



Armed Conflicts Report

Burundi (1988 - first combat deaths)

Update: January 2009

Summary

Type of Conflict

Parties to the Conflict

Status of Fighting

Number of Deaths

Political Developments

Background

Arms Sources

Summary:

2008 Peace negotiations remained stalled between the government and the FNL (Forces Nationales de Liberation) in early 2008. FNL made the resumption of peace talks conditional on immunity being granted to its leaders who were in exile in Tanzania. On April 17th, violence resumed in Bujumbura and Bujumbura Rural province which resulted in over 100 casualties and the displacement of thousands of civilians. The violence lasted until May 14th when exiled leaders returned home to implement the peace deal. Talks resumed and an agreement was reached in late May. Burundians who had fled to neighbouring countries began to come back to Burundi. The peace situation, although stable, remained fragile throughout the summer with both parties accusing the other of breaking the peace accord on numerous occasions. In the fall, Palipehutu-FNL, the political branch of the rebel faction refused to allow disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) practices to begin unless they were recognized as an official political party. Due to the ethnic orientation of the political party name, the government refused and the situation worsened. However, in December, Palipehutu-FNL dropped their demands and both the government and Palipehutu-FNL publicly committed to maintenance of the peace. DDR processes are set to begin in 2009. The situation is currently stable but violence could escalate in 2009 as the 2010 elections approach.

2007 Despite the signing of a peace agreement between the government and the FNL (Forces Nationales de Liberation) in September 2006, peace negotiations between the two parties have remained stalled and tense. In the fall, a splinter faction of the FNL attacked government forces in two separate provinces as well as in the capital resulting in some casualties as well as the displacement of thousands of civilians. The international community has pledged an increasing amount of aid, yet analysts claim that these figures are insufficient to ensure a successful lasting peace. Many fear that the stalling of the current peace accords, coupled with economic stagnation, increased armed banditry and government corruption will result in a complete derailment of the peace process and a resumption of armed hostilities.

2006 Government officials and FNL (Forces Nationales de Liberation) rebels signed a peace agreement in September despite numerous skirmishes between the two sides. Around 10 government troops and 20 rebel fighters were killed in 2006 along with 40 civilians while 38 have been reported missing and are presumed dead. These numbers represent a decline from previous years where casualties totalled 300 persons or more. Reservations still remain about continuing authoritarian practices as well as government control over the army and police. Human rights abuses and a lack of transparency remain serious issues and prompted the resignation of Vice-President Alice Nzomukunda in September. Leaders of the past government, including President Domitien Ndayizeye and former Deputy President Alphonse Marie Kadege, were arrested in August and allegedly tortured on allegations of conspiracy to commit a coup that would topple the Nkurunziza government.

2005 Low-intensity conflict between the FNL rebels and the government continued through the year leaving approximately 300 people dead, close to half of whom were civilians. A new constitution established a power-sharing arrangement between Burundi's ethnic groups and a new government and parliament were elected. The former rebel group, the CNDD-FDD and their leader, Pierre Nkurunziza, swept into power.

2004 Government ceasefires with rebel groups held through the year, leaving the FNL as the only remaining active rebel group. Sporadic clashes between the FNL and security forces as well as attacks on civilian targets left between 250 and 300 people dead. Following the massacre of over 150 Congolese Tutsi refugees at a camp in Burundi, tensions in the Great Lakes region climbed and Rwanda threatened to invade Burundi and the Congo in order to prevent other massacres. The African Union peacekeeping force was replaced with a 5,000 troop UN peacekeeping mission. Elections scheduled for this year were delayed until late April 2005.

2003 Ceasefires signed in October 2002 between the government and two smaller rebel factions endured throughout 2003. However, the two largest Hutu rebel groups, the FDD and the FNL (see below) continued their armed struggle against the Tutsi-dominated government and military, resulting in intense fighting throughout most of the year. A November peace agreement between the government and the FDD held throughout the remainder of the year, leaving the FNL as the sole remaining group in armed conflict with the government. The deployment of an African Union peacekeeping force to Burundi in the latter part of the year was a promising indication of regional commitment to resolving the conflict.

2002 In February, the transition government requested Tanzania's help in bringing to the table the two rebel groups which have refused to recognize the power-sharing agreement forged in August 2000. Subsequent negotiations for a general framework agreement calling for a cease-fire and the restoration of democracy held in August largely failed as rebel combatants and government soldiers continued to target both combatants and civilians. However, by the end of the year both FDD factions and a splinter faction of the FNL had signed ceasefires with the Burundian Government.

2001 Attempts to continue the August 2000 peace talks eventually failed due to the refusal of two rebel groups to participate, an offensive by the rebels against the Burundian capital Bujumbura, and disagreement over who would lead the transitional government. The beginnings of a peace process in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) led to the return of some 4,000 rebel fighters into Burundi and to the escalation of the Burundian conflict. Some 400 civilians were killed in the first half of 2001, as well as hundreds of soldiers on both sides. A transitional government comprised of both Tutsis and Hutus was inaugurated in November 2001 for a three-year period.

2000 An August peace accord and continuing cease-fire talks did not prevent clashes between government troops and rebel fighters or an escalation of violence by the end of the summer. There were reports of hundreds killed in 2000, likely an increase over 1999.

1999 Burundi remained in the throes of civil war in 1999, with most killings and much of the destruction reported in Bujumbura Rural B the province around the capital B and in the southern and eastern provinces. More than 500 people died during the year, down from the number of conflict deaths in 1998.

