

FAST Update

Burundi

Semi-annual Risk Assessment
June to December 2006

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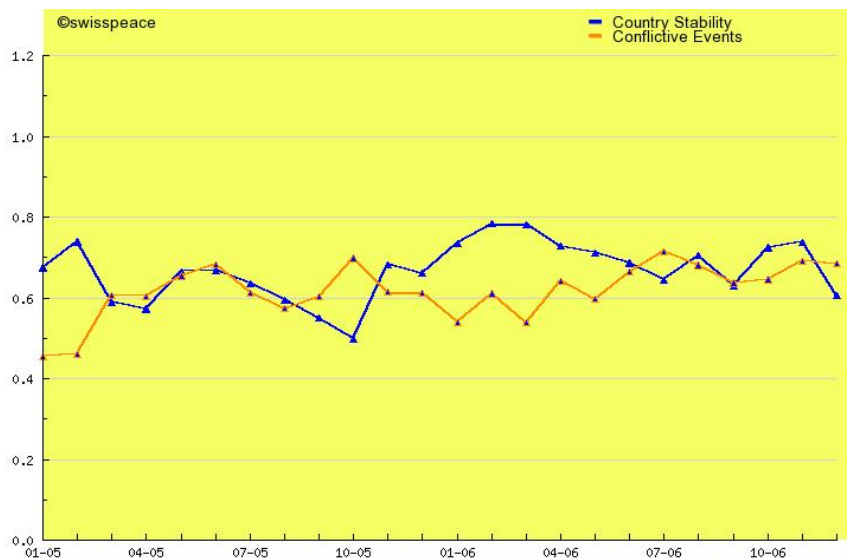
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Country Stability and Conflictive Events (relative)



Average number of reported events per month: 99
Indicator description: see appendix

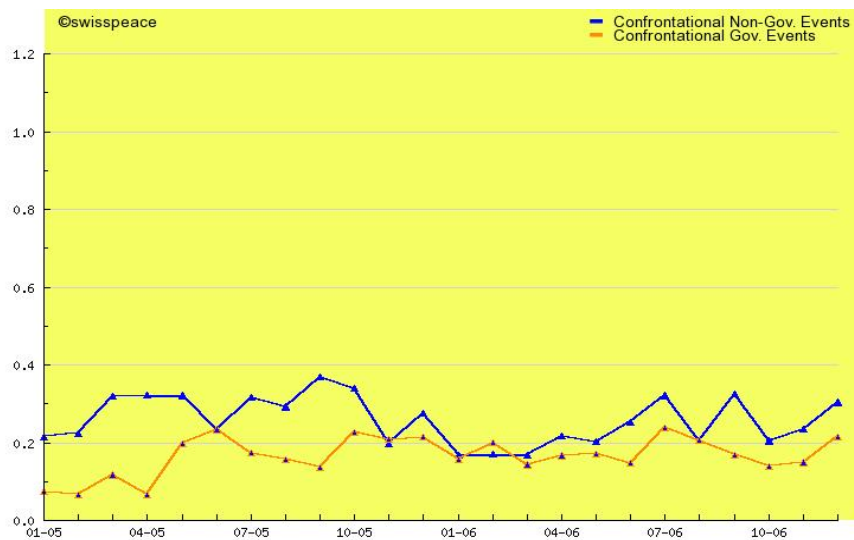
Risk Assessment:

