



The CNDD-FDD in Burundi

The path from armed to political struggle

Willy Nindorera

Berghof Transitions Series No.

10

Berghof Transitions Series

Resistance/Liberation Movements and Transition to Politics

Series editors

Véronique Dudouet and Hans J. Giessmann

The Berghof Foundation is grateful to acknowledge the project funding generously provided by the International Development Research Center, Ottawa, Canada.

About this Publication Series

This case-study is one of a series produced by participants in a Berghof research programme on transitions from violence to peace (*Resistance and Liberation Movements in Transition*). The programme's overall aim was to learn from the experience of those in resistance or liberation movements who have used violence in their struggle but have also engaged politically during the conflict and in any peace process. Recent experience around the world has demonstrated that reaching political settlement in protracted social conflict always eventually needs the involvement of such movements. Our aim here was to discover how, from a non-state perspective, such political development is handled, what is the relationship between political and military strategies and tactics, and to learn more about how such movements (often sweepingly and simplistically bundled under the label of *non-state armed groups*) contribute to the transformation of conflict and to peacemaking. We aimed then to use that experiential knowledge (1) to offer support to other movements who might be considering such a shift of strategy, and (2) to help other actors (states and international) to understand more clearly how to engage meaningfully with such movements to bring about political progress and peaceful settlement.

Political violence is a tool of both state and non-state actors, and replacing it by political methods of conflict management is essential to making sustainable peace. With this programme we wanted to understand better how one side of that equation has been, or could be, achieved. Depending on the particular case, each study makes a strong argument for the necessary inclusion of the movement in any future settlement, or documents clearly how such a role was effectively executed.

We consciously asked participants to reflect on these movements' experience from their own unique point of view. What we publish in this series is not presented as neutral or exclusively accurate commentary. All histories are biased histories, and there is no single truth in conflict or in peace. Rather, we believe these case-studies are significant because they reflect important voices which are usually excluded or devalued in the analysis of conflict. Increasing numbers of academics, for example, study "armed groups" from outside, but few actually engage directly with them to hear their own points of view, rationales and understandings of their context. We are convinced that these opinions and perspectives urgently need to be heard in order to broaden our understanding of peacemaking. For exactly this reason, each case study has been produced with the very close co-operation of, and in some cases authored by, members of the movement concerned. As the results amply illustrate, these perspectives are sophisticated, intelligent, political and strategic.

The reader may or may not agree with the perspectives expressed. But, much more importantly, we hope that the reader will accept that these perspectives are valid in themselves and must be included in any attempt at comprehensive understanding of violent conflict and its transformation. We urgently need to understand in more depth the dynamics of organisations who make the transition between political violence and democratic politics, in order to improve our understanding of their role, and our practice, in making peace.

The views expressed are those of the authors and contributors, and do not necessarily reflect the opinions or views of the Berghof Foundation.

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As of 2012 the former Berghof Conflict Research, Berghof Peace Support and Institute for Peace Education Tübingen (ift) have merged together as part of the Berghof Foundation.

Willy Nindorera:

The CNDD-FDD in Burundi: The path from armed to political struggle
Berghof Transitions Series No. 10

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ISBN 978-3-941514-06-5

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Introduction

The civil war sparked by the assassination of President-elect Melchior Ndadaye in October 1993 pitted a variety of mostly Hutu rebel movements – principally the National Council for the Defence of Democracy and the Forces for the Defence of Democracy (identified by its French acronym, CNDD-FDD) – against Burundi’s regular army. The principal demands of the rebel groups were the return to constitutional law, the institution of democratic majority rule and, most especially, the reform of the Tutsi-dominated army that was viewed as the centre of power. The peace negotiations initiated in June 1998 in Arusha (Tanzania) led in August 2000 to a peace and reconciliation agreement without a ceasefire – mainly because of internal dissent within the main rebel groups and the virtual exclusion of the real belligerents from the negotiation table. Eventually, the ceasefire agreement signed in November 2003 between the CNDD-FDD of Pierre Nkurunziza and the Transitional Government led by President Domitien Ndayizeye enabled peace to return to most of the territory – with the exception of the zones where the remaining rebel group, the Party for the Liberation of the Hutu People and National Forces of Liberation (PALIPEHUTU-FNL), which was hostile to any peace agreement with the government, continued to operate.

That breakthrough in the peace process triggered two irreversible processes: a reform of the defence and security forces, integrating former Hutu armed rebels, and a return to a democratic system through regularly scheduled elections with universal suffrage. The prospect of participating in the general elections of 2005 convinced the CNDD-FDD to become a political party and, from then on, to conduct its political struggle exclusively on the ideological battleground. The former rebel movement comfortably won the 2005 elections, leading to a radical reconfiguration of the political landscape. Five years later, the CNDD-FDD – in control of all local and national institutions, and able to boast of its achievements in education and infant healthcare in particular – consolidated its victory in the 2010 elections, which were tarnished, however, by the opposition’s boycott.

This study analyses the process that pushed the CNDD-FDD rebels to abandon their armed struggle and adopt a non-violent strategy in pursuit of their political goals – as seen by their former and current leaders. The work at hand is part of a large research programme conducted by the Berghof Foundation about the choice of nonviolent or violent strategies by various rebellions around the world, the factors that influenced these options and how they have transformed these conflicts. One important characteristic of the Burundian conflict was firm commitment to its management and resolution from the sub-region and South Africa. Another was the large number of actors (political parties and rebel movements) who often exhibited ideological weaknesses and lack of clarity regarding their objectives (and hidden agendas). This accounts for their internal divisions, the skirmishes between the rebel movements and the conflicts of interest among allies. The CNDD-FDD itself was affected by several scissions that impacted on its political coherence.

From a methodological point of view, this study is mainly based on interviews with current and past CNDD-FDD leaders and former fighters, completed by an analysis of relevant documents and secondary sources. The research and interviews were facilitated by a leader of the former rebel movement who is currently a party deputy. The report is organised into four chapters, which successively review the deep and immediate causes of the conflict; the armed struggle – its founding, organisation and various changes in leadership; the peace talks; and the CNDD-FDD’s successful integration into the political and security institutions.

1 Origins of the conflict

The Burundian conflict mainly results from neo-patrimonial power practices, in an economic context characterised by poverty and land scarcity – in a country where land represents the greatest resource.

1.1 Structural causes of the conflict

In 1962, when the Belgian colonisers departed and Burundi gained its independence, the country was a constitutional monarchy in which the King, from the princely line of the Baganwas, ruled over three ethnic groups – the Hutus, the Tutsis and the Batwas. Although the first group officially made up 85 percent of the population, it was weakly represented in the State institutions,¹ where it shared most of the positions with the Tutsis, who accounted for just 14 percent of the population.² At the time of independence, Burundi suffered a renewal of political tensions against the background of electoral competition and inter-ethnic violence in the neighbouring country of Rwanda. The 13 October 1961 assassination of Prince Louis Rwagasore, son of the King and leader of the Union for National Progress (UPRONA) party that had won the September 1961 legislative elections, was the first in a series of violent incidents that would continue to periodically shake Burundi.

≡ Ethnicisation of the elections and militarisation of politics

Although UPRONA had successfully overcome ethnic rivalries, the sudden death of its charismatic leader, the pernicious influence of the Rwandan revolution³ on Burundi's intellectual elites, and the increasingly fierce fight for power created internal tensions within the party that led to the emergence of two rival currents. The so-called 'Monrovia' group, composed of equal numbers of Tutsis and Hutus, was considered to be pro-Western, whilst the 'Casablanca' group was close to Socialist countries and called itself 'progressive'.⁴ In parallel to the internal tensions within UPRONA, Burundi was affected by a highly instable government, and the King and the prime minister had to be sensitive to ethnic balance and political currents when forming their respective cabinets.

In January 1965, the assassination of Hutu Prime Minister Pierre Ngendadumwe heightened the ethno-political tensions and encouraged the ethnicisation of that year's elections – carried by the Hutu elite of the UPRONA party. The King's refusal to appoint the elite's candidate of choice to be prime minister provoked Hutu officers to attempt a putsch, which was accompanied by the slaughter of civilian Tutsis in the centre of the country. Law enforcement officials retaliated with reprisals in the Hutu countryside. In the aftermath of the aborted coup d'état that was repressed by the loyal army command, part of the Hutu military elite was executed following a rushed trial. For the first time, the defence and security forces had entered the political arena and were exploited by the Tutsi elite. The following year, the army overthrew the monarchy in a military coup headed by Captain Micombero, and progressively imposed a stranglehold on the State.

1 To understand the process of the Hutu elite's gradual marginalisation during the colonial period, see notably Gahama (2001).

2 These figures are from a census carried out during the Belgian colonisation. Since then, all censuses have omitted the 'ethnic' category.

3 The Rwandan social revolution refers to the 1959–1961 period, which included the overthrow of the monarchy and the Tutsi aristocracy and the arrival of a republic controlled by the Hutu majority. During this period the Tutsis, who were principally targeted, went by the thousands into exile in neighbouring countries, including Burundi.

