



Chapter Three

Conflict and Coffee in Burundi

Johnstone Summit Oketch and Tara Polzer¹

Introduction

The small central African country of Burundi has repeatedly been wracked by conflict since its independence in 1962. Since 1993 a fully-fledged civil war has raged, with enormous human and economic cost. Years of regional and international attempts to bring peace have made only slow progress. Tragically, the most promising episodes of Burundi's history in terms of democratisation and reform have repeatedly been turned into the triggers for the most violent and deadly confrontations.

This study re-examines the conflict in Burundi and the conflict management initiatives and processes aimed at mitigating it in the light of the contribution of environmental and ecological factors in causing violence. There are very few studies of the Burundian conflict which take these factors into account. At a time when the Arusha peace process is at a crossroad, with the start of all-party talks in Tanzania in August 2002, this perspective may contribute to a deeper understanding of the underlying causes of the conflict, especially those that have led to its repeated re-emergence over the past decades. We also suggest several possible approaches to peace building that aim to address the structural ecological conflicts that we identify.

The *leitmotiv* connecting the chapters is that the conflict, like many on the continent of Africa, is primarily about elite struggles for control of the state. Many researchers on Burundi² have noted the central importance of competition for control over the state. The state, and the predatory activities of the elite who control it, as we argue, is both the underlying impetus for violent conflict, and the connecting link between the exploitation and degradation of Burundi's natural resources and the conflict. The small size of the private sector in many African countries has ensured that the state is virtually the sole provider of employment and sole agent of economic redistribution. Control of the state is therefore a powerful political asset which brings with it the power to decide over the allocation of all the country's resources. Harold Laswell's adage that politics is a question of *who gets what where and when* applies in a very literal way in Burundi.³ This study, in short, is concerned with the role that the exploitation and control over the country's agricultural produce played in fuelling the conflict. Burundi's political economy is logically central to the study's analysis.

Burundi's *prima facie* environmental problem is the extreme scarcity of land in this small country where the majority of the population lives off subsistence agriculture. There are many kinds of scarcity, which for a rural, subsistence population can be life threatening. But there is also an abundance of resources. We argue, therefore, that the immediate problem of scarcity of resources like land, and the seemingly immediate competition for such resources among groups in the community, is not a direct cause of the widespread violence that has wracked Burundi for the last 35 years. The violence in which Tutsis have killed Hutus and Hutus, Tutsis is a result of elite competition for control over the state.

Belligerents and analysts alike frame the conflict in the context of ethnicity. The reality, however, presents a more complex and seemingly intractable picture of competition for resources, competing urban and rural development and investment policy priorities and industrial and agricultural demands. Furthermore, there is a glaring schism between the country's southern and northern regions, with far-reaching implications for the conflict. The ethnic mask has served to draw attention away from the concrete structural conflict of interests between the elite and the rural majority.

Even though the overt conflict does not reflect the structure of competition for resources, the character of Burundi's natural resources nonetheless directly shapes how the state functions and why it resorts to violence. The small base of most African economies, often monocultural like Burundi, their disproportionate agrarian orientation, and their dependence on cash crops have conspired with the legacy of colonial economic structures to make many African countries extremely economically vulnerable and unstable. In Burundi, more than 80% of foreign exchange receipts come from one cash crop alone, *coffee*. This has ensured that the country's economic health is held to ransom by the vagaries of international market forces.

The vulnerability of Burundi's economy and ecology has been exacerbated by the predatory nature of the state, proverbially biting the hand that feeds it. Neglect of the agricultural sector and the hinterland have ensured that over time primary producers are discouraged, land is under increasing strain of degradation, and hunger looms.

Burundi's, and indeed the entire Great Lakes region's, future is contingent on the peaceful coexistence of their inhabitants. Although it must be clearly stated that the Hutu majority has suffered the most from Tutsi elite exclusion and repression, we here note that there is extreme structural violence against *all* Burundians who are not members of the narrow urban ruling elite, because they suffer poverty, illiteracy and ill health from the distorting effects of the predatory policies of the elite-controlled state. The challenge, then, is to redress the structural bases of the conflicts in the region, for example the coffee sub-sector in Burundi.

Explanations of conflict based on environmental and economic factors have had a renaissance in recent years, reflected in the first chapter of this book. We will briefly outline below to what extent some of these theories are appropriate to Burundi's case. Of course, a focus on ecological causes is only one possible angle from which to understand the conflict, and we do not wish to postulate a new monocausal analysis. In the text, other factors, such as the extremely powerful mutual fear of Hutus and Tutsis of genocide, are noted, but are not treated in detail.

Jeffrey Herbst⁴ makes the important point that too strong an analytical and policy focus on the economic/resource-based aspects of a conflict (for example, arguing for the policy of export diversification) detracts attention from the fact that:

- there are strong ideological or grievance-based factors (fear of mutual genocide in Burundi); and
- that the conflicts are still centrally military. For example, the violence could be ended quickly by increasing the power of one side so that it can defeat the other (as was long the case when the army could brutally repress the rebel groups in a very short time).

Moreover the international community does not want to take sides, and so part of the attraction of drawing attention to economic agendas is that the resulting policy recommendations do not require the international community to get involved "in the messy business of promoting fighting, much less the defeat of one side".⁵ In spite of this caveat, it is clear that a position on ecological issues in such a context is extremely political, because it concerns control over wealth and the political influence this brings. It is not depoliticising violence and conflict, but rather trying to uncover the structural motivations and incentives behind the political rhetoric of ethnicity, which has also had the effect of giving international actors an excuse for not taking a committed and preventative stand in supporting peace building.

Many of the theories concerning the role of environmental factors in the outbreak and continuation of violent conflict that have been put forward in recent years do not apply to Burundi. There has been an active academic debate about the 'new wars' whose protagonists are more interested in continued violence in order to gain and retain control over mineral wealth than in winning for a political end. The central argument of these theories is that armed groups, both government and rebels, can finance their arms and armies through exploiting natural resources, and that retaining control over these resources becomes a self-perpetuating reason for local commanders to fight. These ideas focus mainly on easily extractable and exploitable natural resources, which are found in easily localised and controlled sites, such as gold, diamonds, other minerals (such as coltan in the DRC), oil or timber.

Burundi does not have significant amounts of such resources. Burundi's main source of natural wealth is coffee. The process of extracting, processing and selling coffee is not conducive to the same patterns of violent control and smuggling as diamonds or timber. While the exploitation of the coffee industry and agricultural production in general has indeed been central in funding the state's capacity to carry out violence, the rebel groups have not financed themselves in this way. Finally, the control over Burundi's natural resources has not suddenly become an end in itself (in theoretical contrast to a political aim) through the dynamics of the conflict, but is rather an integral part of the political constitution of the state, before, during and after outbreaks of violence.

The broader expression of the resource extraction hypothesis, that is the debate around the political economy of violence⁶ does apply to Burundi. This approach to understanding conflicts postulates that while wars may start with political aims, the motivation of the fighting groups may change during the process of the war to be economically oriented, that is they get used to looting and smuggling, or to having access to more state military spending. There is a strong element of this in Burundi, which makes a peace process very difficult. The Tutsi-dominated army is accustomed to great wealth and political power, which they justify through the Hutu threat. The rebel groups were long funded by external actors with an interest in continued violence, such as the DRC, and have strong smuggling networks in the whole region. This is an important dynamic, but not directly connected to the environment.

Collier and Hoeffler's⁷ recent statistical work on the determining factors of civil war shows that dependency on the export of primary commodities, that is environmental products, is the "most powerful risk factor" for the outbreak of conflict, compared to all the other factors they tested. This dependency is certainly strong in Burundi. However, Collier⁸ places this statistical finding within a theoretical context that is not applicable to Burundi. He argues that what matters is not *why* rebel groups start a violent rebellion, but rather *how* they manage to finance themselves, and then postulates that a high level of primary commodity exports is likely to lead to conflict because primary commodities are easy loot. As noted above, however, the rebel movements in Burundi are not largely financed through looting coffee or other products of Burundian production – they are financed by external interests and the diaspora. Where the perspective of this report coincides with Collier is in noting the predatory behaviour of the state in financing its own capacities for violence through primary commodity exploitation.⁹ However, Collier only mentions the state actor very briefly, focusing otherwise only on the rebel groups. In the case of Burundi, such a one-sided actor analysis is fatal.

As a closing note on the "greed versus grievance" debate,¹⁰ of which Collier is an extreme supporter of the thesis that greed is the only relevant factor in civil war, this chapter argues that it is false to make a categorical distinction between the economic and the political. Greed is a

highly political attitude, especially if expressed by a state machinery and elite class, since it undermines the equitable and sustainable distribution and use of natural, social and political resources, thereby stunting the life chances of millions of citizens. This approach specifically rejects what Twose and Fairhead call the 'greenwar' thesis.¹¹ This thesis postulates a simplified and inevitable progression from environmental degradation (including land scarcity, land degradation and desertification, etc.) to poverty and conflict. Twose summarises it thus:

"The cycle is repetitive and truly vicious. Environmental impoverishment, increasing conflict over resources, marginalisation of rural people, social and political unrest, displacement and uncontrolled migration lead to further conflict and the outbreak of wars within and between states. When hostilities grow into organised warfare, the environment inevitably undergoes further degradation. The insidious pattern comes full cycle, as a peacetime population and government struggle to cope with a land left environmentally bankrupt. The seeds are sown for further tension and conflict."¹²

In a similar vein to the 'greenwar' thesis, Homer-Dixon¹³ argue that environmental stress and competition over scarce resources may be central factors leading to the outbreak of violence. This includes where the rural poor are competing to survive in the face of environmental scarcity and degradation, but also where more affluent and armed groups compete to capture scarce resources. Uvin has applied this concept to Burundi, noting competition for land as a contributing factor to the violent conflict and genocide. Our analysis does not find that this approach applies to Burundi. Where there is violent appropriation of land, this takes place in the context of much wider structural violence, whose main target is the state, not the land itself.

Fairhead criticises this 'greenwar' position very effectively and suggests an alternative to the focus on scarcity and environmental depletion, namely the focus on resource value and wealth. An important element that such an approach allows us to see is "how the relationship between environmental degradation and conflict is linked to the international economy.... This is important, as the major destinations for the resources which, it can be argued, have been fuelling conflicts in Africa tend to be the industrialised nations."¹⁴ It is for this reason that this chapter analyses the coffee industry to show how local agricultural production and resource exploitation is linked to state predation and finally to the international coffee market and its highly destabilising price swings.

A final and important point that we share with Fairhead is that we aim to 'put environment in its place'. The strategy taken is to focus on the many political and economic causes [of the conflict in Burundi] and then try to see where environmental phenomena fit in, rather than looking at environmental phenomena and trying to see how they might contribute (or not) to understanding [the conflict.]"¹⁵

Background to the Conflict

Competition for the state, in the Burundian context, is synonymous with competition for control over Burundi's natural resources. Burundi's ecological and environmental resources impact on the conflict via the predatory state. This occurs at three levels. First, as with any country whose economy is based overwhelmingly on agriculture, the state derives its income largely from the processing and sale of agricultural produce. It distributes the profits from these resources to create a political client base, and it uses the revenue to protect and perpetuate the predatory system, very often through violence. This is the institutional processing and sale level. The second level, closely connected to this first level, is the local production level, at which the producers of Burundi's resources, especially those mainly Hutu rural farmers who produce cash crops, are exploited and repressed, creating a grievance which contributes to the *cycles of violence*. Finally, the third level is the global market; it concerns the volatile international market for Burundi's resources, mainly coffee, which puts pressure on the resources of the political-military elite.

When speaking of competition for control over the state, we are speaking of competition between urban elites. Rural populations, however, are most directly affected by natural resource questions, especially, in the case of Burundi, by the lack of sufficient land to sustain a growing peasant population living off subsistence agriculture. The average amount of arable land per peasant family is less than one hectare and this is rapidly decreasing owing to population growth, inheritance rights splitting already commercially non-viable farms into even smaller units, and land degradation. This element of natural resource pressure does feed into the way in which violence is carried out. People are known to have been killed so that their neighbours could take over their property. However, we argue that the scarcity of land alone would not lead to violence of neighbour against neighbour in Burundi were it not for the exclusion of the majority from all political and alternative economic opportunity and for the ideology of ethnic hatred and fear. Therefore we will primarily look at how issues of control over natural resources, via the state, affect how elites start violence.

The capture of the state by a small ethno-regional faction, and the concomitant exclusion of the majority of Burundians – most Hutu, but also most Tutsi – from political and economic opportunity has created the structural basis for conflict in the country. Of course there is a complex web of factors that have contributed to the outbreak of actual violence and to the shape that it has taken. These include proximate historical factors such as triggering events and regional and international influences, as well as factors endogenous to a captured state: the lack of legitimate and effective domestic conflict resolution mechanisms, and the role which has accrued to ethnicity over decades of colonialism and post-colonial conflict.

Pre-colonial Burundi

There is no unanimity of views on the circumstances of Burundi's pre-colonial social order, including the nature of the distinction between Tutsi and Hutu, the nature of the political system, and the consequential impact of colonial rule. In addition to the difficulty of researching oral societies, and the extreme distortions of most missionary and colonial reports, the main obstacle to a consensus understanding today is the extreme contemporary political importance of any interpretation.¹⁶ A comment made by David Horowitz about South Africa applies to Burundi as well: "There is the conflict itself, and there is the meta-conflict – the conflict about the nature of the conflict."¹⁷ Various commentators outside as well as within Burundi also note that laying disproportionate responsibility at the door of the 'colonial legacy' has been used by some Tutsi politicians for political mileage and vindication¹⁸. Despite these justified calls for caution, it is clear that colonialism fundamentally changed Burundian society from its pre-colonial condition, and that many of the structures that were put in place then, now continue to create conflict. These include a predatory state, socio-economic and political exclusion, and rigid ethnic identities.

Before analysing the colonial impact, some brief comments about pre-colonial Burundi are necessary. Burundi's social system was bifurcated, not along ethnic lines but between royals and commoners: the *ganwa*-Tutsi on one hand and the non-royal Tutsi and the Hutu on the other. Twa were treated as social outcasts then as they are now. The distinction between Hutu and Tutsi was one of a stratified division of labour; some have likened it to 'classes'. Hutus were predominantly agriculturalists and provided the bulk of labour and Tutsi were pastoralists and warriors. Hutus could 'become' Tutsi by achieving a certain level of wealth (in cattle) or influence. Without romanticising this division of labour, which was based on hierarchy and inequality, there was nevertheless a relationship of mutual dependence and exchange. Furthermore, and contrary to widespread belief, Hutus, although not controlling all levers of power, enjoyed significant positions of responsibility and authority and were accorded property rights. Access to political and economic power, that is access to land and cattle, hinged around the patronage of the royal court, and was mediated through kinship relations and shifting kinship alliances¹⁹. In sum, pre-colonial Burundi was characterised by a highly complex social and political system based on the clan, heterogeneous and flexible ethnic group organisation, competition for access to land and cattle via the king, and a traditional mechanism of conflict management, the *Bashingantahe*, based on respect for clan elders²⁰.

Colonial rule

The elements of group identity, political structure and economy noted above were all radically transformed under colonialism. Colonial rule was first imposed on the Burundian kingdom from 1888 to 1915 by the Germans, who had to give up their colonial territories after the end of the First World War through the provisions of the Versailles Treaty. In 1919, Belgium assumed possession of Rwanda-Urundi as trust territories of the League of Nations, which was formally accepted by the Belgian parliament in October 1924. Belgium held the territories until their independence in 1962.²¹

The colonial administrations had five major effects on Burundian society, all of which became important elements of later conflicts:

1. The disenfranchisement of Hutus in relation to the fledgling state was increased through the administrative reforms which shaped the structure of the state.
2. The ethnic differential of opportunity was cemented through opening education mainly to Tutsi and *ganwa*.
3. Ethnic identities became fixed and politicised.
4. The economy began to be structured for primary product export.
5. The state administration, rather than the royal court, became the central locus of patronage and source of wealth for the elite.

Through the choice of indirect rule as administrative model, the Germans and later the Belgians entrenched the position of the Tutsi aristocratic class, the *ganwa*, who held virtually all positions of leadership and the attendant access to political and socio-economic advancement. Administrative centralisation introduced in the 1930s under Belgian rule further strengthened the Tutsi generally and the *ganwa*-Tutsi particularly, while eroding traditional Hutu claims to power. The progressive decimation of the Hutu ranks in the administration, and their removal from political, social and traditional roles, led to a minuscule Hutu elite by the time of independence in 1962. Education opportunities, while in theory open to all, were for the most part open only to the children of the Tutsi aristocracy with the result of reinforcing their predominant position in local colonial administrative positions.²²

In privileging the aristocratic Tutsi, the colonial powers did not only support the hierarchical system which already existed in Burundian society – they qualitatively changed the relationship between the social groupings as well as their self-perceptions. From a system of mutual dependence and to some extent flexible identities, colonialism concretised and rigidified ethnic identity and placed Tutsi and Hutu in relationship to each other as rulers and subjects. The Belgians, Reyntjens notes, turned ethnic groups into politically relevant categories.²³

The concretisation of political, social and economic categories of ethnic identity was underpinned on the one hand by the so-called 'hermitic myth' and on the other by the introduction of identity cards. The 'hermitic myth', which was introduced by colonial anthropologists, claimed that Tutsis were 'natural rulers' compared to Hutus, based on the supposed origin of Tutsi in northern Africa, and the portrayal of the 'indigenous' Hutu as "disposed to opposition and disobedience" (see Lemarchand²⁴ for an expose of the 'hermitic myth'). Identity cards bearing the holder's ethnicity also played a highly significant role in destroying the flexibility of ethnic ascription. It was the ethnic classification on a holder's identity card that determined liability to forced labour for the Hutu and admissions to the administrative school for the Tutsi at Astrida.²⁵

If the Belgians, as Reyntjens charitably observes, "unwittingly initialled changes [in ethnic identities], not realising their potential for conflict",²⁶ the restructuring of the economy and the introduction of a predatory, rent-seeking and extractive state model were clearly not unwitting. Before colonialism, Burundi had an economy based on subsistence and the transfer of agricultural produce and cattle within a vertical social and political system of patronage. The self-sustaining cycle of economic and political exchange served the needs of its participants. The colonial administrations replaced this with an economy completely oriented toward fulfilling external needs. Export crops such as coffee and tea for Belgian consumption and sale displaced subsistence food cropping and animal husbandry, and the intensification of commercial food crop production served to free up provisions and labour to support the mining sector in the neighbouring Belgian colony, the Congo. Therefore, Burundi's economy became doubly extroverted and doubly dependent on Belgium, directly and via the giant neighbouring country, into whose currency sphere and trading system Burundi had been integrated.²⁷

A centralised and extroverted economy has three effects. First, it creates opportunities for rent seeking for those who control the trade of export goods, and second it disengages the economy from the fulfilment of domestic development objectives. This is because the economy is driven by the twin principles of meeting external rather than domestic demands, and maximising rents for the domestic elite. Third, and also connected to the above phenomena, is the incentive to focus on maximum extraction rather than sustainable development of and reinvestment in primary resources. All three elements remain characteristic of Burundi's current economy and the way it is managed by the predatory and rent-seeking elite who control the state apparatus.