1998 The civil war between the Tutsi-led government and Hutu rebel groups continued to target civilians as the warring factions used summary executions, rape, and torture to terrorize, leaving thousands displaced from their homes.

Type of Conflict:

State control

Parties to the Conflict:

1) Government:

In August, 2005, Pierre Nkurunziza, former leader of the Hutu rebel group CNDD-FDD, became president after the National Council for the Defense of Democracy–Forces for the Defense of Democracy (CNDD-FDD) swept local and parliamentary elections. This brought an end to the transitional government, formed in November 2001 by the creation of a coalition of 17 opposition groups. In line with Burundi's new constitution, the new government consists of a 60/40 Hutu-Tutsi ratio. However, Burundi's Tutsi military elite, officially a part of the

new government, remain a powerful and potentially disruptive force.

"Former Hutu rebel leader Pierre Nkurunziza appointed a cabinet of 20 ministers...giving Hutus 60 percent of the posts and Tutsis 40 percent, in accordance with the new constitution." [*Reuters*, August 31, 2005]

"Burundi's Tutsi army hardliners, the central African nation's traditional election spoilers, are opting for political instead of military muscle...But the Tutsi military men remain a force to be reckoned with, and could easily resort to the time honoured coup d'etat..." [C. Bryson Hull, *Reuters*, March 11, 2005]

Versus

2) Parti pour la Liberation du Peuple Hutu - Forces Nationales de Libération (PALIPEHUTU - FNL):

The FNL is the longest-established Hutu rebel group. A FNL splinter group signed a ceasefire with the government in October 2002 but the main faction of the FNL delayed signing a peace agreement until September 2006. It took until May of 2008, however, before the FNL and the government came to an agreement on the implementation of this peace accord and until December 2008 before both sides publicly committed to pursuing peace.

Status of the Fighting:

2008 Fighting broke out in April between the government and the FNL. Both parties blame the other for the uprising in violence however numerous international bodies including the UN and the Government of the United States accuse the FNL of starting the conflict by shelling the capital. Conflict continued to occur in Bujumbura and Bujumbura Rural province resulting in approximately 20 000 people fleeing their homes. The FNL was also accused of still having approximately 500 child soldiers within their ranks.

"About 100 people have died since the FNL fired shells at Bujumbura three weeks ago" [*BBC News*, 9 May 2008]

"Major army-FNL rebel clashes raged in Bujumbura and neighbouring provinces from 17 Apr; 52, likely more, reported killed" [*CrisisWatch*, 1 May, 2008]

2007 Despite the re-commitment of the FNL (Front National de Liberation) to the 2006 peace accords, fighting broke out in the fall between government forces and a splinter faction of the FNL. The splinter faction, which reportedly has ceded from the main body of FNL leader Agathon Rwasas's forces, then battled with the main faction of the FNL resulting in some deaths. Conflict occurred mainly in the provinces of Bujumbura rural, Bubanza, Mugururo and the capital city of Bujumbura. Skirmishes between the government and rebel factions that occurred over the past year have resulted in the displacement of over 4000 people throughout the country.

"Fighters of Burundi's last active rebel group have for the second time in one week attacked a position occupied by a break-away faction, forcing villagers to flee their homes. The evening raid by combatants of the Front National de Liberation (FNL), led by Agathon Rwasas, took place on a site where the so-called FNL "dissidents" have gathered in the Gakungwe village of Kabezi commune in Bujumbura Rural province." [*IRIN*, 25 October, 2007]

"Hundreds of families fled their homes in the northern suburbs of the Burundian capital, Bujumbura, as factions of the rebel FNL clashed, leaving 20 fighters dead." [*IRIN*, 4 September, 2007]

2006 Throughout 2006, fighting between the FLN and government troops continued and was largely concentrated in the provinces of Bujumbura Rural and Bubanza. However, the main remaining FNL rebel faction signed a peace agreement with the Burundi government in September, the details of which have not been disclosed. Despite the signing of this agreement, allegations against both the government and FLN forces of human rights abuses, including very high instances of rape and sexual torture continue to be reported. There have also been reports of arbitrary killings by government intelligence services. The demobilization process

initiated in 2005 has entered its final phase and the country's new National Defence Force has been reduced to approximately 25,000 troops.

"Agathon Rwasa's FNL is still active in the Burundian provinces of Bujumbura Rural and Bubanza, with reports of frequent fighting with the army." [*IRINnews*, May 30, 2006]

"Sexual violence is commonplace, while arbitrary killings, arrests and torture are also happening, according to Ismael Diallo, the director of the human-rights division of the UN Operation in Burundi (ONUB). Diallo noted that abuses by Burundi's national intelligence service, the Service National de Renseignement (SNR), had grown significantly worse over the past few months, with its agents carrying out arbitrary arrests and torturing detainees suspected of being allied to Burundi's last active rebel group, the Forces nationales de libération." [*IRINnews*, 27 November 2006]

"The Forces Nationales de Libération (FNL), Burundi's remaining active rebel group, has continued to attack civilians even as it continues ceasefire negotiations with the government in Dar es Salaam, the commercial capital of Tanzania." [*IRINnews*, 19 July 2006]

2005 Fighting continued between the FLN and government troops. The FLN intensified their attacks expanding their operations beyond western Burundi and into areas in the north and centre of the country while the government responded with a major offensive in the fall. The use of child soldiers by the FLN continued. Approximately 55,000 former fighters began a demobilization and reintegration process under UN supervision. In December, the UN began the first of a series of troop withdrawals.

