



# Running Out of Options in Burundi

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Headquarters

**International Crisis Group**

Avenue Louise 149 • 1050 Brussels, Belgium

Tel: +32 2 502 90 38 • Fax: +32 2 502 50 38

[brussels@crisisgroup.org](mailto:brussels@crisisgroup.org)

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# Principal Findings

**What's new?** After almost three years, the Inter-Burundi Dialogue has ended in failure. Next steps are unclear as regional leaders reject handing over mediation to other institutions while not committing wholeheartedly themselves to resolving the crisis. Elections due in 2020 carry a real risk of violence unless political tensions ease.

**Why did it happen?** The East African Community (EAC) took the lead on mediation in Burundi though it lacks the requisite experience, expertise or resources. Absence of political will and divisions among member states, coupled with the Burundian government's intransigence, made successful dialogue among the parties impossible.

**Why does it matter?** Without urgent intervention, the 2020 elections will take place in a climate of fear and intimidation. This would increase risks of electoral violence and people joining armed opposition groups and ensure that Burundi continues its descent into authoritarianism, raising prospects of another major crisis with regional repercussions.

**What should be done?** Regional leaders should use their influence, including threats of targeted sanctions, to persuade the government to allow exiled opponents to return and campaign without fear of reprisal. The EAC, African Union and UN should coordinate to prevent Bujumbura from forum-shopping and not allow Burundi to slip from the international agenda.

## *Executive Summary*

After almost three years, the Inter-Burundi Dialogue has ended in failure. The talks, led by the East African Community (EAC), came in response to a political crisis sparked by President Pierre Nkurunziza's April 2015 decision to stand for a third term. They were unsuccessful for a variety of reasons, notably EAC member states' divisions and disinterest. Even now, regional leaders refuse to hand over the mediation to either the African Union (AU) or the UN, but are not prepared to commit wholeheartedly to resolving the crisis. The paralysis is worrying, as elections are due in 2020 and, unless political tensions ease, the risk of violence is high. No one expects the polls to be free or fair, but they could at least be peaceful with opposition politicians able to compete without fear of reprisal, thereby preserving a degree of pluralism that might help prevent a worse descent into conflict. Much, however, depends on Nkurunziza's willingness to open up political space and the readiness of regional leaders, in particular the Tanzanian and Ugandan presidents, John Magufuli and Yoweri Museveni, to nudge him in that direction.

In July 2015, at the height of the crisis, the EAC established the Inter-Burundi Dialogue, appointing President Museveni as mediator and, later, former Tanzanian president Benjamin Mkapa as facilitator to assist him. The regional body took the lead under the AU's principle of subsidiarity, which holds that peace and security issues in Africa should be dealt with at the most local level. The EAC was not equipped for the task, however. It is first and foremost a forum for economic integration, and as such had no experience or expertise in complex political mediation. It also lacked sufficient financial resources and, with Nkurunziza loyalist Libérat Mfumukeko as secretary general, was open to accusations of bias.

Compounding these institutional shortcomings was a lack of political support for the dialogue from EAC heads of state. Historical political rifts among these countries, combined with economic rivalries and heightened personal animosities among their leaders, prevented the region from forming a consensus on how to resolve the crisis. Since the beginning of the crisis, regional leaders have increasingly seen Burundi as an ally or a tool in these disputes and thus have been reluctant to antagonise Nkurunziza by using their leverage to force him to negotiate. Without regional backing, Mkapa found it impossible to bring the parties together for face-to-face discussions.

Talks have taken place sporadically, with facilitators shuttling between the two camps. The opposition parties started out with their own preconditions and red lines, but eventually demonstrated their readiness to compromise, most significantly dropping the demand that the president step down. The government, however, has been intransigent throughout, consistently refusing to participate in the mediation in good faith. By pitting the EAC, AU and UN against one another, Nkurunziza successfully resisted the various forms of external pressure exerted on Burundi – intense public criticism, the threat of an AU military force, the withdrawal of vital financial aid and sanctions on prominent political figures. Instead of moderating its behaviour, the government has consolidated power and begun to dismantle protections for the Tutsi minority provided for by the 2000 Arusha peace agreement that ended Burundi's long civil war.

As a result, and despite the EAC's efforts, as well as those of other international actors, Burundi remains in crisis: its economy is on life support, more than 350,000

refugees reside in neighbouring states, most of the government's political opponents are in exile and those who stayed are subject to severe repression. If elections take place under these circumstances, many Burundians will likely reject them, potentially resulting in street protests that could turn violent and increase support for armed opposition groups, as happened in 2015.

While the government is unlikely to fully open the political space ahead of the polls, it should be possible to push for conditions that allow the opposition to contest in safety, preserve a degree of political pluralism and prevent the escalation of violence. Four things are required to achieve this outcome:

- ❑ The government should allow opponents in exile to return and campaign freely without intimidation, arrest or violence. It should also let external monitors observe preparations for the polls as well as the voting and counting.
- ❑ Regional leaders should use their influence over President Nkurunziza to ensure that the government undertakes these steps. They should publicly state their willingness to freeze senior government and ruling-party figures' assets and be ready to review Burundi's membership in the EAC itself if the country does not make progress toward more credible elections.
- ❑ The AU should revive its High-Level Delegation to Burundi, and if necessary re-constitute its membership. It should expand the delegation's mandate to enable it to build consensus in the region and encourage EAC leaders to help advance talks. The AU should negotiate with the Burundian government an increase in the number of human rights observers and military experts it deploys in country. It should use this augmented contingent to monitor the security situation, including opposition politicians' safety, and assess preparations for the forthcoming elections, including whether conditions for a more credible vote exist. The AU Peace and Security Council and the High Level Delegation should use reports from the AU team on the ground to inform their diplomacy on the crisis. The Assembly of Heads of State, meeting in extraordinary session in July 2019, should endorse these measures.
- ❑ The EAC, the AU and the UN should closely align efforts to ensure that Nkurunziza does not forum-shop. Crucially, they must not allow the crisis to fall off the international agenda.

If no significant headway has been made before the end of 2019, the EAC, AU, UN and other external actors should call for the elections to be postponed for six months. This would give the government ample additional time to get its house in order and forestall potential complaints from Bujumbura and its allies that it has had insufficient time. The EAC, AU and UN should use the extra months to redouble efforts to press the government to improve conditions for credible and peaceful elections. If the vote proceeds without a change in conditions on the ground, either as scheduled or after a postponement, external actors should not support or observe the polls and should minimise diplomatic contact with any resulting government and the EAC should suspend Burundi and freeze its senior leaders' assets.

**Addis Ababa/Nairobi/Brussels, 20 June 2019**

# Running Out of Options in Burundi

## I. Introduction

In April 2015, Pierre Nkurunziza announced he would seek a third term as president of Burundi, sparking a crisis that continues to this day. His announcement triggered mass street protests, a failed coup attempt, armed opposition attacks, assassinations and brutal government reprisals. Despite the turmoil, Nkurunziza decided to hold elections that July. The opposition, many of whose members had already fled the country, boycotted the vote and the African Union (AU), for the first time ever, refused to observe the poll as it judged that conditions for free and fair elections were absent. Nkurunziza won. Violence peaked again in December. Since the close of 2015, the government has violently repressed all internal dissent, including with alleged disappearances of opponents, torture and the use of ethnically charged rhetoric.<sup>1</sup> It has also engaged in low-intensity warfare with a number of armed opposition groups based in the region, mainly in the South Kivu province of the neighbouring Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) where, since 2015, they have fought Burundian security forces and very occasionally launched attacks on Burundian soil.<sup>2</sup>

The Burundian economy has been in recession since 2015. The EU withdrew direct budget support, a mainstay of public finances, in 2016, compounding the effects of government financial mismanagement. Rising unemployment and the collapse of social services have resulted in a sharp deterioration in living conditions, as the population slips deeper into poverty.<sup>3</sup> Along with violence, economic decline and deepening social fractures led more than 430,000 Burundians to flee the country at the height of the crisis in late 2015, including many business owners, most political opposition leaders, journalists and civil society activists.<sup>4</sup> The government maintains that the country is peaceful and stable, and encourages refugees to return home, but many are reluctant to do so despite increasing pressure from host countries, in particular Tanzania.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Crisis Group Africa Report N°30, *Elections in Burundi: Moment of Truth*, 17 April 2015; Crisis Group Africa Briefing N°111, *Burundi: Peace Sacrificed*, 29 May 2015; Crisis Group Africa Report N°235, *Burundi: A Dangerous Third Term*, 20 May 2016.

<sup>2</sup> The armed groups contest the legitimacy of the government and vow to overthrow it. Active groups include FNL-Nzabampema, which refused to demobilise after the civil war; FOREBU, founded by dissident officers who left the armed forces following the failed coup of May 2015; and Red-Taraba, a militia with links to an exiled civilian opposition party. Crisis Group interview, opposition politician, Brussels, October 2018; Thierry Vircoulon, "Opposition Burundaise en exil", IFRI, April 2017.

<sup>3</sup> See Crisis Group Africa Report N°264, *Helping the Burundian People Cope with the Economic Crisis*, 31 August 2018.

<sup>4</sup> The number of refugees hosted in neighbouring countries dropped from a peak of around 430,000 in 2017 to 346,716 as of 30 April 2019. "2017 End of Year Report, Operation: Burundi", UN High Commissioner for Refugees, 4 July 2018; and "Operational Portal: Burundi Situation", UNHCR, 30 April 2019.

<sup>5</sup> "There is pressure on us": Burundian refugees in Tanzania pushed to return", *African Arguments*, 21 August 2018; and "Burundian refugee returns must be voluntary and sustainable", UNHCR, 24 August 2018.

A May 2018 referendum, held in a climate of fear, approved constitutional amendments that consolidate the government's rule and open the way for the dismantling of ethnic quotas in parliament, government and public bodies (including the army). Those quotas were intended to protect the Tutsi minority and were a key provision of the 2000 Arusha Agreement that brought an end to Burundi's protracted civil war.<sup>6</sup> Shortly afterward, international NGOs came under attack; the government suspended their operations in October 2018, demanding that they fulfil stricter criteria.<sup>7</sup> The government also placed restrictions on key foreign media outlets: in March 2019, it permanently revoked the BBC's operating license and maintained its existing suspension of Voice of America.<sup>8</sup> These developments augur ill for the country's stability in the medium term.

Throughout this time, international actors have tried to broker a solution to the Burundian crisis, with little success. The initial response was swift and strong, with the AU setting the direction and tone.<sup>9</sup> The AU called upon Nkurunziza not to seek a third term, in accordance with the two-term limit set out in the constitution and the Arusha Agreement, later threatening sanctions and the deployment of a 5,000-strong military force unless violence and human rights abuses were curtailed. The sub-regional body, the East African Community (EAC), at first took the same assertive approach, with leaders urging Nkurunziza not to run.<sup>10</sup> But the balance switched in Nkurunziza's favour in May 2015, following an attempted coup d'état during an EAC summit concerning Burundi in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania's de facto (though not official) political capital,<sup>11</sup> widening existing economic fractures and historical political rivalries within the organisation.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> See Crisis Group Report, *Burundi: A Dangerous Third Term*, op. cit.; and Richard Moncrieff and Elissa Jobson, "AU must reengage in Burundi", *The East African*, 21 May 2018.

<sup>7</sup> To resume operations a foreign NGO had to deposit one third of its budget in the central bank, sign an agreement with the foreign ministry, agree to support the government's national development plan and adhere to ethnic quotas when recruiting employees. The government has since authorised the majority of NGOs to reopen, including some that refused to respect the ethnic quotas. Some organisations, such as Handicap International and Action contre la faim, refused to adhere to the conditions and have closed down. "Suspension des ONG : Clarification ou revirement ?", *Iwacu*, 8 October 2018.

<sup>8</sup> "BBC interdite et VOA maintenue sous sanctions", *Iwacu*, 29 March 2019.

<sup>9</sup> Nkozasana Dlamini-Zuma, then AU Commission chairperson, took the lead and the AU's Peace and Security Council followed with a series of strongly worded communiqués. See Crisis Group Africa Briefing N°122, *The African Union and the Burundi Crisis: Ambition versus Reality*, 28 September 2016.

<sup>10</sup> In 2015, the EAC comprised Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda. South Sudan joined in April 2016. Tanzanian President Jakaya Kikwete, then EAC chairperson and the Burundian ruling party's historical ally, personally delivered the EAC's request for Nkurunziza not to stand again. The CNDD-FDD received assistance from Tanzania during the civil war. Dar es Salaam saw the guerrillas as a liberation movement similar to its own ruling party, Chama Cha Mapinduzi.

<sup>11</sup> Since 1974, Dodoma has officially been the capital of Tanzania, but Dar es Salaam remains the country's de facto political and economic centre.

<sup>12</sup> Following the coup attempt, President Paul Kagame of Rwanda increased his public criticism of Nkurunziza's actions, consistently calling on him to step down. He was the only EAC leader to do so. Kagame said he was issuing this call not because term extensions are inherently bad, but because Burundi had not prospered under Nkurunziza's rule. See Crisis Group Briefing, *The African Union and the Burundi Crisis: Ambition versus Reality*, op. cit., fn 41. In return, the Burundian authorities

In accordance with the principle of subsidiarity that typically governs its relationship with regional economic communities, the AU ceded primary responsibility for the crisis to the EAC, which appointed Uganda's President Yoweri Museveni as mediator of the Inter-Burundi Dialogue in July 2015. Since then, there have been just six mediation sessions: a prologue in December 2015 organised by Museveni, and five ordinary rounds under the supervision of the former Tanzanian president, Benjamin Mkapa, nominated as facilitator in March 2016.<sup>13</sup>

In the face of intransigence and obstruction from the government, reticence and mistrust from the exiled opposition, and insufficient support – both financial and political – from the EAC and its leaders, Mkapa successively tried, and failed, to bring the parties together for face-to-face negotiations. He finally threw in the towel in February 2019, following a fifth and final round of talks the previous October that the government boycotted.