Under the colonial system, especially the Belgians, the state as an administrative body was fundamentally geared toward facilitating the extraction of wealth from the territory it oversaw, while controlling the population in a way to support this extraction and repress opposition. This function of the state stands in contrast to the pre-colonial kingdom, in which patronage networks

were the structuring principle of political and economic power, but where wealth circulated within the system and there was a measure of mutual benefit between rulers and ruled. The colonial state was set up to divide the rulers from the ruled, so as to encourage arbitrary rather than accountable rule. As in so many African states, this fundamental state structure was not changed with independence in Burundi, in spite of revolutionary nationalist rhetoric, but was merely taken over by a new set of elite and used to further their own purposes.²⁸

Post-independence

Since independence in 1962, Burundi has experienced four episodes of prolonged violence – in 1965, 1972, 1988, and 1993 to date. These are briefly outlined below. There are four recurring themes which weave through this account and which shape the form of violence in Burundi. First is the cyclical nature of the violence, in which each episode creates the conditions for the next. One of these conditions, born of the experience of violence itself, is the fear of ethnic genocide by both Hutus and Tutsis. The second underlying theme, concerning not only the fact but also the cause of violence, is the fundamental and long-term repression and exploitation of the majority by a minority, which is stronger due to control over a centralised state administration and especially the army. This is not a conflict of equals. Third, there are various external and internal triggering factors that serve to spark off violence at a particular time. These might be political or economic, as will be discussed below. Fourth, impunity for the killing of civilians, especially by the army, has undermined any cross-community respect for the rule of law.

Ngaruku and Nkurunziza²⁹ call post-independence Burundi a ‘trap’ in that each new episode of violence has its roots in the previous one. They explain the structure and nature of conflict in Burundi using a predation model, which is built around three elements. Firstly, the bureaucracy acts as a predator on the rents of the state machinery; secondly, the victims of predation rebel and thirdly, the army acts as part of the elite bureaucracy to repress and deter further rebellion, that is to protect the interests of the bureaucracy and their control over the state. This model will also be followed here, adding that, in addition to predation, the exclusion of Hutus from positions of power is a cause of rebellion.

Another image reflecting the cyclical nature of violence in Burundi shows that violence breaks out at certain intervals if there has been no resolution of the underlying conflict causes in the interim. This image reminds us to focus on the continued structural violence, rather than only on the episodic outbreaks of violence. We will see that the underlying causes of predation, repression and impunity for killing have often increased rather than decreased over time and between violent episodes.

The first three outbreaks of violence in 1965, 1972 and 1988 were characterised by the cycle of predation, rebellion and excessive repression, as identified by Ngaruko and Nkurunziza. The conflict since 1993 has broken this mould to some extent, since the army has for the first time not been able to quickly quell the rebellion. The conflict is still ongoing after eight years, and has developed significantly different dynamics from previous times of violence, predominantly because of the rise of armed rebel groups, the influence of regional factors such as the conflict in neighbouring Congo/Zaire,³⁰ and the various domestic and international attempts to bring peace back to the country.

1961–1966

The period from just before independence until the abolition of the monarchy in 1966 was characterised by a swing between hope for national unity and peace, and the start of the trends of exclusion and violence which would continue to shape Burundi's post-independence history. The first cycle of exclusion of Hutus from power by a Tutsi elite, rebellion by Hutus, and extreme repression against educated and high-ranking Hutus by the Tutsi-controlled government can be clearly evident in these five years.

Ethnic strife was by no means inevitable in Burundi. In preparation for independence, Burundians rallied behind a party of national unity, which included both Tutsis and Hutus in its leadership. In the 1961 legislative elections, the *Union pour le Progres National* (Union for National Progress or UPRONA) won a landslide electoral victory under the leadership of charismatic and moderate Prince Rwagasore. This hope for peaceful coexistence and nation building was, however, almost immediately shattered by the assassination of the prince by extremist Tutsis only a few months after the elections.³¹ This assassination of a leading moderate by extremists was only the tip of the iceberg of harassment and assassination of other UPRONA leaders and the increasing exclusion of Hutus from positions of power.³²

Since the *mwami* (king) still had formal power, the political manoeuvring pitted the entrenched royalist Tutsi against the small Hutu elite (since Tutsi of the royal line had been privileged and Hutus generally excluded under colonial education and administration). The mistreatment of Hutu in public positions culminated in the refusal of the *mwami* to allow Hutu politicians to form a government although they had won a majority in the May 1965 elections. This cumulative exclusion led to an attempted *coup d'état* by Hutu politicians, who were subsequently executed, along with other Hutu leaders. In response, around 500 innocent Tutsi civilians were massacred by Hutus in Muramvya province. This resulted in massive army repression against the Hutu across the entire country.

For the first time, in a pattern that was to be repeated again and again, government repression targeted not only those Hutu responsible for the coup

attempt or for the killing of Tutsi civilians, but most Hutu in public positions, as well as educated, influential and wealthy Hutu in general. Many who were not killed fled, leading to a vacuum of Hutu leadership potential in the country.

The effects of the violence on the distribution of power had far-reaching consequences for the political development of the country and for later conflict potential. The main power structures, including the army and what had become the *de facto* single party, UPRONA, came under the exclusive control of Tutsis. The extermination or expulsion of virtually all educated, influential and wealthy Hutu led to a concentration of power, wealth and influence in Tutsi hands, and prevented competition for power for at least a generation. This meant that this one group also had control over the national means of responding to future conflict – either through negotiated politics or through violent repression – consequently making all conflict resolution dependent on the interests of the ruling elite Tutsis.

1966–1972

The cycle of violence was again repeated in the years leading up to the killings in 1972. The 1972 violence was the most extreme of post-independence Burundi, and made the fear of genocide by both communities, which Tutsis had felt since the 1959 ‘revolution’ in neighbouring Rwanda and which had already been prefigured for both Hutus and Tutsis in 1965, into a central causal factor of all future clashes. It “crystallised ethnic tensions in such a way that all subsequent crises have been ... [their] consequence.”³³ Both communities see the killings as genocide against their own ethnic group and justify later violence against the other group on these grounds.

In this cycle of violence, the exclusion of Hutus from power was accompanied by the increasing centralisation of control in the hands of a small, regional Tutsi elite. The Tutsi-Hima clan, largely from the southern Bururi province, gained power over the previously pre-eminent Tutsi-Banyaruguru, traditionally allied with the royal court and therefore closest to power in the early 1960s monarchy.³⁴ This radical reorientation of identity group and regional power distribution culminated in the abolishment of the monarchy in 1966 after a coup by General Micombero, and the parallel ‘Tutsification’ of the army and ‘Bururification’ of the officer corps.³⁵ During the late 1960s, ever fewer Hutus and ever more Hima-Tutsi from Bururi had leading positions in central organs of power, including political, economic, educational, judicial and security sectors.³⁶ To a large extent, the ‘banyabururi’ remain the most powerful group in Burundi to this day, with consequent effects on the peace process.

One rarely noted characteristic of this extreme ethno-regional concentration of power is the level of personal connections. All three military regimes following the 1966 coup (Micombero 1966–1982, Bagaza 1982–1987, Buyoya

1987–1993) were headed by men from the same village in Bururi. Micombero and Buyoya are also related. As will be noted later, even most of the current rebel leaders are from Bururi province. This network of personal connections within the elite has affected the peace process.

The cycle of violence in 1972 was started by a Hutu rebellion in the south, supported by some Hutus in the army as well as Hutu militias in Tanzania and the then Zaire. The rebellion was seemingly sparked by the attempt of the king to return to Burundi from exile. He was then arrested and assassinated by the military government. Between 2 000 and 3 000 Tutsi civilians were killed during the rebellion.

In reaction to this massacre, the army and government security services struck against Hutus, not only in the south but all around the country. Once again, virtually all educated and influential Hutus in business, the civil service, the army, religion, education and any other field, were targeted. Conservative estimates say that 80 000 to 100 000 people were killed, while other estimates range between 150 000 and 200 000. Three hundred thousand Burundians, mainly Hutu, were prompted to flee to neighbouring countries. The United Nations has called this killing a “genocidal repression”.³⁷

As in 1965, but more so, the killing or expulsion of almost all Hutu with four years or more of high school education meant the end of Hutu participation in the public life of Burundi for a generation. Between 1972 and the late 1980s, Reyntjens calls the involvement of Hutu in powerful positions purely cosmetic co-optation.³⁸

Similarly to 1965, the government and army killed with impunity. As Catherine Barnes points out: “The fact that the government was able to complete what the UN Genocide Convention refers to as ‘genocide in part’ without *any* sanction, domestic or international, had significant implications for the future development of both politics and Hutu-Tutsi relations in Burundi and the region as a whole.”³⁹

A further effect of the pogroms was that from 1972 onward there were large numbers of Burundi Hutu in refugee camps in Tanzania, Rwanda and the DRC. These refugees and the camps would play an important part in later Burundian conflicts as well as in other conflicts in the region.

1972–1993

This period includes a time of relative tranquillity after the 1972 massacres, another round of violence in 1988, followed by five years of wide-reaching political reform, culminating in the adoption of a new constitution in 1992, and multiparty elections and the election of a Hutu president in 1993. The significance of this period is that international pressure, coupled with an economically weakened government, brought about political reform. The tragedy of this period is that the reforms, which brought great hope for a

democratic Burundi to many, triggered an extremist backlash, which led to the fighting that continues today.

During the years following the 1972 massacres the underlying causes of the conflict were strengthened rather than reduced. The military regimes of Micombero and Bagaza continued to consolidate Tutsi political gains and Hima-Tutsi power in particular, perpetuating the exclusion of Hutus from the affairs of the country. During the repressive years of Bagaza's reign, the first organised Hutu refugee rebel group began to be more visible, including *Parti pour la Liberation du Peuple Hutu* (PALIPEHUTU), formed in the twilight years of the 1970s. There would emerge later, in the 1980s, *Front pour la Liberation National* (FROLINA).

There were, in addition, some significant economic changes, which affected Burundi's politics. On the one hand, the Bururi lobby in power not only consolidated its political position, but also its powers of patronage. There was a significant shift of state investment from sectors with little rent-seeking capacity, primarily agriculture, to those with high predatory potential, that is state-owned companies, and industry and services in general.⁴⁰ This process will be described in more detail below. On the other hand, the early to mid-1980s saw international sources of economic pressure affect the regime. Increased international attention to the human rights violations of the Bagaza regime made international donors threaten to withhold development aid. Since in the 1980s this aid paid for up to 50% of government expenditure in the context of extreme indebtedness, this was a major threat to the income of the regime. In addition, world coffee prices collapsed in the mid-1980s, undermining further the foreign exchange revenue of the government. Finally, in 1986, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank imposed a structural adjustment programme on the government, including the demand to reduce military spending.

The decreasing popularity of Bagaza's regime, not least because of the economic pressures facing the urban Tutsi elite, led to a military coup in 1987 led by Major Pierre Buyoya. Less than a year after the coup violence erupted anew, this time in the northern communities of Ntega and Marangara bordering Rwanda.

The violence took the established pattern: pre-emptive, limited Tutsi violence against Hutu "to keep them in their place", a widespread and intense Hutu reaction to the provocation by the security forces, and a disproportionately harsh "restoration of normalcy" by those security forces.⁴¹ The violence may have been sparked, among other factors, by government action to curb coffee smuggling on the Rwandan border. The level of fear and mistrust among ethnic groups by this time is shown by the fact that any government action could be interpreted by Hutus as the beginning of ethnic attacks. "Isolated provocation by individual Tutsi immediately took on ominous proportions ... Rumour became the immediate catalyst for violence," notes Lemarchand, emphasising the importance of fear as a motivating factor for killing.⁴² The

number of deaths attributed to the two groups in these cyclical waves of violence has been a potent propaganda tool used by the ethnic elite. Some likely numbers are that some 500 Tutsi civilians were killed, while the army killed as many as 20 000 Hutus, driving a further 60 000 refugees into Rwanda.

What distinguishes the 1988 crisis from previous outbreaks of violence is that the army could not carry out its brutal repression without repercussions. After 1988, for the first time, there was external attention, criticism and pressure on the government to institute reform.

The Buyoya regime instituted political reforms toward democratisation and power sharing in response to this pressure.⁴³ They included the formation of a National Commission to Study the Question of National Unity, tasked with enquiring into the causes and perpetrators of the 1988 killings. This commission, as well as the reshuffled cabinet, the Economic and Social Council, the National Security Council and the Central Committee of UPRONA were balanced equally with Hutu and Tutsi members. A significant number of Hutu were given administrative positions in the institutions of state, and barriers to entrance into higher education for Hutus were reduced.

The commission's report was published in April 1989.⁴⁴ The report was subjected to intense public debate culminating in a Draft Charter of National Unity which paved the way for the Constitutional Commission, set up to write a new constitution predicated on the Charter of National Unity. The resulting document, the Constitution of Burundi, was overwhelmingly approved by a plebiscite in March 1992. The new constitution provided for free elections and a multiparty system. On 1 June 1993, Melchior Ndadaye, Hutu leader of the newly established *Front Democratique de Burundi* (FRODEBU), won 65% of the vote, compared to Buyoya's 32%, surprising many observers, including UPRONA. The subsequent legislative elections reaffirmed the magnitude of the political shift by giving FRODEBU 71.4% of the overall vote (with a 97.3% turnout of registered voters).⁴⁵

The period in the early 1990s is generally acknowledged to have genuinely increased Hutu political participation. What was not challenged was the culture of impunity for past killing of civilians in general and in the army in particular. There was also no change in the Tutsi domination of the army, leaving the political minority with the monopoly of armed force.

Entrenched Tutsi elite felt threatened politically and economically – a recipe for violence in combination with continued control over the army. Politically, Tutsis could not veto constitutional changes by which they felt threatened, since neither UPRONA as a party, nor all Tutsi members of the Assembly (most in UPRONA, but also some in FRODEBU) commanded the blocking minority of 20%. Economically, the new government instituted and planned to institute significant changes in policy that would have undermined entrenched elite interests. Four particular reforms and effects of the change of regime are noteworthy:

- enabling small businessmen, mainly Hutu, to benefit from privatisation by reducing bid bonds by 80%;
- probing the conditions under which the right to refine and export gold had been granted to a Belgian firm, just before the elections (implying corrupt dealings);
- the return of Hutu refugees, some of whom had been living in exile since 1972, and their attempts to regain their land and property; and
- the replacement of many Tutsi civil servants with Hutus. (The direct and indirect economic and political significance of civil service positions is discussed further below.)

Extremist Tutsis reacted to this perceived mortal threat to their power and interests by assassinating President Ndadaye only a few months after his inauguration.⁴⁶

1993 to the present

Ndadaye was assassinated on 21 October 1993 by members of the army in an attempted *coup d'état*. Dupont notes the

“... expression of discontent felt by Tutsi/Bahima in the army and political circle (who) disagreed totally with the reconciliation policies of clan member Buyoya and his successor Ndadaye. They wanted to put a stop to the planned inclusion of even more Hutu and other Tutsi groups in public administration, the schools, the armed forces and the judicial system, realising that this would inevitably lead to further erosion of Bahima monopoly of power”.⁴⁷

The assassination of the president, the speaker and deputy speaker of the National Assembly triggered the longest and bloodiest war in Burundian history. In the provinces, Hutus killed many thousands of Tutsis in reprisal for the death of their president, including Hutu members of UPRONA. The army as well as individual Tutsis retaliated against Hutus and FRODEBU members, especially potential leadership successors. The total estimated number of deaths from 1993 until today is 200 000 to 250 000.⁴⁸ There are seven important facets of the conflict since 1993:

1. The violence directly reflects the Tutsi elite's fear of losing control over the state through democratic reforms, and Hutu anger at having their chance at legitimate access so brutally denied.
2. The conflict distinguishes itself from earlier violence because the army did not succeed in repressing the Hutu rebellion within a few months – at the time of writing, the war has continued for over eight years.

3. The violence can truly be called a civil war, since Hutu rebel groups for the first time reached a significant level of organisation to fight back and to inflict significant casualties on the army.
4. Refugees from previous episodes of violence have played an important role in supporting and forming the rebel movements.
5. The regional element of the conflict has become stronger than in previous years, through the financing, training and arming of rebel groups by some neighbouring countries, and even their direct involvement in the internal war in the DRC.
6. An extreme humanitarian crisis exists in the country owing to internal displacement, regroupment camps, and the fall in agricultural production.
7. International pressure has been brought to bear on the government to come to the negotiating table with the rebels. Sanctions especially have had a major effect, if not always as intended.

When President Ndadaye was assassinated the army and the Tutsi elite did not immediately and overtly take the political lead in the country, but slowly manoeuvred into that position by 1996. While the democratically elected system formally remained in place, it was consistently undermined by UPRONA and the army. FRODEBU attempted to restore order and institutional governance in Burundi after the October 1993 coup attempt and the subsequent widespread violence. However, it was negotiating with partners who could rekindle violence at will, and who did so. The killing of Ndadaye's replacement Cyprien Ntaryamira (in a plane crash in April 1994, alongside Rwanda's president Juvenal Habyarimana) created a renewed power vacuum, and as the genocide in neighbouring Rwanda unfolded, Hutu influence in Burundi weakened. The power sharing agreement, Convention of Government, reached in October 1994 as an attempt to bring peace – in which UPRONA regained significant political power – undid both the 1992 constitution and the 1993 electoral process. In fact, in what Reyntjens calls a “creeping coup”, all the institutions which had been introduced in democratic reforms since 1990 were frittered away, bringing the state to a standstill. Major Buyoya took this as justification for a coup in 1996, and Burundi has been under military control since.⁴⁹

The daily insecurity and killings have continued in Burundi from 1993 to this day, although the number of killings have decreased since Buyoya's rise to power. For the first time, the army saw itself faced with an armed and organised rebel opponent, whereas before it had targeted mainly civilians. Three movements emerged as leading the Hutu rebellion, each with its own armed branch: the National Council for the Defence of Democracy (CNDD) and the Force pour la Defence de la Democratie (FDD); the Parti pour la Liberation du Peuple Hutu (Palipehutu) with the Front National de Liberation (FLN); and the Front de Liberation Nationale (FROLINA). Since their formation there have

been various further splits within these groups. Several Tutsi militias also formed during this time in support of the Burundian army, and the 'political' groups that arose from them play a role in the peace process today.

The rebel groups draw their strength from refugees from previous episodes of violence and the current conflict. Since 1993 some 700 000 people, mainly Hutu, have fled to neighbouring countries in addition to the refugees already living in camps since 1965 or 1972. The main recruitment camps are in the DRC and Tanzania. The living conditions in many camps are dismal, and refugees are discriminated against in their host countries. For many, violent conquest of their own country is seen as the only means of returning home. In addition to having their bases and recruitment camps in neighbouring countries, Hutu rebel groups have become embroiled in wider regional conflict dynamics, especially through their role in the conflict the DRC. Burundi's government, along with Rwanda and Uganda, has been supporting the rebel forces fighting the government in Kinshasa. In retribution, Kinshasa is reported to finance, train and arm Burundi Hutu rebels, especially the CNDD and FDD, in support of their fight against the Bujumbura government. These regional dynamics have a major impact on the peace process, as we will see below.

A further outcome of the ongoing conflict is the extreme humanitarian situation in Burundi. This is partly due to the general disruption caused by the violence, and partly due to the government policy of 'regroupment'. This policy involved forcing much of the rural, largely Hutu population into camps, with the argument of protecting them from rebel attacks and as a counter-insurgency measure to cut Hutu rebels off from their supply base in the country. At one point, up to 800 000 people were held in such camps, including virtually the entire rural population of Bujumbura rural province. There has been the constant and widespread threat of hunger since subsistence agriculture has been severely curtailed by the fact that farmers have been displaced from their fields or held in camps far from their land. The health conditions within the camps were also extremely bad, killing many from cholera. Most camps were closed by the end of 1998, because of international pressure, through the continued withholding of international financial aid and regional sanctions, but the threat of hunger remains.

International attention was focused on Burundi from 1993 through the withdrawal of international aid in reaction to the assassination of President Ndadaye. The most significant international action was the imposition of regional sanctions in the immediate aftermath of Major Buyoya's coup in 1996.

Key Factors in the Conflict

This section will analyse three factors as key to the conflict in Burundi. The first is the predatory nature of the state, the second ethnicity and the third refugees.

