and overall).
5. Participation in political life in Burundi – participate in elections of 2015 (as observer).
6. Activate and mobilize IABD members.
7. Establish and strengthen the country organizations—OP.
8. Lobbying and advocacy in favor of the diaspora at local level and keep contact with Burundi.
9. Organize a conference of engineers and/or other professions in 2014 – in view of contributing to Burundi development

3.To the Burundian businessmen

1. Support the Diaspora work
2. Be open to partnership with international investors
3. Be open to new technology and use it
4. Come with business cases to interest international investors for a joint venture

4.To politicians

1. Prioritize collective interests and development.
2. Respect differences but work together:
3. Facilitate and support the work of the diaspora and put in place a legal framework for them

5.To Civil Society

1. Prioritize peace and human rights
2. It is possible to work independently and peacefully with the Government.

6.To the Press

Give the right information to the people with independence and professionalism

Further recommendations:

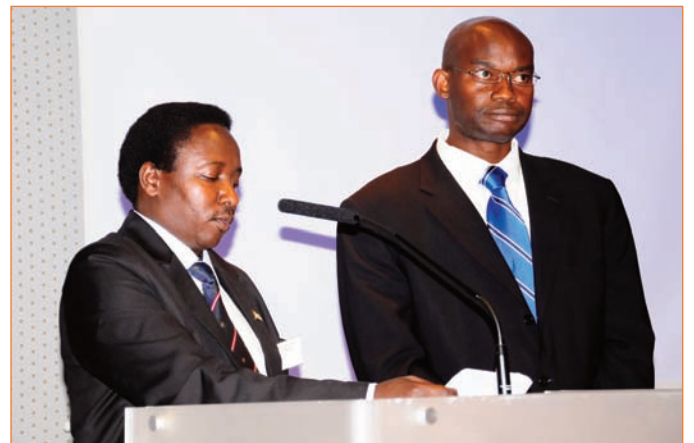
1. The next conference should take into consideration the value of a fruitful dialogue between political parties and civil society and allocate more time to them. IABD should build on the achieved results from this conference, learn from mistakes made and improve them. Generally IABD should organize two consecutive conferences in each country in order to make an impact, profile itself and make a good follow up.

In terms of results from the conference, the conference played an introductory role in profiling Burundi and its Diaspora organization which needs to be strengthened by another conference, preferably in Oslo, in order to consolidate achieved results, follow up from the last conference and learn from mistakes made in the same environment if IABD wants substantial results from its conferences. In fact, there is a risk to underperform if the conference is made in another country where one needs to mobilize institutions and people who do not know Burundi and its Diaspora, where there will be a need to explain over and over again in addition to a new organizing team that can repeat the same mistakes.

2. The conference as meeting place allowed as well IABD leadership to meet and work together. It is recommended that the IABD leadership finds a more practical way to meet once or twice before the annual rendez-vous in order to establish and strengthen its structure.

3. IABD has succeeded to create its brand: "Burundi is ready for Business" which needs to be protected and developed. This meeting place between Burundian and Norwegian business is an original and consistent way for IABD to show its normative role as a network organization contributing to the development of Burundi. It is recommended to be held every time IABD organizes conferences.

4. The lobbying exercises IABD started are very important to build a good and professional relationship between the trio Government, Civil society and Diaspora. The Diaspora bill project is a testimony that IABD is working to fight for all Burundian Diasporas interests. This again underlines the IABD normative role for its member organizations that needs to be developed and strengthened .



Annexes

IMPLEMENTED AGENDA

DAY ONE (Thursday June 20, 2013)

| TIME | SUBJECT | SPEAKER | FUNCTION / INSTIT. |
|---------------|--|-----------------------------------|--|
| 08:00 – 09:00 | <i>Registration, Tea and Coffee</i> | | IABD |
| | OPENING SESSION | | |
| 09:00 – 09:10 | Introduction and Presentation of the Program of the day | Mr. Japheth Legentil Ndayishimiye | President of IABD |
| 09:10 – 10:15 | Opening Speech by the Representative of the Government of Burundi (25 min) | Mrs. Annonciate Sendazirasa | Minister of Labor & Public Administration. |
| | Business Opportunities in East Africa Community and Diaspora Collaboration (20 min) | Mr. Eivind Fjeldstad | Managing Director, Norwegian-African. Business Association (NABA) |
| | What Opportunities does NORFUND present for Investing in Burundi? (20 min) | Mr. Ola Napstad | Head of Department Strategy and Analysis, Norweg. Investment Fund for Developing Countries |
| 10:15 – 10:30 | <i>Tea and Coffee break / Networking</i> | | |
| 10:30 – 12:10 | INVESTMENT CLIMATE & OPPORTUNITIES IN BURUNDI | | |
| | Investment Climate in Burundi - Investment opportunities in Burundi (20 min) | Mr. Antoine Kabura | Managing Director, Burundi Investment Promotion Authority (API) |
| | Burundi Fiscal Reforms – A Modern Tax Administration Contributing to the Development and its Economic Integration in the region and globally | Mr. Kieran Holmes | Commissioner General, Burundi's Revenue Authority (OBR) |
| | Challenges and Perspectives of Private Sector in Burundi (20 min) | Mr. Christian Nkengurutse | Secretary General, Burundian Federal Chamber of Commerce and Industry |
| | Business Case – KCB Bank Burundi Ltd (20 min) | Mrs. Gloria Nyambok | Managing Director, KCB Bank Burundi Ltd |
| | Business Case – Hauge Micro Finance Ltd (20 min) | Mr. Arne Sylta, | Co-founder, Hauge Micro Finance Ltd |
| 12:10 – 13:25 | <i>Lunch & Networking</i> | | |
| 13:25 – 14:25 | THREE PARALLEL SESSIONS | | |
| | SESSION 1: TRADE – TOURISM & FINANCE SECTOR with: | With Mr. Christian Nibitanga | Ministry of Trade, Industry and Tourism |
| | --KCB Bank Burundi LTD | Gloria Nyambok | |