4 Over the course of the first violent crises, these two groups slowly assumed ethnic connotations (Ngayimpinda 2004).

≡ Regional cleavages and ethnic radicalisations

In 1969, a group of Hutu officers and civilians was accused of plotting a coup d'état, arrested and executed. While the deepening ethnic split was punctuated by purges of Hutu military leaders and civilians, the Tutsi elite was experiencing regional cleavages. Once the monarchy had been overthrown, the seat of power was gradually transferred from the centre to the south. A similar shift was apparent in the armed forces, whose command was already dominated by the southern province of Bururi. In 1971, a group of Tutsis from the centre and north of the country was charged with attempting a coup and its alleged ringleaders were arrested. The trial that followed ended with a variety of convictions including a number of death sentences, none of which was carried out.⁵ However, the most serious crisis erupted in 1972, when a Hutu rebellion massacred about a thousand Tutsi civilians in the south (Chrétien and Dupaquier 2007). This provoked terrible repression of the Hutu elite, which in turn was decimated by the army, the police and the gendarmerie, and the Rwagasore Youth Revolutionaries (JRR), the youth wing of the UPRONA party. From then on, the mono-ethnic defence and security forces viewed themselves as the sole guarantors of security for the minority Tutsis in face of the Hutus' alleged attempts at genocide. At the same time, Hutus viewed the army as the symbol of their suffering.

The big crisis of 1972 sent tens of thousands of Hutus into exile, resulting in an even more acute political, economic and social marginalisation of the ethnic majority. Survivors balked at returning to the many secondary schools and the national university where Hutus had been massacred. Despite the implementation of progressive social measures following the 1976 overthrow of the Micombero government, the government of Colonel Jean-Baptiste Bagaza, a Tutsi from the south, progressively adopted and reinforced his predecessor's policies. Not only was the majority still excluded from decision-making spheres, but a discriminatory policy regarding Hutu access to national education was also imposed. When Major Buyoya (who was also a Tutsi from Bururi province) seized power after a coup d'état in 1987, his government was plunged into a violent crisis born of the Hutus' multiple frustrations. In August 1988, a peasant revolt exploded in the north, where Tutsis were once again attacked by enraged peasants. These massacres were severely repressed by the new government (Chrétien et al. 1989).

≡ Attempts at reform and political reversal

Aware of the Hutu majority's deep frustrations and wanting to put an end to the repeated violent crises, in late 1988, to the surprise of his own camp, Buyoya initiated a series of political overtures towards the Hutu. External pressure from donors, including the World Bank, were not unrelated to his change of heart. The new policy of national reconciliation began with proportional Tutsi-Hutu representation in the new government, for the first time since the overthrow of the monarchy. Hutus were also integrated into the senior ranks of the civil service. The long-taboo ethnic issue was officially discussed for the first time. A commission was set up with equal Hutu and Tutsi representation to study all aspects of the question of 'national unity' and make recommendations. This resulted in the creation of a constitutional commission to make suggestions for a new modern and liberal constitution.

Based on the conclusions of this commission, the government democratised the State institutions and organised the first free multi-party elections in 1993. The presidential elections pitted the incumbent leader Pierre Buyoya against Melchior Ndadaye of the Front for Democracy in Burundi (FRODEBU), the main party of the Hutu opposition. Although rallying around the ethnic question was officially forbidden, FRODEBU's undercover propaganda was largely based on this issue and on a critique of Buyoya's reforms, which were viewed as cosmetic. Not only was Buyoya severely defeated by his challenger, who received

⁵ The fact that the ethnic identity of the plotters determined their treatment in the various cases of real and alleged coups d'état was another reason for the Hutu elite's frustration (various interviews).

twice as many votes as he did, but FRODEBU also won the legislative elections comfortably, getting more than 80 percent of the votes cast (Sinunguruza 2004).

1.2 The direct cause of the conflict

Ndadaye's victory received a mixed reaction. In Bujumbura, the residents of some poor Hutu neighbourhoods were overjoyed by what they considered to be their just revenge. They even entered neighbouring Tutsi areas by the hundreds to sing and dance in front of Tutsis who were dismayed by their own candidate's defeat. In view of the geography of the results, it must be emphasised that although Buyoya clearly had attracted thousands of Hutu votes, the vote was generally ethnic. Wanting to reassure public opinion and Tutsi lobbies, the victorious Ndadaye formed a broadly based government that included Tutsis from the defeated party.⁶ He also tried to govern in a conciliatory and moderate fashion. But scarcely three months after taking office, he was assassinated by the very army that was supposed to protect him. In an operation intended to decapitate the State institutions, several of Ndadaye's closest associates were executed that same night.⁷ FRODEBU's main dignitaries sought refuge in a hotel on the shores of Lake Tanganyika, where they were protected by French gendarmes. Although no force officially claimed responsibility for the putsch, the army had obviously played a major role by assassinating the head of state. Following the international outcry caused by this event and the first massacres of civilian Tutsis by furious Hutu peasants, anonymous putschists restored FRODEBU to power. But the leading party was politically weakened by the main Tutsi parties' accusations that they had instigated the large-scale massacres of the minority that followed Ndadaye's assassination. Forced to negotiate with the opposition, FRODEBU accepted the creation of a pluralist government in which most Tutsi parties were represented. Having lost its position of power, the leading party also had to come to terms with the army that had violently attacked the State institutions. Meanwhile, in certain parts of the capital, a movement started to mobilise around the rejection of any compromise with what were considered to be the gravediggers of democracy.

⁶ The Prime Minister was a Tutsi from the UPRONA party.

⁷ These included the President and Vice President of the National Assembly and the Minister of Economy and Finances. Several other top authorities were saved by warnings to flee their homes.

2 The armed struggle

One can place the origins of the CNDD⁸ guerrilla war some weeks after the overthrow of the State institutions on 21 October 1993, and its end at the signing of the Global Ceasefire Agreement on 16 November 2003. The ‘movement’ (as the CNDD-FDD calls itself) started an armed struggle with very few means. But for a decade it continued to grow – until it constituted a real political-military force that the international community had to take into account during the Burundi peace process. In the following discussion about the period of the armed struggle, it is clear how heavily the country’s history – especially the crises of 1965, 1969, 1972, 1988 and 1993 – weighed on the Hutus’ collective conscience and the course of events. The following sections describe the evolution of the rebel movement, with its internal upheavals and its strategies for armed resistance that would increasingly assume a political-diplomatic shape as the time to negotiate a ceasefire approached.

2.1 Underlying reasons for taking up arms

The Hutu political movements of the past forty years have mostly been organised outside the country. They were characterised by two main tendencies, the first essentially incarnated in PALIPEHUTU, which advocated returning to Burundi by force of arms, and the second supported by the Burundi Workers’ Party (*Umugambwe w’Abakozi b’Uburundi*, UBU), that aspired to be a multi-ethnic democratic movement epitomising the values of equality, dignity and justice for all. With the fall of the Berlin wall and its democratising impulse, the latter tendency took precedence over the former. Successors to UBU and the Movement of Progressive Students of Burundi (MEPROBA) gave birth to FRODEBU, winner of the June 1993 presidential and legislative elections.⁹

FRODEBU’s clear and honest victory convinced the most pessimistic Hutus that it would be possible to create a new Burundi in which all ethnic groups could live in harmony. But with the 21 October 1993 coup, most Hutus came to believe that the Tutsis wanted to use the army to remain in power.¹⁰ All the current and former CNDD-FDD leaders interviewed for this study agreed that the armed rebellion was born of the rejection of the democratic process by the Burundian Armed Forces (FAB) in October 1993. According to a former FDD combatant, there was no alternative to taking up arms:

»With the successive crises of the 1960s, 1972, 1988 and especially the last crisis in 1993, in which free elections had succeeded in bringing a Hutu president to power without resorting to force, Hutus had seen that a leader of the country needed a protective force. The existing security forces represented the main obstacle to gaining control of State institutions.¹¹

One hears the same refrain from a CNDD-FDD deputy, a former combatant in the rebel movement:

»Repeated military repression of the unarmed population, the wrongful imprisonments and discrimination in various administrative departments, including the army, forced the population to organise and fight.¹²

⁸ The text will refer to the CNDD for the period before its first split (1994–1998) and to the CNDD-FDD for the following period (1998–2005).

⁹ Interview in September 2011 with Jean-Marie Ngendahayo, former CNDD-FDD negotiator, Minister (2005) and deputy (2005–2007).

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Interview in August 2011 with Cyriaque Muhawenayo, former FDD fighter and journalist.

¹² Interview in September 2011 with Benigne Rurahinda, CNDD-FDD deputy, president of the commission on good governance and privatisation of the National Assembly, and former president of the CNDD-FDD Women’s League.