The Predatory State

Natural resources form the basis of material wealth for the state. In Burundi's case the natural resources that are most relevant are land and agricultural produce. The most important source of income for the state is its foreign currency earnings through the sale of coffee, tea and cotton, which together make up 90% of foreign currency income.

The fact that Burundi is relatively poor in other natural resources, such as gems, minerals, oil or timber, affects how the predatory state is shaped. The state is built around the formation of wealth through the sale of resources to an external market and the use of controls and regulations to extract rents from this trade. It is less concerned with the actual production or extraction of resources itself. This stands in contrast to the experience of countries like Sierra Leone, Angola or the neighbouring DRC, where control over those areas with mineral deposits and the means of extracting them are crucial for the continued power of the state, and therefore central to the contest with rebel groups. In Burundi, rebel groups have targeted coffee plantations, tearing down coffee trees, but with the twin aims of reducing government income and symbolically illustrating the exploitation of the peasants by the government, and not primarily in order to capture the coffee harvest themselves. Looting of the harvest for smuggling and export do occur, but are an isolated and occasional feature in the country. Wealth creation from agricultural produce happens at the processing and export stage, which is controlled by the state.

One of the central characteristics of a predatory state is how it distributes the profits from the resources it controls. State income is channelled into private, often prestige consumption by a small elite, and investment in unproductive projects, often capital intensive and industrial, which are chosen for their ability to create rents for their owners and not for their contribution to the economy and society at large. Furthermore, income is often channelled into financing repressive state mechanisms such as the army, which serve to protect this system from the majority of the population. Burundi fits this model of a predatory state perfectly.

The use of income from resources to protect the system is not limited to financing the army. Political opponents are regularly bought out with offers of lucrative positions in public enterprises or powerful civil service jobs. Such political appointments to positions of economic extraction can directly connect control over natural resources with levels of violence. As Beatrice Hibou notes: "In Burundi ... the struggle for control of the most important purchasing offices has been a factor in the development of the civil war."⁵⁰ Three of the main gold-purchasing bureaux are the fiefs of individual politicians, and have helped to fund their extremist political parties, thereby directly contributing to funding violence.

This example illustrates the central characteristic of this kleptocratic and predatory form of state formation: the lack of differentiation between the political and economic spheres. Control over the state and political power is synonymous with control over economic opportunity, individually and as an elite group. This conflation of politics, economics and the power of coercion is a recipe for violence; and violence is a basic ingredient in its creation and maintenance.

Gaining and Retaining Access to the Predatory Bureaucracy

The framework of a state machinery structured around the purpose of rent seeking was established during the colonial period, as we have seen. We have also already noted the historical rise to pre-eminence of the Tutsi over the Hutu in gaining access to this state apparatus through colonial education policies, supported by racist ideology.

Unequal access to education remains one of the main means of controlling access to the bureaucracy. This applies to the exclusion of Hutu students, but also reflects the regional bias of the regime, thereby disadvantaging northern Tutsi as well. Ngaruko and Nkrunziza⁵¹ show that state investment in educational infrastructure is regionally skewed to privilege the southern provincial origins of the ruling elite and the capital city. Bujumbura, as well as the southern province of Bururi, has the lowest students per classroom and per teacher ratios, and southern provinces are generally better off than underprivileged northern provinces.

Differential access to education is, however, not the only means used to prevent certain groups from becoming competitors for state access. The concentration of wealth and power in the hands of the minority Tutsi community has not just been the function of 'ordinary' institutionalised discrimination. Competition was systematically prevented through the physical extermination of educated Hutu and those with leadership potential, and through the inculcation of fear. Many Hutu families did not send their children to school after 1972 since they did not want them to be targets in the next round of killing.

Although this most extreme mechanism of exclusion was primarily targeted at Hutus, one should remember that other groups were also denied access to the state and its prospects for economic advancement. These groups include most Tutsi not from Bururi, generally mostly rural youth, who are given no alternative channels for improving their life chances, all Twa, and often forgotten, most women.

The logic of such a predatory system has led to a highly skewed distribution of resources according to two dimensions: sectorial and regional. These dimensions reflect the twin *raison d'être* of a predatory state: the maximisation of the rent-seeking potential for the existing elite within the centralised state, and secondly, the creation and maintenance of structures which reflect,

reinforce and perpetuate the regional and ethnic characteristics of that elite. The army, the state and the tiny private sector in Burundi have received the vast majority of resources. In contrast, the agricultural sector, which is the main source of exports as well as the occupation for the vast majority of the population, is seriously under-resourced. Regionally, Bujumbura and Bururi provinces receive far more than their fair share of investment. In general, the rural/urban divide in economic development is extreme.⁵²

Sectorial Distribution

Hammouda⁵³ shows that state economic policy changed dramatically from 1972 in terms of relative levels of investment in agriculture compared to the industrial and service sectors. Until 1972, the agricultural sector, which employs more than 90% of Burundi's workforce and produces its main export commodities as well as the food needed to sustain its population, received around 65% of total public investment. The industrial and service sectors, which together made up approximately 40% of value added as a percentage of GDP in 1980, received 36% of public investment. After 1972, coinciding with the epoch of most concentrated *Banyabururi* power, this relationship shifted radically: investment in agriculture dropped to between 20–30 % in the period 1972–1992 and industry received between 70–80% over the same period. This compares to the sectorial ranking as a percentage of GDP: agriculture 46%, services 37.7%, industry 16.7%. Clearly, the country's economic backbone, agriculture, has been comparatively disadvantaged in government investment decisions.⁵⁴

Subsistence food cropping is not lucrative in terms of opportunities for rent seeking, partly explaining the lack of investment within predatory logic. Nevertheless, the regulations that do exist have the purpose of generating rents. Ngaruko and Nkurunziza⁵⁵ note that the pricing and distribution policies concerning agriculture which are in place make it dependent on the meagre Burundian industrial sector as a market (i.e. agriculture supplies industrial inputs) without there being a reverse input of industrial products (like fertiliser and tools) into agriculture. According to Ngaruko,⁵⁶ this is a policy held over from colonial times.

Predation of the coffee industry, which is the main source of foreign exchange income for the government, acts as a 'cash cow uninhibited by external scrutiny'. As a result of state neglect of agriculture, combined with the fact of high population density and growth, and shrinking land allocation for individual farming families, there is a lack of increase in productivity. There is already a shortfall in food production, compared to national food needs, and this is likely to increase. State neglect of agriculture, therefore, directly leads to the increased probability of famine. A widespread famine is the most direct sign of a government's failure to care for its people. The ongoing policy of neglect has been exacerbated by the conflict since 1993, through the internal displacement of much of

the rural population, and their internment in so-called regroupment camps. With a steadily declining output of staple foods, market prices have more than doubled since the onset of the crisis. Currently Burundi is a net importer of food, while it was previously self-sufficient. Importing food requires foreign exchange, which, as we will see, is allocated predominantly to the small and inefficient industrial sector and the army, and not to ensuring the food security of the majority of the population.

The urban bias of state investment also contributes to the under-resourcing of the agricultural sector. While over 90% of the population live in rural areas, total state funding for the rural sector amounted to 20% in the 1980s. In contrast, Bujumbura and its hinterland received 50% of all public investment, and 90% of all social sector expenditure.⁵⁷

In contrast to the neglect of agriculture in terms of investment, 48% of GDP in 1996 was invested in 37 fully state-controlled firms. If parastatal firms are considered in addition, 77% of GDP flowed into the sector. These firms are easy pickings for the predatory elite. They benefit directly from agricultural pricing, and they receive the vast majority of foreign exchange allocations from the central bank. They also have the political function, mentioned above, of providing a soft landing for ex-politicians. "Rent sharing in Burundi has been used as a political tool to calm down opposition, to buy out potential trouble makers and warmongers or to pay for the loyalty of fellow politicians."⁵⁸

The bureaucracy also, in practice, controls the extremely small private sector. Virtually all private firms are owned by ex-civil servants, and the profitability of these firms is observed to change when there is a change of political leadership, depending on the closeness of the director to the new powers-that-be. The limited foreign exchange rations given out by the central bank privilege the state-owned firms and those private ones with close ties to the government. The sector is therefore not a viable alternative option for wealth creation outside the ambit of the predatory state and its political groupings.

The bureaucracy not only accumulates wealth through corruption and perks such as subsidised housing, travel, and so on, but also through high relative wages. Compared to other African countries, Burundi tops the table in high wages for a relatively small number of civil servants. One in two hundred of the population work as civil servants and their wages make up approximately 20% of total government expenditure. The average civil servant earns 15 times as much as the average Burundian. This seems to run counter to the argument often made by anti-corruption groups, such as Transparency International, that corruption is likely to occur when public servants are badly paid. In the case of Burundi, however, the connection between a corrupt state machine and high civil service wages lies in the common prior variable of minority elite control over the state. Access to the state and the civil service is so restricted to this minority that they have shaped all aspects of it, including the wage structure, to serve their needs.⁵⁹

The monetary value of the few positions in the bureaucracy which are available may certainly contribute to motivating “individuals ... to fight in order to control the state and hence the sources of rent it gives access to”.⁶⁰ Especially since it is not the civil servants and politicians fighting but the army, and since it is the rural Tutsi as well as the rural Hutu civilians who bear the brunt of the death and destruction.

The army plays a central role in protecting and perpetuating the economic and political status quo of the predatory state, reflected in investments in the military by the government. Military salaries made up 8% of total expenditure and net lending in 1992, which rose to 10% after the start of the current conflict, and were raised to 15% after Buyoya took power in 1996. Military spending on goods and services likewise rose in 1996 from between 7 and 9% of total expenditure and net lending from 1992–1996 to 13–15% from 1997–1999, which is the most recent data. High-ranking members of the military also share in other economic opportunities and have immense powers of patronage.⁶¹

The Fifth Five-Year Plan privileged Bujumbura and the surrounding area as well as Bururi by allocating 98% of all gross fixed capital formation to these areas. Especially fixed capital projects and infrastructure are a rich source of revenues from corruption. As mentioned above, this shows both the tendencies to go for rent-creating capital-intensive investment, as well as the regional focus of this investment. Manufacturing, mainly of beer, is also based almost exclusively in Bujumbura.

There is a seemingly perverse relationship between regional poverty and control over the state. The southern provinces, which are privileged, are also among the poorest. Soils are poor and the weather colder than in the rest of the country, and so agricultural production is limited. According to Ngaruko and Nkurunziza this means that purchasing power in the southern regions relies heavily on the resources and remittances which flow back from migrants to other regions.⁶² Furthermore, since the local economy provides such limited options, young and entrepreneurial southerners invest their energies and resources into rent-seeking activities, such as gaining access to the state, financial institutions, import and export firms and the construction sector. This perspective adds an element to the argument that control over the state as a source of accumulation, the army as a means to enforce and protect this control, and the education sector as a means of accessing it, are crucial for the southern elite, since they see no alternative economic options in their local environment.

The fact that the south remains structurally poor and dependent on remittances from the ‘productive’ parts of the country would seem to support the conclusion of high levels of corruption in the system. If a region which has been systematically privileged above all others in terms of infrastructure has not been able to build a sustainable local economic base, this infrastructure

investment must have been mostly inappropriate, unsustainable or not actually carried out. Therefore, even the regional privilege does not extend to all inhabitants of that region – only to those who manage to gain access to the state via their connections to the region.

External Economic Relations and Aid

We have seen the distorting effects of predation on the domestic structure of the economy. As mentioned in the section on colonial influences, Burundi's economy is centrally oriented towards external markets; a structure that further supports the predatory nature of the state. This section will look at two external spheres which fundamentally impact on Burundi's economy, and which have contributed structurally but also directly to shaping the conflict and prospects for peace. The two spheres are, on the one hand, Burundi's neighbouring countries and, on the other, the industrialised countries.

Burundi, as a small, landlocked country, has an economy inextricably linked to its neighbours. This relationship has interacted with the conflict in two ways. First, normal economic relationships have largely been replaced with illicit dealings and large-scale smuggling often directly connected to military and rebels' activities in the DRC, Tanzania and Rwanda. Second, in response to Major Buyoya's military coup in 1996, the neighbouring countries imposed economic sanctions on Burundi, with the purpose of placing pressure on the regime to return to democratic rule. These sanctions had an extreme effect on Burundi's economy, but were in turn undermined by the pre-existing smuggling structures.

'Informal' economic connections between Burundi and its neighbours did not only commence with the outbreak of the current conflict, as shown by Burundi's exports of gold and ivory. Although it produces negligible amounts of both within its own borders, Burundi has for decades been an exporter of the two valuables. Eighty per cent of gold exported in the 1990s was smuggled in from the DRC and 19% from Tanzania and Uganda. The government licensed gold-trading bureaux brought the government significant revenue in the 1990s, as did ivory-dealing offices in the 1970s and 1980s.⁶³ Since the eruption of the 1993 conflict, and the direct involvement of both government and rebel forces in the conflict in the DRC, smuggling has taken on a new character and can even be described as military looting. Large amounts of coffee beans have been smuggled from the DRC into Burundi, to be sold onward to international markets as Burundian coffee, as reported by a UN panel of experts.⁶⁴ This form of illicit economy has served to finance both government and rebel forces and the purchase of arms.

Coffee is also smuggled from Burundi to neighbouring countries, as described in more detail below. This is connected to the conflict through a different dynamic, namely the attempt of rural coffee producers to evade the exploitative economic regime and gain better prices for their labour. The 1988

crackdown in the northern coffee producing areas shows how immediate the connection between control over resources and violence can be.

The extent of economic integration between countries can often best be seen when that connection is severed. This was the case when Burundi's neighbours, under the leadership of Tanzania's former President Nyerere, imposed sanctions on Buyoya's military regime after his *coup d'état* in 1996. These sanctions had the clear political intention of creating pressure on the regime to negotiate peace and to return to the democratic process of 1993. The combined sanctions of regional powers and the international aid community had a devastating effect on the economy, and especially on the rural poor. From an overall positive balance of payments of US\$ 1.1 million in 1995, there was a drop to a deficit of US\$ 86.7 million in 1996.⁶⁵ The World Bank estimates that poverty doubled between 1994 and 1998, partly because of war but largely because of the sanctions.⁶⁶

While the sanctions, once again, hit the poor the hardest, the elite whom the sanctions had originally targeted soon evaded their effects through smuggling networks with regional business groups. President Buyoya's wife herself was implicated in connection with large sugar import fraud by a parliamentary commission of inquiry in 2001. Some neighbouring countries openly flouted the embargo. In January 1999 the sanctions were suspended, partly because it was clear that they were not working and partly as an incentive to encourage peace talks.

Burundi's economic dependence on the developed world is fundamental to the structure of the predatory state. The two main mechanisms of dependence are international aid and international trade in primary commodities, mainly coffee. Burundi's elite has managed to turn dependence to their own benefit through capturing the profits from international transactions and passing on the risks to the poor population. On the other hand, economic dependence can give leverage to international actors in the quest for peace, if that leverage is used wisely.

The export revenue and domestic income in Burundi by far does not cover government development and recurrent expenditure. Multilateral and bilateral donors and development partners for a long time filled this gap. In the period between 1989 and 1991 more than half the finances spent by the Burundian government came from these sources and international non-governmental organisations,⁶⁷ averaging US\$ 300 million annually, and making up over 80% of total investments⁶⁸. In 1992 foreign aid made up 25% of GNP. Large flows of aid shape the structure of the economy, often supporting the predatory elite rather than development for the whole population.

The retrogressive effects of international financial assistance on the development of the country's economy took various guises. Aid lowered incentives to develop a competitive strategic export sector, leading to ineffective export promotion strategies. Domestic savings remained dismal because external

assistance substituted for any efforts to mobilise internal resources and thus frustrated even minimal domestic capital accumulation. Thirdly, donors and development partners preferred to deal directly with the government rather than with the private sector and civil associations. Public enterprises and the government administration benefited at the expense of the private sector, stifling competition and growth. Civil society was not helped to develop independently. The overall result of this interaction between aid and government policy is massive foreign debt, and falling per capita income.

However, on balance, international aid can also create extreme pressure for reform if donors threaten to withdraw it or actually do so. In the aftermath of the 1988 violence, political reforms were pushed through by the threat of reduced aid, especially by France, one of Burundi's main donors. We have already noted the extreme effects on the economy when international financial assistance was scaled down following the derailment of democracy in 1993 and its eventual freeze in 1995 following the initiation of the regroupment policy. This placed the Burundi government in a desperate economic position. Whether the sanctions fulfilled their intended purpose of bringing the government to the negotiation table is discussed elsewhere in this chapter.

Government dependence on income from exporting primary commodities, especially coffee, to developed markets has already been noted. The national economy is therefore extremely vulnerable to price fluctuations in international commodity prices, and coffee prices are notoriously unstable. The price swings in the mid-1980s brought Burundi's economy to the brink of crisis. The IMF and World Bank reacted with pressure for economic structural readjustment, including a cut in military spending. This threat to elite interests, among other factors, contributed to the outbreak of violence in 1988.

The Connection between Predation and Violence

The previous section analysed the causes and effects, domestic and international, of Burundi's predatory state and economy. We postulate that this predatory system leads to conflict and violence through the following mutually reinforcing mechanisms.

First, the elites use violence to gain and maintain control over the state and its patronage resources. Violence is targeted at potential and perceived competitors for power. This is illustrated by the brutal extermination of most educated and influential Hutus in 1965 and 1972.

Second, there is a temporal correlation between economic crisis and government violence and repression. This is because the resources with which the government has to feed its client base shrink, therefore weakening the position of elite factions within their own networks of patronage. This can be seen as the main impetus for violence in 1988, following pressure because of falling coffee prices and international calls for structural readjustment.

Third, serious competition for political and the concomitant economic power, through democratisation processes and expected or actual reforms incites ruling elite to protect their position through violence. This is what happened in 1993, when the ruling Tutsi-Hima Bururi lobby were faced by the, for them, existential challenge of an elected Hutu-led government. It is generally acknowledged that President Ndadaye was assassinated because he and his elected government tried to reform the system, both politically and economically, and thereby challenged the entrenched interests running it.⁶⁹ Violence and ongoing war were considered preferable to losing influence. This dynamic is also present in the current attempts at a peace process. Numerous failed military coup attempts against President Buyoya, who is seen as a moderate because of his willingness to negotiate with Hutu rebels, are indicators that some Tutsi elite, and particularly those in the military, are unwilling to relinquish or share political power.

While these three mechanisms explain the direct violence of the ruling Tutsi elite against Hutus and moderate Tutsis, predation also provides the fundamental basis for grievance and rebellion among the victims of the exploitative system. The episodes of violence of Hutus against civilian Tutsis, and the ongoing rebel offensive against the government army reflect this dynamic.

The reason that the violence resulting from predation does not manifest itself in the form of a class war of elite versus oppressed is the ethnic element. Actual conflicts over scarce resources, which would pit poor, rural Tutsi together with their poor, rural Hutu neighbours against the urban elite, are superseded by a perceived mortal conflict between ethnic groups. This perception is used by those in power in times of instability in order to mobilise support and justify their privileged position.⁷⁰ In addition to this instrumental use of ethnicity, however, ethnically based fear and hatred has developed into a potent independent source of conflict during the course of the cycles of violence.

Ethnicity

We have noted that ethnic divisions existed in pre-colonial Burundi, but were not inherently a conflictual division. During colonialism, however, ethnic identity was directly connected to competition for control over the state. Since independence it has been simultaneously denied as a relevant factor by Burundi's elite in public political discourse, and also used as the fundamental factor of political structuring. Ethnicity was and still is the most important factor in determining an individual's life chances, in education, profession, and too often in life or death itself. The effect has been threefold. First there is a deep and existential fear and mistrust of the other group, reaching the level of continual fear of genocide on both sides. An action of one group against individuals of the other can immediately be interpreted as an attack against the

whole group, triggering 'preventative' killing of the perceived aggressors; an interpretation which each group sees as borne out by memories of 1972.