| | | | |
|---------------|--|---|--|
| | (Bank & Finance -- Laboremus Oslo AS (ICT software, Web solutions, Finance applications) - VIRKE (Hotel & Hospitality / Tourism) | Philip Røer Rolf Forsdahl | |
| | SESSION 2: RENEWABLE & SUSTAINABLE ENERGY IN BURUNDI , with: | With Mr. Antoine Kabura | Ministry of Energy |
| | - Trønder Energi (Ren Energy) - Jacobsen Elektro (Renewable Energy) - Green Biotech Solutions (Energy and Environmental) – - Bright Product (Sustainable Power Solutions) | Inge Stølen Patrick Vigneau Knut Hovland Francis Stevens George | |
| | SESSION 3: AGRIBUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES IN BURUNDI , with: | With Mr. Joseph Nduwimana | Ministry of Agriculture |
| | - Agrinos, - Nortura (Agri & food processing) - Inventure Management - NORFUND | -Svein Mork Dahl -Kristin L. Sellevold | |
| 14:25 – 14:40 | <i>Tea and Coffee break / Networking</i> | | |
| 14:40 – 15:40 | Speed-Dating and Matchmaking Investors - Entrepreneurs and Regional Experts : | | API – OBR – NABA – KCB – Burundian Fed. Chamber of Commerce and Industry-- NORFUND – Embassy of Burundi in Norway (Nordic Countries) |
| 16:30 – 19:30 | Reception | | |

DAY TWO (Friday June 21, 2013)

| TIME | SUBJECT | SPEAKER | FUNCTION |
|---------------|---|--|--|
| 08:00 – 08:30 | <i>Registration Tea and Coffee</i> | | <i>IABD</i> |
| 08:30 – 08:45 | Intro and presentation of the program of the day | Amb. Anselme Bankambona | Chairman of IABD Board |
| 08:45 – 09:45 | PRESENTATIONS | | |
| | Strategies and Policies for the Integration of the Diaspora in Country Development Programs (15 min) | Amb. Gaspard Musavyarabona | Director General, Directorate of Diaspora, Burundi's Ministry of Foreign Affairs |
| | How to Engage Diaspora in Development (15 min) | Mrs. Norunn Grande | Special Adviser, Nansen Center for Peace and Dialogue |
| | Realities of Return Migration (15 min) | Mrs. Tove Heggli Sagmo | Researcher, Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO) |
| | Rural Social Entrepreneurship: A Solution for Diaspora Returners? (15 min) | Mrs. Marit Linnebo Olderheim | Africa Start Up, Gambia |
| 09:45 – 09:55 | Q & A | | |
| 09:55 – 10:55 | Fiscal Reforms in Burundi – What can Diaspora Expect from Burundi's Revenue Authority? (20 min) | Mr. Kieran Holmes | G. Commissioner, Burundi's Revenue Authority (OBR) |
| | KCB Bank Burundi LTD – What Services and Products for Diaspora? (20 min) | Mrs. Gloria Nyambok | Managing Director, KCB Bank Burundi |
| | Diaspora Bill – What Advantages for the Country of Origin? (20 min) | Dr. Herman J. Lauwerysen | Development Consultant / Anthropologist |
| 10:55 – 11:05 | Q & A | | |
| 11:05 – 11:20 | <i>Tea and Coffee break / Networking</i> | | |
| 11:20 – 12:20 | How Civil Society Organizations can Collaborate with the Government Without Being Biased: Norwegian Experience (20 min) | Mr. Terje Vigtel | Director, Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation, Civil Society Department |
| | Civil Society Organizations in Burundi - Challenges and Prospects (40 min) | PARCEM – RPA – Ligue ITEKA – Women's forum – Burundian Youth council | |
| 12:20 – 12:30 | Q & A | | |
| 12:30 – 13:30 | <i>Lunch & Networking</i> | | |
| 13:30 – 14:30 | DEBATE ON DIASPORA MANAGEMENT AND DIASPORA BILL | | |
| | Panelists: | | Moderator: |