- The fluctuations in Country Stability and increase in Conflictive Events indicate that recent months have been characterized by instability which has grown steadily until July when a number of senior politicians were arrested on charges of plotting a coup. The downward spike in Conflictive Events in September reflects the signing of a ceasefire agreement between the *Forces nationales de libération* (FNL) and the *Conseil national pour la défense de la démocratie – Forces pour la défense de la démocratie* (CNDD-FDD). However, the overall trend has been towards greater conflict, as the upward turn in Conflictive Events in the following months indicates.
- In the last six months, Burundi has gone from relatively stable to slightly unstable, largely as a result of the Burundian government's arrest of eight prominent opposition politicians on what are widely-felt to be trumped-up charges of coup plotting, and its crackdown on the media and civil society in the aftermath of these arrests. Although the situation is not expected to prompt an overthrow of the government, observers are concerned that recent events could indicate that the government is growing increasingly authoritarian. There also seems to be little reason for the crackdown, as the CNDD-FDD governs with an overwhelming majority both in the National Assembly and the Senate. At the same time, the ruling party has an easy relationship with the Tutsi minority which has maintained strong influence over the integrated military and has no reason to feel sidelined. There have been suggestions that growing splits within the CNDD-FDD may have motivated the orchestration of the coup plot. Hassan Radjabu, the CNDD-FDD's president and a powerful hard-liner is believed to have ordered the arrests, causing growing concern in the more moderate ranks of the party that he will hijack the party and turn it into an increasingly authoritarian movement. President Pierre Nkurunziza has been remarkably silent on the latter since the arrests started in August 1, and is either unwilling or unable to influence the situation.
- On August 1, security forces arrested a number of senior opposition politicians, including Alain Mugabarabona of the *Forces nationales de libération-Icanzo* (FNL-Icanzo), Alphonse-Marie Kadege, a lawyer, member of the *Union pour le progrès national* (Uprona) and former vice-president in the transition government. Former Burundian President Domitien Ndayizeye was arrested on August 21. Although none of the detainees have been charged with a particular crime, the government has accused them of plotting to overthrow the government. No evidence has yet been provided and private radio stations suggested in subsequent broadcasts that the government had planned to stage fake attacks on key installations in the capital. A number of journalists involved in the broadcasts were subsequently arrested.

- Much of the government's case had been built on the alleged confession by Mugabarabona. However, the veracity of its claims were severely undermined when Mugabarabona managed to gain access to a mobile phone and phoned *Radio Publique Africaine*, a Bujumbura-based local radio station, from his prison cell. Mugabarabona explained that his confession had been extracted under threat from the security services who told him that unless he implicated Kadege and Ndayizeye in the plot he and his family would be killed.
- Meanwhile, local and international human rights organizations have said that the detainees have been tortured during their detention. Human rights officers of the United Nations Mission in Burundi (ONUB) stated that two of the detainees who were released – Kadege and Mugabarabona – as well as Kadege's lawyer showed visible signs of torture. Jean-Bosco Ndikumana, the Attorney General, allowed them to be treated in a local hospital and initiated investigations into the torture allegations.
- The remaining detainees stay in prison in spite of a Supreme Court ruling of October 7 that their detention contravened existing legislation. This ruling was overruled by Ndikumana who issued a direct order to the Bujumbura Central Prison not to release them. No date has yet been set for an appeal.
- In early September, Vice-President Alice Nzomukunda resigned from her post, citing corruption, incompetence and a declining respect for the principles of democracy as the reasons for her resignation. In her public remarks she also criticized Radjabu for his negative influence on the country, accusing him of causing the country to become increasingly incapacitated. Nzomukunda has since fled Burundi for exile in Italy. Marina Barampama, previously in the Ministry of Finance, and a close associate of Radjabu, replaced Nzomukunda.
- Talks between the CNDD-FDD and the *Parti pour la libération du peuple Hutu - Forces nationales de libération* (Palipehutu-FNL) continued over the reporting period, alongside violent clashes between the FNL and the *Forces de défense nationale* (FDN). On June 18, under the mediation of Charles Ngakukla, the South Africa Minister for Safety and Security, both sides signed an "agreement of principles" which offered Palipehutu-FNL limited amnesty if a ceasefire be concluded, and the right to exist as a political party. After a series of setbacks, talks resumed on July 15. The main sticking point since the start of negotiations has been the composition of the FND, since the Palipehutu-FNL claimed a larger representation of Hutu with respect to their share of the population. This option was clearly rejected by the CNDD-FDD, as it would undermine the larger power-sharing deal which underpins the current political and military situation in the country.
- On September 7, in Dar es Salaam, rather to the surprise of many long-standing Burundi observers, Agathon Rwasa, the leader of the Palipehutu-FNL agreed to sign a ceasefire deal with the CNDD-FDD in spite of the fact that none of its key demands had been agreed to. This agreement provides for the immediate cessation of hostilities and the integration of FNL combatants into the FND – unless they want to be demobilized. On October 11, a joint verification commission was formed to monitor the ceasefire, however, the representatives of the Palipehutu-FNL did not attend the meeting, demanding that Jean-Berchmans Ndayishimiye, the FNL's intelligence and military operations chief who was captured by government forces in July, first be released from prison. Some observers have interpreted this as a sign that commitment to the ceasefire may be less than sincere.
- Ngakula has established an office in Bujumbura tasked with assisting in the implementation of the agreement and the facilitation of further negotiations on key outstanding issues such as the participation of Palipehutu-FNL representatives in government and details of how to integrate the FNL into the FND. At the time of writing, the ceasefire continues to hold.
- The sale in June of the presidential jet has since turned into a major national scandal. Finance Minister Dieudonné Ngowembona sold the jet which had been parked at a Swiss airport accruing bills for \$3.1 million. Several weeks later, another company alleged that it had bid \$5 million for the plane and filed a lawsuit to have the initial sale halted. Ngowembona has said that he opted for expediency as the plane was just costing money, however his explanation has not been widely accepted, and the World Bank has since ordered an audit into the sale.
- The events of the last six months of 2006 clearly indicate that the government is growing increasingly autocratic. Even more worrisome is the fact that key institutions such as the judiciary are less able to