Secondly, concepts of democracy have become inextricably linked to the ethnic calculus, severely constraining options for an end to military rule. As Reyntjens laments about the Arusha agreement, which "institutionalised ethnicity as an important political variable through the introduction of quotas and the practice of alternation [of leadership along ethnic lines], ... in the Burundi demographic context no solution is possible as long as ethnicity remains the only factor of political structuring."⁷¹ The conflation of Hutus with the political majority and Tutsi with the political minority, were there a democratic system, remains deeply ingrained in the peace negotiations.

Thirdly, ethnicity has also shaped the regional dynamics of the conflict. Hutu rebels from Rwanda and Burundi, who live in the same refugee camps in the DRC and Tanzania, are fighting together and in each other's domestic conflicts. Alliances between Burundi rebels and other fighting groups in the DRC have also revolved around ethnic categories.

Refugees

The hundreds of thousands of refugees who are spread out in the entire Great Lakes region because of ethnic repression and massacres have created a dynamic that fundamentally shapes each new outbreak of violence. Refugee camps are used as training and recruitment camps for rebel militias, and as rear bases for attacks on the refugee home countries. FDD, FLN and Palipehutu members all grew up in extreme conditions of scarcity and chronic insecurity in such camps, explaining some of the motivation to return home, even using force. This process has a strong regional dimension. Burundian refugees in camps in Tanzania and the DRC have formed alliances with Rwandan refugees and local groups in DRC. Refugees and exiles who have managed to go further afield, some to developed countries, provide funding for rebel groups.

The question of refugees also poses a central problem for the peace process. Their possible return to Burundi raises issues of land distribution, the return of property and resources taken from them during the violence and a paucity of jobs and resources in general. One of the main issues that triggered a return to violence in 1993 was the expected massive return of Hutu refugees.

Conflict Resolution

We have analysed the history and underlying causes of the war that has been raging in Burundi since 1993. But what are the prospects for peace? Given our analysis that there are two conflict levels – firstly the resource and access

conflict between the governing elite and the general population, and, secondly, the violent conflict between Hutu and Tutsi – we must ask which kinds of conflict resolution initiatives address which conflict. The official ‘peace processes’, both domestic and international, tend to address the latter conflict between the Tutsi government and Hutu rebels. They may take the issues of political and resource exclusion more or less into account. While it is certainly necessary to come to an agreement that will end the violence between these two groups, the first conflict must not be relegated to a sub-category of this violent conflict, that is something to be addressed once the political stalemate between elite and fighting groups on both sides has been overcome. It must be responded to in its own right. In addition to being the sole basis for a sustainable peace, moves toward greater ‘structural peace’ may also help to resolve the political stalemate, and must be supported in parallel to and even before a formal negotiated peace. Some non-governmental and ‘third-track’ peace initiatives, domestic and international, are working in this direction.

This section will look at both official and non-governmental conflict resolution initiatives. Concerning the official negotiations, we will see that in the current process there are conflicting priorities for the twin imperatives of finding an immediate versus a long-term sustainable peace. Looking at the non-official peace initiatives, we will ask how they can help to avoid a situation where the immediate peace agreement once again becomes a trigger for future violence, because it has failed to adequately address the underlying causes of the conflict, that is exclusion, the distribution of political and economic power, ethnic identities, and the position of refugees. Finally, we ask how the peace processes deal with the question of environmental factors. In sum, while there is much promise in the various peace processes, both official and civil society initiatives are threatened by a lack of domestic and international political will to support real social transformation.

Official peace initiatives have taken many forms since 1993. There have been repeated domestic attempts at reconciliation between 1993 and 1996, which did not prove to be successful at defusing or allaying ethnic tensions. The failure of the 1994 power sharing *Convention de Gouvernement* (Convention of Government) even served as the justification for Buyoya’s 1996 coup. Regional and international peace interventions included an OAU military observer mission from 1993 and the naming of UN, EU and US special representatives. These initiatives had little effect. The main international and regional initiatives – sanctions and the Arusha peace process – did have significant, but very ambivalent effects.⁷²

The 1996 imposition of sanctions and withdrawal of aid were intended to pressure Buyoya to restore parliament, allow opposition political parties, and begin “immediate and unconditional” negotiations with all parties to the conflict. In fact, the sanctions had the effect of radicalising Burundian politics,

thus marginalising moderates among both Hutus and Tutsis. Commentators, such as Jan van Eck, evaluate the sanctions as having been counterproductive and possibly prolonging the conflict.⁷³ The rebel groups, especially the CNDD, felt legitimised by the sanctions, and were not hurt economically, since they were based outside Burundi. They therefore had no incentive to negotiate with the government, since for some time they had reason to expect outright victory. The government elite and military, on the other hand, did feel the economic and political pressure of the sanctions, but managed largely to pass the physical hardship on to the population, while maintaining their own standard of living through large-scale smuggling. The effects of the sanctions were also soon undermined by the lack of enforcement or active breach of the embargo by some neighbouring countries, such as the DRC. Sanctions were lifted in January 1999 and international aid was resumed, as a supporting incentive for negotiations, which had the effect of strengthening Buyoya's position.

Since 1998 the official peace process has been framed in a series of meetings in Arusha, Tanzania, led first by President Nyerere of Tanzania, since mid-1999 by former South African President, Nelson Mandela and more recently by Deputy President Jacob Zuma. This process is seen as the key to future peace in Burundi, but may in practice legitimise a continuation of the war.⁷⁴

The negotiations have led to the signing of an agreement in August 2000 – the Arusha Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Burundi – which addresses most of the underlying causes we have identified in a detailed and constructive fashion. The content of the agreement was worked out in five committees, chaired by international experts, on:

- the nature of the conflict;
- democracy and good governance;
- peace and security;
- reconstruction and economic development; and
- guarantees for implementation of the peace accord.

The three completed protocols (1, 2, and 4) “outline a clear and precise action programme which seeks to move Burundi towards reconciliation, democracy and reconstruction”.⁷⁵ The report of Committee IV on reconstruction and development addresses the issues of how to reintegrate refugees, the need for political inclusion, and the need to restructure the domestic economy. Increased investment in the rural and agricultural sectors is included. Difficult political issues such as the reinstatement of refugee property and the need to reform the ownership of Burundi's economy are clearly noted and agreed, amounting to a clear plan for redistributing the riches of the country.⁷⁶

The problem with the peace agreement in Burundi's case is not, therefore, the content, but rather the likelihood of implementation. Notably, the two

protocols on which agreement was not reached are those on peace and security, including a ceasefire, and guarantees for implementing the accord. Despite the promise of a serious resumption in the talks during August 2002 in Tanzania, including the government, the FDD-CNP, the CNDD-FDD and possibly the PALIPEHUTU-FNL several reasons remain why the agreement as it was signed may not be fully implemented as intended or may even become the reason for renewed fighting. There is, firstly, a lack of real political will among elite leaders; secondly, the ambivalent position of international influence on the peace process, and finally, the failure to adequately integrate civil society in the official peace process.

The negotiations of the peace processes have become another arena for Burundi's elite to compete for control over the state. The negotiations are an extension of the struggle among competing individuals and factions within Burundi's small governing elite to obtain or retain wealth and power – politics as war by other means, to invert Clausewitz's famous phrase. This is illustrated by the continually shifting alliances and strategic partnerships among groups and individuals. With 19 signatories to the Arusha Peace Accord prior to the start of the most recent initiative, the cross-ethnic alliances of the parties are as important as their ethnic divisions. For example, the G7 group of Hutu parties which often formed a negotiating block, and the G6 group of moderate Tutsi parties who are opposed to the present military government led by Major Buyoya, joined forces in March 2001 to back Hutu Domitien Ndayizweye – the opposition FRODEBU party candidate – as president with Tutsi Colonel Epitace Bayaganakandi as vice-president. This proposal was rejected by other groups, but serves as an example that ethnic lines as well as regional and ideological lines are porous in these negotiations. There are certainly differences among the politicians. The genuine desire of some to bring about democratic rule and peace should not be trivialised, but the main dynamic driving the negotiations is not programmatic but strategic.

The questions of army reform and the structure of the transition government directly affect which groups can retain or gain power. Therefore they have been the most difficult on which to reach agreement. Furthermore, the ruling Tutsi elite which currently controls both the army and the government, is in a stronger position to veto any suggested reforms by threatening to exit the negotiations. This has reduced the scope of the discussion to the creation of conditions which retain enough veto power (military and political) for the ruling Tutsi elite minority so that they feel able to protect themselves from the perceived threat of the Hutu majority. The acceptance that the peace process will provide this security is by no means a given, as the repeated coup attempts by militant Tutsi against the negotiating government attest. As long as minority security is the priority, and as long as the Tutsi elite interests retain the bargaining chip of the army, there can be very little

meaningful action on the front of reforming the system of control over resources.

The second element which reduces the likelihood that the Arusha agreement will be successfully implemented is that the armed Hutu rebel groups have not been included in the negotiations from the outset, and therefore see the agreement as illegitimate. This has partly been the reason that there has been no ceasefire agreement with the rebels, which, in turn, has diminished the willingness of the Tutsi state authorities to find a security compromise. After the signing of the peace accord in August 2000, the worst violence which Burundi has seen for many years broke out, as the rebels protested against an agreement they did not see as their own.

Third, the international element of the negotiations has been simultaneously too directing and too weak. The International Crisis Group criticised Nelson Mandela, the former chief facilitator, for pushing ahead with the signing of the accord before the stakeholders were fully agreed. Too much focus was placed on the accord itself and not enough on the means by which agreement was reached and the effect this would have on the probability of its implementation. After 26 months of debate between 17 parties, the government and the National Assembly, which resulted in the main substance of the agreement, substantial and significant amendments were made in a single night's negotiations between two people: Pierre Buyoya, President, Commander in Chief of the army and leader of UPRONA, and his main political adversary Jean Minani, President of FRODEBU and leader of the G7 coalition of Hutu parties. During this night Buyoya demanded "last-minute compromises ... in return for his signature the next day."⁷⁷ The result was an agreement with highly contested provisions for a transition government, opening the probability, at best, of endless continuing negotiations, and at worst, recourse to the military option.

The lack of international engagement with the post-accord details is shown by the fact that since August 2000 until the recent request by the South African facilitation team and the transitional government to Tanzania to help to bring the rebels to the table, there has been very little constructive movement on this issue. Furthermore, international actors have been reluctant to commit peacekeeping troops to monitor the transition period, resulting in an agreement to deploy a South African military protection force during October 2001. Finally, the international community has failed to mobilise significant resources to support Burundi in addressing the humanitarian crises in the country, including the reintegration of refugees and the demobilisation and reintegration of rebel and militia fighters.

There have been significant domestic and international non-governmental initiatives, which have been constructively aimed at reconciliation and structural change. Such initiatives, however, have been largely excluded from the official peace process. The exclusion of domestic civil society from the peace

process, in particular, weakens the potential for real transformation. As Ali notes, even if a peace agreement acknowledges the importance of “sharing the spoils” of control over the state, this still only constitutes a sharing among elite, and continues to exclude the ordinary people.⁷⁸ Furthermore, there is no effective means for civil society to monitor the implementation of the peace agreement – if there were, this would lead to both greater accountability and legitimacy of government, and greater public trust and identification with it. These are important peace-building aims in themselves.

Non-governmental initiatives can be very effective in providing space for dialogue and reconciliation. Many organisations in Burundi, such as the *Compagnie des Apotres de la Paix*, the Human Rights League ITEKA, the *Communautes Ecclesiales de Base*, and radio stations such as Ijambo and African Public Radio have indeed done so. Concerning our central question, however, civil society cannot itself plan and implement structural changes in the way the state exploits the resources of a country and how it distributes the proceeds. The only way in which civil society can influence this is through pressure on a responsive state, which, as we have seen, does not apply in Burundi.

Grass roots and civil society initiatives can, however, play a crucial role in addressing the local, community-based resource conflicts as well as the ethnic enmities created by the decades of violence. If it is too great a job to tackle the meta-conflict all at once, it may be possible to work on smaller, local conflict dynamics, such as the issues of resource competition at the local level. The resource conflict, which exists between members of a community (including between Hutus and Tutsis) or between those who have stayed in Burundi and those refugees now returning, can be addressed co-operatively at the local level. If modes of reconciliation and cooperation between groups at the local level can be achieved, perhaps through joint agricultural or environmental programmes which benefit the entire community, then this creates peace constituencies which can impact on the national level negotiations as well. Joint projects centred on sustainable natural resource use and sharing can help to overcome ethnic enmity and mistrust. A popular peace constituency, which realises that its daily problems can be solved without resorting to ethnic hatred, is potentially a great step toward disempowering the manipulative elite.

In addition to the problems of internal dynamics, Burundi's peace process is also bedevilled by the fluctuating conflict in the DRC. The rebel groups, who continue their violent attacks in Burundi, were long financed by the governments of the DRC, Zimbabwe and Angola because of their strategic alliance against the Congolese rebels supported by Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi's government. This financial and political support, also from Tanzania, long gave the rebels no need to negotiate, since they believed in the possibility of winning the war. Since the resuscitation of the Lusaka peace process in the

DRC after the death of President Desire Kabila and the accession of his son, Joseph, the DRC government has committed to disbanding and demobilising the forces which it had supported on its land, including Burundian Hutu groups. This has created pressure for the rebels to move back into Burundi, but with their arms and their intention to win the conflict intact. The uncertainty of this situation, also given the slow and complex progress of the Lusaka process in the DRC, is likely to destabilise Burundi and the whole region for some time, if the peace processes cannot be coordinated.

In sum, the conflict resolution attempts to date are far from achieving the conditions for a 'positive peace' which would allow for a transformation of the structural underlying causes of the conflict.⁷⁹ The longer the conflict continues, the more Burundi's population, environment, and economy will suffer, making reconstruction ever more difficult and fraught with competition for ever-shrinking resources. At the time of the accession of the interim government, the Arusha peace agreement has not even managed to provide the citizens of Burundi with a 'negative peace', a respite from violence, from which a trajectory towards a positive peace might be found.

Overview of the Environment

Burundi has been described as the 'Switzerland of Africa'.⁸⁰ Its undulating landscape is punctuated by rich and fertile soils and its hills by cold temperatures for most of the year. Burundi lies in the Great Rift Valley belt, with agriculturally rich volcanic soils. The country's "... geography, climate and ecology are characterized by impressive heterogeneity."⁸¹ No wonder then that cash crops like tea and coffee thrive in certain areas of the country. Burundi has, until recently, been self-sufficient in food production.⁸²

Land occupies in excess of 90% of the country's 27 834 square kilometre total surface area. Lake Tanganyika and small rivers occupy the rest. The Imbo plain along Lake Tanganyika accounts for 7% of the total land area. The Imbo plain is between 700 and 1 000 metres high, with relatively fertile soils. There is then the central plateau, (1 500–1 900 m high) which covers the widest part of the country, accounting for 52% of the total land area. Many rivers and streams cascade across the central plateau, making the landscape a series of sloped hills and narrow valleys. Soil fertility varies, but is constantly decreasing because of demographic pressure.

A chain of high mountains in the western part of Burundi directs the flow of water in two directions: towards the Congo River to the west and the Nile River to the east. This mountainous chain takes 15 % of the total land area and is between 1 900 and 2 600 metres above sea level. Soil fertility is good in valleys but poor on eroded hillsides. There is, additionally, the Kumoso depression along the Burundi-Tanzanian border, and the Bugesera depression

to the country's north-east, which accounts for a total of 16% of the total land area. Soil fertility in the depressions is poor. Burundi's natural vegetation is mainly mountainous forest, clear forest and grassland. Most of these are in state-protected areas, which amount to almost 127 000 hectares.

Lake Tanganyika, which Burundi shares with Tanzania, Malawi and the Democratic Republic of Congo, is in the country's south-west and traverses the provinces of Bujumbura, Bururi and Makamba to the south. A fresh water lake, it augments protein sources of the country's population through fish and is an important transport gateway to the contiguous countries. With respect to water for both domestic and industrial consumption, the lake's provisions are augmented by generous rainfall for most of the year.

There are three seasons annually, resulting in 31 000 million cubic metres of water. These are the short rainy season between October and January, the long rainy season between February and May, and the June to September dry season. Over 20 000 cubic metres is lost through evaporation.

Burundi's natural environment is ideal and suitable for agriculture at both the commercial and subsistence levels. The country has no significant amounts of mineral resources (as opposed to its neighbour to the west, the DRC). Its economic wellbeing has and continues to hinge on the productivity of the land and especially on its ability to feed itself and procure goods and services from abroad through foreign aid and foreign exchange receipts. These foreign exchange receipts largely accrue from the agricultural sector, pointedly from coffee and tea exports.

Several constraints have reduced Burundi's optimum harnessing of its natural resources. Firstly, the country's landlocked status reduces the value of net receipts from agricultural production, even as it inflates the prices of imports. Secondly, population density (at an average of 230 per km²) has led to a marked decline in productivity of the land per acreage and intense colonisation of uninhabited land. Additionally, intensive cultivation and livestock production has subjected land to serious soil erosion and loss. This has been made significantly worse by the general topographical character of the land, undulating as it is.

The intensive use of fertilizers (when available and affordable) accounts for yet another reason for the decline in soil fertility and thus production. Fourthly, the poor, coercive and uncoordinated management of the natural environment has had multiple retrogressive influences on the fortunes of the country's majority poor who subsist off the land. Intense competition for scarce land, and clashing visions of how the land should be productively used between the peasantry and the leadership, has served to further frustrate sustained and productive yields.

Land use: Blighted History, Central Control and Natural (Mis)fortunes

General Characteristics

Land in Burundi, as in many agricultural countries, is of great cultural attachment and economic value to the people. It is even more intensely so in the case of Burundi, given the country's unsustainable population density and consignment of agriculture as the critical national 'bread winner'.

Economic activities in Burundi revolve around agricultural activities. Over 85% of the country's population are engaged in the agricultural sector. Food crops, mainly for subsistence, represent 87% of the total crop production. Cash crops take the rest; coffee (8%), tea and sugarcane (1.7%), and others (3.3%). The following table breaks down the respective land area occupation in Burundi.

Table 1: Land use⁸³

Land use	Area (ha)	% of land area
Natural vegetation (including swamps and non-cultivated forests)	240 716	8.6
Forests	128 375	4.6
Pastures	775 506	27.8
Food crops (outside of swamps)	1 210 000	43.3
Cash crops	104 000	3.7
Cultivated swamps	81 403	2.8
Lakes	263 400	9.9
Towns	25 000	0.9
Total	2 783 400	

From Table 1, land in Burundi is primarily put to agricultural production. It is also clear that the majority of the population lives in rural areas, as urban areas are restricted to a mere 0.9% of the total land area. Beginning in 1933, the colonial government began the establishment of forest reserves. This continued in the succeeding years resulting in sizeable areas being marked as protected zones today, including the infamous Kibira forest.⁸⁴

The significance of land use in Burundi has a blighted social history. A system of social and economic relationships existed between communities in the countries prior to the advent of colonialism. This system's characterisation as 'feudal' has been the subject of intense dispute between the Hutu and Tutsi in Burundi. Whereas many Hutus view it as the ultimate historical illustration of Tutsi exploitation, injustice and domination, Tutsis and their apologists see it in the light of a flexible social and economic system.⁸⁵

The 'feudal' system, which was abolished by ex-President Bagaza during the 2nd Republic when he assumed power in 1976, has existed in Burundi for a long time. *Ubugererwa*, as it is locally referred to, is closely associated with the advent of the monarchy and its intricate social and economic relations. In this system, a person would work for a more fortunate one, usually a Tutsi, without compensation. The 'serf' was referred to as *Umuhutu*, and the 'lord' as *Umututsi*. The parcel of land that the *Umuhutu* was living on would never become his property or the property of his descendant. *Umuhutu* and his children always faced the prospect of expulsion from the land on account of flimsy and unsubstantiated accusations for instance for allegedly plotting against the 'lord'. Injustice thus prevailed during the royal regime, especially through the capricious and unjust dispossession of the serf's land and cattle.