This report examines the response to the Burundian crisis, in particular the EAC-led Inter-Burundi Dialogue that followed, analysing the various actors' positions and laying out the reasons for the mediation's failure. It also looks ahead to the 2020 elections, presenting options that could pave the way for a more credible and peaceful poll than now seems possible. It is based on interviews with Burundian politicians, journalists and civil society figures, as well as African and Western diplomats.

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alleged that Rwanda was involved in the putsch and was recruiting and training rebels. They managed to convince Dar es Salaam of Kigali's supposed involvement in what they portrayed as an attempt to restore Tutsi power. Crisis Group interviews, political party leaders and diplomats, March 2019. For more on ethnic speech, see Thierry Vircoulon, "L'arme de la communication dans la crise burundaise", IFRI, May 2018.

<sup>13</sup> See Appendix B for full details of the Inter-Burundi Dialogue process.



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## II. The Main Parties' Positions

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Neither the government nor the opposition was fully open to the EAC-led Inter-Burundi Dialogue process. Both came to the table with preconditions and red lines that thwarted the facilitator's mediation efforts. Since 2017, opposition parties have demonstrated their readiness to compromise, however, dropping their demand for Nkurunziza to stand down. But the president, the ruling National Council for the Defence of Democracy – Forces for the Defence of Democracy (CNDD-FDD) and allies have remained firm, refusing to concede any ground.

### A. The Government

The Burundian government has consistently declared its openness to dialogue but its behaviour throughout the past three years has demonstrated a reluctance to negotiate in good faith. It has employed tactics designed to slow down and disrupt talks while arguing, since 2016, that the crisis in the country has passed and with it any need for mediation with the exiled opposition.

From the start of the talks in May 2016, the government insisted on being consulted on the invitees.<sup>14</sup> It used its influence over the EAC secretariat to exclude those it did not want to participate.<sup>15</sup> In particular, it refused to sit at the same table as the National Council for the Respect of the Arusha Agreement (CNARED), the platform for the exiled opposition, arguing that the coalition is not recognised under Burundian law and includes participants in the failed May 2015 coup.<sup>16</sup> During the second round of dialogue in Arusha in July 2016, the government succeeded in excluding CNARED as a group. Some of its members attended as individuals, but the government delegation and its allies refused to negotiate with them directly, obliging the facilitator to meet each group separately.<sup>17</sup>

The government has also consistently displayed its reluctance to participate in the external EAC-led mediation, boycotting two rounds (February 2017 and October 2018) and sending only low-level delegations to others.<sup>18</sup> Instead, it has repeatedly

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<sup>14</sup> "The Burundian government must be consulted [because] we must agree on who should be invited, dates and place", said Willy Nyamitwe, spokesperson for Burundi's presidency, on national radio. "Burundi govt won't join crisis talks unless consulted", *The East African*, 27 April 2016. Prior to the talks in May 2016, the government announced it would not take part unless consulted on the participants, location and date of the session. It eventually attended, but disrupted the proceedings by sending a huge delegation of pro-government political parties and civil society organisations. "Arusha II promet mais ...", *Iwacu*, 30 May 2016.

<sup>15</sup> Some diplomats and opposition members also accused the mediation team of amateurism or collusion with the Burundian government. Some considered it unacceptable that Libérat Mfumukeko, a Nkurunziza loyalist appointed EAC secretary general in 2016, was connected to the dialogue process. They accuse him of working for the government. "Dialogue inter-burundais : pourquoi les discussions sont dans l'impasse", *Jeune Afrique*, 20 May 2016.

<sup>16</sup> "Burundi : s'il n'est pas consulté en amont, le gouvernement ne participera pas au dialogue", *Jeune Afrique*, 21 April 2016.

<sup>17</sup> The talks were attended by Jean Minani, the president of CNARED, and Pie Ntavyohanyuma and Gervais Rufyikiri, CNARED members and respectively former president of the National Assembly and former president of the Senate. "Les incertitudes d'Arusha", *Iwacu*, 20 May 2016.

<sup>18</sup> "Comprehensive report by the facilitator of the East African Community-led inter-Burundi dialogue process", Office of the Facilitator, November 2018.

called for the talks to take place in Burundi even though opposition and civil society actors in exile would have been unable to attend safely.<sup>19</sup> In concert, the government pressed ahead with its own national dialogue, which was intended to enable it to argue that the EAC mediation was redundant. The process excluded those in exile. The internal opposition boycotted the parallel dialogue, judging it to be a government facade; the UN criticised it for its lack of inclusivity.<sup>20</sup> The parallel dialogue concluded that “the majority of the country” was in favour of revising the constitution, as well as the Arusha Agreement, and extending presidential term limits.<sup>21</sup>

Without regard for the EAC-led dialogue, in March 2017 Nkurunziza initiated a constitutional review process designed to remove any obstacle to the government’s control of the state apparatus that culminated in a referendum on 17 May 2018.<sup>22</sup> The government, including the ruling party’s youth wing, the Imbonerakure, carried out a campaign of intimidation against anyone opposing the referendum or calling for a “no” vote. It used threats of violence to push Burundians to register to vote, in order to minimise abstentions, and banned Western media outlets – the BBC and Voice of America – from broadcasting for the campaign’s duration. Not surprisingly, the proposed changes were adopted by a significant margin: according to the official result, 73.2 per cent voted in favour, with an improbably high turnout of 96 per cent.<sup>23</sup>

Since the referendum, the government has seemed emboldened. Having refused to attend the fifth and final round of the EAC-led dialogue on 30 November 2018, it boycotted an EAC summit that was due to discuss Mkapa’s report on the failed dialogue process. The same day, the government issued an international arrest warrant

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<sup>19</sup> In October 2016, the Burundian interior minister organised a workshop that resulted in a “peace and reconciliation resolution” signed by the 22 officially recognised political parties and the government. It called for EAC mediation to take place in Burundi in collaboration with national bodies, and for opposition leaders wanted by the Burundian justice system to face national courts before participating in the dialogue. “Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Burundi”, UNSC S/2018/1028, 15 November 2018 and “Burundi : accord des partis sur une révision de la Constitution”, RFI, 21 October 2016.

<sup>20</sup> On 17 May 2015, President Nkurunziza nominated fifteen members for the National Commission of Inter-Burundi Dialogue (CNDI). Public hearings and debates were held across the country. See “Nomination des membres de la CNDI”, *Infos Grands Lacs*, 19 May 2015; “Burundi : vers la fin de la limitation du nombre de mandats présidentiels ?”, RFI, 24 August 2016; “Un dialogue monologue”, *Iwacu*, 9 September 2016; “Report of the Secretary-General on Burundi”, UNSC S/2017/165, 23 February 2017.

<sup>21</sup> The CNDI claimed that its conclusions represented the voices of 26,000 citizens. The opposition retorted that all the voices sounded similar, as if citizens had learned the words by heart. See “La CNDI a présenté son rapport final au président Nkurunziza”, Présidence de la République du Burundi, 12 May 2017; “Vers la levée du verrou de la limitation des mandats”, *Iwacu*, 12 April 2017; “Un dialogue monologue”, *Iwacu*, 6 September 2016.

<sup>22</sup> Crucially, they extended presidential mandates from five to seven years, reset the clock on the two-term limit and laid the groundwork for reversing the ethnic checks and balances that were a key part of the Arusha Agreement.

<sup>23</sup> See Crisis Group Report, *Burundi: A Dangerous Third Term*, op. cit.; and Moncrieff and Jobson, “The AU must reengage in Burundi”, op. cit. Opposition parties denounced the referendum result, alleging intimidation, arrests and the disruption of campaign meetings. They brought the case before the constitutional court, which dismissed the petition. “Burundi opposition appeals referendum result”, *Daily Nation*, 25 May 2018; and “Burundi constitutional court validates referendum result”, *The East African*, 31 May 2018.

for Pierre Buyoya, a former Burundian president and the AU's high representative for Mali and the Sahel, accusing him of complicity in the 1993 assassination of President Melchior Ndadaye, the first president to represent the Hutu majority. After the AU Commission chairperson, Moussa Faki Mahamat, called on all sides to refrain from measures "likely to complicate the search for a consensual solution", government-backed protesters took to the streets of the capital in anger.<sup>24</sup> President Nkurunziza appears to be pulling Burundi further toward isolation, shoring up his domestic base and pre-empting any attempt by the EAC or the AU to encourage compromise ahead of the 2020 presidential election.<sup>25</sup>

With regard to the forthcoming poll, the government argues that exiled opposition parties should simply come back home and compete in the vote without offering any guarantees for their personal safety or opening up political space. Such commitments are the opposition's minimum requirements to return.

## B. *The Opposition*

The anti-government side at the EAC-led mediation has consisted of three blocs: the exiled opposition, the internal opposition and civil society. Unlike the government, the various opposition groupings have moved away from their original maximalist positions and have shown a willingness to compromise.

### 1. The opposition in exile

The government's exiled opponents are not a homogenous group. They are composed of former opposition leaders and CNDD-FDD dissidents, many of whom held prominent positions, and most of whom fled in 2015 because they rejected the idea of Nkurunziza's third term.<sup>26</sup> In August of that year, they formed the CNARED platform in order to negotiate with the Burundi government with one voice.<sup>27</sup> The coalition includes many former enemies and has seen inevitable internal power struggles, leading some prominent members to leave in 2016.<sup>28</sup> Initially, it included civil society groups but they, too, left as early as 2015.

Despite these internal problems, CNARED has maintained a relatively consistent line since the start of EAC-led mediation in 2016. First, it emphasised the importance of the 2000 Arusha Agreement as the basis of peace and social cohesion in Burundi

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<sup>24</sup> "Statement by the chairperson of the commission on the regional efforts on Burundi", press release, African Union, 1 December 2018.

<sup>25</sup> "Burundi issues international arrest warrant for ex-president Buyoya", France 24, 30 November 2018; "Burundi warned after ex-President Buyoya arrest warrant", BBC, 2 December 2018; and "Burundi clashes with AU over arrest warrant against ex-President", *Africa News*, 2 December 2018.

<sup>26</sup> Those fleeing the country included Ntavyohanyuma, head of the National Assembly; Rufyikiri, head of the Senate; Leonidas Hatungimana, Nkurunziza's former spokesperson; Onesime Nduwimana, CNDD-FDD former spokesperson; Bernard Busokoza, former vice president; Jeremie Ngendakuma, CNDD-FDD former secretary general. See Thierry Vircoulon, "L'opposition burundaise en exil", IFRI, April 2017.

<sup>27</sup> Its official title is "Conseil national pour le respect de l'accord d'Arusha et la réconciliation au Burundi et de l'état de droit". For background, see "Vircoulon, L'opposition burundaise en exil", op. cit.

<sup>28</sup> Former CNDD-FDD President Hussain Radjabu left in May 2016. See "Le CNARED se fissure", *Iwacu*, 16 May 2016; "L'opposition burundaise en exil", IFRI, April 2017.

and, as the key document used in writing the 2005 constitution, the source of constitutional legitimacy. Secondly, aware that alone it has little leverage to compel the government to change course, it has consistently called on the Agreement's guarantors (the DRC, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, the U.S., the AU, the EU and the UN) to fulfil their responsibility by pressuring the government through sanctions, an arms embargo and the repatriation of Burundi's peace-keeping troops. Finally, CNARED has demanded an end to human rights abuses and the reopening of political space.<sup>29</sup>

For CNARED's founders, adherence to the Arusha Agreement and its principles entailed opposition to Nkurunziza's third term.<sup>30</sup> The platform's call in 2015 and 2016 for a transition without Nkurunziza led to a dramatic break with Mkapa, the EAC facilitator.<sup>31</sup> CNARED found little international support for this rejectionist position, however, and adjusted its line during the course of 2017. While continuing to blame Nkurunziza's decision to seek a third term for causing the conflict, it became more open to accepting his continued rule while pushing in private for the inclusion of opposition members in government, which it previously had rejected.<sup>32</sup>

Throughout 2017 and 2018 CNARED continued to criticise Mkapa's mediation, as he tried to push the platform to agree on minimal conditions for elections in 2020 and to desist from focusing on past events.<sup>33</sup> Opposition leaders felt that Mkapa and his team consistently underestimated the amount of international pressure required to shift Nkurunziza's position and hence get to more credible elections in 2020.<sup>34</sup> They have also raised concerns about the talks' organisation, the mediation team's technical competence and their delegates' personal safety.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> These positions are evident throughout CNARED's communications. See, for example, "Propositions des partis acteurs politiques de l'opposition sur le règlement pacifique de la crise actuelle au Burundi", Arusha, 30 November 2017.

<sup>30</sup> The Arusha Agreement clearly sets out term limits, unlike the constitution, which is a little more ambiguous. Protocol II, Chapter 1, Article 7.3 of the accord states that the president "shall be elected for a term of five years, renewable only once. No one may serve more than two presidential terms".