remain independent – as the overruling of the court's decision to release the suspected coup plotters on bail indicates. This trend is expected to continue to undermine the consolidation of democracy, and political repression is likely to become more intense in the future. This will have a negative impact on overall country stability, as observers grow disillusioned with the Nkurunziza government. It may however yet be possible for donors to exert pressure on the government and to use the carrot and stick approach to push it to behave in a more democratic way.

Confrontational Government and Non-Government Events (relative)



Average number of reported events per month: 99

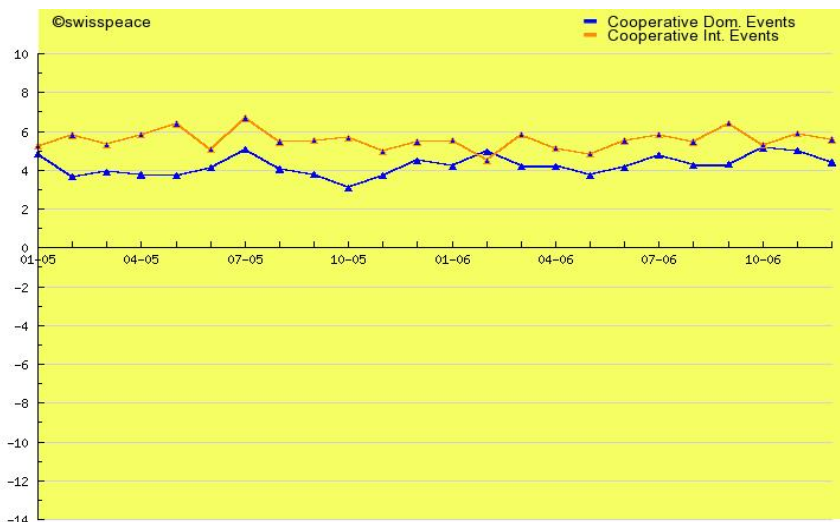
Indicator description: see appendix

Risk Assessment:

- The rise in Confrontational Government and Non-Government Events after May 2006 reflects the slight increase in clashes between CNDD-FDD and FNL after the start of negotiations between them in May-June. Subsequent fluctuations in the graphs have been caused by the governmental crackdown on the media and civil society over the past few months.
- The alleged coup plot has been followed by a severe crackdown on the freedom of Burundi's vibrant independent broadcast media. Radio *Isanganiro* received threatening e-mails to stop "defaming" the government in mid-September and its director, Gabriel Nikandana has since been ordered to report to a magistrate in Bujumbura three times a week. A few weeks later, the Minister of Information, Ramadhani Karenga, likened *Radio Publique Africaine* to *Radio Mille Collines*, the private pro-Hutu Rwandan radio station which incited Hutus to kill Tutsis during the Rwandan genocide. Alexis Sinduhije, the director of the radio subsequently went into hiding. Meanwhile, also in September, Aloys Kabura, a journalist who has been detained since May, was found guilty of defaming the President after he made critical remarks about Nkurunziza in a bar. It is believed that the real reason for his arrest is that he was working on a story about corruption in the sugar export business which implicated senior CNDD-FDD politicians. In late November, another three journalists at *Radio Publique Africaine* were arrested by security services, allegedly because the broadcaster had not paid its licensing fees.
- In addition to facing arrest and harassment, Burundi's journalists have also been warned by Radjabu himself that they should watch what they say. On the first anniversary of Nkurunziza's inauguration, Radjabu made a public speech in which he cited a Burundian proverb implying that if the media goes too far, the responsible journalists could be killed.
- Civil society has fared little better. Gabriel Rufyiri, the director of the *Observatoire pour la lutte contre la corruption et les malversations économiques* (Olucome) was imprisoned in October in the absence of any charge.
- According to a recent Human Rights Watch (HRW) report, "*We flee when we see them*" abuses with impunity at the national intelligence service in Burundi, the *Service national de renseignement* (SNR, the Burundian intelligence services) has killed at least 36 people and arbitrarily detained at least 200 more. ONUB says that at least 30 FNL supporters disappeared between May and August in the province of Muyinga and are presumed killed. Although a number of SNR agents have been arrested, and HRW says that some of the most "egregious" cases are being investigated by government authorities, it stresses that much more must be done to put an end to the culture of impunity of which the security forces take advantage.

- The FDN and the FNL have also continued to engage in human rights violations, including murder, rape and armed robbery. However, ONUB has indicated that since the signing of the ceasefire agreement on September 7, and the government's instructions not to pursue FNL combatants and suspected collaborators, there has been a significant reduction in reported human rights violations.
- Given the overall decline in the authorities' respect for human rights, this aspect of the situation in Burundi is not expected to change for the better in the near future. Ongoing violations, especially by the FDN against the civilian population and the FNL will corrode the fragile cease-fire between the government and the FNL, and the populations trust that Nkurunziza government is doing its best to address the situation.

Cooperative Domestic and International Events (average weighted)



Average number of reported events per month: 99
Indicator description: see appendix

Risk Assessment:

- In July, the Burundian government doubled basic pay for the FDN troops, which means that the rank and file now earn \$ 60/month and officers \$ 130/month. While the pay increases were necessary, there is also a feeling that Mr Nkurunziza was trying specifically to keep the FDN happy. Teachers and nurses, who are also badly in need of a pay rise, have yet to receive one.
- In mid-October, after months of rising tensions and ongoing harassment of the media and civil society, the government launched a charm offensive, presumably aimed at winning them over. Nkurunziza met with representatives of the media on October 18 to discuss recent problems and has said that his Minister of Information will hold weekly question and answer sessions which have yet to start. A similar approach was taken to wooing back civil society; first Vice President Martin Nduwimana and the Minister of the Interior, Evariste Ndayishimiye met with civil society groups and promised that the government would improve its behavior. Unfortunately, it is highly doubtful that either one of these initiatives will lead to any kind of concrete improvement of the human rights situation for outspoken critics of the government.
- Relations between ONUB and the Burundian government have been strained since Nureldin Satti, the United Nation's Secretary General's Special Representative (SRSG) to Burundi, openly criticized the arrests and detentions of the accused coup plotters. The Burundian government subsequently demanded that Satti leaves the country and be replaced, but the UN refused to concede on the matter and Satti will remain on until the end of 2006 when the last remaining ONUB troops pull out of Burundi.
- ONUB has been gradually reducing its troop presence in Burundi since late-2005. According to ONUB, 800 Pakistani troops withdrew in September. As of October 20, ONUB's total troop strength stood at 2,434. It has been asked by the South African facilitation to assist the deployment of the African Union force which was due to start in December but which has been delayed due to logistical reasons. ONUB officially ended its mandate in Burundi on December 31.
- The *Bureau intégré des Nations Unies au Burundi* (BINUB) will take over as the UN structure responsible for coordinating UN activities with the Burundian government. BINUB, which is due to be operational on January 1, will focus on reconstruction, development and capacity building. The government and the UN have identified a number of priority areas for future collaboration: peace and democratic governance, security sector reform and civilian disarmament, human rights and justice, public information and communication and reconstruction and socio-economic development. In late December, Yussuf Mahmoud was appointed as the BINUB chief.