If *Ubugererwa* centered on land exploitation relations between the Hutu and the Tutsi, *Ubugabire* revolved around the other pillar of traditional economic activity, livestock. *Ubugabire* involved the lending or donation of a cow of the owner of a herd to someone who had none. In return, the beneficiary, inordinately a Hutu, would serve the benefactor in all manners of ways. Ultimately, the net beneficiary was the benefactor. The relationship was impregnated with connotations to the effect of 'suppliant' 'requests' 'submit' 'command' and 'control'.⁸⁶

The social and economic relationship between the Hutu and the Tutsi has been variously characterised. However, there is a convergence that notwithstanding the social group to which either the beneficiary or benefactor belonged, the beneficiaries from this system were mainly Tutsis, with few Hutus playing the role of 'lord'. The internal flexibility of the system with respect to the social group membership is strongly disputed. On the one hand, Buyoya asserts that the system was flexible and Hutus could rise up the social ladder with ease. On the other, Ndarubagire, himself a Tutsi, maintains that the system was inflexible and coercive, with the classical characteristics of any other feudal societies in history.⁸⁷

Land use and tenure in Burundi carries a great deal of historical baggage. The Hutus see a connotation embedded in their *Umuhutu* as that of historical servitude. Given the exploitation of the environment as an integral, indeed the crux of feudal relations, it becomes clear how the use of land and ownership, as well as exchange laws have shaped the perceptions of the social groups in the continuing conflict in the country.

The unfortunate nexus between history and land use in Burundi is only part of the complex relationship between Burundians and their land. Less social but real is the concrete conditions that serve to provide fuel for conflict between social groups in Burundi. The country's unsustainable population density (averaging 230 people per km² but as high as 360 persons per km²)⁸⁸ in some areas has been a source of conflict, directly and otherwise.

Agriculture and housing have exerted great pressure on land. Added to the harvesting of forests for fuel use, the land is increasingly vulnerable to worsening soil erosion and is therefore becoming less productive. Four problems are evident with regard to land in Burundi.

First, land scarcity is evident in both rural and urban areas. Because it remains the principal capital for the household, there is the problem of intense competition. Secondly, cultural practices and traditions of land inheritance from father to son has led to the increased subdivision of land between sons, decreasing the economies of scale that would otherwise accrue from reasonable parcels. This increased subdivision has led to general decline in soil fertility and productivity. Third, the traditional land tenure system of subdivision between male heirs has led increasingly to the shrinking of household land. Increasingly, land is becoming too small for viable subdivision, effectively disinheriting some members of the household and leading to migration. Related to this is the limiting of shifting cultivation between pieces of land. The effects are over-exploitation of parcels, declining productivity and the concomitant increase in food prices because of scarcity. Additionally, migrations are taking place from less productive areas to more vulnerable but uninhabited and thus fertile land: hillsides. The effect of increased erosion of vulnerable areas and the declining fertility and thus productivity of traditional farming areas has been multiple: food scarcity, increased areas under cultivation, reduced soil fertility and intense competition for land.

The land tenure in Burundi has always been controlled from the centre. During the pre-colonial period, all land belonged to the *Mwami* or the king, to dispense and distribute at his pleasure. He held the right to distribute as well as dispossess owners as he deemed fit. In this arrangement, land was the king's prime source of patronage and reward as well as punishment because of the status symbol that inhered in land ownership. Accordingly, and as would be expected, land ownership was concentrated in the hands of the king's relatives and administrators, inordinately the Tutsis and the princes of the royal blood, the *ganwa*.

Tendered, the traditional Burundi society was not purely feudal. However, the majority of the Hutu were viewed as servants and 'serfs'. In this social class were some poor and disfavoured Tutsis. Without secure rights to land, peasant Hutu and poor Tutsi gained usufruct rights to land owned by the ruling class. The picture changed little during the colonial period and persists today. Land tenure has changed little. The state has assumed the role of the

king by allocating rights of ownership and access to land. Land allocation is highly skewed in favour of powerful actors and groups, to the disadvantage of a large section of the population. Rights are few for most Hutu, for poor Tutsi, as well as for the minority Twa. The misfortune of the Twa minority has been made worse by the declaration of their traditional forest, Kibira, as a protected forest reserve. The conflict in Burundi has inordinately been played out as if the Twa matter little, if anything at all. Yet their exclusion presents perhaps the most unrecognised and unappreciated tragedy of the conflict, relegated to the margins of the political as well as economic activities of the country.

As land scarcity increases in response to population growth, landless farmers migrate in search of available land elsewhere, often generating suspicion on the part of communities into which they integrate.⁸⁹ Official corruption is a further problem. High-ranking government officials in some cases claim land owned by the state for commercial purposes. Land grabbing by influential politicians and businessmen not only generates conflicts, but also undermines the confidence of rural populations in laws that prohibit access to protected areas, and to those that prohibit certain environmental practices. The net effect is increased social hostility and suspicion as well as further fracture between central and rural visions for the sustainable use of land.⁹⁰

Livestock production accounts for 5% of the total food production in Burundi. In addition to land, cattle, and specifically the *Ankole* breed have had a great social as well as economic value. However, the social esteem with which livestock is held has been under sustained attack from the declining and limited pasture as well as competition for land for cultivation. Livestock rearing on a significant scale persists in the Imbo plains.

The historical association of cattle and the Tutsi community has contributed to a dilemma in priorities. With increasing population growth and the resultant diminishing of land resources, livestock production has been put under the spotlight. Competing claims between livestock farmers and cultivators is a rural source of inter-communal conflicts in Burundi. The scarcity of grazing resources, to a large measure, corresponds to population pressure. Resource scarcity is greater in the Buyenzi and Kirimiro areas, while resource availability is greater in Bututsi.

Coffee represents a dialectic of sorts between central priorities and rural prerequisites. Burundi ranks among small producers and has only less than 1% share on the world market even though coffee accounts for 90% of Burundi's exports. Its production has been characterised by coercion and mutual antipathy between the government and the peasantry.

Coffee was introduced in Burundi early last century by missionaries and the first plantations developed around religious missions. The German colonial administration disseminated the crop first, then the Belgians took over its spread in 1920. The latter spread it all over Rwanda-Burundi villages. Peasants

perceived this as another colonial constraint and hence disliked the crop.⁹¹ The Belgian colonial administration then introduced the 'poll tax' which was compulsory for every adult male, and peasants were forced to set up small coffee plantations in order to have funds to pay the tax. Coffee growing was therefore perceived as the means of meeting tax obligations rather than a way of making profit. In World War II, coffee extension was replaced by food crop extension so that the population could solve the food scarcity linked to that period. Coffee production has been on the decline due to the ongoing civil war but also as a result of increasing scarcity of arable land that has been cleared to make room for food crops needed by the ever-growing population.

The rural population has always been wary of food security, but because this is largely for subsistence purposes, coffee, and similarly tea have served to provide much-needed hard cash for other needs, like education.

Natural Resource Management

Burundi falls short of the minimum requirements for sustainable natural resource management and utilisation. In part, this failure is part of a broader dynamic in the conflict in the country. The significance, nevertheless, of an appreciation of the importance of natural resource management has not been lacking. On the contrary, it has been viewed as an integral part of man's relationship to his natural environment. This is illustrated by the tale of a monarch's refusal to destroy the country's sprawling natural forest to flush out mutineers to his rule. Oral sources report that in the early 20th century, *Mwami* Gisabo refused to put the Kibira forest to fire where a rebellion had erupted under the leadership of one of his sons-in-law. The monarch advanced that this was because "Kibira Forest is the link between the sky and the earth, and therefore no one had the right to destroy it."

The uncoordinated character of natural resource management in Burundi has resulted from the lack of a proper overarching environmental legislation. Its chaotic and coercive character has ensured that it did not strike a chord with the rural inhabitants who are the traditional custodians of the environment. The undermining of the traditional *Bashingantahe* conflict regulation institution has watered down public confidence in the peaceful resolution of disputes arising from the exploitation of natural resources.

Beginning with colonial coercion of the population in soil erosion initiatives, natural resource management initiatives have been top-down and coercive, and viewed by the population as punitive. As such, and lacking strong legal backing after colonialism, little headway has been made in the sustainable management of Burundi's natural resources.

The pivotal traditional role of the council of wise men or *Bashingantahe* was systematically eroded with the advent of colonialism and the successive military dictatorships in the country. Land disputes between communities, hitherto manageably contained by the institution, exploded.

An analysis of the framework regulating land use illustrates the disorderly and exclusive character of government approaches. The Land Law, a set of rules governing the use of land, is no longer in use. The Act, No 1/0088 dated 1986, which creates the Burundian Land law was intended to indicate different rights linked to national land ownership. Close examination of the act reveals that it does not include clauses that protect land against degradation through erosion, over-exploitation, and inappropriate farming practices that would result in decreased productivity. Furthermore, rather than complement the Forest Act, the Land Act, which was issued one and a half years later, serves to limit the application of the former. In fact, competencies for decisions regarding forest transfers or concessions are conflicting. Moreover, the Forest Act ignores traditional rights and habits. The following strategic guidelines were set up by the government of Burundi through the Ministry of Land and the Environment in order to redress the limitations:

- revision of the Land Act with the aim to protect soil against erosion, pollution, unsustainable farming practices, integrated planning of soil use and to combat desertification;
- application of the Swamp Master Plan that provides guidelines on their management;
- inventory of soil use;
- introduction of soil use cards; and
- adoption of soil conservation measures.

The strategies are intended to improve land use and condition. However, they ignore traditional rights and experience. The preparation of conservation blueprints takes little account of the concerns of the population.

The management of the cash crop sector has not been inclusive or transparent either. In the coffee and tea subsectors, the ruling party (UPRONA)'s 'mobilization of the population' characterised government campaigns. As in many parts of the developing world that rely on cash crop foreign exchange receipts, it is against the law to uproot cash crops because of dissatisfaction with compensation for harvests. This made it even worse for the rural population caught between the need to make use of the land to fulfil more immediate needs and a law that effectively left them without an alternative.

The Ministry of Agriculture carries out cash crop management through specialised government institutions, that is ISABU and OCIBU, the state-run tea and coffee parastatals respectively. Actions aimed at improving the coffee quality and quantity have been put in place since the post-colonial period, that is the establishment of tree nurseries, plant distribution, insect control, as well as installation of local treatment facilities.

Each coffee 'campaign' has been injecting large outlays of money into the production areas, but the distribution has been unequal from one region to

another. The price per kilogram also varies in the field. The production of coffee faces a myriad of problems today, as little is done to encourage farmers. The price per kilogram is far below production outlays, and the government recently dismissed agricultural instructors. The dynamic of the conflict and land fragmentation have undermined the productivity of the cash crop subsectors, as has competition for land within the context of increased demand for food production.

The management of the livestock subsector is the preserve of the Ministry of Agriculture and is thus removed from the management of pasture, which is entrusted to the Ministry of Land and Environment. The lack of co-ordination results in programmes working at cross-purposes. The prudent and coordinated management of this subsector is even the more crucial owing to diminishing arable land and the dangers inherent in overgrazing, which has led to the increased cases of serious soil degradation.

Demography plays a significant role in the distribution and exploitation of natural resources in Burundi. As illustrated earlier in this chapter, increasing population density has intensified inter-regional migration and accentuated violent competition for scarce land resources. A considerable size of small parcels of land are to be found in the country's central plateau, which is the older, populated and the bigger of the less populated regions that were recently inhabited (Kumoso and northern Imbo). The most important intra-regional migrations are those directly related to the search for new agricultural land, notably the flow of population towards these areas and Buragane. The tensions emanating from these population movements is aggravated by returning refugee caseloads, which are bound to settle further spaces as their pre-flight settlements and land had been occupied by the remaining population.

Politics and political decisions have greatly influenced natural resource redistributive patterns in Burundi. Various legal provisions (the Land Act, Forestry Act) and other pertinent legal conservation measures point to large parts of Burundi demarcated as forest reserves, especially protected areas and swamps. However, the political class has remained largely indifferent to these laws, expropriating and appropriating the country's natural resources to itself.

Economic decisions and planning in Burundi has ensured that production plants such as factories were established near industrial crops, for example the Sosumo (the Mosso sugar plant) located in the plain of Kumoso, the palm factory of Rumonge, and the tea factories. This arrangement has alienated rural populations, who lack the level of qualifications required for working in the plants. The result has been the 'importation' of urban populations to staff the factories. This has been a portentous source of resentment and conflict, more so because of the near-coterminous relationship between the Hutu, largely rural and Tutsi, urban and skilled.

Land ownership patterns show that various social categories exist in Burundi:

- displaced landowners: refugees, internally displaced and urban employment migrants;
- poor peasants: these hold small parcels of land in constant degradation caused by intensive farming. Others rent their land or do other intensive work to gain revenue;
- smallholders: these are medium income earning people and tend to become peasants because of land fragmentation resulting from repeated subdivision;
- medium owners: these are relatively well-off people having easy access to land resources; and
- big owners: these are rich people with access to and control over both land and land development resources.

Also of importance are the inheritance and successor rights which disinherit women. The system is patrilineal and characterised by successive subdivision of land between sons.

Productive use of land requires the following:

- Capital: critical as it is to productive activities, capital is ill distributed and is largely inaccessible in rural areas. It is however abundant to the authorities and some government workers who are well placed and 'politically correct'. Left to their own devices, the majority of the rural population rely on family gifts and inheritance. NGOs, banks, community organisations as well as trade associations provide potential sources of capital.
- Security: in Burundi where the population is divided into conflicting ethnic groups, security is a prerequisite in considerations for the setting up of different productive activities. Here again, the most secure group is the Tutsi community that enjoys protection from the army and the authorities, as well as commanding political influence. One of the reasons for the cyclical episodes of ethnic conflicts between the Hutu and Tutsi is the determination of the latter to ensure security for the community's productive activities and that of the former to gain a foothold in controlling the same. Besides, security is critical in the acquisition of capital in Burundi.
- Knowledge: this is accessed through NGOs, family and bank support, and the government. Exclusionary government policies have ensured that a majority of the peasant Hutu community lack the skills and knowledge necessary for the exploitation of economic opportunities, including the harnessing of natural resources.
- Transport facilities: the landlocked status of Burundi is a major impediment to production. Transport beyond the country's frontiers is facilitated

principally by the government, banks as well as community organisations. Here again, the predominance and political influence of the Tutsi community ensures that Tutsi businessmen are at an advantage.

Trade and Market Structure

Regarding trade and market structures, a number of unfavourable factors inhibit fair and efficient internal trade of agricultural products. These include lack of storage systems, bad conservation methods and limited supply channels, as well as relatively unstable prices. The market structure is imperfect, characterised as it is by two unequal players. These are a small number of traders and a great number of producers who access a single and same market and deal in a single product. There are few intermediaries and the price offered is very low. On some retail markets, about 70% of traders are producers themselves who sell small quantities of their produce. Producers and retailers often live far from markets, and can only access the markets on foot.

In Bujumbura, most agricultural products are sold by retailers who buy from producers or from other retailers. Trade in agricultural products is mainly retail. Wholesale trade is less developed and is limited to trade in beans. Some large consumers purchase via bidding for sale from traders who manage to mobilise important quantities. According to other sources, storage of great quantities is impossible by large-scale traders but this is done by other contractors or collectors in producing regions depending on demand and the state of the market.

Poor organisation, lack of transport, the near absence of an information network, and losses through poor storage undermines efficiency. These market imperfections explain abnormal profit margins, instability of prices and weak incentives for producers. Most of the produce ends up in Bujumbura, the most important and secure market. The government has done little to correct these market imperfections that allow a small coterie of influential businessmen to dominate the trade in agricultural products. On the other hand, it exercises close and tight control over the pricing of cash crops both in fixing the price and in the marketing of the products.

As a result of these constraints and the decline of productivity, producer prices have declined enormously in real terms, providing little incentive to farmers. During periods of good harvests, financial reserves of the stabilisation fund are used to close the budget deficit in total disregard of the sole purpose of the fund of stabilising producer prices in order to protect them against fluctuations in prices on international markets. When prices decline, the shortfall is not covered by the depleted stabilisation fund. The result is that the producer's purchasing power worsens.

High population density amid a rapidly increasing population, poor planning and the relative absence of a coherent agricultural policy have contributed to worsen the environmental conditions of Burundi. The

over-exploitation of the soil has drastically reduced per capita production of food as well as of cash crops. This is an indicator of the environmental decline. This has been accentuated by the intensive use of fertilizers in the production of cash crops, principally tea and coffee, some of the most fertilizer-intensive crops. The net effect has been felt more heavily in the decline of food production.

The following table illustrates the decline over the years of key cash crops in Burundi between 1994 and 1998.

Table 2: Cash crop production

Year	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
Coffee (tons)	41 000	28 000	26 000	20 000	17 000
Tea (tons)	Not available	6900	5800	Not available	5600
Cotton grains (tons)	4900	4600	2600	2300	3400

Source: Statistics and Agricultural Information Department, 1999

Reasons for the decrease in coffee production are multiple. During the period after the widespread outbreak of the civil war in 1993 the population undertook to destroy coffee plantations and replace them with food crops. Coffee has always been perceived by the producers, who were essentially Hutu, as a means of central taxation of their labour, first to the colonial authority and later to the post-independence governments, and not as a means of economic self-advancement. In the post-independence period, Hutu coffee growers continue to view coffee mainly as a source of income for local authorities, which for the last 40 years or so have been Tutsi.

Political propaganda in 1992 strongly harped on this feeling. Following the assassination of President Ndadaye (Hutu) in 1993, Hutus undertook to destroy coffee plantations in retaliation so that the Tutsi group who had just assassinated the president should not benefit from the wealth generated by the coffee industry. As a result, over 1 924 841 coffee trees were destroyed. Continued pressure on limited land and increased fragmentation have also ensured that food crops replace coffee trees.

The decline in coffee production can also be attributed to the reduction of fields sewn, the destruction and/or the abandonment of related infrastructure and production units, lack of agricultural fertilizers following the economic embargo (1996–1998) and low performances of support services.

Table 3 corroborates the declining trends of cash crop production per capita.

Table 3: The production of major cash crops per inhabitant

Year	Coffee	Cotton	Tea
1993	6.29	1.52	4.53
1994	3.29	0.84	5.64
1995	6.85	0.76	5.39
1996	4.14	0.42	4.62
1997	4.21	0.38	3.35
1998	3.17	0.51	5.02

Source: Central Bank, 1999

Shrinking forest cover and the concomitant availability of wood fuel are equally alarming indicators of Burundi's natural resource trends. Total available potential resources stand at 27.8 million tons. Of this, harvesting has been steadily increasing from 5.9 million tons in 1997. It is expected to rise to 6.7 million tons in 2003.⁹² According to a report of a prospective study of the forest sector in Africa by the year 2002, Burundi stands to incur a deficit of 4.2 million tons of fuel wood between demand for consumption (5.9 million tons) and the annual production (1.7 million tons). This deficit should grow in the future if the growth rate of forest areas remains lower than that of the population.

The reason for these declines is the absence of prudent management and the increased encroachment into forest areas, and the unscrupulous acquisition of forest reserves by equally unscrupulous, well-placed politicians and government officials.

Conflicts associated with land in Burundi are multiple and manifest at various levels. Nationally, there is a crisis of unsustainable land use brought about by the high incidence of population density. This has resulted in population movement to forest zones in Kumoso, north Imbo, Buragane and Buyogoma. New arrivals are pitted against original inhabitants in fierce competition for land. Natives of these areas are unhappy and hold populations from Buyenzi and Kirimiro responsible for any and all environmental decline. Additionally, high population density has resulted into over-exploitation of soil resources leading to declining productivity and competition for scarce and dwindling food products. The end result is conflict.