"Some 180 soldiers in a Mozambican contingent are set to leave Burundi on Wednesday, marking the start of the withdrawal of the UN Mission there known as ONUB... All of the roughly 5,000 UN peacekeepers in Burundi will leave by February 2006, Ngwebi said. In February, the 817 peacekeepers of the Kenyan battalion will leave. Then, in March, the 640-strong Ethiopian contingent will leave along with 60 physicians from Jordan and 224 Pakistani engineers." [*Reuters*, December 16, 2005]

"Peace in Burundi is seen as essential to a wider settlement in the troubled Great Lakes region, but analysts say that the country's peace prospects depend on Mr. Nkurunziza's success in bringing the rival FNL group into government." [*BBC News*, September 13, 2005]

"Burundi has disarmed and demobilised 7,282 former combatants since December 2004 under an ongoing programme that includes their reintegration into society, a military spokesman for the UN Mission in Burundi (ONUB) has said. The spokesman, Maj Adama Diop, told IRIN on Saturday that of this figure, 6,315 were men, 328 women and 639 children." [*IRINnews.org*, April 26, 2005]

2004 There were sporadic clashes between government security forces and FNL rebels and government forces clashed with members of Rwanda's Interahamwe militia who reportedly entered the country from the Congo. Attacks on civilian targets by rebels and militia were also reported, including an assault on Congolese refugees in a Burundi camp that killed over 150 people. The FNL was accused of the attack but a later UN report proved inconclusive. Although the Burundian army demobilized over 900 child soldiers, children remained active on both sides of the conflict.

"A US-based pressure group says a recent massacre at a refugee camp in Burundi in which 160 people died was carried out by a Burundian rebel movement. A preliminary report by the United Nations last week said that Congolese-based groups were involved in the attack. But Human Rights Watch said this conclusion had helped threaten a renewed outbreak of war in the region... The report says National Liberation Forces (FNL) rebels entered the Gatumba camp at night on 13 August and raked the refugee tents with gunfire." [*BBC News*, September 7, 2004]

"Burundian government troops have succeeded in repelling an unknown number of Rwandan militiamen who crossed into Burundi from neighbouring Democratic Republic of the Congo, army spokesman Maj Adolphe Manirakiza said on Tuesday." [*IRIN*, August 4, 2004]

"Fighting has broken out between Burundi's last active rebel group and government forces, a day

after rebels announced a unilateral ceasefire. Both sides accuse the other of starting the clash. The National Liberation Forces (FNL) announced a truce on Thursday, but warned it would fight back if attacked by government troops. The government welcomed the rebel call, though the FNL has still to agree to talks aimed at ending the 10-year war." [BBC News, April 23, 2004]

2003 At the beginning of the year, ceasefires existed between three of the four rebel groups and the Burundian Government (the exception being the main faction of the Forces Nationales de Libération - FNL). In spite of this, the largest factions of each of the two main rebel groups [the FDD (despite its ceasefire with the government) and the FNL] fought the government's security forces and each other. A major offensive by the FNL in July, described as the most concerted attack on the capital in ten years, and later sporadic attacks targeting both civilians and government fighters shattered any hopes of the group signing a ceasefire with the government. However, a November peace agreement between the government and the FDD ended the conflict between these two groups for the remainder of the year. The size of the Internally-Displaced Peoples (IDP) population within Burundi increased as the conflict intensified.

"Four soldiers and four civilians have been killed in two attacks in Bujumbura blamed on Burundi's last active Hutu rebel group, the National Liberation Forces (FNL), officials said Wednesday." [Agence France Presse, December 17, 2003]

"Some 10,000 civilians fled their homes on Wednesday following the renewed fighting between two rebel groups (FDD and FNL) in Burundi's Bujumbura Rural Province." [UN Integrated Regional Information Network (IRIN), September 18, 2003]

"Although the Forces for the Defence of Democracy (FDD) was one of the groups that signed a peace accord with the government in December, they say they were simply defending themselves from attacks by the army." [BBC News, April 18, 2003]

2002 Government soldiers, the Forces for the Defense of Democracy (FDD), and the National Liberation Front (FNL) continued to exchange attacks with civilians being targeted by all parties to the conflict. In the first nine months of 2002, the military claimed a number of significant victories, boosting its morale and weakening the rebellion. In October the government and smaller factions of both the FDD and the FNL rebel groups agreed to a ceasefire. In December the main faction of the FDD also signed a ceasefire with the Burundian Government.

"But the civil war has continued because the main Hutu rebel groups have refused a cease fire. ... The National Liberation Forces (FNL) has become more fanatical following defeats in its stronghold around the capital, Bujumbura, since the beginning of the year. ... The other main group, the Forces for the Defence of Democracy (FDD), has also been stepping up its attacks." [BBC News, July 14, 2002]

"Burundian army soldiers forced more than 30,000 civilians from their homes in Ruyigi province in eastern Burundi in late April and early May, Human Rights Watch said today. Burundian authorities have refused to allow humanitarian aid groups to provide assistance to the displaced persons, who are suffering from malnutrition and disease." [Human Rights Watch, June 4, 2002]

2001 The Arusha peace accords of August 2000 did not stop the fighting and the two rebel groups which refused to sign the peace accords, the Forces for the Defense of Democracy (FDD), and the National Liberation Front (FNL), increased their attacks on both civilian and military targets. In January, the National Liberation Front (FNL) began an offensive against the capital Bujumbura which, according to media reports, left hundreds of civilians and soldiers dead.