<sup>31</sup> CNARED, "Déclaration relative à la paralysie du processus des pourparlers inter-Burundais", Brussels, 5 January 2017. At a press conference in Bujumbura in December 2016, following meetings with the government, Mkapa declared that Nkurunziza's 2015 election should no longer be the focus of the mediation, infuriating CNARED, which argued that Mkapa had thereby "disqualified himself" from leading the dialogue.

<sup>32</sup> Mkapa, and prior to him Museveni, has called for a government of national unity since mid-2015. "Mediator Museveni leaves Burundi as crisis-hit poll looms", Deutsche Welle, 15 July 2015.

<sup>33</sup> Benjamin Mkapa, "Statement to the East African Community Summit", Dar es Salaam, 20 May 2017, as listed by Great Lakes of Africa Centre, University of Antwerp. The opposition's criticism gradually diminished over time, as Mkapa was clearly critical of the government in private conversation. But they continued to disparage his entourage.

<sup>34</sup> One former politician and prominent CNARED member argued that the mediation team failed to take account of the CNDD-FDD's violent past and treated the crisis as "an ordinary electoral crisis, like Kenya". Crisis Group interviews, opposition leaders, Belgium, November 2018. See also "Le Cnared mécontent de l'agenda des prochains pourparlers inter-burundais", RPA Radio, 12 October 2018.

<sup>35</sup> Crisis Group interview, member of CNARED, Brussels, October 2018.

The opposition has expended much energy in disputes over the process.<sup>36</sup> The most serious has been over participation in the talks.<sup>37</sup> CNARED has criticised the mediation team for allowing the government to send huge delegations of pro-government politicians and dictate who attends the dialogue. It has consistently argued that it should be invited as a whole in order to counteract the government's divide-and-rule tactics.<sup>38</sup> It has also called for the government to talk to armed opponents. CNARED spokesperson Pancrace Cimpaye said in December 2017: "Let us recognise that it is absurd that the captain of the opposing team has the right to dictate the composition of your team, with the blessing of the facilitator".<sup>39</sup>

As hopes for negotiations fade, CNARED's coherence is being tested. During 2018, divisions grew between those willing to continue negotiations and those who see armed insurgency as the only way to pressure Bujumbura. It has also been riven with suspicions that some members are seeking to secure a speedy return to Burundi. Whether founded or not, these suspicions have fundamentally undermined the coalition and led several major parties and opposition figures to leave in late 2018 and early 2019.<sup>40</sup> Opposition splintering strengthens the government's case that talks should take place in Bujumbura, particularly if some factions return to Burundi. In that light, the departures cast doubt on the viability of future externally mediated talks.

## 2. The internal opposition

Unlike CNARED, the internal opposition – including historically prominent parties such as the Union for National Progress (UPRONA) and Front for Democracy in Burundi (FRODEBU), as well as the National Liberty Congress (CNL), a former Hutu rebel group turned political party – has consistently participated in the talks.<sup>41</sup> It saw

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<sup>36</sup> As the UN Secretary-General noted in January 2018, "Stymied by persistent mistrust between the government and the opposition, regional efforts to bring together the parties to the conflict have been unsuccessful thus far. Rather than seeking common ground the stakeholders to the conflict continue to wrangle over the dialogue process itself". "Report of the Secretary General on the situation in Burundi", UNSC S/2018/89, 25 January 2018.

<sup>37</sup> Museveni invited CNARED to the dialogue in Entebbe in December 2015, which saw a sharp exchange of views between Léonard Nyangoma, then CNARED's leader, and government representatives. Since 2016, CNARED, as a group, has not been invited to any of the five mediation rounds. See "Les incertitudes d'Arusha", *Iwacu*, 20 May 2016. In July 2016, CNARED reacted by allowing individual parties to attend, but tasked them with maintaining a single line. In February and December 2017, it attempted to impose a boycott on its constituent parties.

<sup>38</sup> CNARED has expressed anger that Mkapa repeatedly promised, according to it, to invite the platform as a whole but never did so, fuelling concerns that the facilitator was saying different things to different parties. Crisis Group interviews, CNARED members, Brussels, November 2018; France, November 2018.

<sup>39</sup> "Interview avec Pancrace Cimpaye : 'nous avons une facilitation atypique, je pèse mes mots'", *Iwacu*, 7 December 2017.

<sup>40</sup> "CNARED ou le carnet d'un retour au pays natal", *Iwacu*, 25 March 2019.

<sup>41</sup> Agathon Rwasa, historical leader of the Forces Nationales de Libération (FNL), formed a new political party called Front National pour la Liberté Amizero y'Abarundi in September 2018. Rwasa changed the name of his party to the National Congress for Freedom (CNL) after a challenge from Jacques Bigirimana, president of the FNL's pro-government splinter faction. Rwasa's new political party was approved by the interior ministry on 14 February 2019. It is currently the only party challenging the ruling CNDD-FDD. Other opposition parties do not have the same popular base, have

negotiation as the only way to solve the crisis, and as such has never tied its participation in the Inter-Burundi Dialogue to any specific conditions. It has rejected the possibility of military action and professes to have no contacts with armed groups. The internal opposition also participated in the referendum even though CNARED called for a boycott. And since the end of 2017, its members have started to meet inside and outside Burundi in order to formulate a common position. But personal disputes, as well as a more flexible position than CNARED's, have prevented government opponents who remained in Burundi from allying with those in exile.<sup>42</sup>

The ruling CNDD-FDD considers Agathon Rwasa's National Congress for Freedom (CNL) to be the main threat to its hold on power. The two parties have been locked in a struggle for Hutu support since they were armed insurgencies during the civil war. This intense rivalry continued even after both militias transformed into political parties, and is manifested today by the government's increasing repression of Rwasa and the CNL.<sup>43</sup>

### 3. Civil society organisations

Many civil society organisations participated in the 2015 "Halte au troisieme mandat" (Stop the Third Term) campaign. Consequently, their leaders went into exile and some of their members have been kidnapped, arrested or killed. At first, CNARED included civil society groups, but they left in late 2016 under pressure from their funders to stay out of formal politics. They have participated only at the margins of the EAC-led talks as they were not systematically invited.<sup>44</sup> They have had notable success, however, in highlighting human rights abuses in the country, influencing UN reports on the subject.

Additionally, civil society actors have consistently raised concerns about the lack of political freedom and media restrictions and called on the international community to protect Burundians from state-orchestrated violence.<sup>45</sup> They have also pushed hard for the return of Burundian troops in UN and AU missions, arguing that soldiers should protect Burundian citizens instead of populations abroad.<sup>46</sup>

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split (for example, FRODEBU and UPRONA) or are operating in hiding (such as MSD or PDP-Girijambo).

<sup>42</sup> FRODEBU was uncomfortable with CNARED when former National Assembly leader Jean Minani headed it, as he had created a faction in the party in 2008. Similarly, the Evariste Ndayimpinda wing of UPRONA did not support CNARED when Charles Nditije, who has established a breakaway party, was leading the coalition.

<sup>43</sup> On the historical rivalries between the CNDD-FDD and FNL (now CNL), see Crisis Group Africa Briefing N°63, *Burundi: To Integrate the FNL Successfully*, 30 July 2009. For current rivalries, see "Burundi : Agathon Rwasa dénonce les restrictions imposées à son parti", *Jeune Afrique*, 3 March 2019 and "Muyinga : Peur sur Butihinda", *Iwacu*, 3 May 2019.

<sup>44</sup> "Arusha II promet mais ...", *Iwacu*, op. cit.

<sup>45</sup> "Position of Burundian Civil Society Organisations Regarding the Electoral Forcing of June 29, 2015", East African Civil Society Organisation Forum, 21 July 2016.

<sup>46</sup> "La mission impossible de la société civile", *Iwacu*, 18 January 2016.

### III. Division, Miscalculation and Impotence: International Responses to the Crisis

At the beginning, the EAC, AU and UN were all actively engaged in trying to resolve the crisis in Burundi, but were unable to halt the conflict, which has limped along since coming to a violent head in December 2015. Gradually, interest has waned as the intensity and blatancy of the violence has receded, and the diplomatic tools at the international community's disposal – mediation, commissions of inquiry, public condemnations, sanctions and restrictions on aid – have failed to move Nkurunziza, his government or his party.

#### A. *The East African Community: A Region Divided*

Founded in 2000 by Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania as a regional customs union and common market, the EAC is primarily a vehicle for promoting regional integration. Burundi and Rwanda joined in 2007, followed by South Sudan in 2016. The region is considered a major motor for economic growth and development in Africa.<sup>47</sup> But its economic dynamism starkly contrasts with, and often suffers from, the political turmoil and electoral disputes to which its states regularly fall prey.<sup>48</sup>

Member states' economic rivalries, furthermore, have periodically disrupted the EAC itself. In 2013, disagreements over regional integration, as well as transport and trade infrastructure, cleaved the organisation in two, pitting Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda (countries seeking to accelerate progress toward an East African federation) against Tanzania. Landlocked Burundi, dependent on Tanzania for access to the sea, gave its backing to its eastern neighbour.<sup>49</sup> Old personal and economic rivalries have further rent the EAC and fed into the region's feeble response to the Burundi crisis.<sup>50</sup>

#### 1. Rwanda and Uganda

The relationship between Rwanda and Uganda, both major players in the region and in the crisis, has been marked by ups and downs. Though Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni's support during the Rwandan civil war (1990-1994) helped the now ruling Rwandan Patriotic Front seize power in 1994, the two countries have progres-

<sup>47</sup> "Croissance économique : situation contrastée dans une Afrique de l'est championne continentale", *La Tribune Afrique*, 14 December 2018.

<sup>48</sup> "Kenya : nouvelle nuit d'émeutes, plus de 250 morts depuis les élections", *La Dépêche*, 1 January 2018; and "At least 22 killed in post-election violence in Uganda's west: police", Reuters, 14 March 2016.

<sup>49</sup> One major polarising project is the Northern Corridor, a transport network providing a gateway through Kenya to Uganda, Burundi, Rwanda, the eastern DRC and South Sudan. This network is in direct competition with Tanzania's development of a Central Corridor bypassing Kenya. See "The East African Community takes on the Burundi crisis", ISS Issue 8, August 2016; and "Understanding the East African Community and its transport agenda", ECDPM, March 2017.

<sup>50</sup> The alliance between Kenya, Uganda and Rwanda was unlikely to prosper due to the resurgence of former rivalries between presidents Kagame and Museveni, and the reversal of agreements on some major projects, for example Uganda's decision to work with Tanzania, instead of Kenya, on its oil export pipeline. "L'Ouganda choisit la Tanzanie pour exporter son pétrole", *Prix du Baril*, 23 April 2016.

sively grown apart since 1997. Kigali wishes to free itself from its neighbour's influence. The two countries also have competing expansionist ambitions in the DRC, which led them to war in 1999 and 2000.<sup>51</sup> The military defeat and casualties Uganda sustained in this conflict remain ever present in the ruling elite's psyche.<sup>52</sup>

Regional leadership rivalries and mutual accusations of destabilisation – Rwandan opposition members regularly pass through Kampala and Uganda accuses Kigali of trying to infiltrate its security forces – have compounded the dispute of late. Animosity came to a head in February 2019 when Rwanda closed its main border crossing with Uganda following the arrest and expulsion of Rwandan citizens charged with espionage. Trade across the region has suffered as the two states exchange barbs.<sup>53</sup>

## 2. Rwanda and Tanzania

The relationship between Rwanda and Tanzania was relatively cordial until 2013, when then Tanzanian President Jakaya Kikwete recommended opening negotiations between Kigali and the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR), a faction of *génocidaires* active in eastern Congo. This declaration led to heated verbal exchanges and threats between the two heads of state, souring diplomatic relations. In the same year, Tanzania sent a military brigade to the UN peacekeeping operation in the DRC to fight the M23 rebel movement, which had occupied a provincial capital with Kigali's and Kampala's alleged sponsorship. Relations were further harmed by Dar es Salaam's suspected support for dissident Rwandans and collusion with the FDLR.<sup>54</sup> Kigali was thus convinced that Tanzania was attempting to destabilise it.

The election in Tanzania of President John Magufuli at the end of 2015 eased tensions between Kigali and Dar es Salaam. But though the crisis does not seem to concern Magufuli, he has maintained his predecessor's support for Nkurunziza and has followed the Burundian government's line that the political and security situation is normal, pressing refugees to return. The ruling party, Chama Cha Mapinduzi, views the situation as a dispute between Hutus and Tutsis, partly due to its historical closeness to the CNDD-FDD, which portrays the crisis as an ethnic one.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> At the very beginning of the civil war, in October 1990, following the death of Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) leader Fred Rwigema, President Museveni established Paul Kagame as the new head of the movement. Taking advantage of his personal contribution to the RPF's rise to power, as well as his role in Kagame's ascension, Museveni regularly influenced the new administration's decisions during their first years of power. Crisis Group interviews, former Rwandan civilian and military officials, March 2019.

<sup>52</sup> Crisis Group interviews, former Rwandan civilian and military officials, March 2019.