Another CNDD-FDD deputy agreed: “We said to ourselves that we could use the same arms as those who thought that they had the monopoly on force.”¹³ For the party’s current Secretary General, Gelase Ndirirabe, “One army being destroyed by another is what justifies the choice of the armed struggle.”¹⁴

But the assassination of President Ndadaye was just the trigger of the armed struggle, which according to these same sources was deeply rooted in the Hutus’ frustration over the discrimination, exclusion and repeated cycles of aggression to which they had been subjected. According to a colonel in the National Defence Forces (FDN),¹⁵ formerly of the FDD, the armed struggle was needed to combat the dictatorial regime – maintained in power since 1966 by a mono-ethnic, mono-regional Tutsi army – whose racist policies that regarded Hutus as enemies of the State had led to the ethnicisation and regionalisation of all State services.¹⁶ In addition, according to one of the early organisers of the CNDD rebellion, the Hutus were reminded of the whole bloody history and refused to submit again:

»The generation of orphans of 1972 recalled their relatives’ deaths and felt it was their duty to fight. They were young people, 20 to 30 years old who decided to take up guns. For Hutus, the word gun (‘inkoho’ in Kirundi, the national language) has special meaning. Since the army was mono-ethnic, Hutus always felt the inkoho was scary. But then they said to themselves that they, too, could learn to use it – to become the equals of the Tutsi army.¹⁷

In fact, these Hutus, who were young adults at the time of the assassination of the first democratically elected president, would become spearheads of the new rebellion. Many Hutus regarded that event as a replay of 1972 and decided to launch a preventive war by attacking their Tutsi neighbours. These massacres were legitimised by FRODEBU’s official organ, ‘The Dawn of Democracy’ (APPLE 1996).

2.2 Creating a ‘popular resistance’ and defining the CNDD’s goals

In the first weeks after the coup d’état, the violence was going full tilt in a large part of Burundi. In the interior, many Hutus, distraught and left to their own devices, went and killed their Tutsi neighbours. In response, the army deployed throughout the country, officially to pacify it, but actually to carry out massacres of Hutus, often with the help of Tutsi militias. The government, which had taken refuge in the ‘Vacation Club’ hotel, had lost control of the situation and could not agree on the nature of the radio messages to be broadcast about the situation. In the mostly Hutu working class neighbourhoods of Kamenge and Kinama, the residents started to procure arms and organise the resistance, and at the same time, Hutu students attending the Higher Institute of Military Officers (ISCAM) deserted their camp for an unknown destination.¹⁸

When the army started to target those FRODEBU authorities that had escaped the bloody coup d’état, the latter secretly decided to organise a rebellion. They engaged Leonard Nyangoma, one of the party’s founders and a former minister in the Ndadaye government, to evaluate the needs of the Hutu armed groups that were already fighting. Nyangoma took advantage of a trip abroad to further organise the new rebellion, and was joined in his Belgian exile by several other FRODEBU leaders. When their request for United Nations troops to put an end to the coup was officially refused because of insufficient funding, the war strategy was chosen.¹⁹

The FRODEBU leadership then began to coordinate the resistance networks that were dispersed

¹³ Interview in July 2011 with Karenga Ramadhani, CNDD-FDD deputy and former negotiator during the peace talks.

¹⁴ Interview in October 2011 with Gelase Ndirirabe, Senator and CNDD-FDD Secretary General, former CNDD-FDD spokesperson during the armed conflict and negotiator during the peace talks.

¹⁵ The FDN is the new name of the Burundian army, chosen by the negotiators of the Arusha Accords and made official by Law No1/022 of 31 December 2004 on the creation, organisation, missions, composition and functioning of the national defence force.

¹⁶ Interview in September 2011 with Colonel Mukwaya, the chief inspector for social welfare at the Ministry of National Defence, a former FDD fighter.

¹⁷ Interview in August 2011 with Festus Ntanyungu, CNDD-FDD deputy and one of the early organisers of the armed struggle.

¹⁸ Interview with Festus Ntanyungu.

¹⁹ Ibid.

throughout Kamenge and the interior of the country. ISCAM youth systematically organised the rebellion with the help of intellectuals who had left university and secondary school to take up arms. When the main leaders in charge of organising the rebellion returned from Belgium, the CNDD was officially founded on 24 September 1994. The movement designated Leonard Nyangoma as the chief organiser, given his experience in mobilisation during his years with FRODEBU. A number of FRODEBU leaders left Burundi for Zaire (now the Democratic Republic of Congo – DRC) and formed a political executive board under Leonard Nyangoma. This political structure included the following notables, both Hutu and Tutsi who, for the most part, were former heads or deputies of FRODEBU: Stanislas Kaduga, Pascaline Kampayano, Festus Ntanyungu, William Munyembabazi, Christian Sendegeya, Leonce Ndarubagiye, Antoine Harushimana alias Mbawa, Ngurube Melchiade, Anicet Barusasyeko and Prime Ngowenubusa. The new leadership organised the armaments and techniques of war and also became diplomatically active in an effort to convince the African community and the rest of the world of the justice of their struggle.

The movement formulated its basic goals centred on the unconditional restoration of institutional legality in conformity with the results of the legislative and presidential elections of June 1993, and the establishment of a truly national army that would guarantee the security of the country's institutions in service to the whole Burundian nation.

2.3 Heterogeneity and evolution of the movement's leadership

During its first years of activity, the CNDD's politics were directed by an executive committee affiliated with FRODEBU. The gradual development of basic texts, especially those defining the movement's ideology and politics, helped the executive committee become independent of FRODEBU from 1996.

≡ Disputed leadership

The CNDD leadership was first assumed by Leonard Nyangoma, who had set up his command post in Zaire and allied himself to President Mobutu, as well as to the remnants of the Rwandan army that had been defeated after the 1994 genocide, and to the Hutu genocidal militias (*Interahamwe*). The CNDD quickly asserted itself as the largest and most popular rebel group,²⁰ and maintained difficult, if not hostile, relations with the other rebel movements, as shown by the numerous clashes with the FNL, PALIPEHUTU-FNL's armed wing.

Neo-patrimonial practices (regionalism, favouritism and corruption) that had plagued the Bujumbura government for decades were also evident in the CNDD. Leonard Nyangoma, who came from Bururi province, favoured political leaders and combat officers from his region. In particular, he was criticised for keeping his right-hand man, William Munyembabazi, who had been accused of embezzling. Other cadres of the movement were evicted and sometimes even assassinated. Nyangoma was also reproached for being absent from the field. According to Pierre Nkurunziza, the current head of state:

»Nyangoma committed a lot of abuses. He never came to the field of combat in Burundi, and for a while, FDD combatants even thought that he did not exist. ... He also used the military combat led by the FDD on the ground to transfer funds abroad to make sure he and his own would be able to survive.²¹

²⁰ The size of the CNDD (later of the CNDD-FDD) – 8,000 to 12,000 armed fighters, according to various estimates – varied throughout the war. But it is accepted that the number did swell, especially just before the CNDD was about to join the institutions with the intention of integrating and demobilising a maximum number of combatants.

²¹ Interview with a Burundian journalist in September 2004, when Nkurunziza was the CNDD-FDD President and a member of the Transitional Government presided by Domitien Ndayizeye. Accessible at the following link: www.burundi-info.com/spip.php?article72

Such accusations of corruption are made by several movement leaders who give the example of how the CNDD diverted part of the coffee harvest that it was exporting through its own channels.

The heterogeneity of the people joining the movement also increased the leadership problems. First of all, regional tensions surfaced between members from the Imbo plain in western Burundi and those from other parts of the country.²² People from the Imbo complained that most of the fighting with the FAB, the regular army, was concentrated in their region, and very rarely in Bururi province, least of all in Songa, the hometown of movement leaders. For a long time, FAB reprisals almost exclusively affected the families of resistance fighters from the Imbo plain.

Tensions were also linked to variations in the backgrounds and countries of origin of the rebellion's leaders. Those who had been members of PALIPEHUTU or had lived in exile in Rwanda had a more pronounced ethnicist interpretation of the Burundian conflict than those who came from Burundi or were part of the diaspora in Europe.²³ Although most of the leaders claim that the CNDD was always a multi-ethnic movement because its original ideological orientation was inspired by FRODEBU and because it did not fight for any special social or ethnic group but rather for all the people, many former combatants do admit to the existence of ethnic cleavages within the movement.

There were religious tensions, too. Officer Ismaël Misago was assassinated for being Muslim. Relations were no less fraught between Catholics and Protestants.²⁴ Gender cleavages also impacted the movement's cohesion – albeit to a lesser degree – because some female fighters complained of discrimination and being assigned duties beneath their educational level.²⁵

Finally, doctrinal disagreements regarding how to run a guerrilla war appeared between ISCAM graduates, who wanted to impose iron discipline and a strict hierarchy between superiors and subordinates, and fighters with informal training who took a more empirical approach and refused the diktat of those who adopted the militarist approach. The question of longevity within the movement's ranks was another source of cleavage between combatants, with the older members tending to look down on the newest recruits. These various divisions affected the criteria for advancement in rank since they were sometimes based on subjective standards.²⁶

While some attributed these tensions and internal cleavages to a lack of political training, leadership conflicts or personal ambition,²⁷ others explained these conflicts as being due to diverging views about how to run a war. “For some, the war was long and hard. They were tired and could no longer see how the war could be won. Some even had to give up. Others considered that they had to fight to the end.”²⁸ Although the movement was able to heal these cleavages, real and latent rifts finally split the leadership.