"A new attempt to achieve a lasting peace settlement in Burundi has ended without progress, amid reports of intensified fighting near the capital, Bujumbura. Several African presidents gathered in the northern Tanzanian town of Arusha to try to revive a multi-ethnic power-sharing agreement drawn up last August. The two Hutu rebel groups, the National Liberation Front (FNL), and the Forces for the Defense of Democracy (FDD), both refused to sign the peace accords." [BBC News, February 26, 2001]

2000 Despite the signing of a peace accord in August and the continuation of cease-fire talks, clashes between

Burundian troops and rebel fighters continued during 2000. By the end of the summer there were reports of an escalation in the frequency of rebel attacks and ambushes by the Forces for the Defense of Democracy (FDD) and the National Liberation Front (FNL), the two rebel groups unwilling to take part in the peace process.

"As the peace talks supposedly move into their final phase, the war between the mainly Tutsi army and the Hutu rebels continues unabated... Although rebel leaders are at last being brought into the talks in Arusha, the latest reports from Burundi suggest that the militias are escalating their fighting in both the east and the west, with frequent attacks and ambushes." [*The Economist*, 12 August 2000]

"The Forces for the Defense of Democracy (FDD) and the National Liberation Front (FNL) have been responsible for most of the recent attacks in Burundi and particularly in the capital, Bujumbura." [*Africanews*, 18 September 2000]

1999 Burundi remained in the throes of civil war as security conditions deteriorated. Most killings and much of the destruction reportedly took place in Bujumbura Rural, the province around the capital, and in the southern and eastern provinces. The army used landmines to prevent rebel groups from accessing territory and the rebels used mines to continue a campaign of terror.

1998 Both insurgents and soldiers engaged in substantial military activity from July through October, particularly in the provinces of Rural Bujumbura, Bubanza, Kayanza, Muramvya, and Nyanza-Lac, where military attacks in August caused the flight of 2,000 people to Tanzania.

"In a continuing civil war, both government troops and insurgents slaughtered unarmed civilians and carried out other grievous human rights violations, including arbitrary executions, rape, and torture, and the pillage and destruction of property. The number of lives lost was apparently less in 1998 than in 1997, however, and most parties to the war engaged in negotiations that gave some hope of peace." [*Human Rights Watch World Report*, 1999]

Number of Deaths:

Total: Independent media reports estimate that approximately 300,000 people have been killed since 1993.

2008 Fighting between government forces and the FNL from April 17th – May 26th has claimed the lives of 100-140 rebel fighters and soldiers. Indications of four specific civilian deaths were given, however it is indicated that there is a possibility the number of civilian deaths is higher. There have also been reports of increased murder and crime in the country due to the increase in population, poverty and a higher number of arms in the country. An increase in cases of torture and summary executions by the national intelligence was reported.

"We cannot continue to speak about peace when we are at war" – Representative of South African mediator Kingsley Mamabolo [*AFP*, 21 May, 2008]

2007 Fighting between government forces and a splinter faction of the FNL as well as internal fighting amongst FNL factions have claimed the lives of at least 33 rebel fighters and government troops. No estimates were given as to the number of civilian casualties that resulted from the clashes that took place in the fall. There have also been reports of atrocities on the part of the government that include summary executions, torture and increased instances of rape and sexual violence.

2006 An official tally of casualties is unavailable, however, fighting between the FLN and the government resulted in some deaths. In addition, claims that the government's secret service has been carrying out atrocities remain rampant. Around 10 government troops and 20 rebel fighters were killed in 2006 along with 40 civilians while 38 have been reported missing and are presumed dead. These numbers represent a decline from previous years where casualties totalled 300 persons or more.

2005 Over 300 people were reported killed of whom close to half were civilians.

2004 Between 250 and 300 people, a mixture of rebels and civilians, were reportedly killed.

"About 30,000 people have been displaced following clashes between government forces and

rebels in Burundi. Army spokesman Adolphe Manirakiza said they have been fighting rebels from the Forces for National Liberation (FNL) south of the capital, Bujumbura. About 25 rebels have reportedly been killed in the three-day military operation at the FNL stronghold." [*BBC News*, March 19, 2004]

2003 The sporadic nature of the conflict and the discrepancy in the figures from governmental and rebel reports made it impossible to determine the number of deaths resulting from the conflict in 2003. Between 400 and 800 people were likely killed throughout the year, with the majority of deaths occurring during and after a July rebel offensive.

2002 Unconfirmed sources report that approximately 1,000 combatants and civilians were killed in the first eight months of 2002.

2001 Human rights groups in Burundi issued a report which stated that more than 400 civilians were killed in the fighting during the first half of 2001. According to media reports hundreds of government soldiers and rebels were also killed in the fighting.