<sup>53</sup> "Congo : La guerre entre le Rwanda et l'Ouganda pourrait reprendre dans l'Ituri avec l'or comme enjeu la victoire des mineurs de Mongwalu", *Le Soir*, 22 June 2002; "Note D'Analyse Politique : Le Rwanda et l'Ouganda: alliés ou rivaux ? Le contentieux rwando-ougandais source de déstabilisation de la région", *Thinking Africa*, 24 March 2013; "Rwanda accuses Uganda of supporting rebels", Reuters, 5 March 2019; and "Closed borders and fighting words: Rwanda and Uganda's deepening rift", *African Arguments*, 12 March 2019.

<sup>54</sup> "Final Report of the Group of Experts on the Democratic Republic of the Congo", UNSCS/2015/19, 12 January 2015.

<sup>55</sup> Crisis Group interviews, Western diplomats, Nairobi, June 2018.



### 3. Rwanda and Burundi

Despite the fact that the Rwandan army and the Democratic Defence Forces (FDD), then the military wing of the ruling CNDD-FDD, fought each other during the First and Second Congo Wars (1996 and 1998/1999), the two countries for years enjoyed surprisingly good relations. When the CNDD-FDD first came to power in 2005, it sought to shed its image of ethnic Hutu radicalism and maintain sound relations with its neighbours. For Rwanda, which already had difficulties with Uganda and the DRC, having an ally in the sub-region was necessary for security and economic purposes.<sup>56</sup>

But relations have progressively deteriorated since 2013, when Burundi sided with Tanzania in the EAC's economic disputes and issued critical statements about the Kenya-Uganda-Rwanda bloc. Kigali interpreted these actions as implicit support for Dar es Salaam in the dispute over the FDLR. Rwanda suspected that Burundi and Tanzania (and perhaps others) were secretly cooperating to destabilise it. The rumoured presence of FDLR troops in Burundi nourishes this sentiment, as does alleged cooperation between Burundian security service officials and FDLR leaders.<sup>57</sup> The increasing resort to ethnic discourse by some Burundian leaders and other disagreements – notably the provision of facilities to Rwandan businessman Tribert Rujugiro, whom the government suspects of financing opposition groups – has confirmed Kigali's fears.<sup>58</sup>

For their part, the Burundian authorities are convinced that Rwanda is working to overthrow the government in Bujumbura. They allege that Kigali was involved in the failed coup attempt in May 2015, citing the flight of certain coup supporters to the country as proof.<sup>59</sup> They also accused Rwanda of arming and training refugees with the aim of ousting Nkurunziza, a charge that a UN expert panel report seemed to substantiate.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> Throughout much of the CNDD-FDD's first two mandates (2005-2015), their cooperation was marked by acts of friendship and mutual support: Rwanda supported Bujumbura during electoral protests in 2005 and 2010; Rwanda paid \$1 million to support Burundi's EAC contributions in 2009; Rwanda sent emergency helicopters to help extinguish a market fire in central Bujumbura in 2013; and Bujumbura extradited Rwandan opposition members. See "Burundi : Fermeture provisoire du marché central de Bujumbura", *Burundi AgNews*, 28 January 2013; and "Extradition d'un ancien journaliste rwandais réfugié au Burundi", *Panapress*, 6 March 2010.

<sup>57</sup> Crisis Group interviews, journalists and members of Burundian civil society, March 2019. In 2014, Kigali was also informed that the Imbonerakure, the armed youth wing of the CNDD-FDD, was receiving training in eastern DRC. See "Rapport final du Groupe d'experts conformément au paragraphe 5 de la résolution 2136 (2014)", UNSC S/2015/19, 12 January 2015.

<sup>58</sup> "Museveni breaks silence on Rujugiro, the businessman at the heart of Rwanda-Uganda stand-off", *Daily Monitor*, 19 March 2019; "Museveni, Kagame exchanged letters", *The Independent*, 25 March 2019; and "Museveni writes to Kagame: 'Uganda can't support anti-Rwanda elements'", *Top Africa News*, 19 March 2019.

<sup>59</sup> Crisis Group interviews, political party leaders and diplomats, March 2019. For more on ethnic speech, see Vircoulon, "L'arme de la communication dans la crise burundaise", IFRI, op. cit.

<sup>60</sup> "Exclusive: Burundi rebels say trained by Rwandan military – UN experts", *Reuters*, 3 February 2016.

### B. *Miscalculations and Missteps: The African Union's Response*

The AU took a strong position on Nkurunziza's decision to stand for a third time, calling upon him right away to adhere to the constitution and the Arusha Agreement.<sup>61</sup> But in December 2015, the AU Peace and Security Council made what, in hindsight, appears to have been a serious miscalculation. In response to an intense spike in violence – brutal government reprisals triggered by an opposition grenade attack on a military compound – it authorised a 5,000-strong military mission intended to prevent the further deterioration of security and protect civilians. The AU threatened to forcibly deploy the troops under Article 4(h) of the Constitutive Act, which allows it to intervene in case of war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity. Strong and unanticipated opposition from the government and a stark reduction in violence contributed to heads of state refusing consent for the force at their January 2016 summit.<sup>62</sup>

This rebuke dented the AU's credibility, and it has since taken a back seat on Burundi.<sup>63</sup> From holding almost monthly sessions during the first eighteen months of the crisis, the Peace and Security Council went virtually a whole year without convening a single meeting on the country.<sup>64</sup> When it finally met, the Council decided to reduce the number of its human rights observers and military experts (leaving, respectively, ten and three members in Burundi) despite no independent verification that security had significantly improved, on the grounds that "relative peace and stability [was] prevailing in the country". Following the lead of heads of state, the Council reiterated the AU Assembly's July 2018 appeal for the EU to lift its sanctions and called on the AU Commission "to accompany Burundi in efforts toward convening an all-inclusive dialogue".<sup>65</sup>

In recent months, relations between the AU and Burundi have soured significantly. Peace and Security Commissioner Smail Chergui visited Bujumbura from 5-7 November 2018 to explore how the AU could help Burundi with election preparations.

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<sup>61</sup> See Crisis Group Briefing, *The African Union and the Burundi Crisis: Ambition versus Reality*, op. cit., fn 11. The AU's assertive public posture – refusing to send an election observation mission and threatening sanctions – had only limited success as it was not backed by consistent private diplomacy both in Burundi and the region. Ibid., p. 6.

<sup>62</sup> See *ibid.* for a full account of the AU's response to the crisis.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., pp. 6-10. The long-term effect has been to undermine the confidence of the Council and Commission, which are now more reluctant to intervene in member states' internal affairs, even when there are strong grounds to believe that they pose a threat to regional stability.

<sup>64</sup> The Council met to discuss Burundi on 27 October 2017, and did not meet again until 19 September 2018, despite stating its intention to "remain seized of the matter".

<sup>65</sup> In May 2015, the AU authorised a mission of 100 human rights observers and 100 military experts. The first deployment of personnel took place in August 2015; only 32 observers and 14 experts were admitted, however, due to the Burundian government's refusal to issue visas. The AU and the Burundian government have yet to sign the memorandum of understanding concerning the mission. Crisis Group Briefing, *The African Union and the Burundi Crisis: Ambition versus Reality*, op. cit.; "Crisis in Burundi: Security Council authorizes deployment of 228 UN police", France 24, 30 July 2016; "Support to the African Union Human Rights Observers and Military Experts Mission in Burundi", The African Peace Facility – The European Commission, 2018; "31st Ordinary Session of the AU – Decisions, Declarations and Resolution", AU Assembly/AU/Dec.695(XXXI), July 2018; and "The 794th meeting of the AU Peace and Security Council on the Situation in Burundi", communiqué, AU Peace and Security Council, 2 October 2018.

The trip was a major setback: Chergui received a cold welcome and was unable to see Nkurunziza as planned.<sup>66</sup> Then, on 30 November, the Burundian government issued an arrest warrant for Pierre Buyoya, the AU's High Representative for Mali and the Sahel. To add insult to injury, the government sanctioned protests in the capital against Buyoya and the AU Commission chairperson.<sup>67</sup>

For the AU, the protests were the last straw.<sup>68</sup> It retaliated by downsizing Burundi's contingent in the AU's military mission in Somalia, a decision that it justified by citing defective equipment.<sup>69</sup> Burundi contested the decision and threatened to withdraw all its forces. Though it harnessed diplomatic support to obtain a suspension of the decision, it eventually had to accept the troop reduction.<sup>70</sup> These incidents have made it almost impossible for the AU Commission to play a significant, independent role in calming tensions ahead of the 2020 elections.

### C. *The UN's Impotence*

Like the AU, the UN was initially proactively engaged, but disagreement in the Security Council over how to mitigate and resolve the crisis stymied a decisive response.<sup>71</sup> During the first fifteen months of the crisis the UN undertook one Security Council visit, one Secretary-General visit, three Council resolutions and two presidential statements.<sup>72</sup> But though some Council members tried to follow the African lead, the continent rarely spoke with one voice on Burundi: in New York, the three African Council members (the A3) were disunited and not all of them adhered to decisions taken by the AU Peace and Security Council in Addis Ababa. Egypt was the most vocal defender of Bujumbura on the Security Council and maintained a very high degree of coordination with the Burundian ambassador to the UN.<sup>73</sup>

<sup>66</sup> Crisis Group interviews, AU and EU officials, European diplomat, Addis Ababa, December 2018.

<sup>67</sup> "Burundi issues international arrest warrant for ex-president Buyoya", France 24, 30 November 2018; "Statement by the chairperson of the commission on the regional efforts on Burundi", press release, African Union, 1 December 2018; "Burundi warned after ex-President Buyoya arrest warrant", BBC, 2 December 2018; and "Burundi clashes with AU over arrest warrant against ex-president", *Africa News*, 2 December 2018.

<sup>68</sup> Crisis Group interviews, African diplomats, February 2019.

<sup>69</sup> Crisis Group interview, AU official, April 2019. The AU chose to cut 1,000 troops from Burundi's contingent of around 5,400, rather than spreading the losses across all troop contributors, as had been customary. The decision was a big blow to Bujumbura, which has relied heavily on the revenues that the troop contributions generated. "Somalie : Le Burundi doit rapatrier 1 000 soldats d'ici le 28 février", AFP, 21 December 2018.

<sup>70</sup> Burundi sent its foreign minister to remonstrate with the new AU chairperson, the Egyptian head of state Abd al-Fattah al-Sisi. "Presidential Activity February 2019", State Information Service of Egypt, 3 March 2019.

<sup>71</sup> France and the U.S. initially called for Nkurunziza not to run for a third term, while Egypt took a strong pro-government and anti-interventionist stand, joining China, Russia and Venezuela to resist robust UN action.

<sup>72</sup> The Council also undertook a visit to Burundi in March 2015, prior to the start of the crisis.

<sup>73</sup> Crisis Group interviews, Security Council diplomats, New York, August and November 2016. In 2015, Chad, Nigeria, and Angola made up the A3. In 2016, it was Angola, Egypt and Senegal. During discussions in November 2015, Angola counselled against incorporating language taken directly from AU Peace and Security Council communiqués into a UN Security Council resolution. Crisis Group Briefing, *The African Union and the Burundi Crisis: Ambition versus Reality*, op. cit., fn 49.

Nor has the UN been able to move Nkurunziza.<sup>74</sup> In July 2016, after months of indecision, the Security Council finally agreed in Resolution 2303 to mandate up to 228 unarmed police to keep an eye on security and support the monitoring activities of the office of the high commissioner for human rights. Bujumbura rejected the deployment, refusing to grant access to the proposed force on the grounds that it violated the “sovereignty of Burundian territory”.<sup>75</sup> Few, if any, Council members actively lobbied Nkurunziza for the force’s admission and his firm stance eventually deterred the UN from implementing its resolution.<sup>76</sup> The UN’s inability to prevent the government’s closure of its human rights office in Bujumbura in March 2019 is further evidence of its impotence in the face of Burundi’s intransigence.

While Burundi has not fallen completely off the Security Council’s agenda, the body has issued no further resolutions on the country, producing only limited statements and watered-down declarations. This record is the combined result of a reduction in violence compared to the beginning of the crisis; Nkurunziza’s persistent disregard for the Council’s positions; and finally, the objections of some Council members, notably China and Russia, to adopting new measures on Burundi coupled with the growing inertia of the Western permanent Council members (France, the United Kingdom and the U.S.).<sup>77</sup> Still, with the arrival on the Security Council of Belgium, which maintains an active interest in its former colony, and U.S. and French continued concern, it seems likely that Burundi will remain on the agenda at least until the 2020 elections, despite Russian and Chinese calls for it to be removed.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> The cautious approach of the UN Special Envoy Jamal Benomar, who prioritised his office’s access to the government, contributed to the UN’s inaction. Crisis Group interviews, Security Council diplomats, New York, September and October 2016.

<sup>75</sup> Furthermore, Burundi refused to receive 50 police officers whose deployment it had previously agreed to. “Communique of the government following the adoption by the UN Security Council of the Resolution 2303 of 28 July 2016”, Government of Burundi, 28 July 2016; “UNSC Resolution 2303 – The situation in Burundi”, UNSC S/RES/2303, 29 July 2016; and “Burundi formally rejects deployment of over 200 UN police”, *Africa News*, 3 August 2016.

<sup>76</sup> “Bujumbura rejette en bloc la résolution 2303”, *Iwacu*, 3 August 2016.

<sup>77</sup> “Statement by Russian representative Alexander Repkin at the UNSC on Burundi”, video, YouTube, 9 August 2018.