≡ Change of leader and name

In 1998, Leonard Nyangoma was squeezed from power in favour of a young ISCAM officer, Jean-Bosco Ndayikengurukiye, supported by Hussein Radjabu, the movement's real strongman. An agricultural adviser by training, Radjabu had joined PALIPEHUTU before joining the CNDD in 1994 as general commissioner in charge of mobilisation and propaganda. After helping to oust Nyangoma, he became the movement's Executive Secretary. At the military level, new faces also appeared, such as those of Melchiade Ngurube, Adolphe Nshimirimana and Pierre Nkurunziza.

²² Interview with Karenga Ramadhani.

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ Interview with Karenga Ramadhani. There are no reliable statistics concerning the relative proportions of the various religions in Burundi, but Catholics are commonly estimated to number between 60 and 70% of the population, Protestants around 10% or more, and Muslims around 1%. The rest of the population is animist.

²⁵ Women accounted for less than 5% of the CNDD-FDD, and were not represented at the level of High Command.

²⁶ Interview with Benigne Rurahinda.

²⁷ Interview with Festus Ntanyungu.

²⁸ Interview with Gelase Ndabirabe.

With this new team, the movement changed its name to CNDD-FDD to emphasise its distinction from the CNDD, which Nyangoma kept as a political group and had no army, nor any real popular support outside his native area – as shown by the results of the 2005 elections.²⁹ After assuming his position, Ndayikengurukiye also left the theatre of operations to settle in the DRC, where President Mobutu had been overthrown and replaced by Laurent-Désiré Kabila. For several years, Kabila supported the CNDD-FDD in exchange for military assistance to fight the Rwandan and Burundian armed forces present in eastern Congo.

Ndayikengurukiye gradually took over all decision-making authority without delegating any tasks or visiting Burundi. He was accused of poorly managing funds allocated for purchasing and transporting armaments to the theatres of operation, and reproached for wanting to get closer to power. Some even suspected that he was sharing intelligence with the enemy through the intervention of his cousin Augustin Nzojibwami, the FRODEBU Secretary General, who was in close contact with the authorities in Bujumbura where he lived.³⁰ He was also charged with having made new purges within his movement by approving the execution of many high-ranking officers, who were assassinated just because they were university graduates and did not come from the Bururi region.³¹

Jean-Bosco Ndayikengurukiye was finally overthrown in October 2001.³² Radjabu, who spearheaded his replacement by Pierre Nkurunziza, continued to control the movement as CNDD-FDD Secretary General. He was in charge of raising funds and diplomatic support abroad, which accounted for his many foreign trips to various capital cities.³³

■ Increasing internal cohesion and preparations for negotiations

Nicknamed '*Umuhuza* (Unifier)', Pierre Nkurunziza was political commissioner in Nyamutenderi, in rural Bujumbura. Prior to heading the movement, he had played an important leadership role in calming the tensions and healing the cleavages within the CNDD-FDD. In particular, he introduced new activities that were unconnected to fighting – such as prayer sessions, sports and sociocultural exchanges – to unite people from the different regions. Foreign travel and meetings with people and institutions outside of the movement also fostered openness and development.³⁴

The will to bring the fight against the Bujumbura government to an end helped the movement to surmount its internal tensions. Discussions were also held to help boost the morale of the fighters and to remind them why they had taken up arms.³⁵ Once Nkurunziza had assumed control of the troops, he rarely travelled or left Burundian territory. His policy of remaining near the troops helped create cohesion within the leadership and allowed it to pursue negotiations with great discipline – in contrast to most of the other political groups.

Finally, changes at the head of the CNDD-FDD affected its structure, as well as the relations between the movement's military and political divisions. Whereas the movement's military wing clearly had been subordinated to the political wing during Nyangoma's time, his ouster marked the shift towards the CNDD-FDD becoming a political-military organisation, which officially continued to be directed by a political bureau.³⁶ Under the leadership of Pierre Nkurunziza, the political leaders regained influence ahead of the opening of peace negotiations.

²⁹ Leonard Nyangoma's CNDD received 4% of the votes.

³⁰ Interview with Jean-Marie Ngendahayo.

³¹ Nkurunziza's interview with the journalist Athanase Karayenga, October 2004.

³² Eventually, Ndayikengurukiye created a minority rebel force (the CNDD-FF) that signed a peace agreement with the Transitional Government following the 2000 Arusha Accords.

³³ As the main CNDD-FDD strategist, Radjabu later directed the negotiations. In 2005, he became the party's president.

³⁴ Interview with Karenga Ramadhani.

³⁵ Interview with Benigne Rurahinda.

³⁶ Under Ndayikengurukiye, the CNDD-FDD direction was composed of: the office of the general coordinator; a political bureau with five committees (political and ideological, diplomatic, legal affairs, defence and security, economy and finance); the executive secretariat with six committees (organisation of the masses, foreign relations, ideological training, fund-raising and financial management, social affairs, information and communication); the high command, organised on the same basis as the Burundian army general staff; and the war council.

2.4 Mobilisation of resources and supervision of the population

The rebellion owed its existence, organisation and growing military and political effectiveness to the material and moral support from the country's largely Hutu peasant population.³⁷ Under Nyangoma's leadership young fighters were recruited and peasants were mobilised to support the war effort. Each concerned family had to contribute a fixed amount of food. In the refugee camps in Tanzania, each family either had to donate a kilo of beans or maize – or cattle. In addition, the movement received substantial income from weapons and other goods that were confiscated from the Burundian armed forces. Using its own networks, the CNDD also managed to organise the sale of coffee, and some tea, outside of the country.

Under Ndayikengurukiye's leadership, the CNDD-FDD reorganised its systems for procuring armaments and in-kind contributions in Burundi. Abuses committed on the civilian population were stopped thanks to the commissioners in charge of propaganda and political education raising the members' political awareness. Although the movement initially used a clearly ethnic form of mobilisation with propaganda songs and anti-Tutsi slogans, after 2000, hatred of Tutsis was progressively replaced with slogans promoting fraternity and democracy for all Burundians. The leadership was aware that negotiations were in the offing and the growing involvement of intellectuals from the Diaspora helped create a better image of the movement in the eyes of the Tutsi population and the population of Bujumbura, which had previously been largely hostile to it.

In addition to getting material support from the population, the movement received substantial financial contributions from the Hutu diaspora in the west (whose numbers had increased over the war years), and from traders and private corporations who could discern big political changes on the horizon. The refugee camps furnished food taken from international donors, and ransoming vehicles on the big trunk roads was an important and regular source of provisions.

Regarding the supervision of the population, a parallel administration and police force were introduced throughout the country. According to a former spokesperson of the movement,

»There was a parallel administration, ranging from the provincial governor to the administrator for policy and the economy. The population heeded both authorities of the State and those of the movement. It was an incredible success. Unlike the FNL, the CNDD-FDD has never committed violent acts against the general population. In fact, we stopped fighting the FAB for a while in order to combat the FNL because of the latter's abuse of the population... Our movement assured all the administrative functions – supervision, social assistance and food management. For example, the cows that the fighters confiscated were eaten by the local population as well as by the combatants.³⁸

The movement also ensured public safety outside of the established institutions by putting in place its own police. The term '*Imbonerakure*', which today refers to the CNDD-FDD youth movement, used to refer to the guerrilla-era scouts who were sent to reconnoitre an itinerary or an enemy position. Because the rebel movement was developing within a territory controlled by the government it was fighting, it had to establish a method of identifying its members and to protect itself from the omnipresent security forces. For instance, members constantly changed passwords to identify each other.

At the political level, much effort was made to mobilise the population and increase popular awareness of the deep-seated reasons for the struggle. To raise money for the movement and provide the population with jobs, the CNDD also founded revenue-generating associations that, for example, sold boats or bicycles. The movement also opened a number of production units in areas under its control, such as in Mitakaka, to the west, where it owned watermelon fields. It taught the local population how to grow its own food, and

³⁷ Interview with Jean-Marie Ngendahayo.