- According to the 8th report of the Secretary-General on the UN Operations in Burundi, by October 1, the total number of refugees that has returned to Burundi since January 2006 has reached 25,901. Over half returned in August and September, perhaps encouraged by the signing of the ceasefire agreement. While this was encouraging, the report said that the total number of returnees still falls far below the projected number of 50,000 for 2006. An estimated 320,000 Burundian refugees remain in neighboring Tanzania.
- There has been little tangible progress on establishing a transitional justice mechanism in Burundi. Following a mission to Burundi in March, the UN Under-Secretary for Legal Affairs is still looking for clarification from the Burundian government on the type of framework which would lead to the establishment of a truth and reconciliation commission.
- In mid-June, the UN's recently-created Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) decided to establish a specific group for Burundi, one of only two countries that have been chosen to benefit from the new body. The PBC will act as a liaison between the government, the African Union (AU), World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), European Union (EU), bilateral donors and NGOs. Donor aid is crucial to Burundi's recovery – economic, political and social – after decades of war. After initially enjoying positive relations with the Burundian government, donors have grown slightly wary, as they have watched developments over the past few months. Given the Burundian government's strong dependence on donor monies – 60 percent of the budget is financed by donors - they should use their substantial leverage to push the government to respect human rights, good governance and democracy in the interest of the country's recovery.
- The World Bank has yet to disburse the second \$ 30 million tranche of its budgetary support program to the Burundian government. The delay in the disbursement was partly due to the fact that parliament had not yet ratified the grant agreement. However, the World Bank has also insisted that the Burundian government hire an international audit firm to conduct an audit into the sale of the presidential jet, the circumstances of which have been questioned. Deloitte and Touche had reportedly agreed to conduct the audit, but later decided to withdraw from the project.
- The government continues to work on the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP), which it needs to elaborate in order to qualify for debt relief from the IMF. Although the PRSP was expected to be completed by September, it has been delayed and is now expected to be complete by early 2007. If the Burundian government does gain access to the Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility (PRGF) and the Highly-Indebted Poor Countries initiative (HIPC) it stands to receive \$ 1.5 billion in debt relief. The interim PRSP prescribes strict fiscal and monetary discipline, reigning in inflation, and liberalizing state assets such as the coffee sector. The government needs this money in order to pursue its poverty reduction strategies, however as donors become stricter as a result of concerns over the deteriorating political situation, there is potential for clashes between the international financial institutions and the Burundian government.
- South Africa, which is aggressively expanding its influence in the Great Lakes region, continues to support both the Burundian peace process and the Nkurunziza government and this is not expected to change in the near future. South Africa has so far refrained from commenting on the alleged coup plot and recent developments in the country.
- The EU, Belgium and ONUB have all expressed concern over the government's violations of human rights over the past months. In September Karel de Gucht, the Belgian Foreign Minister, told the UN that the democratic process in Burundi was being threatened.
- Donors will do their best to remain engaged and to help the government consolidate improvements in the humanitarian situation. While the international community is aware that its support is crucial for the Nkurunziza government, recent events have made it more difficult for donors to justify ongoing support.