<sup>78</sup> Crisis Group interviews, diplomat, Addis Ababa, December 2018; UN Security Council diplomat, New York, June 2019. At a Security Council meeting in November 2018, the Russian representative stated, “As a matter of principle, Russia advocates for the sovereignty of Burundi and categorically rejects interference in the internal affairs of Bujumbura. ... The information that we have heard today does not demonstrate the presence of problems in the situation of Burundi which would merit keeping the subject of Burundi on the agenda of our work”. The Chinese representative seconded this position, saying, “China has noted that the foreign minister of Burundi stated in the General Assembly debate that the current political and security situation in the country is completely calm and stable. It has long ceased to be a threat to international or regional peace and security. [We] believe that Burundi should be removed from the agenda of the UN Security Council”. At the same meeting France, the UK, Sweden and the Netherlands all called for Burundi to remain on the agenda. 8408th UN Security Council meeting, “The situation in Burundi”, 21 November 2018.

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## IV. Why EAC Mediation Failed

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Since July 2015, when the EAC appointed Uganda's President Museveni as mediator of the Inter-Burundi Dialogue, the process has made little – if any – headway. A number of factors combined to limit its success: bias and a lack of capacity within the EAC; the disinterest of chief mediator, President Museveni; a lack of regional support for the facilitation team; regional divisions; and finally, the government's intransigence coupled with inequalities between the negotiating parties.

### A. *An Ill-equipped and Biased Institution*

The EAC lacks the technical and financial resources needed to conduct the Inter-Burundi Dialogue. In addition, its internal procedures and its secretariat's makeup have militated against a strong stance on the crisis.

While its foundational treaty contains an article on peace and security, and another protocol was introduced in 2013, the EAC was not set up to play a significant role in conflict resolution; it is first and foremost an economic institution. As a result, its competence in this area is weak and its mechanisms underdeveloped compared to some of the continent's other sub-regional bodies (for example, the Southern Africa Development Community and the Economic Community of West African States).<sup>79</sup> It also lacks the financial resources and capacity needed to sustain a complex political dialogue.<sup>80</sup> Despite its limited experience of mediation and conflict prevention, the EAC nonetheless found itself managing the crisis.

The appointment in March 2016 of a Burundian and Nkurunziza loyalist, Libérat Mfumukeko, as EAC secretary general cast doubt over the mediation's impartiality. Though he had little influence on the dialogue's substance, his initial oversight of logistical arrangements and the invitee list significantly impaired the opposition's participation, feeding its mistrust of the negotiations.<sup>81</sup>

The EAC's decision-making process has further hampered attempts to resolve the Burundi crisis. All countries must be represented at its summits; hence Burundi was able to prevent a crucial EAC meeting, planned for November 2018, from taking place simply by refusing to send representatives. Its decisions are taken by strict consensus, unless a member state is being considered for suspension or expulsion, when that country's views will not be considered. This need for consensus, and the patent lack thereof, have been significant obstacles for the EAC's mediation.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> Article 124 of the treaty sets out obligations on peace and security. It mentions disaster management, refugees and terrorism, but not mediation or a specific role for the EAC in conflict prevention, mitigation and resolution. The EAC did not help resolve post-election crises in Kenya (2007-2008) or Burundi (2011). "EAC Protocol on Peace and Security", EAC, November 2013.

<sup>80</sup> "The EAC couldn't even sort out basic things like plane tickets", said one mediator. Crisis Group interview, former mediation team member, February 2019.

<sup>81</sup> On occasion, CNARED members did not receive invitations until the day before dialogue session began. Their need for special travel permits meant they were unable to arrive to the talks on time. Mfumukeko's influence was greater than it should have been due to the EAC's lack of mediation experience. Crisis Group interview, former mediation team member, May 2019.

<sup>82</sup> Articles 12 and 15 of the EAC's charter firmly establishes this. "The Treaty for the Establishment of the East African Community", EAC, 2000. Crisis Group interviews, Addis Ababa, 20 September and 10 October 2018; EAC official, 3 April 2019.

### B. *An Indifferent Mediator*

From the outset, Museveni has shown little interest in his role as mediator. He was selected by default – Kikwete, then EAC chair, and the Ugandan president were the only heads of state to attend the 6 July emergency summit at which he was appointed.<sup>83</sup> On the face of it, Museveni was a good choice: he had chaired the Great Lakes Regional Peace Initiative on Burundi, with then Tanzanian President Mkapa as his deputy, which brought the parties in the Burundian civil war to sign the Arusha Agreement in 2000. But in 2015 he was in the midst of a re-election campaign and never fully committed to his mediator's task. Within days of assuming the position, after a two-day visit to Bujumbura, he handed over responsibility for the process to his defence minister, Crispus Kiyonga.

As a mediator, Museveni lacked moral authority in a crisis caused by a president who had sought, many claim unconstitutionally, to extend his stay in power and who has since engineered a constitutional amendment that may allow him to rule, barring a reversal of fortune, until 2034. The Ugandan president has himself held office since 1986 and has presided over the scrapping of presidential term limits in 2005 and age limits in 2017, removing all bars to him remaining in power indefinitely.

In addition, the opposition questioned Museveni's impartiality. "All the opposition parties felt [he] was not neutral", one exiled politician told Crisis Group.<sup>84</sup> Museveni also had historical ties to Burundi: it was the Jean-Baptiste Bagaza regime's reported financial assistance that helped bring Museveni to power in 1986. This background, together with his sympathy for Nkurunziza as a fellow former insurgent, helped fuel the perception that Museveni was biased toward the government in Bujumbura.

Finally, his position on the crisis was inconsistent due to his changing relations with Kigali. In an attempt to counter Rwanda, Museveni gradually sided with the Burundian government, drastically reducing pressure on Nkurunziza and his administration. And, as mentioned above, both governments have hostile relations with Rwanda and an interest in undermining Kagame and what they perceive as his growing influence.

### C. *An Unsupported Facilitator*

Mkapa's appointment as facilitator in March 2016 revived hope in the EAC process. "We thought Mkapa would be good because he followed the Arusha talks and was a guarantor", said one opposition leader.<sup>85</sup> But from the outset, he downplayed his role, underlining that his mandate consisted of facilitating consensus, not mediation, which remained in Museveni's hands. According to former members of the mediation team, Mkapa's hands were tied before he even started. In private, regional leaders clearly set out for him the limited scope of his duties and impressed upon him

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<sup>83</sup> Crisis Group interview, member of opposition in exile, Brussels, October 2018. "East African Community the 3rd Emergency Summit of heads of state of the East African Community on the situation in Burundi communiqué", communiqué, EAC, July 2015.

<sup>84</sup> Crisis Group interviews, members of CNARED and other opposition in exile, Belgium, October 2018.

<sup>85</sup> Crisis Group interview, member of opposition in exile, France, October 2018.

that the dialogue was an EAC operation. He was also constrained by his position as former Tanzanian president, feeling bound to follow his government's line.<sup>86</sup>

Mkapa was aware of the hurdles he faced in reaching a settlement. Indeed, he laid them out clearly himself in a statement to the EAC summit in September 2016: a "glaring lack of seriousness and willingness from all stakeholders" to fully engage in the dialogue; the need for the EAC itself to provide reliable funding, rather than depend on financial aid from the EU and China; and regional leaders' reluctance to use their personal influence to force the parties to commit to the process.<sup>87</sup> It is this last point that perhaps most hampered the Inter-Burundi Dialogue, prompting the facilitator on numerous occasions to try to resign his commission.<sup>88</sup> Without the full backing of the EAC's heads of state, it has proven impossible for Mkapa to overcome the parties' intransigence and reluctance.<sup>89</sup>

Mkapa also made some missteps. The opposition accused him of bias toward the government after he publicly recognised Nkurunziza's third term in December 2016, following discussions in Bujumbura. In reality, he had little choice but to do so, but greater engagement with opposition leaders before making that position public could have mitigated some of the fallout.<sup>90</sup> Those leaders also lambasted him for the way in which the dialogue was organised, in particular, his team's initial failure to provide an agenda or proposals to help the parties reach agreement, as well as his inability to "impose himself" on the proceedings.<sup>91</sup> And despite the EAC's lack of experience, he was reportedly reluctant to accept technical support from the UN and the AU.<sup>92</sup> Regardless, without consensus in the region and the full support of EAC leaders, his task was all but impossible.

#### D. *Regional Divisions and Dissension*

Most observers, and many of those participating in the mediation, agree that divisions among EAC member states have been one of the biggest barriers to progress on the Inter-Burundi Dialogue. The crisis in Burundi reopened old political and economic rifts and heightened personal animosities, preventing the region's leaders from

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<sup>86</sup> "As a former president of Tanzania, you don't leave office. You remain close to State House", said one interviewee. Crisis Group interviews, former members of the mediation team, May 2019.

<sup>87</sup> "We Need to Talk", International Refugee Rights Initiative, July 2018, p. 19; "Statement by Mkapa to the EAC Extraordinary Summit – Dar es Salaam", EAC, 8 September 2016, as found on CNARED's website.

<sup>88</sup> "Benjamin Mkapa: prisoner of EAC mediation?", *Iwacu*, 3 May 2018; Crisis Group interview, UN official, Addis Ababa, 10 October 2018.

<sup>89</sup> In February 2017, Mkapa told EAC leaders that there was an "imperative need" for their "personal engagement" in getting the Burundian authorities to "commit to serious dialogue without pre-conditions". "The Costs of Regional Paralysis in the Face of the Crisis in Burundi", African Centre for Strategic Studies, 24 August 2017.

<sup>90</sup> Crisis Group interview, member of CNARED, Brussels, October 2018; "Mkapa faces uphill task in Burundi peace", *The Citizen*, 11 January 2017.

<sup>91</sup> Crisis Group interviews, members of CNARED and other opposition in exile, Belgium, October 2018.

<sup>92</sup> Before Mkapa was appointed facilitator, the AU and the UN had looked set to take over the mediation. As a result, Mkapa kept them at a distance. Crisis Group interview, former mediation team member, May 2019.

forming consensus behind a resolution. Those states with influence over the government – Tanzania and, to a lesser extent, Uganda – have been reluctant to use their leverage to force Nkurunziza to the negotiating table, viewing Burundi as an ally and a tool in their quarrels with Rwanda.<sup>93</sup> Domestic matters have also preoccupied the leaders.<sup>94</sup>

The Burundian government is well aware of the EAC's divisions.<sup>95</sup> It has used these antagonisms to circumvent international pressure and win allies in the region. As EAC secretary general, Mfumukeko, a Burundian close to the government, has supported Nkurunziza's divide-and-rule strategy.<sup>96</sup> And, as time has passed, the regional leaders have progressively disengaged from the Burundian dialogue.

The problem persists. In February 2019, Rwanda took over the EAC presidency. Cognisant of his limited room for manoeuvre, and in order to avoid Burundian resistance to any kind of Rwandan initiative, Kagame delegated the mediation's continuation to his Kenyan, Ugandan and Tanzanian counterparts, who have shown little – if any – interest in the issue. Once again, the Inter-Burundi Dialogue finds itself trapped between personal rivalries among the sub-region's leaders and states.

#### E. *A Failure to Compromise*

Nkurunziza has proved strikingly resistant to the various forms of pressure applied by the international community. A desperate economic situation, the suspension of financial support by the EU (Burundi's largest donor) and the imposition of sanctions by some of its member states have forced no concession from the government, which has consistently refused to participate fully in the Inter-Burundi Dialogue, improve human rights or open up political space. Burundi has been able to withstand the financial pressure, in part due to support from both Russia and China.<sup>97</sup> But Bujumbura has also been willing to let the economy fall into recession, unemployment rise and social services atrophy rather than bow to the international community's demands.<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>93</sup> "The Burundian dialogue has been blocked in the region", said a leading former Burundian politician. Crisis Group interview, October 2018. "Having divisions within the EAC has brought us to this state. The EAC process was undermined by internal issues", said a senior source with insight into the government and ruling party. Crisis Group interview, October 2018.

<sup>94</sup> As the crisis broke, Museveni was in the middle of an election campaign and has since been preoccupied with regime survival. Kenyatta was still trying to manage the fallout from the International Criminal Court case related to 2007-2008 electoral violence, which was not dropped until December 2014, while preparing for an election in 2017 and pursuing counter-terrorism activities against Al-Shabaab. Kagame was in the process of changing the constitution and later kept a low profile to avoid inflaming tensions. Tanzania's new president was busy consolidating power at home and showed little interest in regional or continental affairs.

<sup>95</sup> Crisis Group interview, former Burundian official, November 2015.

<sup>96</sup> Crisis Group interview, political party leaders and diplomats, November 2018, March 2019. Following his appointment as EAC secretary general, Mfumukeko was promoted to the rank of extraordinary and plenipotentiary ambassador by Nkurunziza.

<sup>97</sup> "Update 1-Burundi signs deal with Russian bank on foreign investment", Reuters, 17 June, 2016; and "China disposed to reinforce cooperation with Burundi, says Ambassador Li Changlin", *Iwacu*, 9 December 2018.

<sup>98</sup> See Crisis Group Report, *Helping the Burundian People Cope with the Economic Crisis*, op. cit.



It is chiefly the manifest imbalance in the parties' power and their different attitudes to the talks that has stymied the EAC's attempts to bring them together for face-to-face talks. The government does not recognise the main opposition coalition and sees no reason to shift its position. CNARED, on the other hand, was created with the express purpose of negotiating with the government. It was formed in part under pressure from international actors who wanted the EAC talks to succeed.<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> But many in CNARED, especially those from the pre-2015 opposition, resent international actors for not having put pressure on Nkurunziza earlier despite their warnings that his rule was becoming increasingly authoritarian. Crisis Group interview, CNARED member, France, November 2018.