³⁸ Interview with Gelase Ndabirabe.

helped small businessmen develop market gardening. In the social sector, the movement also supplied health workers for the needs of the communities within its operating areas.³⁹

As regards external assistance, it goes without saying that this very delicate matter was handled at the highest leadership level and was not a matter of common knowledge. This is why some members deny that the movement got any help from outside. However, some leaders do admit to receiving support from the Mobutu regime in Leonard Nyangoma's time, and later from Presidents Kabila, both father and son. The CNDD also benefitted from the anarchy that prevailed in the Congo. In the province of South Kivu, the lack of State authority – and bribes – allowed the CNDD to evolve unhindered. Sudan also contributed to the movement, and before the Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement was signed, the DRC and Tanzania served as support bases for the guerrilla forces. Several countries of the sub-region also furnished amenities such as travel documents to movement leaders. For a while, the CNDD-FDD was even suspected of having contacts with Al-Qaida because of rumours spread by the FRODEBU, which led to it being infiltrated by western countries. According to Nkurunziza,

»Foreign powers were worried by this piece of information and wanted to verify its accuracy. They organised a discreet spying system that used officers who supposedly belonged to the CNDD-FDD but in reality were hired to gather information to confirm this charge. Our ground operations and accounts were scrutinised by these spies who were working for foreign powers. But they could not discover any clues proving that the CNDD-FDD had entertained any contact with Al-Qaida.⁴⁰

³⁹ Interview with Benigne Rurahinda.

⁴⁰ Interview with the journalist Athanase Karayenga.

3 Peace talks with the CNDD-FDD

In the aftermath of the 1996 military coup in Bujumbura, the army – under duress from the sub-region and encouraged by President Buyoya (back in power since a 1996 military coup) – was prodded to discuss its reform when the Arusha negotiations started in June 1998. In fact, the army's ethnic configuration had already changed in response to various imperatives. In order to compensate for losses within its ranks and to quickly reinforce its capacities for the civil war which had intensified and spread throughout the country, the army had recruited thousands of Hutus. Yet the army command was still the fief of the Tutsi minority that was little disposed to make the concessions demanded by the political parties and Hutu armed movements. Nevertheless, amidst the leadership's discord regarding negotiations,⁴¹ the army was pressured into accepting the principle of a reform of the defence and security forces.

The Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement, signed on 28 August 2000 by 17 political parties and armed movements,⁴² as well as by the government and the Transitional National Assembly, provided for equal representation of Hutus and Tutsis in the defence and security forces. This agreement also recommended professionalising the forces and creating a new National Police to integrate the former police and gendarmerie with the former rebel movements, as well as the deployment of international troops to supervise the whole process. In addition, a quota system for the institutions gave Hutus 60 percent of the positions in the government and the National Assembly and 50 percent in the Senate. Arusha also foresaw a female quota of at least 30 percent in the institutions. The agreement adopted the principle of regularly-held direct democratic elections with universal suffrage, and included specific modalities to promote small political parties and offer Tutsi parties an implicit guarantee of representation in the institutions.

Although the Arusha Agreement was supposed to unite all parties to the conflict, the two main rebel groups, the CNDD-FDD and the PALIPEHUTU-FLN, refused to participate, thus threatening its implementation. This section focuses on the CNDD-FDD-led negotiations, which ended in the Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement in December 2003.⁴³

3.1 Impediments to abandoning the armed struggle

For a long time, internal divisions within the movement delayed the elaboration of a clear ideology and a political programme. While the CNDD-FDD was clear about why it took up arms, it was much less coherent about its goals and ideology, which have evolved over the years. The aforementioned changes in leadership seriously affected the movement's coherence. In its early years, the CNDD-FDD had lapsed into an ethnicised discourse, which affected its operational mode and led to targeted attacks of Tutsi civilians. It took the movement quite a while to understand the fundamental nature and dimensions of the conflict.

Although the CNDD-FDD had initially taken up arms with the aim of pushing the Burundian armed forces to negotiate – without intending to overthrow the government – over time, some of its leaders came up with new goals. Drawing on their military successes, they planned to take the capital by force and capture State power. Obviously, this hard line blocked other positions for dialogue inasmuch as it banked on the Burundian army's collapse – or failing that, a military victory.

⁴¹ A small group including the Minister of Defence, Firmin Kagojo, was in favour of opening negotiations with the Hutus and accepted the idea of reforming the defence and security forces. However, Kagojo died in a helicopter accident in February 1998.

⁴² These included UPRONA for the Tutsi parties, and FRODEBU, CNDD (of Leonard Nyangoma) and PALIPEHUTU (without its armed wing, which continued to fight under the name of PALIPEHUTU-FNL) for the Hutu parties.

⁴³ It is not concerned with the multiple aborted negotiation efforts during the CNDD era (1994-98), notably in Cape Town, Rome and Maputo.

Moreover, at the start of the Arusha negotiations, the movement was torn by internal cleavages and rivalries and was reluctant to negotiate because it was ill-prepared and rumours were circulating about collusion between its leader Nyangoma and the Bujumbura authority.

Since it was partly based in the DRC, the CNDD-FDD also had to comply with the priorities set by its sponsors, whose support it needed for weapons and ammunition. In turn, Laurent-Désiré Kabila needed the FDD's striking power to respond to the Rwandan army, which had overpowered the Congolese troops many times, so he threw his weight behind keeping the CNDD-FDD in the Congo. He had plenty of pull for a movement that derived material and financial dividends by being there.

When the Arusha negotiations were concluded and it was clear that the peace agreement of 2000 met most of the CNDD-FDD demands, the latter not only refused to endorse them, but also turned down the first invitations to join the talks. In fact, Jean Minani, the president of FRODEBU, the main Hutu group at the Arusha negotiations, boasted to the various institutions engaged in the peace talks that he would be able to force the main rebel groups – the CNDD-FDD and the PALIPEHUTU-FNL – to accept the Arusha Agreement. Funds were even disbursed to tempt and corrupt CNDD-FDD officers. However, the rebels were not likely to stick to an agreement they had not negotiated; they were keen to negotiate specific arrangements regarding their integration into the institutions. These factors contributed to delaying the rebel movement's support for the peace process.

3.2 Factors conducive to the renunciation of force

≡ Internal factors

The civil war had lasted ten years, and the fighters and active members of the movement were tired of armed struggle. The conflict had claimed nearly 13,000 souls from the ranks of the CNDD-FDD alone.⁴⁴ Everyone had lost family, friends and comrades. Movement leaders were increasingly inclined to negotiate, especially since the CNDD-FDD had set up its parallel administration throughout Burundi and started a campaign of proximity in preparation for the next elections. The rebel movement also realised that the popularity of its main adversary courting the Hutu electorate – the FRODEBU – was waning, whilst the CNDD-FDD itself had a number of resources for the next electoral campaign. Besides, the movement had already split several times and refusing to negotiate could create new internal frictions.

The CNDD-FDD was well entrenched in the population through its political mobilisers, who constantly communicated news about the movement's political orientation. In fact, there was no need to mobilise its constituency on the question of negotiations, as Hutu partisans of the rebellion were already won over to the idea of a political solution to the conflict, and even the belligerents were in favour of a negotiated settlement: in many localities, they got ahead of the politicians by proceeding to a ceasefire before being instructed to do so.⁴⁵

Although the gap between the ethnic groups seemed unbridgeable at the beginning of the crisis, with time, Hutus saw Tutsis begin to support their cause. The participation of Richard Habarugira, the nephew of Gilles Bimazubute,⁴⁶ one of FRODEBU's historic leaders, at a congress of the underground movement had a huge effect on opening up people's minds. The respectful attitude shown by a number of FAB officers (especially the Generals Niyoyankana and Gacyubwenge) towards the civilian population had forced FDD fighters to recognise that reality was complex and that not all Tutsis were their born enemies.⁴⁷

⁴⁴ The figure was cited for the first time by President Nkurunziza during a television broadcast in August 2005.

⁴⁵ Interview with former combatants.

⁴⁶ Gilles Bimazubute, who was one of the rare Tutsi cadres in FRODEBU when it came to power, was elected Vice President of the National Assembly in July 1993. He was assassinated by members of the army the same night that President Ndadaye was killed.

⁴⁷ Interview with Karenga Ramadhani.

As for the Tutsis, although they were initially keen on making war against the alleged “perpetrators of genocide”, they also had evolved towards favouring a negotiated solution. They understood that the Burundian armed forces would not be able to vanquish the rebellion. Moreover, the war was taking an increasing toll on peoples’ lives, and finally, the entire political class, and civil society in particular, led a campaign advocating a political solution to the conflict. CNDD-FDD leaders had different reactions to this campaign and the role of civil society in general. For some, contacts with civil society were highly beneficial, especially during their meetings abroad, while for others, it was of no consequence.⁴⁸ One party leader went so far as to say that there never was any civil society, that it had become the refuge “of the vanquished”.⁴⁹

Concerning the FAB, their troops and command were also weary of an armed conflict that they doubted they could win on the battlefield. The army command and the authorities also designed astute schemes to protect and guarantee the interests of the minority in the future. The Arusha Agreement reserved 50 percent of the positions in the new defence and security forces for Tutsis, hence good assurances were made about the inclusion of a sizeable number of the FAB’s superior officers and troops. Thus reassured, a significant part of the forces stuck to the main reforms recommended by Arusha.