Country Stability	The Country Stability index reflects three independent factors: (i) challenges by non-government actors to the state's monopoly of force; (ii) state repression; and (iii) violence entailing physical force against persons or property. The index is scaled between 0 and 1, where 1 means high and 0 low stability.
Cooperative International Events (average weighted)	Based on the IDEA cooperation-conflict scale: Average weight of Events (i) that have a positive value on the IDEA conflict-cooperation scale* and (ii) where at least one actor comes from outside the country. The Indicator has a range between -13 and 8.
Cooperative Domestic Events (average weighted)	Based on the IDEA cooperation-conflict scale: Average weight of Events (i) that have a positive value on the IDEA conflict-cooperation scale* and (ii) where all actors come from inside the country. The Indicator has a range between -13 and 8.
Confrontational Non-Government Events (relative)	Number of Events (i) that are of confrontational nature such as 'Threaten', 'Demonstrate', 'Reduce relationships', 'Expel', 'Seize' and 'Force' and (ii) where at least one Initiator is a non-government actor divided by the number of all reported events. The Indicator has a range between 0 and 1.
Confrontational Government Events (relative)	Number of Events (i) that are of confrontational nature such as 'Threaten', 'Demonstrate', 'Reduce relationships', 'Expel', 'Seize' and 'Force' and (ii) where at least one Initiator is a government actor divided by the number of all reported events. The Indicator has a range between 0 and 1.
Conflictive Events (relative)	Number of Events (i) that have a negative value on the IDEA conflict-cooperation scale* divided by the number of all reported events. The Indicator has a range between 0 and 1.

*The IDEA cooperation-conflict scale is a general weighting scale that attaches a weight to every event. The scale has a range from -13 to +8. Event types that are regarded as cooperative have positive values, conflictive event types have negative values.

Who are we?

FAST International is the early warning program of swisspeace, based in Bern, Switzerland. The program is funded and utilized by an international consortium of development agencies consisting of the Austrian Development Agency (ADA), Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC).

What do we want to achieve?

FAST International aims at enhancing political decision makers' and their offices' ability to identify critical developments in a timely manner so that coherent political strategies can be formulated to either prevent or limit destructive effects of violent conflict or identify windows of opportunity for peacebuilding.

How do we work?

FAST International uses both qualitative and quantitative methods, with the combination of methods being determined in each case by customer needs. The centerpiece of FAST International is the collection of single cooperative and conflictive events by means of a web-based software, applied by local staff using a coding scheme called IDEA (Integrated Data for Event Analysis), which is based on the WEIS (World Interaction Survey) coding scheme. The monitoring by FAST International is done independently from Western media coverage, thus providing for a constant influx of information. This information is collected by FAST International's own Local Information Networks (LINs). The quantitative empirical analysis is based on composed indicators developed within the IDEA framework. Since even the most profound quantitative analysis requires interpretation, FAST International cooperates with renowned country/area experts.

What are our products?

FAST International offers different early warning products tailored to customer needs. The only standard product available to the general public is the FAST Update, which provides the reader with an overview of developments on a semi-annual basis. It consists of three to five tension barometers (graphs), displaying cooperative and conflictive developments, which are analyzed by FAST's country/area experts on the basis of specific indicators. Whenever major changes occur in one of the countries or regions under scrutiny, FAST releases Special Updates, which follow the structure of the regular FAST Updates. FAST Updates are available in either hard copy, in electronic form on the respective country page or by subscription.

Which countries do we currently monitor?

Africa: Angola, Burundi, DRC/Kivu region, Ethiopia, Madagascar, Mozambique, Rwanda, Somalia
Asia: Afghanistan, India/Kashmir, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Nepal, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan
Europe: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Georgia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Russian Federation/North Caucasus region, Serbia