## V. Getting to More Credible and Peaceful 2020 Elections

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The EAC-led mediation has failed. After three years of shuttle diplomacy and numerous attempts to get the parties round the negotiating table, the facilitator, Benjamin Mkapa, has admitted defeat. The region, it seems, is not yet ready to do the same. At its summit in February, the EAC committed to “consult further on the Inter-Burundi Dialogue process”.<sup>100</sup> But while regional leaders are unwilling to relinquish control of the Burundi crisis to either the AU or the UN, neither are they prepared to fully commit to finding a solution.

The impasse is worrying, given that presidential and parliamentary elections are fast approaching, and with them the risk of heightened violence, including the possibility of small-scale clashes between the security forces and armed opposition groups. Free and fair polls in 2020 are likely impossible, considering the scant time remaining, the repression the main opposition parties already face and the four-year exile of other opposition groups, during which time the government has tightened its grip on power. But with concerted African and international engagement, there is a chance that the vote could be peaceful and the playing field levelled enough to allow opposition politicians to contest safely and some to re-enter parliament, giving them a limited say in the country’s affairs.

Four things are key to achieving this outcome. First, President Nkurunziza needs to take steps to significantly improve the political climate in Burundi so that the internal opposition and exiled politicians alike can take part in the elections. Secondly, the region has to wholeheartedly engage, with key leaders exerting pressure on Nkurunziza to open up political space. Thirdly, the AU has to engage at the highest level, using its good offices to put additional pressure on Nkurunziza while encouraging regional leaders to do the same. Finally, the region, the AU and international actors must align their efforts to prevent the government from forum-shopping. If Burundi does not make significant progress toward opening up political space by the end of 2019, international actors should call for the elections to be postponed.

### A. Reopening Political Space

Without a significant opening of political space, the 2020 elections will take place in a climate of fear and intimidation. Despite competition from the National Liberty Congress, led by Agathon Rwasa, a former Hutu militia leader who has remained in Burundi throughout the crisis, the ruling CNDD-FDD will probably win both the presidential and parliamentary elections. A vote held under these conditions would significantly increase the risk of electoral violence.

To prevent this, the political and security situation needs to change significantly. Ideally, the government would allow media and civil society organisations suspended since 2015 to reopen and operate without restriction; permit political leaders to return from exile with their security, and that of their supporters, guaranteed; form a new, independent electoral commission; release political prisoners; lift arrest warrants against exiled politicians; and allow long-term observers to monitor the polls and preparations for them. Nkurunziza and his government are unlikely to take these steps,

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<sup>100</sup> “20th ordinary summit of heads of state of the EAC – joint communiqué”, EAC, 1 February 2019.

however, given that they have spent the past four years consolidating their grip on power and almost certainly will not agree to anything that could jeopardise it.

At a minimum, the opposition in exile's participation is essential for more credible and peaceful elections. Many among them would be willing to return to Burundi even without ideal conditions. Some are motivated by fear of political obscurity if they remain outside the country, while others find it difficult to subsist abroad and want to recover assets back home that the government has threatened to confiscate.<sup>101</sup> Those who argue that participation in previous elections was pointless, and that they would simply be legitimising CNDD-FDD rule if they took part this time around, will need some convincing.<sup>102</sup> The government would have to lift outstanding arrest warrants, permit them to campaign freely and allow international observers to monitor their security and the credibility of the polls.<sup>103</sup>

The government itself has much to gain by letting those in exile come back and participate, not least the possibility of negotiating a return to direct EU support for its development programs. Nkurunziza is also concerned, to a degree, about the further damage that electoral violence could cause to Burundi's reputation in Africa. Following a flare-up of violence in December 2015, when at least 87 people were killed, some summarily executed, the violent repression of the opposition abated before becoming more covert, enabling the government to argue that the crisis has ended.<sup>104</sup> Another bout of violence would undercut such claims. Moreover, Burundi recently failed to gain entry to the Southern African Development Community (SADC), one of the continent's most stable and attractive regional economic communities, on the grounds that the current political situation contravenes membership criteria. Admission could help revive Burundi's ailing economy, as well as the government's legitimacy, and peaceful and more credible elections could give SADC reason to reconsider.<sup>105</sup>

## B. *Consistent and Concerted Regional Engagement*

Extracting even minimal concessions from the government will be difficult. It has proven highly resistant to outside pressure throughout the EAC-led mediation and seems intent on raising funds for the 2020 elections from citizens in order to reduce donors' potential influence.<sup>106</sup> But foreign governments, especially Burundi's direct neighbours, have some leverage. While general economic sanctions seem unlikely to

<sup>101</sup> "CNARED ou le carnet d'un retour au pays natal", *Iwacu*, 25 March 2019; Crisis Group interview, members of CNARED and other opposition in exile, Belgium, October 2018; and "Burundi court seizes assets of opposition figures", *The East African*, 16 May 2019.

<sup>102</sup> "CNARED ou le carnet d'un retour au pays natal", *Iwacu*, op. cit.; and Crisis Group interview, members of CNARED and other opposition in exile, Belgium, October 2018.

<sup>103</sup> For some opposition leaders, especially those accused of being involved in the 2015 coup, the lifting of criminal prosecutions would have to be negotiated.

<sup>104</sup> "Burundi: 87 killed in worst violence since April coup attempt", *The Guardian*, 12 December 2015; "Report of the Fact Finding Mission of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights to Burundi", ACHPR, May 2016; Crisis Group interviews, Addis Ababa, 31 January 2016 and Brussels, 29 February 2016.

<sup>105</sup> "Will Burundi get the nod to join SADC?", *The East African*, 1 August 2017; "Geingob explains SADC's latest Burundi rejection", *New Era*, 28 May 2019.

<sup>106</sup> "Burundi will raise funds from citizens to pay for 2020 elections", Reuters, 11 December 2017; "President Nkurunziza asks students to support election kitty", *The East African*, 12 January 2019.

have an impact (the government has done nothing to correct course under pressure from the EU, previously its largest donor), targeting individuals' personal wealth and threatening diplomatic isolation in Africa may help. In the absence of regional pressure, the government will not open political space ahead of the 2020 elections.

Unfortunately, one crucial element missing from the EAC-led dialogue has been steady joint pressure from regional leaders on Nkurunziza and his administration. Regional intervention at the highest level arguably could have made a difference, especially by setting tone and expectations at the beginning of the process.<sup>107</sup> In the DRC, the engagement of regional leaders (in particular the Angolan and South African presidents) was critical to convincing incumbent President Joseph Kabila not to stand for re-election in contravention of the constitution.<sup>108</sup> In Burundi, by contrast, because EAC heads of state (especially Presidents Magufuli and Museveni) did not offer their full support, it has been impossible for the facilitator to compel the government to participate meaningfully in the dialogue, something Mkapa has complained about on numerous occasions.<sup>109</sup>

Two factors have obstructed action in Burundi similar to that in the DRC. First, EAC leaders appear to believe that the situation in Burundi poses a less grave threat to regional stability or that it is simply too intractable to warrant expending the significant diplomatic capital required to persuade Nkurunziza to change course. Secondly, absent a regional hegemon, political and economic divisions, coupled with personal animosity among EAC leaders, have thus far made it impossible for them to work effectively together.

Rwandan President Paul Kagame's recent appointment as EAC chairperson will likely further complicate things. Following allegations that Kigali helped orchestrate the May 2015 failed coup in Burundi, Kagame has kept a low public profile on the crisis. His decision to hand over the file to Presidents Magufuli, Museveni and Kenyatta illustrates his determination to maintain some distance and deny Bujumbura an excuse to reject EAC overtures. But the absence of strong regional leadership leaves the way open for Nkurunziza to play those presidents off against each other and risks leaving no one feeling responsible for the process.

The government's current policies could provoke not only election-related violence but, further down the road, another major crisis that could prove destabilising for the region. Factional violence could occur within the ruling party, as happened in 2015, the danger of splits in the army is ever present and Burundian armed opposition groups are installed in at least one neighbour.<sup>110</sup> Moreover, the crisis is an eco-

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<sup>107</sup> The EAC was "set up to fail" from the very start, according to a former member of the mediation team. The dialogue began at the precise moment that regional leaders had made it clear they were not going to exert sufficient pressure. Crisis Group interview, February 2019.

<sup>108</sup> The unconstitutionality of Kabila's bid for a third term was more clear-cut than Nkurunziza's. The fact that for his first mandate Nkurunziza was selected by parliament, not elected by citizens, was cited by the government and some external legal experts as justification for a third term. See Crisis Group Briefing, *The African Union and the Burundi Crisis: Ambition versus Reality*, op. cit.

<sup>109</sup> Statement by Mkapa to the EAC Extraordinary Summit – Dar es Salaam, EAC, op. cit.; "Comprehensive Report by the Facilitator of the EAC-led Inter-Burundi Dialogue Process", Office of the Facilitator, EAC, op. cit.

<sup>110</sup> For risks of splits in the army, see Crisis Group Report N°247, *Burundi: The Army in Crisis*, 5 April 2017. For previous spikes in violence around elections, see Crisis Group Briefing, *Burundi:*

conomic drain: estimates say it costs the EAC hundreds of millions of dollars annually in lost trade and delayed infrastructure development.<sup>111</sup> Closer economic and political integration, the organisation's raison d'être, are impossible so long as the Burundi crisis persists. Resolving the crisis would thus provide the region with a considerable dividend.

Given its divisions, the EAC optimally would relinquish its lead on Burundi and combine its efforts with those of the AU and the UN in a joint initiative. Regardless, it must act and do so quickly. Some form of regional diplomacy is essential for peaceful and more credible elections in 2020. Though face-to-face negotiations between the two sides are preferable, they have proven impossible to organise since January 2016, and diplomacy need not take the form of direct contact. The EAC could at least consider appointing a high-profile mediator from outside the bloc, someone with the political weight to engage the region's leaders on an equal footing and who is less encumbered by national interest.

Regional leaders should also state their willingness to freeze the assets of senior government and ruling-party figures if no progress is made toward more credible elections by the end of 2019. Too, they should demonstrate their readiness to review Burundi's membership in the EAC itself.<sup>112</sup>

Tanzania's and Uganda's involvement is key. Strong, consistent private pressure exerted by their leaders, especially President Magufuli, could make a difference.<sup>113</sup> So far, however, the Tanzania president and his Ugandan counterpart, Museveni, have shown little interest in intervening. Without a change of posture in Dar es Salaam and Kampala, the situation risks deteriorating.

### C. African Union Diplomacy at the Highest Levels

Though the AU Commission's relations with Burundi sharply deteriorated at the end of 2018, the AU as an institution can still play a role in ensuring that the forthcoming elections are credible and do not spark violence similar, or worse, than that which surrounded the 2015 polls.

The regional body, in particular its Assembly of Heads of State, can help bring pressure to bear on the EAC to engage constructively with Burundi ahead of the elections. In January 2016, the Assembly authorised the dispatch of a High-Level Delegation to Burundi (comprising the presidents of Gabon, Mauritania, Senegal and South Africa, as well as the Ethiopian prime minister) for discussions with the government

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*Peace Sacrificed?*, op. cit.; and Crisis Group Africa Report N°169, *Burundi: From Electoral Boycott to Political Impasse*, 7 February 2011. For details on how the 2015 electoral crisis led to a dangerous split in the regime, see Crisis Group Report, *Burundi: A Dangerous Third Term*, op. cit.

<sup>111</sup> "The Costs of Regional Paralysis in the Face of the Crisis in Burundi", ACSS, op. cit.

<sup>112</sup> Under Articles 143, 146 and 147 of the EAC treaty, sanctions, including suspension and expulsions, can be levied on members that fail to observe the organisation's fundamental principles or meet their financial commitments. Burundi has arrears of almost \$14 million, the highest of any member state, but to date the EAC has taken no action. Political expediency makes it highly unlikely. "East Africa leaders meet as trade wars, underfunding persist", *The East African*, February 2019; "Lawmakers want states sanctioned for EAC cash snub", *Business Daily*, April 21 2019.

<sup>113</sup> Nkurunziza listens to Magufuli and the CNDD-FDD listens to the Chama Cha Mapinduzi. Crisis Group interview, CNARED member, Brussels, October 2018.

and other stakeholders.<sup>114</sup> The Assembly could revive this delegation, which undertook only one visit to Bujumbura between 25-26 February, and extend its mandate to enable it to build consensus in the region and encourage EAC leaders to use their leverage over Nkurunziza and his administration.

Even if the government can be persuaded to open up political space ahead of the elections, without external scrutiny it will be impossible to determine whether conditions for credible polls exist ahead of time. Here, the AU too can play a significant part. Since August 2015, it has maintained a small contingent of human rights observers and military experts on the ground in Bujumbura. It should negotiate with the government to enlarge the deployment and use it as a tool for monitoring the safety of opposition politicians and civil society actors, as well as evaluating, at the end of 2019, the progress of preparations for the 2020 vote.<sup>115</sup> Those observers' and experts' reports should then inform the diplomatic efforts of the Assembly of Heads of State and the Peace and Security Council. If sufficient advances have been made, the AU should additionally send a long-term election observation team. A decision from the AU Assembly, due to meet for an extraordinary summit at the beginning of July, supporting the enhanced deployment would increase the likelihood that Nkurunziza and his administration accept its presence.