≡ International pressures

The international community and the countries of the sub-region used various tactics to entice the CNDD-FDD to the negotiating table. The Kenyan government harassed CNDD-FDD members transiting the country because the organisation had not signed the Arusha Agreement. In collusion with the international community, the movement was even described as being a “negative force” in the sub-region – like the *Mayi Mayi* militias in Congo or the Rwandan *Interahamwe*. Further pressure was applied towards the CNDD-FDD leaders by subjecting Hutu refugees in Tanzanian camps to wrangling and repeatedly threatening them with expulsion.⁵⁰ These forms of pressure from regional leaders were decisive: the movement’s leadership was forced to recognise that it would have difficulty moving across borders with total impunity if it refused to sit down at the negotiating table. Although these regional dynamics had an undeniable impact on the rebels’ decision to negotiate, the single most decisive factor from outside the movement was clearly the intervention of Nelson Mandela, the new mediator. Mandela was convincing because of his past as a freedom fighter, his prestige and his extraordinary charisma. During the ‘talks-about-talks’ in 2000–2001, Ndayikengurukiye fathered a child that he named “Nelson” in honour of the great man, which was a big psychological triumph for the mediator.

Finally, on the international scene, there was an increasingly negative attitude to taking power by force. Organisations like the African Union had institutional arrangements to discourage the use of force to seize power and many countries such as Gabon, despite having advocated for the CNDD-FDD, vigorously opposed using arms to seize power.⁵¹

⁴⁸ Interview with Benigne Rurahinda.

⁴⁹ Interview with Gelase Ndabirabe.

⁵⁰ Interview with Benigne Rurahinda.

⁵¹ Interview with Gelase Ndabirabe.

3.3 Negotiations and peace agreements between the CNDD-FDD and the Transitional Government⁵²

Before the actual negotiations began, the CNDD-FDD made a fresh start on the ground, engaging in fierce fighting against FNL elements to weaken them, especially in the provinces of Cibitoke and Bubanza, and particularly in Tenga. Under Ndayikengurukiye's leadership, the CNDD-FDD turned away from the Arusha negotiations regarding Hutu–Tutsi relations in order to focus on direct talks in Libreville (Gabon) with Pierre Buyoya's military oligarchy. The arrival of Pierre Nkurunziza at the head of the movement caused a political *aggiornamento* that accelerated the conclusion of the 2003 accords.

When formal talks began in Tanzania under South African mediation in August 2002, a basis for negotiations already existed because after the Arusha Agreement, the Transitional Government had signed two separate agreements – with other dissident rebel movements that did not have much support on the ground (including the minority section of the CNDD-FDD directed by Ndayikengurukiye) – which could serve as benchmarks for the negotiating parties.

At the start, negotiations between the various parties on the political issues were difficult. A climate of suspicion and animosity persisted, even during the transition. The CNDD-FDD members suffered from an inferiority complex about their intellect and/or social status in the face of the political professionals who represented the other parties, although they gradually added members who were better prepared to their negotiating team, such as cadres from the diaspora who had fairly high educational levels.

On the other hand, the CNDD-FDD's negotiations on military and security issues with the FAB proceeded discreetly with good will, in a constructive atmosphere. It was much easier to reach conclusions that satisfied both parties, and the negotiations wound up much sooner than those on political issues. The CNDD-FDD readily signed the various agreements with the Transitional Government because the texts (see Annex I) satisfied its main demands regarding its proportional representation in the defence and security forces and its participation in the political institutions, especially the government, in light of the coming elections.

The Pretoria Protocol on Political, Defence and Security Power-Sharing in Burundi that was signed between the CNDD-FDD and the Transitional Government on 8 October 2003 provided for quotas for the defence and security forces, specifically promoting the FDD command. Regarding the new National Defence Force, it stipulated that “the integrated General Staff and the officer corps shall be composed of 60% officers from the governmental army and 40% officers from the CNDD-FDD”. Regarding the National Police, the “General Staff structure [shall] be based on the principle of 65% [to the Transitional Government] and 35% to the CNDD-FDD.”⁵³ The agreement also provided for integrating the rebel movement into the executive and legislative branches, the Senate, territorial administration, diplomatic corps and public enterprises. It granted the CNDD-FDD four ministries including one Ministry of State, 15 seats in the National Assembly, three governorships, two ambassador posts, 30 positions for local Council administrators, and the directorates of 20 percent of the public enterprises.

Specific parts of the agreements also addressed the demobilisation and reintegration of former CNDD-FDD combatants, on the basis of the main principles enunciated in the Arusha Agreement. Unlike soldiers in the regular army, who generally were not tempted to return to civilian life for fear of losing their meagre material and financial advantages and facing a difficult reintegration, CNDD-FDD fighters had never received salaries, so they were more attracted by the benefits offered by the national programme for the demobilisation, reinsertion and reintegration of former fighters. They had to come to terms with

⁵² Based on the provisions of the Arusha Agreement, a Transitional Government was formed on 1 November 2001. It was supposed to run for two 18-month phases, presided over first by a Tutsi party and then by a Hutu party. From 2001 to 2003, Major Pierre Buyoya directed the Transitional Government, then Domitien Ndayizeye, a Hutu member of FRODEBU, took over.

⁵³ See the entire text of the Pretoria Protocol online in French at www.burundi.news.free.fr (archives of 8 October 2003) and in English at www.iss.co.za/cdburundipeaceagreements/No%204%20Pretoria%20Protocol.pdf

the demands placed by their leaders, who were primarily concerned with filling the quotas they had been granted in the various forces. The CNDD-FDD first expanded its troops⁵⁴ in order to then be able to encourage the most recent recruits to demobilise while keeping most of the real fighters in its ranks. Overall, the process of reintegrating demobilised fighters was impeded by a lack of preparation and the precarious socio-economic situation.

3.4 The contribution of the international community

The international community got involved in the peace negotiations very early on, through financing the process and appointing various delegations. The United States and the European Union appointed special envoys in the region of the Great Lakes to supervise the peace process and discreetly advocate for the various negotiating parties. To facilitate implementation of the Arusha Agreement and especially the return of the rebel movement leaders (referred to as ‘armed political parties and movements’, APPM), the African Union (AU) deployed troops to Burundi. The South African contingent guaranteed the security of the FDD combatants in the assembly camps. In June 2004, the AU troops were replaced by a United Nations military contingent that opened a peacekeeping mission in Burundi (ONUB), and some countries hosted meetings of rebel movement delegations with other partners such as the Dutch Parliament or the Belgian press.⁵⁵ Finally, when it was time to implement the newly signed agreements, bilateral and multilateral cooperation agencies and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) made substantial contributions, both material and financial, such as the following:

- ≡ The German development cooperation (GTZ) supplied food for the combatants in the assembly areas;
- ≡ The World Bank financed the demobilisation of former fighters;
- ≡ Doctors without Borders took care of injured combatants;
- ≡ The Dutch development cooperation financed the construction of ‘Camp Hope’ in Tenga, a locality marked by especially violent clashes, where the combatants of the two former belligerents were trained to protect the institutions;
- ≡ The South African NGO ‘Accord’ got involved in managing land disputes in the south of the country;
- ≡ The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) played an important role in family reunification.⁵⁶

After the CNDD-FDD had entered the provisional government (see section 4 below), party leaders were mobilised to directly or indirectly hold talks with the various international stakeholders on the ground to implement all the programmes aimed at reinserting demobilised fighters (GTZ), guaranteeing security (South African contingents), and initiating self-empowerment projects for vulnerable populations or communities affected by the war (UNICEF, UNHCR, BINUB, Accord, World Bank, etc.). EU countries (such as the United Kingdom, Netherlands, Belgium, France and Germany) contributed a lot towards peacebuilding support, and some African countries offered scholarships for accelerated training and refresher courses for future civil servants from the resistance or returning from exile. One of the most successful and rewarding campaigns was the demobilisation and reinsertion of 3,261 child soldiers, with support from the United Kingdom and UNICEF (MDRP 2008).

⁵⁴ More than half of the 21,000 combatants declared by the CNDD-FDD were recruited after the ceasefire was agreed and were trained in the assembly areas under their control. Of these 21,000, about 8,000 were integrated into the FDN and 6,000 into the National Police. Nearly 7,000 were demobilised.

⁵⁵ Interview with Karenga Ramadhani.

⁵⁶ Interview with Benigne Rurahinda.

4 Integrating the CNDD-FDD into the state institutions

After the various agreements had been signed with the Transitional Government, the CNDD-FDD was integrated into the political and security institutions. This process took place in different stages, starting with an exploratory mission of movement cadres to Bujumbura to assess whether conditions allowed for the return of the leaders and fighters. Some days later, the CNDD-FDD leadership and combatants left their respective locations (or countries of asylum) to travel to the capital and the various assembly points. From then on, integration into the political and security institutions was carried out in parallel and in mutual interaction. Blockages at the political level inevitably had repercussions on progress in integrating the rebels into the defence and security forces and vice-versa.

