

FAST Analytical Framework Burundi / September / 2007

ROOT CAUSES

Historical

- Former feudal kingdom (reigned by the Ganwa) with a society being divided along complementary economic activities (pastoral Tutsi and agricultural Hutu) (17th-20th century)
- Colonization based on divide and rule policy, fostering ethnic/social divides (1916-62)
- Discriminatory school system established and conducted by the church in support of the colonial notion of dominance
- Rwanda Revolution (1959-61) and assassination of Rwagasore (1961) as ignition points of the ethnic polarization process between Hutu and Tutsi
- Frequent outbreaks of ethnic violence linked with political crisis (1965/ 69/ 72/ 73/ 88/ 91/ 93) culminating in large scale massacre against Hutu elites in 1972

Political / Governance

- Military ethnocracy by (Tutsi) Hima clan from Bururi (1966-88); exclusion of Hutu from access to executive power
- Failures of political pluralism (1961-66, 1988-93); extreme political fragmentation and polarization along ethnic and regional lines
- State control over access to land; politicization and corruption of land distribution
- Struggle by the political class to accede to and/or to remain in power
- Patronage and clientelism within the political system
- Weak state structures and institutions
- Human rights violations by, and impunity of security forces, especially the military
- Widespread corruption (closely related to judicial inefficiency)

Societal / Socio-Demographic

- Existence of a minority (Tutsi) and a majority (Hutu)
- Rapid demographic growth since the 1970s
- Widespread poverty (mainly in rural areas); high rate of illiteracy; lack of access to health services and education
- Reciprocal demonization of ethnic groups

Economic

- Extreme scarcity of economic resources; export products consisting primarily of unrefined agricultural primary goods (mainly coffee, tea); landlocked country
- Dependency on subsistence farming; rapidly falling land per capita ratio due to demographic pressure
- Small industrial sector; rudimentary means of production

Ecological

- Lack of natural resources
- Vulnerability to natural hazards (drought, torrential rain)

International

- Cross-border implication of crisis in Rwanda, Tanzania and Zaire/DRC Congo
- Significant Diaspora notably in Tanzania (since 1972), exerting strong influence within Burundi since the foundation of Palipehutu (1980)

PROXIMATE CAUSES

Political / Governance

- Continued political fragmentation (since the split of the Hutu camp in extremists and moderates following Ndadaye's murder) reaching its climax during the Arusha talks (1998-2001)
- Ongoing disagreements about the Arusha Peace Accord
- Top-heavy political machinery; lack of leadership and of political vision
- Disagreement over dealing with the past (e.g. 1972 massacres)
- Political power as means to secure the elites privileged position
- Tendency towards single party domination of the 2005 elected government and parliament including marginalization of opposition parties; increasingly authoritarian style of rule despite promising successful and peaceful transition to a multiparty democracy (2005).

Security

- Ongoing FNL militancy since the signing of the 2000 Arusha agreement
- High level of militarization including small arms proliferation
- Widespread armed banditry (creates also disincentive to disarm)
- Continued human rights violations by security forces, including torture, alleged extrajudicial killings, etc.

Societal / Socio-Demographic

- Legacy of the 1972 massacre
- Large number of IDPs and refugees hosted (from Rwanda and DRC)
- Lack of basic infrastructure such as education or health care facilities
- Increasing number of HIV/AIDS infected people
- Widespread sexual and gender violence
- Widespread killings of alleged sorcerers, witches

Economic

- Increasing rural poverty
- Severe drop in world coffee price
- Contestation over land left behind by fleeing refugees
- Tutsi being privileged to enter private sector; parastatals increasingly controlled by CNDD-FDD affiliated individuals
- Mismanagement of resources on governmental level, corruption and control of the public procurements

Ecological

- Environmental stress (growing population, land degradation)
- Consecutive droughts in northern provinces since 1998; torrential rains in early 2007
- Dropping water level in lake Tanganyika

International

- Regional instability influencing the patterns of alliances and tensions between ethnic and national divisions
- Use of immense international pressure as a means to establishing peace, especially with regard to the signing of the highly contested Arusha Peace Accords (2001)
- Huge number of Burundian refugees mainly living in Tanzania, with the latter increasingly pressing for their return
- Porous borders; DRC as hiding base for rebels and bandits from Burundi