| | | | |
|---------------|---|--|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Hon. Sylvestre Ntibantunganya -Hon. Emmanuel Nkengururitse -Hon. Glorioso Hakizimana -Hon. Laurent Rwankineza -Dr. Herman J. Lauwerysen -Mr. Félix Muvayo Birihanyuma | | <p>Dr. Serge Ngendakumana</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Senator & Former President of Burundi -Senator -Senator -Senator -Development Consultant -Director of Diaspora |
| 14:30 – 14:45 | <i>Tea and Coffee break / Networking</i> | | |
| 14:45 – 16:45 | TWO PARALLEL SESSIONS | | |
| | SESSION 1: DEMOCRACY AND POLITICAL DIALOGUE | | |
| | <p>Panelists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Senate and Parliament members -Ruling and oppositions parties leaders or representatives -Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) -Community Based Organizations (CBOs) | <p>Moderator: The Christian Council of Norway</p> <p>Mr. Tor Kristian Birkeland</p> <p>Mr. Tore Martin Herland</p> | <p>Coordinator Norwegian Ecumenical Peace Platform</p> <p>Regional area Rep. Great Lakes Africa – Norwegian Church Aid</p> |
| | SESSION 2: STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR DIASPORA International Action for Burundian Diaspora (IABD) - member organizations only | <p>Moderator:</p> <p>Dr. Herman J. Lauwerysen</p> | <p>Evaluator & Senior Development Expert</p> |
| 16:45 – 17:00 | <i>Tea and Coffee break / Networking</i> | | |
| 17:00 – 17:15 | Closing Ceremony | | Representative of IABD & others. |

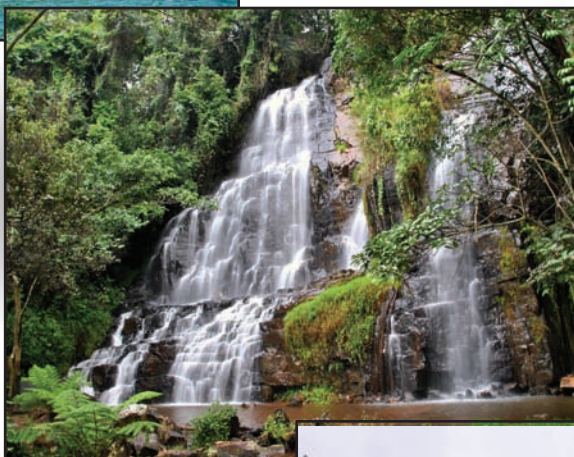
ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|---------------|--|
| IABDU | Action Internationale pour la Diaspora Burundaise |
| API | Agence de Promotion des Investissements |
| BIF | Burundi Franc |
| CBO | Community Based Organization |
| CFCIB | Chambre Fédérale de Commerce et d'Industrie du Burundi |
| CLSP | Cadre Stratégique de Lutte Contre la Pauvreté |
| CSO | Civil Society Organization |
| CSR | Corporate Social Responsibility |
| EAC..... | East African Community |
| FDI | Foreign Direct Investments |
| FIGA | Guaranty Fund |
| GDP | Gross Domestic Product |
| GMDF | Global Migration Development Forum |
| HMF | Hauge Micro Finance |
| IABD | International Action for Burundian Diaspora |
| IFRS | International Financial Reporting Standards |
| IT | Information Technology |
| KCB..... | Kenya Commercial Bank |
| KPI | Key Performance Indicators |
| LDC | Least Developed Countries |
| NABA | Norwegian-African Business Association |
| NCPD | Nansen Center for Peace and Dialogue |
| NORFUND | Norwegian Investment Fund for Developing Countries |
| NSPR | National Strategy for Poverty Reduction |
| OBR | Office Burundais des Recettes |
| OP | Organisation du Pays |
| PPP | Public-Private Partnership |
| PRIO | Peace Research Institute Oslo |
| SME | Small and Medium-size Enterprises |

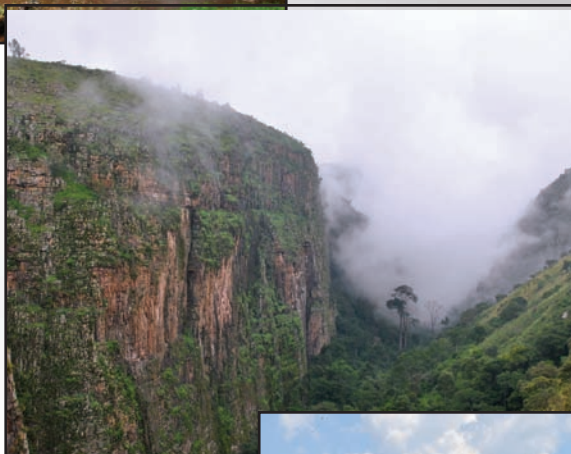
BURUNDI IS READY FOR BUSINESS



One Burundi



One Diaspora



One Destination



International Action for Burundian Diaspora | Registration Nr. 898 708 152 |
Dysjalsandsvegen 12C, 4360 Varhaug - Norway | www.burundi-diaspora.org | E-mail: bdi.diaspora@gmail.com