"The Tutsi-dominated army and Hutu rebels killed at least 400 civilians in the first half of this year, according to a report issued by five human rights groups in Burundi. The report said 227 civilians were killed, 100 of them by the army, when rebels attacked Kinama neighbourhood of the capital, Bujumbura, earlier this year. It also accused the two rebel groups, the National Liberation Front, and Forces for the Defense of Democracy, of killing Tutsis in ambushes on main roads, as well as attacking rural villages." [*Associated Press*, August 11, 2001]

2000 There were reports of hundreds killed in 2000; however, more accurate conflict casualty figures were unavailable.

1999 More than 500 hundred people were killed by government forces and the rebels in 1999. By the end of the year, Burundi's army forcefully removed some 300,000 people from their homes in the countryside near Bujumbura. The army regrouped these people in camps, saying its action is key to ending the attacks on Bujumbura. Over 300,000 people from Burundi were seeking refuge in Tanzania, while 800,000 persons were internally displaced in the country.

1998 At least 2,500 people died in the fighting during 1998, with some reports suggesting many more. This represents a reduction from the tens of thousands of annual deaths reported in previous years.

Political Developments:

2008 April and early May 2008 saw an uprising in violence within the capital of Burundi and its surrounding provinces. Human Rights Watch accused Nkurunziza's government of arresting more than 300 people who are suspected of being part of the FNL's political wing and holding them for longer than 7 days without charges (the length of time indicated in Burundi's constitution). However, In May of 2008, the FNL and the government came to an agreement on the implementation of the peace accord signed in September 2006. The return of FNL leader Agathon Rwasa to the country suggested an increased commitment to peace on the part of the FNL. However, the Palipehutu-FNL, the political wing of the FNL made it clear over the summer months that they would not commit to a DDR process unless they were recognized as an official political party. Due to the fact that their name means "for the Hutu alone" and favours one of the three major ethnic groups in Burundi, the government would not approve and requested that the group change their name. Arguments over the name change continued into late November of 2008, with both sides accusing the other of violating the peace agreement and the situation deteriorating and becoming fragile. However, in December, the Palipehutu-FNL dropped their request and both sides publicly committed to pursuing peace in a communiqué issued to the public. As part of the deal, 33 senior members of the Palipehutu-FNL received non-elected positions in the government and the government released all political and war prisoners.

2007 Despite the commitment of the FNL (Front National de Liberation) to a peace accord signed in September 2006, tensions remained high between the rebel group and the government. The FNL abandoned the peace process several times throughout the year resulting in an increased fear that peace negotiations would flounder. The FNL also claimed that a South African peace mediator was biased on the part of the

government and refused to participate in peace negotiations or to join the Joint Verification Monitoring Mechanism that would require complete disarmament, a sentiment that was later confirmed by Parliament resulting in the expulsion of the mediator. The government remains mired in accusations of corruption and has also been accused of using torture and summary executions against civilians. Yet the United Nations remains positive about the progress made on disarmament and hopes remain high for peace as international donors inked a \$665 million dollar deal for economic recovery and South Africa committed 1100 soldiers to an African Union task force. The government has also made progress, as it formed a new, more inclusive cabinet with members of two other rebel parties: the Front pour la Democratie au Burundi (FRODEBU) and the Union pour le Progres National (UNPRONA).

"The South African government has approved the deployment of 1100 soldiers to an African Union special task force in Burundi. The deployment is designed to contribute to Burundi's peace and stability, and to ensure that progress towards peace is not reversed." [VOA News Online, 22 February, 2007]

"Donors pledged \$665 million to Burundi's three-year economic recovery plan, designed to lift the tiny central African country from the ashes of a 12-year civil war." [Reuters, 25 May, 2007]

"The country has generally been viewed as an African success story since Nkurunziza took power, but was criticized last year for the jailing and trial of dissidents and for corruption. The government has since blamed most of that on Hussein Radjabu, the former leader of the ruling party who had wielded enormous power behind the scenes until his arrest last month on charges of trying to destabilize the country." [Reuters, 25 May, 2007]

"Human rights violations, including executions by armed bandits and sexual violence against women and children, have continued in Burundi despite an improvement in the political landscape." [IRIN, 16 May, 2007]

"In his first report on Burundi to the UN Security Council on 17 May, Secretary General Ban Ki-moon said the National Commission for Demobilization, Reinsertion and Reintegration had demobilized 22 688 combatants since the beginning of the program in December 2004. Of these, 3 041 were minors and 494 women." [IRIN, 18 June, 2007]

"Political leaders in Burundi have welcomed the formation of a new more inclusive cabinet as an important step towards bringing the country's last active rebel group into a stalled peace process. Burundi's President Pierre Nkurunziza reshuffled the cabinet on 14 November to make room for members of two main opposition parties, the Front pour la Democratie au Burundi (FRODEBU) and the Union pour le Progres National (UNPRONA), as the country's constitution stipulates." [IRIN, 15 November, 2007]

2006 In September, a peace agreement was signed by the government and the main faction of FNL, the last rebel group to sign a peace accord. Details of the agreement have not been released, but FNL leader Agathon Rwaswa has expressed concern over government control of both the Army and Police forces. In addition, continued allegations of human rights abuses and corruption within the government sparked the resignation of the Vice-President, Alice Nzomukunda. In August, members of the former government including former Vice-President Alphonse Marie Kadege, were arrested on the premise of a conspiracy to commit a coup. Many reports also alleged that the former Vice-President, along with six other high-ranking officials had been tortured while detained. The repatriation of refugees has also been problematic as it has resulted in many instances of land disputes as thousands return from neighbouring countries.