Competing priorities between cultivation and livestock farming cause conflicts due to incompatibility. The most notable case is to be found in the Rusizi flood plain. Farmers, especially local inhabitants, are at pains to put up with the fact that land dedicated to agriculture degrades when it is subjected

to livestock rearing at the same time. Political considerations in the demarcation of protected areas constitute another cause of conflict between the government and rural inhabitants. Rural populations have been dislodged without prompt, adequate and sufficient compensation by the government in many state-protected areas. Furthermore many of these areas have not been clearly demarcated and the population is often informed neither on the status nor of the law governing protected areas.

State seizure of land ostensibly for reasons of 'public interest' and redistributed to private individuals is yet another land-related source of grievance. The most renowned of these cases is that of Rusizi National Park, which used to be over 9 000 hectares and which was created by expropriation from the Riparian population without compensation. In 2000, the government decided to change the park into a natural reserve of 5 280 hectares. The remaining 4 000 hectares was carved up between high government officials in the country and prominent businessmen. In a belated attempt to redress the grievances of the local population, the government decided to compensate the Riparian population 20 years down the line.

The case of the Regional Development Corporation in Rumonge featured prominently in the Arusha peace and reconciliation talks on Burundi. State appropriation of privately owned land and subsequent unfair subdivision between previous owners has been a source of great acrimony.⁹³

Government mismanagement of public land extends to the confusion between communal and state prerogatives on land. Communes continue to parcel out land while this is a prerogative of the Ministry for Land and Environment. The most striking case concerns public forests where communal authorities sell public trees to the private sector, effectively dislodging the local population that have planted and cared for the forest, in total disregard for their welfare.

In Burundi, additionally, the principle that "the farmer who ploughs a piece of land for several seasons becomes its owner" has led to the population's appropriation and use of land belonging to displaced persons. This leads to conflict upon the return of the original landowners. There are cases of land disputes of this nature in Rumonge, for example.

Swamps are wholly state owned. Swamp ownership by individuals, therefore, contradicts the professed government policy, more so because, often the 'owners' are government officials. This fraudulent acquisition of state-owned land remains a source of conflict.⁹⁴

Main Environmental Challenges

The challenge facing Burundi is as much a political one as it is environmental. Pervasive and widespread practices of non-participatory environmental planning, appropriation of public land and coercive implementation of environmental conservation programmes have alienated the rural population

from the central government institutions. Increasingly, because of this bad blood, productivity of food as well as cash crops has markedly declined (partly as a result as well of the disruptive effects of the civil war since 1993). The result is that a major threat to the successful implementation of the Arusha Reconciliation and Peace Agreement (August 2000) is the high incidence of rural poverty amid a pocket of prosperity.

The development of sustainable agricultural policies with the population's involvement, government intervention to correct imperfect market structures, and a clear environmental management corpus of law and practices must be undertaken. This must be so if only for the reason that they constitute the only viable route to stemming the rapid deterioration of the both the structure and condition of the natural environment in Burundi, a critical structural fuel in the country's civil war.

The observations of this section are buttressed by the following case study, which seeks to cast state management of an economically strategic cash crop, coffee, within the broader conflict.

Coffee as a Source of Conflict

This section looks at the coffee subsector in Burundi. There are a number of reasons for this focus. Firstly, the economy of Burundi, like that of many developing countries, is based on agricultural production. Secondly, and related to the first consideration, the subsector offers the classical arena for rent seeking by a state elite with minimal external scrutiny. Thirdly, coffee constitutes more than 80% of Burundi's foreign exchange earnings. Farming coffee is labour intensive and can only continue if benefits are sufficient to the producers. In the absence of the first incentive, some degree of coercion, however subtle, is required for continued production. The state-controlled marketing and exporting agencies regulate the subsector and set producer prices with only token input of the farmers, who have no meaningful say in decisions.

Burundi is one of the most densely populated countries in the world. The country is also burdened with a rapidly growing population. It is landlocked and small, with an estimated population of six million inhabitants. Logically, competition for scarce land is a potential conflict flashpoint. But perhaps more important is the competition between food and cash crops, in this case coffee.

The ebb and flow of the conflict largely determines the demographic patterns in Burundi. Following the outbreak of the latest cycle of violence, the urban centres, especially Bujumbura, have become isolated 'Tutsistans', whereas the countryside has largely been emptied of its predominantly Hutu inhabitants. The rural population of Bujumbura, the scene of military

confrontation between rebel groups and government forces in the 1990s, has relocated to regroupment camps. Internal displacement has far-reaching implications for agricultural production, with soaring food prices and reduced production of export crops, coffee and tea. The manoeuvring latitude of the 'middleman minority'⁹⁵ has correspondingly been narrowed, exacerbating elite tensions. This was made worse by the imposition of sanctions between 1996 and 1999, imposing increased external costs on the operations of coffee exporters.

To these factors must be added the history of the crop, its introduction into the Burundi economy and symbolic significance. An addition of the colonial economic package, coffee was introduced by the Belgian trustee administration to Burundi in the 1930s. Belgian colonial policy elevated the Tutsi group in a structure resembling indirect rule, making them overseers in the activities of the natives. Thus coffee production was done by the Hutus and overseen by Tutsi local administrators. This reinforced the chasm between the Hutus and the Tutsis as subject and ruler. Attitudes and perceptions have persisted and permeated the ideology of the civil war. The government and Tutsis view the army as their last line of defence against an imagined Hutu peril. Hutus and the armed opposition in turn view with suspicion and describe the armed forces in all manner of pejorative terms. It is the same army that has been the principal agent of oppression and mass murder. Rebel groups have reportedly been waging a propaganda war against the cultivation of coffee for this reason. In the mid-1990s, rebels waged a campaign to destroy the coffee trade by inciting the people to uproot the trees so as to destabilise the government revenue base and cripple the economy.⁹⁶

Coffee production, processing and marketing, including the crop's export, reflect and reinforce the country's ethnic divisions. The Tutsi play an almost exclusive part in the role of the 'minority middleman' and the state, effectively controlled by a cabal within this group, expropriates the earnings, leaving little trickling down the peasants' way.

Global commodity price fluctuations have made matters no easier. The near collapse of coffee prices in the world market (mid-2001 saw the lowest world coffee prices ever) has ensured that it is the primary producers' whose receipts are minimal, often to the benefit of the state. In Burundi, certain episodic outbursts of violence are attributed to the smuggling of coffee to neighbouring Rwanda for better returns and the government's attempts to curtail them.

There are some hopeful signs of progressive change, especially in the northern Ngozi province, the stronghold of coffee production. In this case, farmers and other stakeholders from Ngozi region have organised themselves into a cooperative society, including a financial credit facility to farmers in order to put to good use coffee proceeds for the benefit of the region, irrespective of the identity of the farmers. This coalition of farmers, former politicians and erstwhile

government functionaries has acted in reaction to the diversion of revenues of the region by the central government for the benefit of other regions.⁹⁷

Distribution of coffee⁹⁸

Coffee in Burundi is mainly grown in the north of the country, with some sprinkling in the centre. About 850 000 families are involved in the growing of the crop, which constitutes their primary or secondary source of income, depending on the ratio of their coffee trees to their food production. This income represents between 40–60% of the household cash income. Each family has an average of between 100–300 coffee trees. Overall, it is estimated that three-quarters of Burundi's population is involved in the production of coffee.

Two main types of coffee constitute the crop in Burundi. The favoured high-grade *arabica* and the comparatively less profitable *robusta*. *Arabica* thrives in northern Burundi. *Arabica* makes up over 90% of Burundi coffee exports, while *robusta*, which grows in lower altitude, comprises the rest. Whereas *arabica* is grown exclusively by smallholder farmers, who constitute 50% of the total coffee farmers, export grade *robusta* is grown on irrigated industrial plantations in the Imbo plains.

The total land area under coffee production in Burundi stood at 115 000 hectares, (representing 4% of the country's total land surface area) in 1991, with an estimated 200 million coffee tree. The conflict in the country has frustrated the collection and tabulation of more reliable statistics. It is however plausible that the total land area under coffee cultivation has declined for a variety of reasons. Low or no inputs, most important being fertilizers and insecticides, have ensured that yields have remained less than the average international yield per tree of 0.45 kilogram.

Production structures

In order to clearly understand the production of coffee, it is important to have a brief look at the institutional organisation of the coffee subsector:

Established in 1948, the *Office des Cultures Industrielles du Burundi* (OCIBU) is at the top of the pyramid of the coffee subsector. It is the government's agency charged with regulating activities in the subsector. Its remit includes formulating government policy in respect to coffee production, processing, marketing, research and training. Additionally, OCIBU organises planting programmes, distributes fertilizers and insecticides to farmers, and maintains access roads to coffee growing areas.

The development of the payment schedule is also under OCIBU, as is the payment of operators in the subsector and the collection of taxes from the revenue on behalf of the government. This role is synonymous with the

management of a stabilisation fund for the sector to offset losses when international market prices for coffee are low.

The role of OCIBU is thus broad. It also encompasses establishing quality standards and classification systems as well as monitoring of financial operations and performance of institutions in the sector. Ultimately, it becomes the owner of the final product ready for export.

The *Societes de Gestion des Stations de Lavage* (SOGESTALS) are responsible for the management and operations of washing coffee. The SOGESTALS own and operate all five washing stations in Kayanza, Kirimiro, Kirundo, Mumirwa and Ngozi. They are paid for their services through the general payment schedule as determined by OCIBU. Owing to low production and remuneration, these bodies have had to be subsidised to cover their operating losses.

The hulling operations in the coffee industry are undertaken by *Societe de Deparchage et de Conditionnement* (SODECO). They process the parchment coffee from private traders and SOGESTALS through sorting of the green coffee and bagging it for shipment. There are two SODECO-run hulling factories in Gitega and Bujumbura, with a combined processing capacity of 60 000 metric tons for semi-washed and fully washed coffee. The government, to stimulate competition, has recently licensed two small private hulling companies. These are SONICOFF and SIVCA, both of which are in operation.

Prior to structural reforms in the coffee subsector sponsored by the World Bank and the *Caisse Francaise de Developpement* between 1990 and 1996, OCIBU and the monopoly auction company Burundi Coffee Company (BCC) exercised complete control of the sector. OCIBU owned and operated the washing and hulling subsidiaries, aside from its other functions detailed above, while BCC retained the sole rights for all Burundi coffee auctions. In addition to the roles of OCIBU detailed above, the state firm played the role of financial intermediary between commercial banks and players in the subsector, borrowing on their behalf. The stranglehold on the sector by OCIBU and BCC⁹⁹ stifled competition and reduced production. Coffee proceeds attracted a levy from the government, also determined by OCIBU. The following reforms have been undertaken in the operations and structure of the subsector:

- The services provided by SODECOs and SOGESTALS were previously provided under the aegis and broad management of OCIBU. The assets of the two bodies have been transferred to a new asset management facility *Service du Patrimoine*. The new OCIBU special organ leases washing stations to SOGESTALS and the hulling facilities to the two SODECOs. It is envisaged that *Service du Patrimoine* will oversee the sale of the assets of the two bodies to private investors when the coffee subsector is fully liberalised.

- The auction market has been opened to private exporters, ending the monopolistic role of BCC. Private exporters are organised under the *Association Burundaise des Exportateurs du Café*.

The reforms have had a number of effects. First, they have widened the sources of capital for players in the industry, both domestically and abroad. This allows players in the subsector to access credit at competitive and sometimes concessionary rates. Second, they have limited the government's discretionary levy deductions, replacing them with an export tax. However, the targets set for the privatisation of the coffee subsector and the liberalisation of producer and intermediaries' prices remain largely unrealised.

Production and Adding Value

Coffee cultivation and processing is a tedious process. For *arabica* coffee, two processing pathways are distinguishable. These follow the form in which the farmer delivers the crop to the next stage of production, as either fully washed or in semi-washed form.

In the semi-washed state, farmers depulp (by hand or with manual depulpers) the harvested cherries. This requires a constant supply of fresh water for the extraction of the fruit and has pollution consequences. The depulped parchment coffee is then sold to traders. The traders sell collected parchment coffee to the SODECO hulling factories. SODECO in turn sell the parchment coffee to OCIBU who sell it to exporters on the auction market in Bujumbura. The semi-washed hierarchy thus involves five stages of transaction.

The fully washed path is shorter. Here, the farmer sells the coffee cherries immediately after harvesting to the SOGESTALS, which operate coffee-washing stations. The SOGESTALS convert the cherries into parchment and sell it to SODECO. This process has two distinct advantages. One, it lessens the work of the farmer and second it eliminates the middlemen traders.

The International Market: Players, Producers and Politics

The final coffee product requires more than just coffee bean production. Roasting, grinding and packaging are additional processes. However, importers undertake these processes, lengthening the production chain before the product reaches the consumer. *Arabica's* terminal market is New York while *robusta's* is London. American roasters insist that for best quality, coffee has to be roasted and ground near the consumer and delivered within seven days, with the premium of 48 hours. This however, is a trade barrier excuse by traders in the consuming countries of the developed world, which could easily be overcome through the technology of vacuum packing. The American roasters' argument is consonant with the century-old opposition by the north to import value added food products from the developing world.

The beneficiaries in this arrangement have largely been American and European middlemen and roasters who hold an important place in the coffee commodity chain. Over 40% of global coffee trade is in the hands of only four companies, led by Starbucks, which holds 50% of sales in the terminal markets. Three-quarters of the roasting business in the United States, home of the world's largest instant coffee industry, is in the hands of only three roasters, with General Foods, Nestle for Maxwell House and Nescafe respectively leading the industry. This international market structure creates an oligopolistic market whose penetration by producing countries remains a daunting challenge.

The fair/alternative trade movement has emerged to reduce the length of the chain to benefit the primary producer.¹⁰⁰ Fair trade is based on the need for more equitable, less exploitative dealings with coffee producers. It emphasises minimum prices for inputs, credit availability at concessionary rates, long-term relationships with farmers' cooperatives where they exist, and the bypassing of middlemen. The Fair Trade initiative, however, remains a nascent developed world initiative that will take time to penetrate the complex web of intermediaries in the coffee production chain on the end of primary production and processing.

Distribution of Income

The distribution of income from the coffee subsector has until recently been determined by OCIBU. As stated earlier, OCIBU set out a payment schedule for all the players in the subsector. A commission chaired by OCIBU that includes government ministries and agencies' representatives, farmers, washing stations, hulling factories and exporters representatives now schedules the payments. The payment schedule is set out in *the grille de remuneration qualitative* that factors in production projections, export prices and sales, as well as the cost of intermediaries.

Increase in producer price in tandem with increased production and revenue has, however, not been matched. The IMF laments that

“... Despite these important nominal increments and superior quality of Burundi's *arabica*, producer prices have typically remained below corresponding prices in neighbouring countries and have displayed a low degree of correlation with international coffee prices ... All these have eroded the incentives for coffee production at the level of farmers and have thus undermined the competitiveness of Burundi as a coffee producer and exporter. Moreover a not insignificant – and increasing – part of production is regularly being smuggled to neighbouring countries, especially during periods of relatively low producer prices.”¹⁰¹

The price stabilisation role of OCIBU allowed it to reserve payment during bumper revenue harvests to guard against revenue shortfalls in times of

declined export prices. This was augmented with the European Union STABEX facility under the Lomé Convention. The excess revenue is banked into deposit accounts in the name and under the control of OCIBU. This arrangement has been abused by the government during periods of economic hardship. Thus,

“While the financing of deficits of the ... [subsector] and the replenishment of the reserve account have been secured either through budgetary transfers or donor support, the redistribution of surplus remains an unresolved issue ... in particular, especially during periods of tight budgetary funds *surpluses have been appropriated by the government at the expense of farmers and other operators in the coffee subsector.*”¹⁰²

The main beneficiary has been the government through OCIBU. The government's total control of the tertiary processes in regard to *arabica* through full ownership, control and operations has bred operational inefficiencies, a skewed payment system to the detriment of the producer and has indirectly contributed to the reduced levels of production.

The Role of the State

Burundi's agricultural sector is state led. Successive governments considered the coffee subsector to be strategic.¹⁰³ The reference to strategy is not limited to the crop's important role in financing Burundi's imports, but also to the fact that receipts from the crop, whose *arabica* variant from the country has long been considered by coffee auction houses abroad as one of the best, constitute a 'cash cow' uninhibited by external scrutiny. This is as opposed to official development assistance, for which the country disproportionately depended for development projects until the outbreak of the current episode of conflict in 1993.

UPRONA, the sole political party embodied the executive, legislature and judiciary, all rolled into one. The ruling elite used the party to mobilise and indoctrinate, with an overwhelming presence around the country. UPRONA became the government's local agent where coffee production was concerned, organising and mobilising peasants during the coffee production cycle. According to a Burundian who vividly remembers the period, UPRONA infiltrated and influenced local administration and spearheaded government monitoring activities of the subsector, ensuring that projected government budgetary outlays for the proceeding financial year, from projected coffee exports foreign exchange receipts, were met.¹⁰⁴ In addition, planning of infrastructure outlays to the producing areas was done principally because of extraction of the crop rather than for the welfare of the local inhabitants.¹⁰⁵

The relationship between the government and production in the rural areas was at best tenuous during the post-independence period before the

reforms of the late 1980s. State-producer relations worsened over time, primarily because of the authoritarian, top-down orientation. As a result the agricultural policy was considered a constraint as it constituted a series of orders from above, showing a sense of omnipresent authoritarianism. Laely observes that:

“the monopolistic state has not tolerated other forms of organisations ... there were no peasant unions or even any autonomous associations; indeed, the rural co-operatives were always under such tight state control that they never succeeded in creating any dynamics of their own.”¹⁰⁶

The protest culture in coffee-growing areas of the northern provinces of Burundi has been attributed to the relative accumulation of wealth from agriculture and other economic activities in such areas, some of them illicit.¹⁰⁷ Palipehutu, which took up arms as early as 1980, was originally based in the northern provinces of Ngozi and Kirundo bordering Rwanda. The confluence of the Rwandese and the bordering population that is overwhelmingly Hutu created networks of business activities that ensured that coffee farmers on the Burundi side who could not get a good price for their crop could smuggle it across to Rwanda where prices were higher.¹⁰⁸ When, to curb the smuggling of coffee to Rwanda, among other reasons, the Burundi military moved into the communes of Ntega and Marangara in 1988, violence ensued, resulting in the infamous Ntega-Marangara massacres that brought home to the new Buyoya government the reality and explosiveness of pent up resentments.

The confluence of the region's agricultural renown and rebel activity warrants further inquiry. This is more so because prior to the turbulence in 1993 that proceeded the overthrow of the Ndadaye government, rebel activity begun originally in the north spreading to the rest of the country only a couple of years later. Since the Hutu majority have been discriminated against in education opportunities,¹⁰⁹ they were likely to be less politically conscious to the extent of being mobilised on the scale that was witnessed during the 1988 violence in the north. The logical conclusion is that rebels tapped strong but hitherto latent local grievances with respect to the government's agricultural policies generally and those specific to coffee in particular.¹¹⁰ This they have been able to do because of rising levels of awareness among farmers about market information and trends.

This contention is validated by the characteristic inadequacy of market information in the international coffee environment, whose principal victim is normally the primary producer. In their study, Nkurunziza and Ngaruko¹¹¹ illustrate the skewed provision of education services in favour of the agriculturally arid and poor southern provinces at the expense of the country's northern coffee-producing provinces. Ngozi province, which ranks as a major producer of coffee, is the least privileged among the country's provinces in the provision of education infrastructure.

The logical conclusion to be drawn from these observations is that because of Burundi coffee farmers' low levels of education and limited access to and understanding of market information, the largely poor and illiterate coffee producers of Burundi have required some indoctrination and 'civic education' to be aware of their exploitation by the government. In the hope of a better economic future, the primary producers, whose economic prospects remain at the mercy of a predatory state, have been stirred to political and in some cases, armed protest in the vague hope of 'a better tomorrow'.

