

*Delegation from
Burundi*

*Represented by
Northwest Regional University*

Position Paper for the World Humanitarian Summit

The topics before the World Humanitarian Summit are: 1) Global leadership to prevent and end conflict; 2) Uphold the norms that safeguard humanity; 3) Leave no one behind; and 4) Change people's lives – from delivering aid to ending need. Burundi is deeply committed to working towards a comprehensive outcome document that addresses the current needs and challenges of humanitarian work.

I. Global leadership to prevent and end conflict

Burundi has always put conflict prevention in the forefront of its policy development and strongly believes that effective leadership is necessary to prevent and end conflicts. Having endured a civil war, repercussions of conflict in neighboring states, Burundi has and continues to find ways to tackle prevention of conflict. While global leadership is an important element to prevention and conclusion of conflict, Burundi notes that regional leadership to be more effective, and more importantly believes opportunities be provided for Member States to have a larger role in preventing and ending conflict. Burundi is party to both the Hague Convention and Geneva Conventions, along with the additional protocols.

Burundi strongly believes that there should be a global focus on prevention of conflict. In the past, Burundi has had to deal with a potential conflict within its own borders when situations arose in neighboring Member States. Though regional and global leadership was available, Burundi was able to overcome this situation by acting early and strengthening its own leadership. Recently, Burundi has had to address the growing potential of conflict within its borders. Burundi believes that in order to effectively prevent and end conflict, the government must consistently be engaged and invest in stability, develop solutions with and for the people, and ensure that prevention mechanisms are in place to prevent conflict from reappearing.

II. Uphold the norms that safeguard humanity

International humanitarian law (IHL) is essential framework that safeguards humanity at the global level. Burundi, a strong supporter of IHL, considers that it is the responsibility of national governments to protect and implement the norms that are mutually agreed upon. As a result of ongoing conflict, there is an increase in civilian casualties in Burundi, as well as the need for access to humanitarian and medical aid for civilians. During these times, Burundi reaffirms its support of the Hague and Geneva Conventions, both of which it is party to.

Burundi believes it is important to discuss issues relating to the implementation mechanisms, to better address the variety of conflict that is ongoing today. In addition, Burundi asserts that it is imperative for Member States to ensure their citizens have the

required access to humanitarian and medical aid, regardless of the situation the state is in. Burundi recognizes that the needs of the citizens have to be met at all times. In June 2015, the Burundian government organized and executed presidential elections, recognizing that the 2015 political unrest could only be addressed by enabling the citizens to exercise their democratic rights. These issues need to be addressed at the Summit in order to ensure that civilian rights are maintained at the highest standard at all times, and that there are mechanisms that will aid Member States to achieve this.

III. Leave no one behind

Burundi is honored to bring its best practices and understanding of modern refugee and IDP issues to the Summit. Burundi has a long history of managing refugees and internally displaced peoples (IDPs), most notably during the Rwanda Genocide of 1994. Despite Burundi undergoing its own political conflict, Burundi addressed the resulting refugee problem efficiently. Burundi continues to address the long-term issues of IDPs and refugees seeking asylum in the state, and strongly believe that this topic is of utmost importance during discussions during the Summit.

Burundi strongly supports current efforts that help navigate refugees and IDPs to their origin, and believes that the Summit should use this opportunity to explore the gaps that are evident in current practices, and to improve the current system. As stated in the Secretary-General's report, *Agenda for Humanity*, it is important that Member States address the difficulties faced by women and girls, youth, the elderly, and people with disabilities as a result of displacement. Burundi further emphasizes the need for coordinating efforts between governments and civil society organizations (CSOs). Furthermore, it is important to review existing relocation programs and initiatives. Such efforts will help limit redundancy and promote diversity in the issues addressed.

IV. Change people's lives – from delivering aid to ending need

Burundi strongly endorses the development and promotion of mechanisms to facilitate a more efficient delivery of aid, and more importantly policy initiatives to bring an end to "need." While Burundi recognizes that there are policy initiatives and programs in place that address this issue, many of these frameworks are not flexible enough to address the challenges that come from different types of situations, environmental, political, and social.

Burundi believes that it is important for the Summit to remember that existing national and local infrastructures responsible for delivering aid should not be replaced, but rather reinforced, seeing as many mechanisms often aren't implemented appropriately. More importantly, Burundi believes that such empowerment will enable the growth of local CSOs and ease collaboration between them and local authorities. Subsequently, it will be important to develop mechanisms to anticipate crises by building on the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the SDGs. Burundi recognizes that this approach would be effective in addressing socio-political and environmental issues, as well as strengthening regional abilities.