"The government of Burundi signed a cease-fire with the country's last remaining rebel group on Thursday, marking a milestone in the tiny nation's emergence from a 13 year civil war. "We want to reassure our brothers and sisters of FNL that our government is ready to work with them in promoting peace, democracy, reconstruction and reconciliation in Burundi," Nkurunziza said shortly after signing. Rebel leader Rwaswa said he was happy with the agreement and was looking forward for its full implementation. No details of the terms of the deal were made available. A major stumbling block to securing the cease-fire had been the make up of the national army, which the NFL wanted dissolved or overhauled." [IRINnews, September 7, 2006]

"The increasingly authoritarian government risks triggering unrest and eroding the gains of peace,

warns the International Crisis Group think tank." [BBC News, December, 2006]

"The country's second vice-president, Alice Nzomukunda, resigned, accusing the government of human-rights violations and corruption." [IRINnews, September 8, 2006]

2005 Communal and parliamentary elections were held marking the end of the transitional government. The former Hutu rebel group CNDD-FDD received a majority of votes and Pierre Nkurunziza, former head of CNDD-FDD, became president. The government was formed with a 60/40 Hutu-Tutsi ratio as stipulated by the constitution overwhelmingly approved earlier in the year through a national referendum. The FNL, the last remaining rebel group, first rejected the new government's offer of peace talks but later said it was willing to negotiate if its imprisoned members were freed by the government. The UN mission in Burundi (ONUB) was extended by the Security Council to July 2006.

"Burundi's last remaining rebel group said on Thursday for the first time that it was ready to talk peace with the new government of the tiny central African nation provided its imprisoned members were set free." [Reuters, November 17, 2005]

"The Libération du peuple Hutu-front national de libération (FNL), Burundi's last remaining rebel group, said on Wednesday it did not recognize the legitimacy of the new government and would only negotiate peace with representatives of the country's three ethnic groups." [IRINNews.org September 15, 2005]

2004 In August, CNDD-FDD rebels voted to become a political party while the FNL was declared a terrorist organization and a Tutsi-Hutu power-sharing agreement was endorsed at a summit of African leaders. Despite the main Tutsi parties dropping objections to an interim constitution, national elections scheduled for 2004 were delayed until 2005. As part of a reintegration plan, the Burundi government ended ethnic political identification and divisions and began training the first unit of the government army to include former rebel group members. It also voted to establish a truth and reconciliation commission following elections. African Union peacekeeping troops in Burundi were replaced by a UN peacekeeping mission in June. Although tens of thousands of Burundian refugees returned home during the year, thousands more fleeing the Congo conflict threatened to destabilize Burundi. Following the August refugee camp massacre, tensions climbed in Rwanda, Burundi and the Congo, as Rwanda threatened to invade the other two countries to prevent further massacres of Tutsis.

"Concerns of a constitutional crisis in Burundi abated on Monday when six Tutsi-dominated parties dropped their long-standing opposition to the country's current interim constitution. The interim constitution is necessary to avoid a constitutional void, the chairman of the main Tusti-dominated Parti de l'unité pour le progres national Jean, Baptiste Manwangari, told reporters on Monday." [IRIN, November 1, 2004]

"Burundi's presidential elections, scheduled to take place at the end of October, will now be held on 22 April 2005, according to a plan published on Saturday by the National Independent Electoral Commission." [IRIN, October 18, 2004]

"Two Burundian leaders have welcomed Wednesday's move by heads of state of the Great Lakes region to brand Burundi's rebel Forces nationales de liberation of (FNL) a terrorist organisation, terming it long overdue." [IRIN, August 19, 2004]

"A 5,000-strong United Nations force has taken over peacekeeping operations in Burundi to support the peace process." [BBC News, June 2, 2004]

2003 As part of an earlier power-sharing agreement, in May the presidency of the transitional government was passed from Major Pierre Buyoya to Domitien Ndayizeye, who became the first Hutu leader of Burundi in seven years. This appointment was not considered sufficient by the two main rebel groups who continued their armed struggle. In April, the African Union (AU) outlined the mandate of a peacekeeping force, the African Mission in Burundi (AMIB), which was to deploy to Burundi by June with an initial mandate of one year. Due to initial financial and logistical constraints, the peace operation was delayed in its deployment; however, with the assistance of the European Union, the full force of 2,500 was in the field by mid-October. In November leaders of the FDD and the government signed a peace deal which endorsed the sharing of power between the two

parties in political, security and economic matters. At the same summit, regional leaders issued an ultimatum to the FNL; cease hostilities within three months or face regional action.

"Under the peace deal, the FDD will get four ministers and 40% of officers in a new army. However, another rebel group, the National Liberation Forces (FNL), has not signed up to the deal and says it will continue to fight." [*BBC News*, November 21, 2003]

"At the same time, the 20th summit of the Great Lakes regional peace initiative on Burundi gave the Forces Nationales de Liberation (FNL) rebel faction led by Agathon Rwasa three months to enter negotiations with the government or face the consequences of regional action ..." [*IRIN*, November 17, 2003]

"The peacekeeping force...was mandated to: oversee the implementation of ceasefire agreements, support disarmament and demobilization initiatives and the reintegration of combatants, ensure favourable conditions for the establishment of a UN peacekeeping mission, and contribute to political and economic stability in Burundi." [*United Nations Integrated Regional Information Network (IRIN)*, April 3, 2003]

2002 The inauguration of a new power-sharing government of Hutus and Tutsis in late 2001 failed to stop the bloodshed. Peace talks in Tanzania in August made little progress. A cease fire between the army and the rebels could not be reached, although rebels did agree to negotiate at a later date.

