

Belgium threatens to cut Burundi aid

BRUSSELS: Belgium warned Burundi's President Pierre Nkurunziza on Thursday it would end all direct aid if he went ahead with his run for a third term in power that has prompted violent protests.



The Belgian government "expresses the hope that President Nkurunziza will renounce a third term," the foreign ministry said in a statement after a cabinet meeting in Brussels.

"A third presidential term would stain at the highest level the legitimacy of the Burundi executive and would make the completion of the bilateral programme impossible," the ministry added.

The decision came as one protester was shot dead in Burundi's capital Bujumbura Thursday, the latest victim of the unrest in which more than 20 people have died.

Belgium is the biggest bilateral aid donor to its former colony Burundi, with only the European Union and World Bank providing more support.

In 2013, the direct aid from Belgium amounted to 47.4 million euros (\$52.7 million), of which 34.4 million euros went directly to inter-governmental cooperation.

Earlier this month, Belgium suspended aid for elections in Burundi as well as police cooperation which also involved the Netherlands.

Source: AFP

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