

**Burundi UN Resident Coordinator's remarks
UNHCR High Commissioner's Dialogue on Protection Challenges, Geneva, 7 December 2022**

Excellencies,

On November 2nd, the Government of Burundi and UNHCR organized a high-level roundtable in Bujumbura to shore up support for the return and reintegration of Burundian refugees.

During the roundtable, Myriam, a 30-year-old Burundian returnee, shared her story with us. In 2015, she fled to Tanzania with her family after violence erupted in Burundi. Six years later, in 2021, Myriam returned to Burundi with the support of UNHCR. But back home, local reintegration with her two children was challenged by existing structural vulnerabilities in her community including lack of decent housing, employment, and basic services.

As I stand before you today, I would like to relay the voice of Myriam, the voice of the 200,000 people who have returned to Burundi since 2017 but are struggling with reintegration, the voice of more than 200,000 Burundians who remain in neighbouring countries, and the voice of the 90,000 Congolese refugees in Burundi who need protection and assistance.

In today's world characterised by multifaceted challenges, many Burundians who have returned are once again trapped in a cycle of displacement due to climate related shocks, cost of living crisis, and limited access to land. Close to 90% of the 85,000 IDPs in Burundi are displaced because of climate change.

Excellencies,

At the high-level roundtable in Bujumbura, to advance durable solutions for refugees, we agreed on the following imperatives:

- 1) Reinforce inter-sectoral coordination on reintegration led by Prime Minister. In this regard, the empowered RC system has a role to play through its convening power, alongside with UNHCR, to support coherent national strategies and normative frameworks.
- 2) Systematically include refugees and returnees into key programmes and explore new financing instruments from donors, development banks, and the private sector. To this end, we have agreed to establish a sub-window on reintegration under the existing UN Multi Partner Trust Fund, in line with the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework that we signed with the Prime Minister of Burundi on 3 December 2022.
- 3) Develop stronger migration frameworks, at regional level, such as a Regional Roadmap for Comprehensive Solutions, through regular consultations among key stakeholders.

Excellencies,

To conclude, let me emphasize that now is the moment to address the root causes of displacement to ensure lasting peace and resilience against climate shocks, pivotal to a more dignified life for all the people in Burundi.

Thank you.