POSITIVE INTERVENING FACTORS

Decreasing the likelihood of conflict

- Approval of popular referendum on the Constitution, incl. particular ethnic and gender quotas (February 2005)
- Agreement by the GoB to establish a Truth and Reconciliation Commission and a tribunal to prosecute war crimes (May 2007)
- Peace agreement signed with the PALIPEHUTU-FNL of Agathon Rwasa (September 2006) and arrest of Jean-Bosco Sindayigaya (June 2007)
- Continuance of the disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, reintegration and resettlement process (DDRRR) of former combatants
- Implementation of army reform, incl. 50:50 ethnic balance, and attainment of political independence
- Continued dialogue on regional security within the framework of the Tripartite Plus Commission
- Creation of UN Integrated Office in Burundi (BINUB) as follow up of UN peacekeeping mandate (ONUB) expired in December 2006
- Decrease in inter-ethnic tensions
- Emergence of a tenacious civil society and media
- Efforts for economic recovery including attempts to attract international investors
- Regional integration (re-launch of CEPGL, accession to EAC)

IMPACT ON

NEGATIVE INTERVENING FACTORS

Increasing the likelihood of conflict

- Major government crisis (incl. blockage of the National Assembly by lack of quorum) as a result of ongoing corruption affairs, and growing splits within and between CNDD-FDD and opposition (i.a. due to controversial government policies and power-struggles in the run-up to the 2010 elections), lacking presidential leadership, incapacity to pacify the country
- Eroded trust of Burundians in their elected officials
- Increased state and leadership competition leading to intra-ethnic and regional tensions
- Pending implementation of the ceasefire agreement with FNL
- Growing insecurity notably in/around Bujumbura (resumption of armed activity by FNL, banditry, illegal trainings of paramilitary units); increasing violence against politicians (e.g. grenade attacks on CNDD-FDD delegates in August 2007)
- Continued harassment of opposition members and civilian population by security agencies; increased pressure on civil society, esp. press freedom
- Ongoing impunity and weaknesses in the justice system
- Overall failed structural reforms (as defined in Arusha Accords) thus unchanged socio-economic situation compared to wartime - lack of measures to cope with the land claims as well as humanitarian and infrastructural needs of returning refugees (likely to be exacerbated by the planned closure of camps in Tanzania by the end of 2007)
- Delay in the implementation of the DDRRR process; lack of funding for disbursement of stipends for former combatants
- Presence of antipersonnel land mines posing grave threats to local population
- Precarious food situation in northern parts of the country
- Reluctance of international donors to disburse funds due to clientelistic practices, corruption and unilateral decision making and actions by the GoB
- Unclear future progress in post-election DRC and increasing violence in neighboring Eastern DRC

L
I
K
E
L
I
H
O
O
D
O
F
A
R
M
E
D
C
O
N
F
L
I
C
T

Burundi References

Balencie, Jean-Marc and de La Grange, Arnaud (eds.) 2001: Mondes rebelles. Guérillas, Milices, Groupes Terroristes. Paris: Editions Michalon. 796-809.

Chrétien, Jean Pierre 2000: L'Afrique des Grands Lacs: Deux mille ans d'histoire. Paris: Aubier.

Chrétien, Jean Pierre and Prunier, Gérard 1989 : Les Ethnies ont une histoire. Paris: Karthala.

Guichaoua, André 1995: Les crises politiques au Burundi et au Rwanda (1993-1994). Lille: Université des Sciences et Technologies.

FAST Country Team Burundi 2007: FAST Updates. Bern: Swisspeace. <http://www.swisspeace.ch/typo3/en/peace-conflict-research/early-warning/countries/index.html>

Lemarchand, René 2003-2005: FAST Updates. Bern: swisspeace. http://www.swisspeace.org/fast/afrika_burundi.htm.

Lemarchand, René 1997: Burundi. Ethnic Conflict and Genocide. Washington D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press and Cambridge University Press.

Lemarchand, René 1970: Rwanda and Burundi. New York and London: Frederick Praeger and The Pall Mall Press.

Malkki, Liisa 1995: Purity and Exile. Violence, Memory and National Cosmology among Hutu Refugees in Tanzania. Chicago University Press.

Reyntjens, Filip 2006: Burundi: a peaceful transition after a decade of war. In: African affairs 105:418. 117-135.

Reyntjens, Filip 1994: L'Afrique des Grands Lacs en crise: Rwanda, Burundi (1988-1994). Paris: Karthala.

Wolters, Stephanie 2006: FAST Updates. Bern: swisspeace. http://www.swisspeace.org/fast/afrika_burundi.htm.

Web-Links

Africetime: <http://www.africetime.com/burundi>

allAfrica.com: <http://allafrica.com/burundi/>

Amnesty International: www.amnesty.org

Human Rights Watch: www.hrw.org

International Crisis Group (ICG): www.crisisweb.org

IRINNews.org: http://www.irinnews.org/frontpage.asp?SelectRegion=Great_Lakes&SelectCountry=Burundi

United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs: <http://www.reliefweb.int/ochaburundi/>

University of Antwerp. Centre for the Study of the Great Lakes Region: <http://www.ua.ac.be/main.aspx?c=.GRALACE&n=36876>

Note: this list of references is not exhaustive