2001 African leaders' attempts to continue the peace negotiations started in August 2000 failed due to the refusal of two of the rebel groups, the National Liberation Front (FNL), and the Forces for the Defence of Democracy (FDD), to participate and to disagreements over who would lead the proposed transitional government. An FNL offensive on Burundi's capital around the time of the peace talks complicated negotiations further. In other developments, progress in the peace process of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), led Burundian rebels using the DRC as a staging area for attacks against Burundian government forces to return to Burundi and escalate the conflict there. A transitional government was inaugurated on November 1, 2001 for a three year period. President Pierre Buyoya, 17 political parties and the National Assembly signed the power-sharing agreement. President Buyoya (a Tutsi) will remain in charge for 18 months. He will be succeeded by the current Vice President Domitien Ndayizeye (a Hutu) for the second half of the three year period. Multi-party elections are scheduled from April 2004. The two main rebel groups refused to sign this agreement. South Africa sent 700 soldiers into Burundi to serve as a "special protection unit" for the young government.

"As the latest round of talks to end Burundi's seven-year civil war got under way this week in the Tanzanian town of Arusha, the negotiators squabbled over who should lead the proposed transitional government. They are supposed to agree on a Tutsi president and a Hutu vice-president for the first 18-month phase of the three-year transition. For the second phase, the two will swap roles. The largest of the ten Tutsi parties supports Burundi's current president, Pierre Buyoya. But eight of the other Tutsi groups now back Colonel Epitace Bayaganakandi, a former interior minister." [*The Economist*, March 24, 2001]

"Hutus and Tutsis joined a new power-sharing government in Burundi last week under a peace deal brokered by Nelson Mandela to end the central African state's 'slow genocide' and bitter history of de facto apartheid." [*The Guardian Weekly*, November 8-14, 2001]

"[The creation of a transitional government] was only made possible by through the swift arrival of 700 South African troops, sent with the utmost urgency by Nelson Mandela. ... [A] hundred were sent to protect politicians; five hundred to deal with organization and management and another hundred to take charge of logistics." [*International Crisis Group*, May 24, 2002]

2000 Nominated as a new moderator for peace negotiations, Nelson Mandela presented a draft peace agreement by the beginning of August. Government officials were resistant to a peace accord prior to a cease-fire agreement and there were differences on key issues such as the leadership of the transitional government proposed in the pact. Nevertheless, in late August 13 of the 19 parties involved in the talks signed the Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement for Burundi. Two critical armed factions, the Forces for the Defence of Democracy (FDD) and the National Liberation Force (FNL) were among six non-signatories. A new round of cease-fire negotiations began in Nairobi during September, when rebel leaders presented conditions, including

power sharing arrangements, prior to cease-fire negotiations. Mr. Mandela and other regional leaders threatened to impose sanctions against Burundi unless a cease-fire was agreed within thirty days.

"...leaders are now mulling over a vast, hugely ambitious draft peace agreement, compiled by Mr. Mandela's mediation team. Running to over 100 pages, the text outlines a new political order, based on justice, democracy and good government. There are proposals for international peacekeepers, repatriation schemes for refugees, reconstruction budgets and training programmes. Drawing in part on South Africa's post-apartheid experience, the draft recommends a national truth and reconciliation commission and an international commission of judicial inquiry to investigate genocide..." [*Economist*, 12 August 2000]

"At the Nairobi summit, the rebel leaders presented their demands that they would not agree to enter into cease-fire negotiations until all political prisoners have been released. The rebel movement has also conditioned a future cease-fire on power sharing and dismantling of the re-groupment camps set around the Capital Bujumbura by the government last year to curb rebel activity." [*InterPress Service*, 23 September 2000]

"Buyoya himself signed the Arusha accord, despite the opposition by most of the Tutsi groups, which believe the standard democratic ideal of majority rule cannot work in Burundi, a country where Hutus make up 85 percent of the country's population and voting patterns take ethnic lines. Instead, they prefer a power sharing structure on a 50-50 basis, a fraction Hutu groups have rejected...Tutsis are also uncomfortable about changing the status quo in the army, which they dominate and see as their main protection against reoccurrence of 1993 genocide." [*InterPress Service*, 23 September 2000]

1999 Economic sanctions imposed on Burundi by neighbouring African countries more than two years earlier were lifted in 1999. There was little progress made in the Arusha peace process launched in 1998. President Nelson Mandela of South Africa was nominated as the new mediator of Burundi, picking up negotiations where the late Julius Nyerere had left off.

"Former president Nelson's Mandela's appointment as the mediator of Burundi is the best news for the divided, strife-torn country in a long time. The appointment of Mandela, who replaces the late Tanzanian statesman Julius Nyerere, was made at a meeting of regional heads of state in the Tanzanian town of Arusha on Wednesday." [*Daily Mail and Guardian*, December 3, 1999]

1998 The ethnic and regional nature of the renewed conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo further complicated the Burundian situation, yet peace negotiations occurred during 1998, with varying degrees of success. After a negotiated July ceasefire failed immediately, discussions in October made some progress.

