

In Burundi, UN Special Adviser urges all parties to engage in talks to calm tensions

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At the conclusion of his two-day visit to Burundi, Adama Dieng, the United Nations Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, warned of increased tensions and the risk of further violence, unless all parties engage in open dialogue to resolve the crisis and calm tensions. “ He urged the Government to guarantee respect for human rights, including freedom of opinion and expression, noting that the absence of independent voices through non-State media was contributing to tensions,” said a statement released from Burundi's capital of Bujumbura.

During his visit to East African nation, Mr. Dieng held meetings with the President of Burundi and senior government officials, political party leaders, civil society, representatives of the media and other key actors.

They discussed escalating tensions in Burundi in the pre-electoral period and the risk that what has been primarily a political crisis could escalate to a level that would pose a high risk of atrocity crimes being committed.

Leaders have also gathered in Tanzania for an East African community summit over the weekend in hopes to reinforce dialogue among the Burundian parties amid concerns raised by UN agencies that the current political instability could lead to a humanitarian crisis.

“Given Burundi's history of ethnic violence and in light of ongoing fears of attacks based on ethnicity, the Special Adviser strongly encouraged Burundian parties to use their influence to prevent any action that could increase the risk of violence against individuals or groups on the basis of their identity, including political affiliation, religious and ethnic identity,” the note said.

Special Adviser Dieng emphasized the critical importance of ensuring respect for fundamental human rights and the rule of law, particularly during periods of tension, in accordance with international human rights obligations.

He also recalled that the primary responsibility for protecting populations from atrocity crimes lies with the Government of Burundi and warned that those responsible for serious human rights violations and atrocity crimes would be held accountable by national and international judicial bodies and if need be, by the International Criminal Court ([ICC](#)).

Mr. Dieng also reiterated the continued commitment of the international community, including

regional actors, to support Burundi to secure peace and create conducive conditions for free and transparent elections.

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