4.1 Integration into the security institutions

The military integration process was quite straightforward, since the Pretoria Protocol clearly defined the respective responsibilities of the relevant actors, and the military commission was able to work efficiently and in good faith. In fact it was the only process that was carried out without any buffer troops between the former belligerents. Before integration could begin, a joint General Staff for the two forces was created to plan the process of combatant identification and disarmament, and to harmonise the ranking system. Disagreements arose regarding the ratios of officers, under-officers and troops. It was also necessary to find common ground regarding nominations to the Ministry of National Defence. In the end, the CNDD-FDD got 15 of 51 vacant positions including two out of four department heads, and two of the five regional military commands.⁵⁷

The National Police was significantly restructured after the dissolution of the gendarmerie, with its members increasing tenfold in less than a year: 7,000 former combatants of the rebel movements were integrated into the new police force while 10,000 officers came from the former FAB. The CNDD-FDD also filled the position of the Chief of Police.

In general, the former CNDD-FDD fighters were successfully integrated into the defence and security forces, respecting the signed agreements and avoiding any violent incidents. The transformation of the security sector was concluded by the executive's December 2004 promulgation of two laws on the National Defence Force and the National Police.⁵⁸ The movement used the successful integration of the security forces as its main propaganda point in the electoral campaign.

⁵⁷ This percentage is nevertheless lower than what is called for in the ceasefire agreement between the CNDD-FDD and the Transitional Government, which grants the CNDD-FDD 40% of the FDN's command-level positions. This is due to the fact that a number of these positions require a particular qualification that most of the CNDD-FDD officers lack.

⁵⁸ Law N°1/019 of 31 December 2004 on the creation, organisation, missions, composition, and functioning of the National Defence Force and Law N°1/020 of 31 December 2004 on the creation, organisation, missions, composition, and functioning of the National Police.

4.2 Transformation into a political party

The Pretoria Protocol also recognised the CNDD-FDD as a political movement, and provided for its integration into the political institutions.⁵⁹ After the Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement, the CNDD-FDD did not enter into any alliance with another party, preferring to directly enter the Transitional Government under the presidency of Domitien Ndayizeye. This experience helped the movement build its capacity to manage public affairs and get its first exposure to the realities of the country, which until then had escaped most of the party leaders' knowledge. But it was hard to get the former rebels to work in institutions alongside other political parties. Some members had inferiority complexes regarding their intellectual and social status. Social challenges had to be overcome, such as a shortage of housing and the high cost of living in a period of inflation. These problems lessened somewhat over time.

The party used the transition period to set up its own electoral machine in preparation for the 2005 elections. The transformation of a political-military movement into a political party was an ideological, political, military, administrative and financial process that required forward thinking and the ability to anticipate problems. When, following the end of hostilities, the traditional political parties did not seem to be taking their duties seriously enough, the CNDD-FDD was carefully preparing for the next 'war' that was just as dangerous – the electoral campaign.

According to CNDD-FDD leaders, their movement did not face any serious challenges in reorganising as a political party because some members had prior experience in training and running political parties. The CNDD benefitted from being an offshoot of the FRODEBU, and many of its leaders (including Stanislas Kaduga, Christian Sendegeya and Jean-Marie Ngendahayo) were former FRODEBU cadres. These leaders say that their struggle began in the 1960s, when all the Hutus were mobilised to their cause. They describe MEPROBA as an incubator, first for political mobilisation and then for the armed struggle. Finally, there were also cadres who had belonged to other clandestine groups such as the National Liberation Front (FROLINA) and PALIPEHUTU.⁶⁰

The process of institutionalisation was fraught with legal difficulties, however. In particular, it had to respond to various requirements of the new law of 26 June 2003 regarding political parties, some of which were quite restrictive. One of them stipulated that no governing body of a national political party could include more than three quarters of its members of the same ethnic group.⁶¹ When the CNDD-FDD was integrated into the institutions, it had virtually no Tutsi cadres: there was only one Tutsi among the 15 deputies and four ministers in the government, as well as in the movement's leadership (President, Secretary General and Executive Secretary). But when the CNDD-FDD began to integrate the institutions, many Tutsis quickly joined, thus rectifying the imbalances.

The law on political parties further stipulated that no political party was permitted to set up any military or paramilitary organisation. To overcome this restriction to electoral participation, FDD combatants had to join the army and the police – although this process was slowed because of technical questions about the combatants' status and the harmonisation of the ranks. But once these issues had been resolved, the establishment of the new FDN and National Police enabled the integration of the ex-FDD into the security forces and their effective separation from the political wing of the CNDD-FDD.

During an extraordinary congress of the CNDD-FDD on 7 and 8 August 2004 in the province of Gitega, the movement approved the political conversion. On 13 January 2005, the Ministry of the Interior ratified the CNDD-FDD's legal recognition as a political party.

⁵⁹ Regarding the transformation of the CNDD-FDD into a political party, see Nindorera (2008).

⁶⁰ Interview with Festus Ntanyungu.

⁶¹ Article 34 of Law N°1/006 of 26 June 2003 on the organisation and functioning of political parties.

4.3 Preparing to win the elections

The party's strategic cells carefully scrutinised the preparations for the elections in summer 2005. In order to stimulate new party memberships, under Hussein Radjabu's guidance, the party set about consulting various segments of civil society on the realities of the day. When it left the underground to join the institutions, its numerous political commissioners continued to propagandise for the party and the elections, not waiting for the official start of the electoral campaign to start mobilising its constituency. The CNDD-FDD insisted on its crucial role in reforming the defence and security forces, and on its ability to defend its electoral gains and any possible sabotage attempt like that on the 1993 democratic experiment.

These two messages were meaningful to the Hutu majority who, after that traumatic experience, understood that control of the security forces was indispensable for governing. Hutus viewed the integration of the former rebel forces into the army and the police as a guarantee against any usurpation of the democratic process. They were also receptive to the CNDD-FDD discourse which presented the party as the guardian against any possible threat to their security. Hutus also voted for change because they held the FRODEBU partly responsible for their miserable living conditions. What is more, FRODEBU had become gentrified and disconnected from the masses, and only began to campaign with the approach of the elections – while the CNDD-FDD was closer to the Hutu population, having endured the same living conditions. Capitalising on these assets and on its popularity, the CNDD-FDD easily won the general elections of June-August 2005, and Pierre Nkurunziza became President of the Republic.

The Tutsi community, for its part, reacted with indifference or resignation to the CNDD-FDD's victory. A large number of Tutsis had joined the party, serving to tone down its radical image. Tutsis were also reassured by constitutional guarantees regarding their participation in State institutions. Furthermore, in some Tutsi circles in the capital – disadvantaged youth, civil servants – the arrival of the CNDD-FDD was welcomed because of its will to bring about changes in order to improve their living conditions.

Conclusion

For the CNDD-FDD, the path from armed resistance to the signing of a Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement was long and full of pitfalls. The movement had been sparked by the Hutu peasantry that was tired after four decades of oppression and discrimination, and appalled by the mono-ethnic army's destruction of democratically elected institutions in 1993. The young orphans of the victims of the 1972 genocide were recruited by the rebellion to organise and lead the campaign to restore democracy.

With no political or military experience, these young people created the CNDD-FDD as a last resort in view of the survivors of the October 1993 massacres, who vacillated between servility and fierce resistance to the anti-democratic forces. With youthful impetuosity and awkwardness, they slowly managed to make their cause heard so that after the Arusha Agreement was signed between the old political families in 2000, another agreement was signed in November 2003, legitimising the CNDD-FDD's integration into the country's political landscape.

We must never forget the CNDD-FDD's origins and the congenital handicaps it might have in governing public affairs: "*Umwana aravuka ntaca yuzura ingovy*". This Kirundi saying means: "When the child is conceived, it does not fill up the placenta right away". Everything takes time.

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Interviews⁶²

- Cyriaque Muhawenayo: journalist and former FDD combatant. August 2011.
- Colonel Mukwaya: Chief Inspector for Social Welfare at the Ministry of National Defence. Former FDD fighter. September 2011.
- Gelase Ndabirabe: Senator and CNDD-FDD General Secretary. He was the CNDD-FDD spokesperson during the armed struggle and one of the CNDD-FDD peace negotiators. October 2011.
- Emmanuel Ndayiziga: Special Bureau Chief at the General Directorate of the National Police. September 2011.
- Jean-Marie Ngendahayo: Consultant. He was a CNDD-FDD deputy (2005–2007), Interior Minister during the elections of 2005, CNDD-FDD negotiator during the peace talks, political and diplomatic advisor to the CNDD-FDD during the armed struggle, and minister in the Ndadaye government. September 2011.
- Festus Ntanyungu: current CNDD-FDD deputy. He was one of the main organisers at the beginning of the 'popular resistance'. August 2011.
- Karenga Ramadhani: current CNDD-FDD deputy. He held several ministerial positions from 2005 to 2010, and was previously a CNDD-FDD peace negotiator. July 2011.
- Benigne Rurahinda: current deputy of the CNDD-FDD, president of the commission for good governance and privatisation. She was previously president of the CNDD-FDD women's league, and a CNDD-FDD combatant. September 21.