#### D. *Coordinating International Pressure*

For the EAC's and AU's actions to succeed, international pressure must be closely aligned. Nkurunziza has skilfully exploited divisions within and among the EAC, the AU and the UN, alternately courting one organisation while giving the cold shoulder to the others. Rivalries have meant that early attempts at collective action, such as initial cooperation between the AU and the EAC and the formation of the Joint International Facilitation Team, were short-lived, leaving each institution appearing to defend its own position or trying to carve out space at a competitor's expense.<sup>116</sup>

It is also important that Burundi does not slip off the international agenda. Between now and the elections, the AU Peace and Security Council should meet regularly on Burundi, increasing the frequency of meetings in the immediate run-up to the vote. The UN Security Council should do the same. The appointment of a joint AU-UN envoy, or at the very least combined support for a new EAC facilitator, would increase the chances of the government participating more genuinely in talks that could enable Burundi to hold more credible and peaceful elections in 2020.

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<sup>114</sup> "Decision on the Activities of the Peace and Security Council and the State of Peace and Security in Africa", Doc. Assembly/AU/2(XXVI), 30-31 January 2016; "The African Union appoints the High-Level Delegation to Burundi", AU statement, 4 February 2016.

<sup>115</sup> Currently, the AU has plans to deploy 50 human rights observers and 50 military experts. It should ideally increase their numbers to 100 each, as originally planned.

<sup>116</sup> Though its mediation stalled, the EAC was unwilling to allow the AU to intervene, while the AU in its turn baulked at the UN's enhanced role following its failure to deploy MAPROBU. Crisis Group Briefing, *The African Union and the Burundi Crisis: Ambition versus Reality*, op. cit.

### E. *If All Else Fails*

Getting to peaceful and more credible elections by 2020 is difficult, but not impossible. At a minimum, in the coming months regional leaders, supported by the AU, must press the government to permit political leaders to return from exile and campaign freely, and allow external monitors access to the whole country. The AU's human rights observers and military experts, reporting regularly to the Peace and Security Council, could then be used to evaluate the extent of any opening of political space.

If significant headway has not been made before the end of 2019, the EAC, the AU, the UN and other external actors should call for the elections to be postponed for six months. This would give the government ample additional time to improve the political and security environment and thus forestall any potential complaints from Bujumbura and its backers, in the region and elsewhere, that it has not had enough time. During these additional months, the EAC, AU and UN should redouble efforts to press the government to create the conditions for more credible and peaceful elections. If the elections proceed without a change in conditions on the ground, either as originally scheduled or after a postponement, external actors should not support or observe the polls and should minimise diplomatic contact with any resulting government; for its part, the EAC should suspend Burundi's membership and freeze senior figures' assets.

If the elections proceed under current circumstances, a large number of Burundians would probably reject the results, possibly leading to major protests that could turn violent. Clashes with security forces could then drive people into the ranks of armed groups, as occurred in 2015. Without at least addressing Burundi's basic problems of governance and inclusivity, elections would increase the risk of a more serious crisis in the future.

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## **VI. Conclusion**

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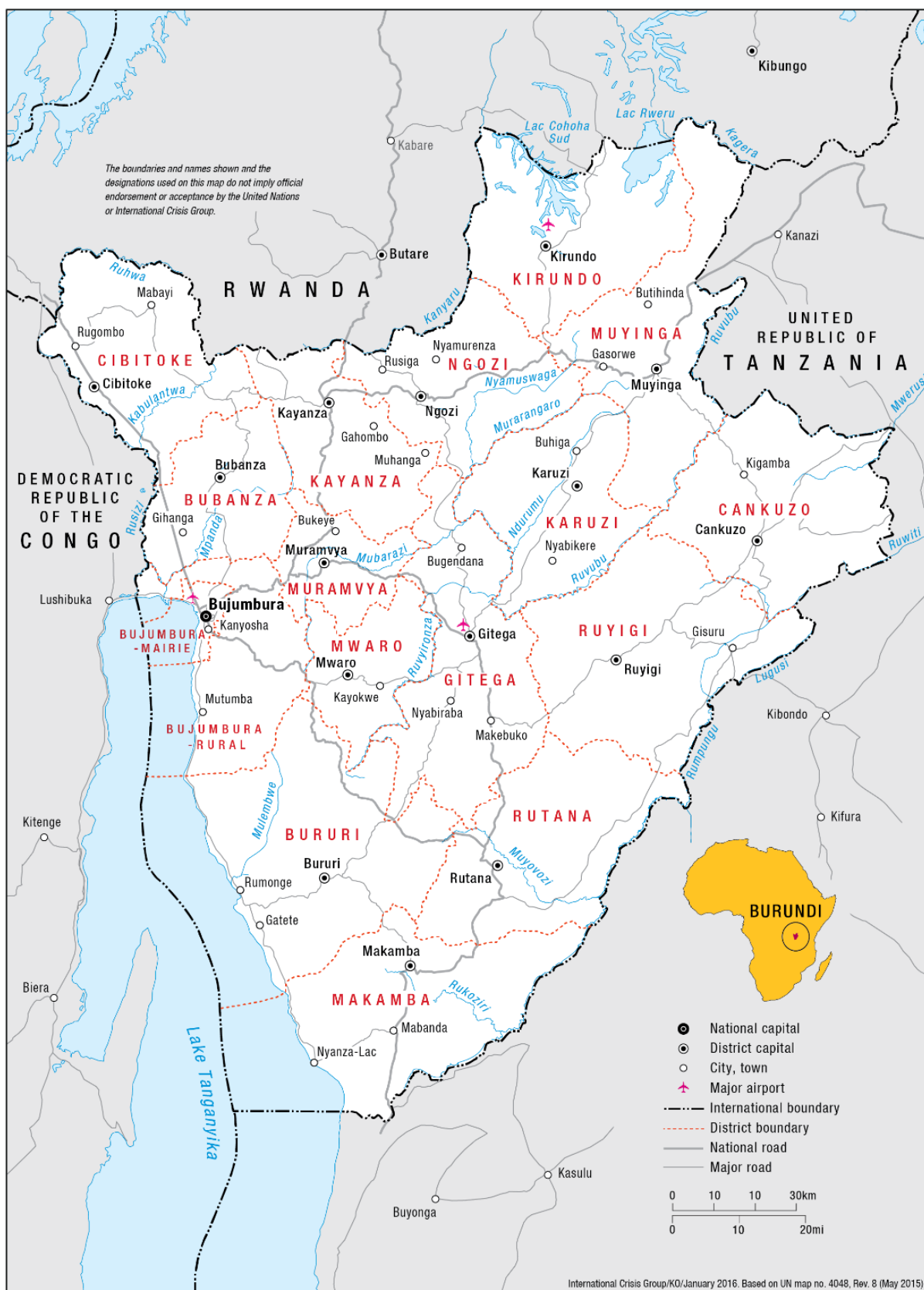
The EAC-led Inter-Burundi Dialogue has failed. Reinvigorating mediation efforts in Burundi is essential and requires that the regional body work more closely with the AU and the UN, and that its leaders put aside their own rivalries and commit to engaging consistently and concertedly. They must act soon, as Burundi's presidential and parliamentary elections, which could see a resurgence of deadly violence, are due in just over twelve months. No one expects the vote to be free or fair. There is still a chance, however, that it could be more credible and peaceful, that both external and internal opposition figures could compete without fear of intimidation or violence and that some could win seats in parliament, thereby preserving a degree of pluralism in the country. Such an outcome would at least help prevent Burundi from sliding into graver conflict and could later prove important to resolving the crisis.

The AU and other regional bodies have much to learn from the EAC's mishandling of the Burundi dialogue process. Greater coordination and cooperation between the AU and sub-regional organisations are essential for successful mediation, as are the careful choice of mediator and support – political and financial – for the process. There is still time to apply these lessons in Burundi ahead of the 2020 elections, and they should certainly inform future continental peacemaking.

**Addis Ababa/Nairobi/Brussels, 20 June 2019**



## Appendix A: Map of Burundi



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## Appendix B: The Inter-Burundi Dialogue

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**July 2015:** On 6 July, the East African Community (EAC) appointed Uganda's President Yoweri Museveni as the mediator of the Inter-Burundi Dialogue. Just one week later, Museveni visited the capital Bujumbura to kick off talks between the government and opposition groups, after which he delegated responsibility for the process to his defence minister, Crispus Kiyonga.<sup>117</sup>

**December 2015 (Prologue):** After the Burundian presidential election on 21 July, the dialogue stalled until December when, following a dramatic spike in violence early in the month, Museveni bowed to international pressure to resume talks. The 28 December session – arguably the most inclusive round and the only one in which the parties met face to face – was intended to prepare the ground for full dialogue in Arusha on 6 January 2016. This follow-up round was cancelled as the parties claimed they had not been informed of the exact date of the deliberations.<sup>118</sup>

**March 2016:** In an attempt to revitalise the process, regional leaders appointed the former Tanzanian president, Benjamin Mkapa, as dialogue facilitator to assist Museveni who was busy campaigning for his own re-election. While in office (1995-2005), Mkapa had been involved in mediation efforts to end Burundi's civil war, and the opposition welcomed his nomination.

**May 2016 (Round One):** Mkapa planned to resume talks on 2 May, but the government requested a delay insisting it should be consulted on the venue, date and participants. Dialogue eventually commenced at the end of the month with neither a clear agenda nor the participation of the main exiled opposition platform CNARED (Conseil National pour le respect de l'Accord d'Arusha et de l'Etat de Droit), which, under government pressure, was not invited as a group. Some of its members attended as individuals but arrived too late to engage in any real discussion.<sup>119</sup>

**July-September 2016 (Round Two):** The dialogue process limped along with little success. During the second session (9-12 July 2016), the facilitator was obliged to meet with the parties separately, as the government and the ruling party refused to sit down with opposition figures they considered to be putschists. In a September progress report, Mkapa appealed to EAC leaders to use their personal influence to force the parties to fully engage in the dialogue without preconditions.<sup>120</sup>

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<sup>117</sup> "Ugandan president begins mediation in Burundi", Voice of America, 14 July 2015; "Uganda minister in Burundi for crisis mediation", News 24, 16 July 2015.

<sup>118</sup> "Mediation in the spotlight as Burundi peace talks fail to take off in Tanzania", *The East African*, 9 January 2016.

<sup>119</sup> See Crisis Group Commentary, "Insights from the Burundian Crisis (III): Back to Arusha and the Politics of Dialogue", 7 July 2016; "Burundi : s'il n'est pas consulté en amont, le gouvernement ne participera pas au dialogue", *Jeune Afrique*, 27 April 2016. "The Burundian government must be consulted [because] we must agree on who should be invited, dates and place", said Willy Nyamitwe, communications officer for Burundi's presidency, on national radio 27 April.

<sup>120</sup> "Update on Inter-Burundi Dialogue", Office of the Facilitator of the Inter-Burundi Dialogue, 1 December 2016.

**February 2017 (Round Three):** The subsequent round of talks did not take place until 16-19 February 2017. The government boycotted, though the ruling party sent representatives. Mkapa pressed for a final communiqué committing the parties to renounce violence, respect the 2000 Arusha peace agreement and the constitution, and reach an urgent consensus on the peaceful organisation of 2020 elections. But divergent positions between the ruling party (it wished to talk only about the 2020 elections and the repatriation of the dialogue to Burundi) and the opposition (which demanded a transitional government without President Nkurunziza) made this impossible.<sup>121</sup> After this fourth session, Mkapa again called on regional leaders to back the mediation process, saying: “It is necessary that the EAC impose sanctions against the government [of Burundi] in order to create a balance between both conflicting parties so that the negotiations reach a lasting solution”.<sup>122</sup>

**November-December 2017 (Round Four):** Nine months later, a further round of talks was held in Arusha, Tanzania. This time CNARED members refused to attend because they were not invited as a group, while the government sent only low-level officials. Discussions were based on an eight-point agenda the facilitator had devised from his previous consultations, points of convergence which would form the basis for an agreement, while divergent points would be the subject of the future dialogue and negotiations.<sup>123</sup>

**October 2018 (Round Five):** It would be almost a year before the fifth and final round of dialogue eventually took place after a series of delays at the government’s behest – first to accommodate the constitutional referendum and then to allow for the commemoration of the 1993 assassination of Melchior Ndadaye, the first president to represent Burundi’s Hutu majority. The date was finally set for 24-29 October 2018. Mkapa viewed this session as a forum for the parties to prepare a roadmap for the 2020 elections. The government requested discussions be restricted to a plan it had devised, which had been endorsed by the ruling party and its allies. It also asked for a further postponement until November. Convinced the government was not genuinely interested in participating, Mkapa went ahead without it. Opposition parties, political actors and civil society groups from both inside and outside Burundi attended, and Mkapa was able to draw up an electoral roadmap that he believes should be the basis for consideration by all parties.<sup>124</sup>

<sup>121</sup> “Crise au Burundi : le médiateur veut convoquer d’urgence un sommet des États d’Afrique de l’Est”, *Jeune Afrique*, 20 February 2017.

<sup>122</sup> “Mkapa calls for extraordinary EAC summit to boost inter-Burundian dialogue”, *Iwacu*, 21 February 2017.