Nominations to the Coffee and Tea Office, a government parastatal body, are made by presidential decrees and "... can therefore be used to compensate active party members and supporters for ... services rendered".¹¹² Consequently, the leadership of this important position has served as a source of patronage at the political centre, alienating the stakeholders in the sector's periphery.

The common complaints recorded in many commodity dependent economies apply to Burundi's coffee subsector: the underpayment of farmers for their produce, often to the enrichment of a plethora of middlemen and elite. The close control and regulation of these sectors by the central government takes the form of taxes, expense deductions like transportation and export costs, infrastructure development levies and a host of other deductions that sometimes leave the primary producer with little more than the input costs of production and little or no disposable income.

This situation amounts to the appropriation of peasant labour. The economic compensation of primary producers is subordinated to the litany of 'expenses' incurred in adding value to the commodity for export on the one hand and exorbitant charges for inputs by middlemen who act in both directions on the other.¹¹³

In the case of Burundi it is observed that

"...The lion's share of the profit from the coffee trade goes to the state and various intermediaries for which there can be no economic justification while the producer receives a little less than 35% [of the export price]."¹¹⁴

This situation is reflective of the broader patronage system that characterises the country's economy. According to the ICG, "the interaction between an authoritarian regime and the accumulation of economic benefits has been characterised by the exploitation of the elite of income from primary, agricultural and mining resources."¹¹⁵

The overwhelming control the Tutsi elite has on the country has ensured that the structures for redistribution of national income and wealth in Burundi revolve around a Tutsi regional network. (In Burundi's political economy parlance, *Mwaro* [money], *Ijenda* [technocrats] and *Bururi* [political and military power] complement one another in controlling economic

activities in the country.) It is this powerful cabal that derailed the 1993 democratic experiment and, following the slide of the country into generalised chaos between 1993 and 1996, restored President Buyoya to power to protect its threatened interests.¹¹⁶ The other regions of the country, dubbed 'the Third World' of Burundi, include Kayanza and Ngozi provinces, which produce the bulk of the country's coffee.

The 1993 the liberalisation of Burundi's politics threatened the privileged political and economic base of the country's minority, especially the Bururi Tutsi, through sweeping political and economic reforms. It is unclear, however, what reforms were envisaged for the coffee subsector. President Ndadaye had intimated reforms in the agricultural sector, including the restructuring and reform of OCIBU.¹¹⁷ The intended reform threatened to cut off a major source of patronage largesse for some.¹¹⁸ It is instructive to note that FRODEBU campaigned on a platform of reforms.

The strategic importance of coffee in Burundi's economy has brought with it legal sanctions on the farmers' freedom to choose what they deem to be economically more viable. Thus they cannot uproot their coffee trees as this is viewed as economic subversion and treason.¹¹⁹ The result has been competition between subsistence agriculture for food and coffee cultivation for income. The country's expanding population and concomitant diminishing land resources aggravate the problem.¹²⁰

It is reported that rebel groups and opposition political parties have participated in exhorting coffee farmers to uproot their coffee trees. Their argument is that the government uses revenues from coffee to procure arms to protect the interests of a privileged elite and not for development.¹²¹ They further argue that the armed forces oppress the very farmers who produce the bulk of the country's foreign exchange. The 'coffee propaganda' began in the mid-1980s, its emergence motivated by unfavourable government policies and evidence that some food crops like bananas were more profitable in the long run. But the government, through the law and a 'misinformation' campaign, effectively countered these attempts.¹²²

Recent anti-coffee campaigns by rebel groups appear to be a twin-pronged strategy through their mobilisation propaganda:

- to incite acts of economic sabotage on the part of the peasants and thus reduce government revenue and disable the army; and
- to incite government retaliation which would in turn justify the continuation of the rebellion and their opposition to the government.

It is difficult to assess how successful this message has been, partly because of the multiple consequences of the civil war on the agricultural sector, regional economic sanctions (1996–1999) and the policy of regroupment or the forcible relocation of rural populations into protected camps. It is difficult to

disaggregate the role rebel political messages have carried and what precise impact they have had on coffee production.

Direct manifestations of the role of coffee in the conflict have come to light in recent years. A United States agency report found that due to foreign exchange reserves shortfalls, the government had mortgaged future coffee production (tea, cotton and sesame were also mentioned as mortgaged) as payment for arms and munitions for the war. This desperate action came as the Hutu insurgency escalated and regional economic sanctions bit, depriving the government of hard currencies with which to procure arms.¹²³ The suspension of international financial assistance since 1993 ensured that the only remaining source of government foreign exchange was the export of coffee and, to a small extent, that of tea. The escalation of the war and regional economic sanctions frustrated the government's efforts to get the reduced coffee production to the world market.

More recently, a UN report unearthed evidence to the effect that coffee from the DRC is being smuggled to Burundi where it is mixed with and exported as Burundi coffee.¹²⁴ The UN report, undertaken to investigate the illegal exploitation of the DRC's natural resources and other forms of wealth, has firmly focused the limelight on the regional network of smugglers and illicit traders and their role in the continuation of the conflicts in the Great Lakes region.

Specific Areas of Conflict

The foregoing discussion points to two levels of conflict, direct and indirect. Indirectly, the conflict arising from the relatively low earnings of the primary producers in relation to other players in the sector is subtle because of the relative ignorance of farmers about the export price for coffee and the complicated payment system administered by the state.¹²⁵

At the direct level, there are two forms of conflict. One, the diminishing land space imposes the temptation to return to subsistence and/or food agriculture. Because it is illegal to uproot coffee trees, farmers are faced with a situation where they place little emphasis on the production of coffee while concentrating on food crops. Additionally, scarce land increases the pressure on land resources, leading to environmental deterioration, made worse by inadequate government investment in the sector and the continuing civil war. The other form of conflict, briefly discussed above is the politicisation of the coffee subsector and its role in prolonging the conflict.¹²⁶

Land and Land-related Issues

The problem of land scarcity and the unsustainable population growth in the Great Lakes region generally, but in Burundi and Rwanda in particular, and

its implications for conflict is now widely acknowledged. With Burundi's 2001 population estimated at 6.53 million people and growing at an estimated 3% annually, the country's population doubles every 20 years.¹²⁷ The population density stood at an average of between 260–300 people per square kilometres as of 1997 and is on the rise, one of the highest in Africa. An average peasant family in Burundi possesses less than one hectare of land.¹²⁸

The total arable land as a percentage of the country's total land area is 44%, with the area under permanent crops taking up 9% of that. The large number of people living off the soil and the relative underdevelopment of the tertiary and service sectors¹²⁹ consign an increasing number of the country's population into competition for increasingly scarce land resources. The pressing environmental concerns in Burundi revolve around land rights of ownership and access. Closely related are soil erosion and degradation, as well as access to and exploitation of natural resources. This is the case particularly because of the intensity of agricultural activity, what with its expansion into marginal lands and into forest areas.

The challenge facing Burundi is that of mediating the competing claims of food deficit and the desperate reliance on coffee to redeem the deficit. The civil war has ensured that Burundi is transformed into a net importer of food. Thus concerns over food security have gained an entry in a country that was until the end of the 1980s food self-sufficient.¹³⁰

Intensive farming practices offer an intermediate solution that may not be sustainable in the future because of coffee's notoriety for pollution, being the second most chemically intensive crop after cotton. Although the input of fertilizers in the coffee-growing areas in Burundi has been erratic in recent years because of the civil war, the use of fertilizers over the years has bequeathed the soil considerable residual chemical effect. This poses a potential for reduced soil productivity because of the crop's long life cycle. The dilemma is the pivotal place coffee (especially *arabica* which contributes 85–90% of the foreign exchange derived from coffee) occupies in the economy and the fact that segregating it from food crop cultivation is a near impossible task. This is because in most smallholding plots where it is cultivated, it is alongside food crops. Thus the setting up of separate coffee 'plantations' is not an option.

Marketing of Coffee and Location of Secondary Industries

The marketing of coffee is a source of tension between the identity groups in Burundi. Hutu farmers are aggrieved that the middlemen are overwhelmingly, if not exclusively, Tutsi who pay a low price for the coffee harvest.¹³¹ The traders engage in speculative activity, buying the harvest from farmers before it is harvested and the price is fixed. In most cases farmers end up with little revenue because the traders are privy to inside and forecast information of prices in the international coffee market.¹³² The trend is however changing in

some areas, for example in Ngozi, where farmers are increasingly becoming aware of the prices offered in the international market. This is responsible for the increased agitation by farmers for greater control of the resource.¹³³

The location of the SODECO processing plants is a source of conflict at three levels. On one hand, a majority of the employees in the plants (and those of the SOGETALs), who earn ridiculously high salaries, are not native to the local coffee-producing areas and are in most cases from the country's south. This has bred resentment among locals and partly contributed to the violence in 1988 in Ntega and Marangara.¹³⁴

Secondly, the costs associated with transporting coffee to the processing plants is passed on to the farmer by middlemen. These middlemen, who are Tutsis, have access to financial credit from banks countrywide unlike the farmers, (many of whom are Hutus) and are able to bear the costs.

Liberalisation of the subsector, although moving slowly, has produced a pattern of "alien and elite ownership". Farmers have not been granted the necessary financial resources nor the opportunity to co-own the processing plants, despite the fact that some farmers are able to purchase shares in the companies, which sell at about US\$ 150 per unit.¹³⁵ These structural inequities leave the primary producer at the mercy of the middleman.

International Economic Environment and Domestic Political Developments

The Burundi economy and thus the country's coffee producers' welfare are inextricably intertwined with the international prices of coffee. Because of the country's over-reliance on coffee receipts for foreign exchange, the economy is susceptible to price fluctuations in the international market. This is aggravated by the fact that the country is a comparatively small producer compared to giants like Colombia and Brazil, which respectively are the leading producers of *arabica* and *robusta*. Because of its minimal production volumes, Burundi cannot therefore influence the direction of prices at the world market the way, for example, changes in global political dynamics and the weather in Brazil can.

The collapse of the International Coffee Agreement in 1989 rendered small producers, including Burundi, vulnerable to the vagaries of adverse coffee price changes in the world market. The International Coffee Agreement (ICA), the longest-established international commodity-regulating organisation, was formed in 1940 to stem price volatility arising from speculation and sales volume in the world market. It brought together both producers and consumers (the major producers being Brazil and Colombia and the major consumers the United States and European countries) and worked out production and sales quotas for the producing countries.

The gradual disintegration and eventual collapse of this organisation was partly responsible for the collapse of world coffee prices in the mid-1980s.

The effects of this on the economy of Burundi were adverse and have been observed to have been partly responsible for the disturbances during the second half of that decade.¹³⁶

Failure to renew the agreement in 1989 is partly attributable to the waning and eventual collapse of Cold War politics. The United States' interest in the agreement was part of its Cold War zero-sum competition for producer country allies with the defunct Soviet Union. It hoped that by stabilising coffee-producing countries' receipts from the crop export by playing a role in shielding them from world market price volatility, they would be less vulnerable to 'poaching' by the Soviet Union. With the diminishing Cold War discourse in the late 1980s, the ICA's strategic relevance turned into an unjustifiable loss to the powerful coffee-roasting lobby on Capitol Hill. Additionally, discontent was growing among some major producers that the main winners in the scheme were Brazil and Colombia, that some smaller producers had taken advantage of the scheme to surpass their allotted quotas and had in fact been exporting to East European countries. The ICA collapsed in 1989, the victim of a changed and changing world.

Between 1986 and 1992, the price of coffee dropped by 75% and Burundi's average growth in export revenues correspondingly dropped from 3.3% for the period 1965–1980, to –1.9% for the period 1980–1990. This was thus a period of heightening tension between the increasingly impoverished and neglected rural population and the privileged urban elite. Nkurunziza and Ngaruko's "predation, repression and rebellion" model helps in explaining the outbreak of the 1988 Ntega-Marangara violence in relation to the shrinking of the government's clientelist reservoir. The model amply illustrates the positive correlation between state predation and declining government capacity owing to a shrinking prey. During periods of declining GDP per capita, predation rises. This in turn provokes rebellion by the peasants. The government reacts with predictability, heavy-handedly putting down the rebellion.¹³⁷

The relevance and place of international financial aid is pertinent in this discussion. The export revenue deriving from coffee in Burundi provides less than half of government development and recurrent expenditure estimates. Multilateral and bilateral donors and development partners have filled this gap. In the period between 1989 and 1991 more than half the finances spent by the Burundi government came from these sources and international non-governmental organisations.¹³⁸ This would explain the relative closeness between Burundi peasants and these organisations as contended by Laely.¹³⁹ External development financing mainly put up the infrastructure projects built during the Bagaza period.

The twin phenomena of the Burundi government's disproportionate reliance on external financial receipts and the country's rural population's near indifference to central authority is made more compelling when one looks at the post-1993 events and the 'creeping coup' that came to pass in

July 1996. The scaling down of international financial assistance following the derailment of democracy in 1993 and its eventual freeze in 1995 following the initiation of the regroupment policy placed the Burundi government in a desperate economic and political position both internally and externally.

If the government's back was to the wall with the 1995 freeze of external financial assistance and support, regional economic sanctions (1996–1999) nearly brought it to its knees. Its only recourse was an internal economic environment long neglected and a cash crop whose producers have remained on the margins of government priorities. Salter rightly argues that the credibility of region's sanctions against Burundi rested squarely with their ability to prevent it from exporting its coffee crop.¹⁴⁰

When Burundi found a crevice in the otherwise well-intentioned regional initiative, it broke through, selling its coffee through Mombasa via Tanzania initially and later through Rwanda as Rwandan coffee. And when these avenues proved expensive and unsustainable, Burundi switched to the Zambian lake port of Mpulungu as the gateway to Durban in South Africa.¹⁴¹ As indicated earlier, with the escalation of the civil war, defence expenditure became an overriding priority and finances for arms purchases had to be found if the government was decisively to defeat the rebellion through its chosen strategy – in the battle field. It meant the government could even mortgage future coffee receipts in exchange for desperately needed arms.

The Ausha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement is in consonance over the need for reforms in the coffee subsector.¹⁴² However, and perhaps because of the broad scope of that agreement, its recommendations are not only unclear and unfocused, they ignore other related structural impediments to increasing the production of coffee and payments to the producers. Export diversification is one possible solution to getting out of the country's over-dependence on coffee for foreign exchange. The coffee subsector is in need of reforms and restructuring to make it more transparent and responsive to external as well as internal stimuli. There is, in the same vein, the need for a rapprochement between rural and urban development priorities on the one hand, and between the centre and the periphery on the other. It is only these realignments in the social and economic relations within Burundi that will make it possible to mediate satisfactorily the competing claims of peasants' demands for better payment for their produce and government security and development priorities.

The reforms in the coffee subsector, which have so far been only modestly successful, should continue as soon as a conducive opportunity for their implementation is at hand. The seemingly deliberate attempts by the authorities to delay reforms in the sector will only serve to dim the prospects of coffee as a 'strategic sector' in the economy. The IMF crystallises some of the concerns woven in this chapter, pointing out the major stumbling blocks to privatisation, which include:

- The assets management entity of OCIBU, *Service du Patrimoine*, lacks the necessary legal authority.
- There is a lack of coordination between the service in charge of public enterprises and the inter-ministerial committee on privatisation.
- There are delays in the enactment of privatisation-enabling legislation by the government.
- A bad state of domestic savings exists and thus a shortage of financial means in the private sector and thus of private buyers.
- Insufficient incentives persist under the prevailing remuneration and price setting policy.¹⁴³

The foregoing points to two major observations. Clearly, the subsector's legal and organisational framework is without teeth and is open to abuse. The financial status of the subsector is not up to the task of providing either the necessary motivation for increased productivity or the additional capital investments to make it more efficient and fair.

Part of these bottlenecks stem from the government's reluctance to relinquish its direct control of the coffee subsector, which it rightfully views as strategic. However, in order to stimulate production, which has stagnated in the last ten years and provide producers with the incentives, the restructuring of the sector to give farmers more say is not only necessary, it is imperative.

The disproportionate government investment in the service and industrial sectors at the expense of the agricultural sector demands immediate redress. Although the industrial and service sectors have grown marginally since independence, they remain the near-exclusive preserves of a small *petit bourgeoisie* within the country. There is need for equity in the operations of the state.

The suffocating state omnipresence has had a negative effect on Burundi's coffee's subsector. A meaningful broadening of the range of actors and players to include the producers in policy and decision making, as well as greater transparency and accountability in the operations and management of the subsector is needed.

Although the EU market offers hope for the future growth in demand for coffee, fierce competition is expected in the global coffee markets and price-dip vulnerability of producers is set to continue because of the structure of the whole coffee chain at the international level and market saturation in the key United States market. Similarly, and partly because of the first observation, intra-African coffee producers' competition for a share of the global market will continue. The viable option is for regional producers to pool production to enhance their bargaining power in the global markets. Here, regional cooperation offers a viable promise.

Regional cooperation will need more attention. The revitalised East African Community (EAC) and the Southern Africa Development Community

(SADC) are two schemes that offer the best chance yet to achieve this. Although Burundi's application for EAC membership is with the regional body, it remains to be approved. Regional integration will provide much-needed economies of scale and thus efficiency and cost-effective production, improving the earnings of the member countries' populations. Economic diversification, furthermore, will serve to render member countries less vulnerable to the vicissitudes of the international market for primary products. Burundi clearly stands to gain from these potential benefits.

Conclusion

This Burundi country study has analysed the country's conflict and explored the peace process. Emphasis, indeed the focus, has been on the contribution of ecological variables in the conflict and how these have been appreciated or ignored in understanding the broad contours of the conflict and how best to factor them into the search for peace.

The emergent picture is disheartening. Not only has there been an insufficient appreciation of ecological variables in the conflict in Burundi; there have been only token considerations of these in the construction of architectural plans for peace. Stewards of Burundi's predominantly agricultural-driven economy have cleverly concealed some of the primary structural deficiencies that have been at the forefront of motivating the continuation of the conflict. At the centre of this state of affairs are the parochial and self-interested impulses of perpetuating and expanding elite privileges at the expense of the bulk of the country's population.

As noted in the introductory chapter, politics has dominated discourses about the conflict in Burundi without sufficiently appreciating the essence of politics: who gets what, when and how. Underlying this appreciation is the equally valid truism that politics arises from, among other things, scarcity.

Burundi has been ruled by a political-military oligarchy that tightly controls the state and appropriates all decision making without recourse to citizens' demands and desires. Where the majority of the citizens' lives are intertwined with their land and its resources, it need not be emphasised that their demands will invariably be ecologically linked. In this respect the successive Burundi governments have resorted to coercion, repression, and violence in addressing citizens' grievances.

At the centre of the conflict in Burundi are unjust structures, among which are the ecological management policies instituted by the country's various administrations. As a result, and to find a comprehensive solution to the country's conflict, *settlement* of the conflict is insufficient; *transformation* must remain the overriding goal.