62 These interviews were conducted by Leontine Nzeyimana, CNDD-FDD deputy, by myself, or jointly.

Annex I: Main peace agreements with the Armed Political Parties and Movements

Peace agreements	Signatories	Main content	Remarks
Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement, 28 August 2000	The government, the National Assembly, 10 Tutsi parties (including UPRONA) and 7 Hutu parties (including FRODEBU, CNDD and PALIPEHUTU)	Political and security power-sharing based on ethnic quotas (with gender quotas for the executive and the legislative); regularly-scheduled elections on the basis of universal suffrage; institutional reforms (defence and security forces, justice); creation of a truth and reconciliation commission.	This agreement did not stop the war. Its implementation was delayed for several years because of the continuation of hostilities on the ground.
Ceasefire Agreement between the Transitional Government of Burundi and the Armed Political Parties and Movements of Burundi, 7 October 2002	The Transitional Government, the CNDD-FDD of Jean-Bosco dayikengurukiye and the PALIPEHUTU-FNL of Alain Mugabarabona	This agreement was inspired by Protocol III of the Arusha Agreement – especially relative to the formation of new defence and security forces and technical military aspects connected with the integration of these two movements. It does not contain any specific clause about their representation in the political and security institutions.	The implementation of this agreement demonstrated that the two movements no longer had any combatants, which is why they were gradually marginalised within the institutions.
Ceasefire Agreement, 2 December 2002	The Transitional Government and the CNDD-FDD of Pierre Nkurunziza	This agreement was inspired by Protocol III of the Arusha Agreement – especially relative to the formation of new defence and security forces and technical military aspects connected with the integration of the CNDD-FDD. It mentions in annex future negotiations on political issues such as the return to constitutional legitimacy, the transitional institutions and their heads.	This agreement was ineffective because the two parties did not agree on its enforcement.
Pretoria Protocol on Political, Defence and Security Power-Sharing in Burundi, 8 October 2003	The Transitional Government and the CNDD-FDD of Pierre Nkurunziza	This agreement states that the CNDD-FDD will be represented in the political institutions (government, parliament, diplomatic corps, territorial administration and public enterprises) and security institutions (national defence force, national police and intelligence services).	This agreement served as the basis for integrating the CNDD-FDD into the institutions.

Peace agreements	Signatories	Main content	Remarks
Pretoria Protocol on the Outstanding Political, Defence and Security Power-Sharing in Burundi, 2 November 2003	The Transitional Government and the CNDD-FDD of Pierre Nkurunziza	This agreement sets out the terms of provisional immunity to be granted to the combatants and leaders of the CNDD-FDD. It also links the beginning of the combatants' cantonment process to the transformation of the rebellion into a political party and the start of the integration of its armed wing.	
Protocol on the Forces Technical Agreement, 2 November 2003	The Transitional Government and the CNDD-FDD of Pierre Nkurunziza	This agreement defines the future role of the defence and security forces. It describes the process of setting them up and the role of supervisory institutions in implementing the ceasefire agreement.	
Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement, 16 November 2003	The Transitional Government and the CNDD-FDD of Pierre Nkurunziza	This agreement ratifies the protocols of October and November 2003.	This agreement allowed for the CNDD-FDD to enter the political and security institutions.
Agreement of Principle, 16 June 2006	The government of Pierre Nkurunziza and the PALIPEHUTU-FNL	This agreement enables the pursuit of negotiations on the following issues: creating a commission of experts to rewrite the history of Burundi; including the term 'forgiveness' in the name of the truth and reconciliation commission; granting provisional immunity to PALIPEHUTU-FNL members; and enabling the transformation of the movement into a political party.	This agreement was not respected because the government refused to negotiate these points.
Ceasefire Agreement, 7 September 2006	The government of Pierre Nkurunziza and the PALIPEHUTU-FNL	A technical agreement that set the terms for ending the hostilities and moving the FNL fighters to assembly areas; setting up a Joint Truce Verification and Monitoring Mechanism; and the African Union's creation of a special team assigned to protect FNL leaders.	This agreement permitted implementation of a ceasefire (despite a few skirmishes) with the last armed rebel group, and for the FNL combatants to enter the assembly areas.

Annex III: Acronyms

APPM	Armed Political Parties and Movements
AU	African Union
BINUB	<i>Bureau des Nations Unies au Burundi</i> [Office of the United Nations in Burundi]
CNDD	<i>Conseil National pour la Défense de la Démocratie</i> [Council for the Defence of Democracy]
CNDD-FDD	<i>Conseil National pour la Défense de la Démocratie – Forces de Défense de la Démocratie</i> [National Council for the Defence of Democracy – Forces for the Defence of Democracy]
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
FAB	<i>Forces Armées Burundaises</i> [Burundian Armed Forces]
FDD	<i>Forces de Défense de la Démocratie</i> [Forces for the Defence of Democracy]
FDN	<i>Forces de Défense Nationale</i> [National Defence Forces]
FNL	<i>Forces Nationales de Libération</i> [National Liberation Forces]
FRODEBU	<i>Front pour la Démocratie au Burundi</i> [Front for Democracy in Burundi]
FROLINA	<i>Front pour la Libération Nationale</i> [National Liberation Front]
GTZ	<i>Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit</i> [now GIZ]
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
ISCAM	<i>Institut Supérieur des Cadres Militaires</i> [Higher Institute of Military Officers]
JRR	<i>Jeunesses Révolutionnaires Rwagasore</i> [Rwagasore Revolutionary Youth]
MEPROBA	<i>Mouvement des Etudiants Progressistes Barundi</i> [Movement of Progressive Students of Burundi]
ONUB	<i>Opération des Nations Unies au Burundi</i> [United Nations Operation in Burundi]
PALIPEHUTU	<i>Parti pour la Libération du Peuple Hutu</i> [Hutu People’s Liberation Party]
UBU	<i>Umugambwe w’Abakozi y’Uburundi</i> [Burundian Workers’ Party]
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
UPRONA	<i>Union pour le Progrès National</i> [Union for National Progress]

Annex IV: Chronology of the Burundian conflict

18 September 1961	UPRONA victory in the first legislative elections
13 October 1961	Assassination of Prince Louis Rwagasore, historic leader of UPRONA and son of King Mwambutsa
1 July 1962	Burundian independence
15 January 1965	Assassination of Hutu Prime Minister Pierre Ngendadumwe
19 October 1965	Attempted overthrow of the King by a Hutu elite, followed by massacres of Tutsi civilians in the interior of the country, and retaliatory actions by the army in Hutu rural areas. After the coup d’état is thwarted, the government holds rushed trials and executes part of the Hutu military elite.
28 November 1966	The monarchy is overthrown by a military coup headed by Captain Micombero, a Tutsi from Bururi in the south of the country.
September 1969	26 Hutu civilians and officers who were allegedly plotting a coup are given death sentences and executed.
1971	A group of Tutsis from the centre and north of Burundi are arrested and accused of planning a coup. Several of the alleged plotters are condemned to death but none of the death sentences are carried out.
29 April 1972	A rebel attack in the south of the country kills at least a thousand Tutsis. The ensuing repression practically decimates the entire Hutu elite and causes tens of thousands of Hutus to flee to surrounding countries.
1 November 1976	Major Micombero is overthrown by Colonel Jean-Baptiste Bagaza, a Tutsi native of Bururi.
3 September 1987	Major Pierre Buyoya, a Tutsi native of Bururi, topples Jean-Baptiste Bagaza.
August 1988	Hutu insurrection in the north of Burundi.

- 23 November 1991 PALIPEHUTU attacks in the northwest and the capital of Burundi.
- 1 June 1993 The FRODEBU candidate, Melchior Ndadaye, wins the presidential elections, getting twice as many votes as the incumbent.
- 21 October 1993 Members of the army assassinate President Melchior Ndadaye and some of his closest colleagues. Tutsis are massacred in many provinces. The army responds with savage reprisals in the Hutu countryside, starting the civil war.
- 24 September 1994 The official founding of the CNDD.
- 25 July 1996 Major Pierre Buyoya overthrows Sylvestre Ntibantunganya of FRODEBU.
- June 1998 Opening of the Arusha negotiations, boycotted by the CNDD-FDD.
- 28 August 2000 Signing of the Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement.
- 16 November 2003 Signing of the Global Ceasefire Agreement between the Transitional Government of Burundi and the CNDD-FDD, which then joins the State institutions.
- 13 January 2005 The CNDD-FDD is recognised as a political party.
- June – August 2005 The CNDD-FDD wins the general elections.
- September 2006 A ceasefire agreement with the PALIPEHUTU-FNL is signed.
- May – July 2010 The CNDD-FDD wins the general elections a second time.

This work was carried out with the aid of a grant from the International Development Research Centre, Ottawa, Canada.