"Despite being enmeshed in the larger conflict within the region, the parties in Burundi persisted in peace negotiations just as military conflict escalated in the DRC. The new government and most of the major insurgent groups arrived at a preliminary agreement and a cease-fire that was to begin at the end of July. But both the government and the FDD immediately reneged on the cease-fire agreement and one part of PALIPEHUTU also declared that it would continue military activity. Several of the already numerous parties involved in negotiations divided further, complicating the process. FRODEBU had been divided into two wings for some time, one inside Burundi and one in exile; the CNDD/FDD split in May; PALIPEHUTU experienced internal difficulties in July; and UPRONA, a largely Tutsi party, divided in October... A round of peace negotiations in October produced some progress and the parties were to meet again in January 1999." [*Human Right Watch World Report*, 1999]

Background:

Burundi has been subject to ethnic violence since independence from Belgium in 1962. Tutsis mostly have held the reins of power, with the majority Hutus claiming oppression by minority rule. The current phase of the conflict began in 1988 when 20,000 or more Hutus were massacred by the military following an uprising in northern Burundi. In 1993, a Hutu, Melchior Ndadaye, and his Front for Democracy in Burundi (FRODEBU) party won Burundi's first democratic elections. Shortly after, Ndadaye was murdered, allegedly by Tutsi

soldiers. In 1994 the formation of a coalition of parties representing two ethnic groups, FRODEBU (Hutu) and the Tutsi Union for National Progress (UPRONA), led to the installation of Cyprien Ntaryamira as president. After he and Rwandan president Juvenal Habyarimana were killed in a plane crash in April 1994, a UN-brokered agreement produced another Government of National Unity. In 1996 former president Major Pierre Buyoya regained control of the government by a military coup and neighbouring states reacted to Buyoya's suspension of parliament and banning of political parties by imposing economic sanctions on Burundi. Renewed conflict in neighbouring Democratic Republic of Congo in 1998 further complicated the Burundian situation, although peace talks began the same year. In November 2001, a transitional government consisting of both Hutu and Tutsi representatives was inaugurated in accordance with the August 2000 Arusha peace accords. However, the two main rebel groups, the FDD and the FNL refused to recognize this government or agree to a cease fire. The situation changed in 2003 when the FDD agreed to join the government leaving the FNL as the sole rebel group. The continued violence led the African Union to mandate the creation of a peacekeeping force to Burundi. By October 2003, 2,535 peacekeepers had been deployed to Burundi and in 2004 the AU mission was replaced by a 5,000 troop UN peacekeeping force. In February 2005 a new constitution was approved after receiving over 90 percent of votes in a national referendum. The constitution establishes a democratic mixed parliamentary-presidential political system and the sharing of parliamentary, government and military posts among Burundi's ethnic groups. In September 2006, a peace accord was finally signed between the government and the FNL, the country's last remaining rebel group to do so. However, throughout 2007 negotiations remained difficult and the FNL continuously abandoned the process resulting in increased fear that the process could be derailed altogether. In 2008 violence erupted in April with renewed peace talks occurring in May 2008. In May, government and the FNL reached an agreement on the implementation of the 2006 peace accord. The summer months saw the slow deterioration of peace, however, in December, both parties issued a combined communiqué and the DDR process is set to begin in January of 2009.

Arms Sources:

"A key factor to the rising murder rate is the number of readily available weapons in the country" [AFP, July 21, 2008]

"The continuing circulation of weapons among civilians and the slow reintegration of demobilized fighters into society have led to daily reports of armed banditry in 2007." [IRIN, 16 May, 2007]

In 2006 it was reported that Burundi spent close to 51.8 million Burundian Francs on military expenditure. This figure also represents 6.3 percent of the country's annual GDP. [The SIPRI Yearbook, 2006]

In 2005, Belgium signed an agreement to resume military cooperation with Burundi. France was the main arms supplier to the Burundi government until 1996. The government also received weapons from South Africa in 1998 and Ukraine in 2001 and 2002 while the Hutu rebels, especially the CNDD, were reportedly supplied by Zimbabwe. According to at least one report, arms originating from several countries have made their way to Burundi via private sources.

[Sources: *Military Balance*, 1999/2000 to 2004/2005, *SIPRI Yearbook 2005*]

"Belgian Minister of Defence André Flahaut and his Burundian counterpart, Vincent Niyungeko, signed a letter of intent on Tuesday to resume military cooperation, which was suspended in 1972....The two countries, he said, would set up a partnership programme 'in the near future', to begin training Burundian army officers and cadets at the Belgium Royal Military Academy and the Royal Defence Institute in Belgium. Belgian instructors would also go to Burundi to train military trainers, he added." [IRINnews.org, March 30, 2005]

"It [Human Rights Watch] names China, France, North Korea, Russia, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda, the United States and Zaire (now the Democratic Republic of Congo) under the late President Mobutu Sese Seko as the most important suppliers of military aid, although Washington and Paris officially ended their assistance in 1996. It also charges Angola, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zaire with permitting their territories to be used as trans-shipment points for arms bound for Burundi.... In addition to Belgian-based companies directly involved in the trade, gun runners from Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan, Ukraine, and Bulgaria have used Belgium-based pilots and cargo handlers to transport arms to Burundi via Belgium Zaire, South Africa, or Angola, according

to the report." [*InterPress Services*, December 8, 1998]

"The Zimbabwe Independent claimed that a military cooperation agreement was signed in June last year between the government and CNDD involving training, equipment, finance and diplomatic assistance. Arms and ammunition would be supplied from stockpiles held by the Zimbabwe Defence Industries." [*IRIN*, 3 February 2000]

"A delegation of Burundian rebels was seen recently negotiating arms deliveries in Zimbabwe, which supports Kabila in his fight against Uganda and Rwanda." [*The Guardian Weekly*, March 2-8, 2000]

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