Endnotes

- 1 The authors would like to acknowledge the assistance of Elvin Nyukuri, Rene Lemarchand, Benoit Nzigidahera, Jean Marie, Francois Gringnon and Liam Campling.
- 2 F Ngaruko & J D Nkurunziza, An economic interpretation of conflict in Burundi, *Journal of African economies*, vol 9, no 3, 2000; R Lemarchand, *Patterns of state collapse and reconstruction in central Africa; Reflections on the crisis in the Great Lakes*, Paper prepared for XVIIth World Congress of the International Political Science Association, Seoul, 1997; P Uvin, Ethnicity and power in Burundi and Rwanda; Different paths to mass violence, *Comparative Politics*, vol 31, no 3, 1999.
- 3 H Laswell, *Politics: Who gets what, when and how...*, 1936.
- 4 J Herbst, Economic incentives, natural resources and conflict in Africa, *Journal of African Economics*, vol 9, no 3, 2000
- 5 *Ibid*, p 287
- 6 M Duffield, *Network war and the regulation of global resources*, Centre for Defence Studies, King's College London Seminar Presentation, 2001
- 7 P Collier & A Hoeffler, Greed and grievance in civil war, *World Bank Policy Research Working Paper*, no 2355, 2000.
- 8 P Collier, *Economic causes of civil conflict and their implications for policy*, World Bank, Washington, DC, 2000.
- 9 *Ibid*, p 9f
- 10 M Bernal & D M Malone (eds), *Greed and grievance: Economic agenda in civil war*, Lynne Rienner, Boulder, CO, 2000,
- 11 J Fairhead, The conflict over natural and environmental resources, The economic causes of complex humanitarian emergencies, E W Naffziger, F Stewart & R Väyrynen, (eds) *The economic causes of complex humanitarian emergencies*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2000; N Twose, Introduction: What is Greenwar?, O Bennet (ed) *Greenwar: Environment and conflict*, Panos, London, 1991.
- 12 *Ibid*, p 8
- 13 T Homer-Dixon, *Environment, Scarcity and Violence*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1999.
- 14 Fairhead, *op cit*, p 2
- 15 *Ibid*, p 2
- 16 Uvin, *op cit*. This is particularly true for Burundian actors involved in the conflict when they attempt historical explanations of the conflict. See for example position papers of political groups party to the Arusha peace negotiations, Committee II "The nature of the conflict: Genocide and exclusion".
- 17 D Horowitz, *A Democratic South Africa? Constitutional Engineering in a Divided Society*, 1991, p 2
- 18 A Mafaje, *Kingdoms of the Great Lakes region: Ethnography of African social formations*, Fountain Publishers, Kampala, 1998; National Assembly of Burundi, *Position paper on the nature of the conflict in Burundi*, Arusha Peace Talks, Committee II – Nature of the conflict, genocide and exclusion, July 1998.
- 19 Mafaje, *op cit*.

- 20 R W M Louis, *Rwanda-Burundi 1884–1919*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1963; P Buyoya, *Mission possible: Construire un paix durable au Burundi*, L'Harmattan, Paris, 1998; A Ndoricimpa, *The council for the restoration of the dignity of Burundi: Burundi Elders Project Speech*, Milimani Hotel, Nairobi, 7 December, 1998.
- 21 Buyoya, op cit; R Lemarchand, *Burundi and Rwanda*, Pall Mall, London, 1970; Louis, op cit; T P Melady, *Burundi: The tragic years*, Orbis Books, New York, 1974.
- 22 Buyoya, op cit; F Reyntjens, *Afrique des Grands Lacs en Crise: Rwanda, Burundi 1988–1994*, Karthala, Paris, 1994; Melady, op cit.
- 23 F Reyntjens, Rwanda genocide and beyond, *Journal of Refugee Studies*, vol 9, no 3, 1996.
- 24 R Lemarchand, Ethnicity as a myth: The view from central Africa, *Occasional Paper*, Centre for African Studies, University of Copenhagen, Copenhagen, May 1999.
- 25 R van der Meeren, Three decades of exile, Rwandan refugees 1960–1990, *Journal of Refugee Studies*, vol 9, no 3, 1996.
- 26 Reyntjens, Rwanda genocide and beyond, op cit.
- 27 H B Hammouda, *Burundi: Histoire Economique et Politique d'un conflit*, Paris: Editions L'Harmattan, Paris, 1995, pp 48–50.
- 28 A M Mazrui (ed), *General history of Africa: VIII Africa since 1935*, James Currey and UNESCO, University of California Press, 1993.
- 29 Ngaruko & Nkurunziza, op cit.
- 30 Throughout this paper we will refer to what is now called the Democratic Republic of Congo as the DRC, even in times when it was called Zaire, to avoid the confusion of the various name changes within the time frame we are discussing.
- 31 L Ndarubagiye, *The origins of the Hutu-Tutsi conflict*, Nairobi, L Ndarubagiye, 1996; F Reyntjens, *Burundi: Breaking the cycle of violence*, Minority Rights Group, London 1995. The assassination of Prince Rwagasore is acknowledged as a major loss for Burundi's potential post-independence political stability given UPRONA inclusive-oriented policies and the prince's moderate political leanings.
- 32 Ngaruko & Nkurunziza, op cit.
- 33 Ibid, p 375.
- 34 Uvin, op cit; J Bayart, *The state in Africa: The politics of the belly*, Longmans, London & New York, 1993.
- 35 R Lemarchand, *Burundi: Ethnic conflict and genocide*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1994; Reyntjens, *Burundi: Breaking the cycle of violence*, op cit.
- 36 W Weinstein, *Political conflict and ethnic strategies: A case study of Burundi*, Syracuse University, Syracuse, 1976; R Lemarchand, *Burundi: Ethnocide as discourse and practice*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1994; F Reyntjens, The proof of the pudding is in the eating: The June 1993 elections in Burundi, *Journal of Modern African Studies*, vol 3, no 4, 1993.
- 37 Reyntjens, *Burundi: Breaking the cycle of violence*, op cit; R Lemarchand, Exclusion, marginalisation and political mobilization: The road to hell in the Great Lakes, *L'Observatoire de L'Afrique centrale*, vol 3 no 45, December 2000;

- R Lemarchand & D Martin, Selective genocide in Burundi, *Minority Rights Group Report*, no 20, London, 1974; United Nations, Rapport de la Commission d'Enquete Internationale Chargee d'etablir les faites concernant l'assassinat du President du Burundi, le 21 octobre 1993, ainsi que les massacres qui ont suivi, document s/1996/682, August 1996, par 85. The term genocide denotes "acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such" as defined in the Genocide Convention.
- 38 Reyntjens, Rwanda genocide and beyond, op cit.
- 39 C Barnes, *Beyond conflict: The structures and purposes of genocide in the twentieth century*, Doctoral dissertation, Fairfax VA, Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution, George Mason University, 1999, p 711, emphasis in original, Melady 1974.
- 40 Hammouda, op cit, p 107.
- 41 Reyntjens, *Afrique des Grands Lacs en Crise: Rwanda, Burundi 1988–1994*, Karthala, Pais, 1994, p 158.
- 42 Lemarchand, *Burundi: Ethnic conflict and genocide*, op cit, p 127.
- 43 There are different interpretations of the motivation of Buyoya's reforms. Some describe them as "courageous" and "profound" (Reyntjens, 1995), while others see them only as a reaction to strong external pressures (See Lemarchand, op cit, p 166; Reyntjens, op cit, 1993, p 564).
- 44 For a critique of the report, see Lemarchand, The report of the national commission to study the question of national unity in Burundi: A critical comment, *Journal of Modern African Studies*, vol 27, no 4, pp 685–690.
- 45 Reyntjens, The proof of the pudding is in the eating: The June 1993 elections in Burundi, op cit.
- 46 Reyntjens, *L'Afrique des Grands Lacs en Crise: Rwanda, Burundi 1988–1994*, op cit; Reyntjens, *Burundi: Breaking the cycle of violence*, op cit; Lemarchand, *Burundi: Ethnic conflict and genocide*, op cit; International Crisis Group, *Burundi: Neither war nor peace*, Arusha/Nairobi/Brussels, 2000.
- 47 P Dupont, The sub-regional context of the crisis in Rwanda and Burundi, B Fortnan & M Verhuis (eds), *Internal conflicts, security and development*, RAWOO Lectures and Seminar Publication, no 14, 1997, p 62.
- 48 Human Rights Watch, *Proxy targets: Civilians in the war in Burundi*, < www.hrw.org > , 1998
- 49 Reyntjens, *The proof of the pudding is in the eating: The June 1993 elections in Burundi*, op cit; Reyntjens, *Burundi: Breaking the cycle of violence*, op cit; Barnes, op cit.
- 50 B Hibou, The social capital of the state as an agent of deception; or the ruses of economic intelligence, J-F Bayart, S Ellis & B Hibou, *The criminalisation of the state in Africa*, James Currey, Oxford, 1999, p 86.
- 51 Nguruko & Nkurunziza, op cit.
- 52 Reyntjens, *Burundi: Breaking the cycle of violence*, op cit, p 19.
- 53 Hammouda, op cit.
- 54 International Monetary Fund, *Burundi, Statistical Annex*, Washington DC, 2000; World Bank, *World Development Report, 1998/1999*, 1999; Hammouda, op cit; Economist Intelligence Unit, *Burundi Country Report*, London 2001.

- 55 Ngaruko & Nkurunziza, op cit, p 386; F Ngaruko, L'industrie et L'accumulation au Burundi, *Revue Mondes en Developpment*, vol 21 no 92, 1993.
- 56 Ngaruko, op cit.
- 57 A Guichaoua, *Destins paysans et politiques agraires en Afrique Centrale*, vol 1, L'Harmattan, Paris, 1989, pp 168–173.
- 58 Ngaruko & Nkurunziza, op cit, p 386.
- 59 Transparency International, *The Source Book*, Transparency International, Berlin 2000; International Monetary Fund, op cit.
- 60 Ngaruko & Nkurunziza, op cit, p 389.
- 61 International Monetary Fund, op cit; International Monetary Fund, *Burundi – recent economic developments*, Washington DC, 1997.
- 62 Ngaruko & Nkurunziza, op cit, p 384.
- 63 Hibou, op cit, p 85.
- 64 United Nations, S/2001/357, *Report of the Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of the Democratic Republic of Congo*, 2001.
- 65 International Monetary Fund, *Burundi: Statistical Annex*, op cit.
- 66 World Bank, *Burundi – an interim strategy 1999–2000*, Report no 19592-BU, 1999. For economic implications of the 1996–1999 sanctions see various articles by G Mthembu-Salter, *An assessment of sanctions against Burundi*, Action Aid, London.
- 67 This was more than the average for sub-Saharan Africa, which stood at 7.8%.
- 68 United Nations Development Programme, *Human Development Report*, 1993.
- 69 Ngaruko & Nkurunziza, op cit; Lemarchand, *Burundi: Ethnic conflict and genocide*, op cit; Reyntjens, *Afrique des Grand Lacs en Crise: Rwanda, Burundi, 1988–1994*, op cit.
- 70 Hammouda, op cit, p 14.
- 71 United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Integrated Regional Information Network (OCHA-IRIN) mailing, 2 July 2001.
- 72 See J S Oketch, *A critical evaluation of sanctions as third party leverage in the management of internal conflict: The Burundi peace process, 1993–2000*, M.A. Dissertation, Institute of Diplomacy and International Studies, University of Nairobi for a detailed analysis of the role of the regional sanctions in the Burundi peace process.
- 73 J van Eck, *Signals needed to further stimulate internal and external negotiations processes*, Search for Common Ground and Centre for Conflict Resolution, Washington DC & Cape Town, 1998.
- 74 International Crisis Group, op cit.
- 75 Ibid, p ii.
- 76 Ibid, p 13.
- 77 International Crisis Group, *Scramble for the Congo: Anatomy of an ugly war*, *ICG Africa Report*, 26(20), December 2000.
- 78 Ali Abdel GadirAli, The economics of conflicts in Africa: An overview, *Journal of African Economies*, vol 9 no 3, 2000.
- 79 J Galtung, *Peace by peaceful means: Peace and conflict, development and civilisation*, Prio, Oslo, 1996.

- 80 See description in P Buyoya, op cit, p 11.
- 81 See G Dennison, G Murray & G Booth, Burundi: Biological diversity and tropical forest assessment, *World directory of country environmental studies*, United States Agency for International Development, Development Alternatives Inc. & Energy/Development International, Washington D.C., p 2.
- 82 Burundi received US\$ 21 million in food aid between 1994–1997 and the conflict has destroyed its food self-sufficiency capability. See J Havermans, Burundi: Peace initiatives help stem violence, *Searching for Peace in Africa: An Overview of Conflict Prevention and Management Activities*, European Platform for Conflict Prevention and Transformation, Utrecht, 1999, pp 197–208 & 200.
- 83 National Environment Strategy in Burundi, 1997.
- 84 Other protected natural areas are the Bururi and Kigwena Natural Reserves.
- 85 For contrasting views on the ‘feudal system’ in Burundi, see for example L Ndarubagire, op cit, pp 17–21; and P Buyoya, op cit, pp 42–44. T Laely employs the patron/client framework in illustrating the relative flexibility of relations during the pre-colonial period. See T Laely, Peasants, local communities and central power in Burundi, *Journal of Modern African Studies*, vol 35, no 4, December 1997, pp 695–716 & 702–706.
- 86 Ibid. More significantly, Laely notes the political aspect of the relationship upon ‘formalisation’ through a gift of a cow or territorial command. It was then transformed into *amasabo*, assuming the meaning of patronage defined as unconditional loyalty and dependence.
- 87 Ndarubagiye characterises the relationship thus “... Tutsi had set up an efficient feudal exploitation system, the two instruments of which were *social bondage contracts* ...” P Buyoya, op cit, p 42. Laely is quick to point out that “In Burundian society, which was structured in a strongly vertical fashion, [unconditional loyalty and dependence] was not a negative but a positive value; such bonds of dependence could provide the means of upward mobility.” Laely, op cit, p 704.
- 88 Higher population density can be seen in Kayanza and Ngozi to the country’s more fertile north. It need be mentioned as well that there is a close relation between the population density, soil productivity and incidences of violence.
- 89 See for example the seminal report of the United Nations Secretary General to the Security Council on *The root causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa*, United Nations Department of Public Information, New York, 1998, par 15.
- 90 The thesis of incorporation and disengagement in the analysis of the relationship between peasants and the state illustrate the mutually suspicious character of the relationship between government authorities and the rural population in Burundi. See e.g. V Azarya, Re-ordering state-society relations: Incorporation and disengagement, D Rothschild & N Chazan (eds.), *The precarious balance: State and society in Africa*, Lynne Rienner, Colorado & London, 1988, pp 3–21.
- 91 See, among others, T Laely, op cit, p 707.
- 92 Burundi Ministry of Energy and Mines, 1998.
- 93 See the Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement for Burundi, Annex IV, Reconstruction and Development, par 1.4.3.2.

- 94 Ibid.
- 95 Typically the middleman minority is “any ethnically distinct group that specialises in the selling of goods or skills”, is alien to the society in which they carry out business and is “typically much poorer than the ruling class but much richer than the mass natives”. Note that the use of the concept here varies from the original, ideal construction given the identity configuration of Burundi and its homogeneous cultural orientation. P van den Berghe, *The ethnic phenomenon*, Westport, New York, 1987.
- 96 Laely, op cit; Dupont, op cit.
- 97 Interview with a Burundian senior political analyst, International Crisis Group, Nairobi, 12 June 2001, Nairobi .International Monetary Fund, *Burundi – recent economic developments*, op cit.
- 98 This subsection is in large part taken from International Monetary Fund, Staff Country Reports No. 97/114 and Burundi’s *Administration Generale de la Cooperation au Development*.
- 99 A wholly government company, see Table 27, List of Public Companies, International Monetary Fund Staff Country Report No. 99/8 Burundi Statistical Annex, February 1999, 32. OCIBU and the SOGETALs are listed as mixed ownership, i.e. private-public companies.
- 100 Fair Trade Foundation reports that the commodity chain from the primary producer to the supermarket shelf is 150 fold, *Spilling the beans*, Report, 2001.
- 101 International Monetary Fund, Burundi – recent economic developments, op cit
- 102 Ibid. Emphasis added.
- 103 Interview with International Crisis Group political analyst, Nairobi.
- 104 Ibid.
- 105 Laely, op cit.
- 106 Ibid. Emphasis added.
- 107 Reyntjens, The proof of the pudding is in the eating: The June 1993 elections in Burundi, op cit.
- 108 Interview with former OCIBU official in price department, Nairobi, 3 July 2001.
- 109 Weinstein, op cit; R Lemarchand, Burundi in comparative perspective: Dimensions of ethnic strife, J McGarry & B O’Leary (eds) *The politics of ethnic conflict regulation: Case studies of protracted ethnic conflicts*, London, Routledge. The systematic elimination of a nascent Hutu counter-elite is best illustrated by accounts of the 1972 massacres of educated Hutu in government and schools. This trend continued more or less over the years until the reforms instituted by Buyoya in 1989.
- 110 Ngaruko & Nkurunziza, op cit.
- 111 Ibid.
- 112 International Crisis Group, op cit.
- 113 This practice is common in African agricultural economies and is characterised by the author as ‘double extortion’.
- 114 International Crisis Group, op cit.
- 115 Ibid.
- 116 Ibid; Ngaruko & Nkurunziza, op cit. The latter authors talk of the ‘privatization’ of the state to serve the interests of some *overlapping networks*. (emphasis mine).

- 117 Interview with a former OCIBU departmental head in charge of pricing, Nairobi, 3 July 2001.
- 118 According to the International Crisis Group respondent cited above, one of the priorities of the Ndayaye administration was the streamlining of the operations in the coffee subsector to ensure that farmers, overwhelmingly Hutu incidentally, and from among whom FRODEBU derived a larger share of its constituency, received their just due from their coffee produce.
- 119 Interview with a former OCIBU departmental head in charge of pricing, Nairobi, 3 July 2001.
- 120 Report of Committee IV Reconstruction and Development, Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement for Burundi, par 3.3.1.
- 121 This claim has been repeated by many respondents. Virtually all respondents interviewed by the writer made the connection between expropriated coffee revenue and the government's defence budget. Clearly then, there is widespread perception that this is the case.
- 122 Interview with a Burundi agriculture graduate student in Kenya, 3 July 2001, Nairobi.
- 123 See review of the report July 1999 United States Bureau of Intelligence and Research in Arms trade fuel conflict in Africa, *The East African*, Nairobi, 5 September 1999.
- 124 United Nations, S/2001/357, op cit.
- 125 This is however changing, as coffee prices are now, as opposed to in the past, more available and accessible to farmers. Interview, ICG political analyst, op cit. However, the filtering and 'noises' along the chain as illustrated by Love above effectively ensure that primary producers cannot obtain timely, accurate and concise and sometimes relevant information.
- 126 Aside from the mentioned report of the US Bureau of Research and Intelligence, reports are widespread of rebels imposing taxes on the peasants to foot war-related maintenance expenses. Part of this is paid from revenues farmers derive from coffee, which constitute the major source of peasant farmers' disposable income.
- 127 Economist Intelligence Unit, op cit.
- 128 Dupont, op cit.
- 129 Economist Intelligence Unit, op cit. The sectorial ranking as a percentage of GDP is as follows; agriculture, 46%, services 37.7%, industry 16.7%.
- 130 S R Weisman, *Preventing genocide: Lessons learned from international diplomacy*, United States Institute of Peace, Washington DC, 1998.
- 131 Lemarchand identified the marketing of coffee as a source of conflict between the two groups in his response to this study's questionnaire.
- 132 Interview with a Burundian living in Kenya, 3 July 2001, Nairobi.
- 133 Interview with *Banque Nationale de Developpment Economique* employee, op cit.
- 134 Interview with former OCIBU employee in charge of the Department of Pricing who worked for a time in the Ntega Marangara region shortly before the violence.
- 135 Ibid.
- 136 Dupont, op cit.
- 137 Ngaruko & Nkurunziza, op cit.

- 138 United Nations Development Programme, *op cit.* This was more than the average for sub-Saharan Africa, which stood at 7.8%. This averaged US\$ 300 million annually and was responsible for over 80% of total investments.
- 139 Laely, *op cit.*
- 140 Mthembu-Salter, *op cit.*
- 141 *Ibid.*
- 142 Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement for Burundi, Arusha August 2000, Annex IV, Report of Committee IV: Reconstruction and Development, Sections 3.2.3, 3.3.5, & 3.5.3. The last section calls for increased share of the coffee price on the international market to farmers to boost cash incomes for rural Burundians.
- 143 International Monetary Fund, Burundi – recent economic developments, *op cit.*