<sup>123</sup> The eight points are: i) the status and implementation of the Arusha Agreement; ii) the legality and constitutionality of the third term; iii) the politicisation of security organs; iv) political space for the opposition in the exercise of democracy; v) the impact of the economic crisis; vi) relations between Burundi and Rwanda and other partners; vii) human rights and humanitarian concerns; and viii) the security situation and commitment to the rule of law. “Comprehensive Report by the Facilitator of the EAC-led Inter-Burundi Dialogue Process”, Office of the Facilitator, EAC, November 2018.

<sup>124</sup> “Comprehensive Report by the Facilitator of the EAC-led Inter-Burundi Dialogue Process”, Office of the Facilitator, EAC, op. cit.

**November 2018-February 2019:** An EAC summit planned for 30 November to discuss the facilitator's final report and the next steps in the mediation was postponed after Burundi refused to send a delegation, arguing that it had not been informed in time.<sup>125</sup> The meeting eventually took place on 1 February 2019, and Mkapa presented his report, which stated that the political situation in Burundi remains worrying, especially as the country prepares for the 2020 elections.<sup>126</sup> In the final communiqué, EAC leaders pledged to conduct further internal consultations to determine the next step in resolving the Burundian crisis and designated the presidents of Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania to take the matter forward.<sup>127</sup> On 5 February, Mkapa announced the conclusion of the mediation process.<sup>128</sup>

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<sup>125</sup> Nkurunziza's decision not to send a delegation to the summit sparked a war of words with Museveni. In a letter to Museveni dated 4 December, Nkurunziza set out his concerns regarding the facilitator's report. He expressed surprise that the EAC has ignored Rwanda's aggression toward Burundi – an increasing government preoccupation – urging leaders “to focus on the real problem that is jeopardising peace and security throughout Burundi”. In an ill-tempered response, the Ugandan president chastised his Burundian counterpart, taking exception to Nkurunziza's charge that EAC was usurping his country's sovereignty (Museveni contended that as Arusha guarantors the organisation was obliged to take an interest), and suggesting that the government sit down with the coup plotters – something Bujumbura has refused to contemplate from the outset. “Letter from H.E. President Pierre Nkurunziza to H.E. President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni”, President of Burundi, 4 December 2018; “Letter from H.E. President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni to H.E. President Pierre Nkurunziza”, President of Uganda, 8 December 2018; “EAC summit: Epistolary war”, *Iwacu*, 3 December 2018; “Nkurunziza meets his match as Museveni answers letter”, *The East African*, 15 December 2018.

<sup>126</sup> “Burundi rejects Mkapa report over proposal to amend constitution, again”, *The East African*, 9 February 2019.

<sup>127</sup> “This is what Mkapa told EAC leaders over Burundi”, *The Citizen*, 11 February 2019.

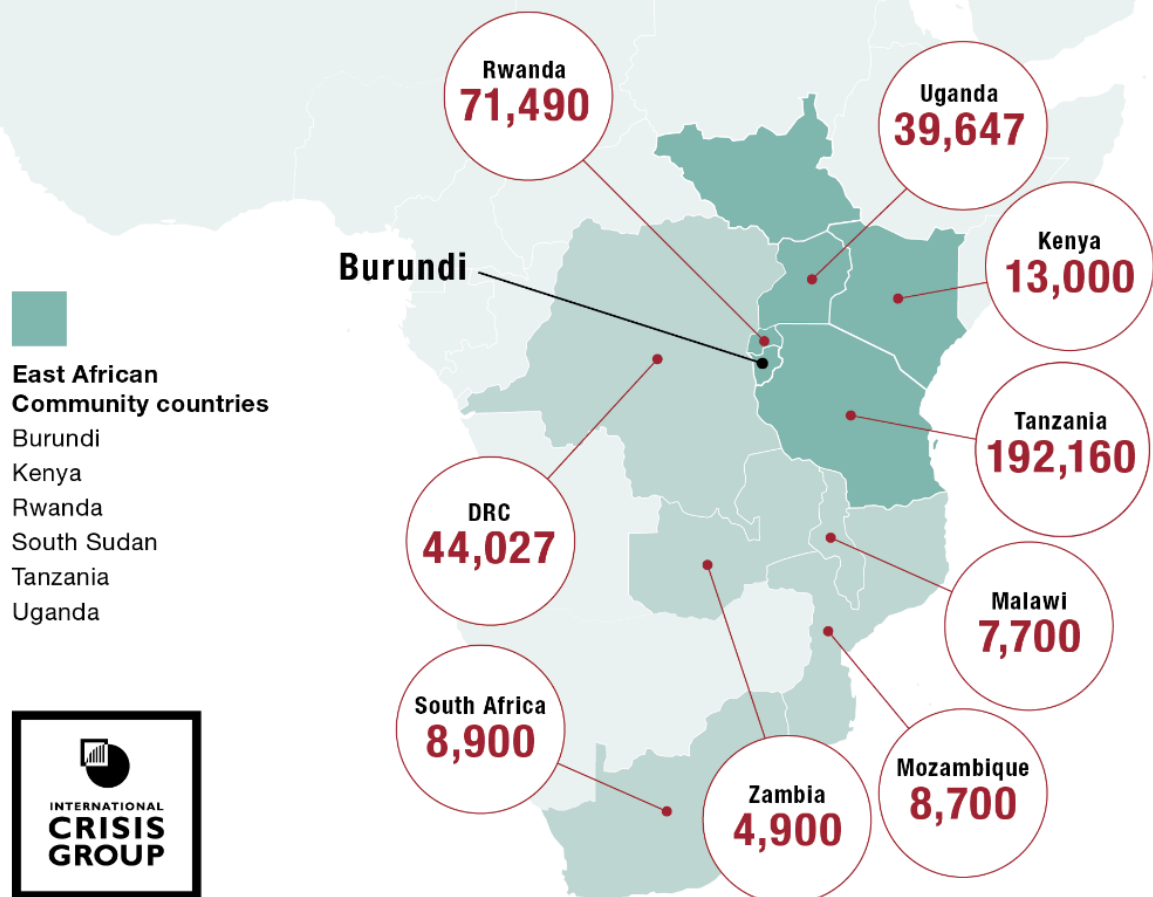
<sup>128</sup> Tweet by Macocha Moshe Tembele, @mactembele, personal assistant to Benjamin Mkapa, 12:33am, 5 February 2019.

Appendix C: Dispersion of Burundian Refugees

## Refugees from Burundi

**347,324** Last updated 30 April 2019

The above figure reflects the number of Burundians currently seeking refuge in neighbouring states (Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda) and includes those who had fled since the April 2017 crisis began, as well as some 37,000 who had sought asylum prior to this. This figure has fallen significantly from a peak of around 430,000 in 2017. In addition, some 30,000 Burundian refugees reside in southern Africa.



## Appendix D: About the International Crisis Group

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The International Crisis Group (Crisis Group) is an independent, non-profit, non-governmental organisation, with some 120 staff members on five continents, working through field-based analysis and high-level advocacy to prevent and resolve deadly conflict.

Crisis Group's approach is grounded in field research. Teams of political analysts are located within or close by countries or regions at risk of outbreak, escalation or recurrence of violent conflict. Based on information and assessments from the field, it produces analytical reports containing practical recommendations targeted at key international, regional and national decision-takers. Crisis Group also publishes *CrisisWatch*, a monthly early-warning bulletin, providing a succinct regular update on the state of play in up to 70 situations of conflict or potential conflict around the world.

Crisis Group's reports are distributed widely by email and made available simultaneously on its website, [www.crisisgroup.org](http://www.crisisgroup.org). Crisis Group works closely with governments and those who influence them, including the media, to highlight its crisis analyses and to generate support for its policy prescriptions.

The Crisis Group Board of Trustees – which includes prominent figures from the fields of politics, diplomacy, business and the media – is directly involved in helping to bring the reports and recommendations to the attention of senior policymakers around the world. Crisis Group is chaired by former UN Deputy Secretary-General and Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Lord (Mark) Malloch-Brown.

Crisis Group's President & CEO, Robert Malley, took up the post on 1 January 2018. Malley was formerly Crisis Group's Middle East and North Africa Program Director and most recently was a Special Assistant to former U.S. President Barack Obama as well as Senior Adviser to the President for the Counter-ISIL Campaign, and White House Coordinator for the Middle East, North Africa and the Gulf region. Previously, he served as President Bill Clinton's Special Assistant for Israeli-Palestinian Affairs.

Crisis Group's international headquarters is in Brussels, and the organisation has offices in seven other locations: Bogotá, Dakar, Istanbul, Nairobi, London, New York, and Washington, DC. It has presences in the following locations: Abuja, Algiers, Bangkok, Beirut, Caracas, Gaza City, Guatemala City, Hong Kong, Jerusalem, Johannesburg, Juba, Mexico City, New Delhi, Rabat, Tbilisi, Toronto, Tripoli, Tunis, and Yangon.

Crisis Group receives financial support from a wide range of governments, foundations, and private sources. Currently Crisis Group holds relationships with the following governmental departments and agencies: Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Austrian Development Agency, Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, European Union Emergency Trust Fund for Africa, European Union Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace, French Development Agency, French Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs, German Federal Foreign Office, Global Affairs Canada, Irish Aid, Iceland Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Japan International Cooperation Agency, Principality of Liechtenstein, Luxembourg Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Qatar Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, the UK Department for International Development, and the United Arab Emirates Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation.

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**June 2019**

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### Special Reports and Briefings

*Exploiting Disorder: al-Qaeda and the Islamic State*, Special Report N°1, 14 March 2016 (also available in Arabic and French).

*Seizing the Moment: From Early Warning to Early Action*, Special Report N°2, 22 June 2016.

*Counter-terrorism Pitfalls: What the U.S. Fight against ISIS and al-Qaeda Should Avoid*, Special Report N°3, 22 March 2017.

*Council of Despair? The Fragmentation of UN Diplomacy*, Special Briefing N°1, 30 April 2019.

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*Chad: Between Ambition and Fragility*, Africa Report N°233, 30 March 2016 (also available in French).

*Burundi: anatomie du troisième mandat*, Africa Report N°235, 20 May 2016 (only available in French).

*Katanga: Tensions in DRC's Mineral Heartland*, Africa Report N°239, 3 August 2016.

*The African Union and the Burundi Crisis: Ambition versus Reality*, Africa Briefing N°122, 28 September 2016 (also available in French).

*Boulevard of Broken Dreams: The "Street" and Politics in DR Congo*, Africa Briefing N°123, 13 October 2016.

*Cameroon: Confronting Boko Haram*, Africa Report N°241, 16 November 2016 (also available in French).

*Fighting Boko Haram in Chad: Beyond Military Measures*, Africa Report N°246, 8 March 2017 (also available in French).

*Burundi: The Army in Crisis*, Africa Report N°247, 5 April 2017 (also available in French).

*Cameroon's Anglophone Crisis at the Crossroads*, Africa Report N°250, 2 August 2017 (also available in French).

*Avoiding the Worst in Central African Republic*, Africa Report N°253, 28 September 2017 (also available in French).

*Time to Reset African Union-European Union Relations*, Africa Report N°255, 17 October 2017 (also available in French).

*Cameroon: A Worsening Anglophone Crisis Calls for Strong Measures*, Africa Briefing N°130, 19 October 2017 (also available in French).

*Cameroon's Far North: Reconstruction amid Ongoing Conflict*, Africa Briefing N°133, 25 October 2017 (also available in French).

*Time for Concerted Action in DR Congo*, Africa Report N°257, 4 December 2017 (also available in French).

*Seven Priorities for the African Union in 2018*, Africa Briefing N°135, 17 January 2018 (also available in French).

*Electoral Poker in DR Congo*, Africa Report N°259, 4 April 2018 (also available in French).

*Cameroon's Anglophone Crisis: How the Catholic Church Can Promote Dialogue*, Africa Briefing N°138, 26 April 2018 (also available in French).

*Increasing the Stakes in DR Congo's Electoral Poker*, Africa Briefing N°139, 8 June 2018 (also available in French).

*DR Congo: The Bemba Earthquake*, Africa Briefing N°140, 15 June 2018 (also available in French).

*Cameroon's Far North: A New Chapter in the Fight Against Boko Haram*, Africa Report N°263, 14 August 2018 (also available in French).

*Helping the Burundian People Cope with the Economic Crisis*, Africa Report N°264, 31 August 2018 (also available in French).

*Cameroon: Divisions Widen Ahead of Presidential Vote*, Africa Briefing N°142, 3 October 2018 (also available in French).

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*Cameroon's Anglophone Crisis: How to Get to Talks?*, Africa Report N°272, 2 May 2019 (also available in French).

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*Making the Central African Republic's Latest Peace Agreement Stick*, Africa Report N°277, 18 June 2019 (also available in French).

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*Ethiopia: Governing the Faithful*, Africa Briefing N°117, 22 February 2016.

*Sudan's Islamists: From Salvation to Survival*, Africa Briefing N°119, 21 March 2016.

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<b>Diego Arria</b> <b>Zainab Bangura</b>	<b>Mou-Shih Ding</b> <b>Uffe Ellemann-Jensen</b>	<b>Surin Pitsuwan</b> <b>Fidel V. Ramos</b>
<b>Nahum Barnea</b> <b>Kim Beazley</b>	<b>Stanley Fischer</b> <b>Carla Hills</b>	<b>Olympia Snowe</b> <b>Javier Solana</b>
<b>Shlomo Ben-Ami</b>	<b>Swanee Hunt</b> <b>Wolfgang Ischinger</b>	