



# DIIS REPORT

## **MIRROR IMAGES**

DIFFERENT PATHS TO BUILDING  
PEACE AND BUILDING STATES  
IN RWANDA AND BURUNDI

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## **Executive Summary**

Since the massive violence in the 1990s, Rwanda and Burundi have moved in two very different directions in terms of peacebuilding and statebuilding. Rwanda is following a path of social engineering, creating a radically new national identity with a new citizenry in order to break with what is perceived as a national culture that led to the genocide. Because the conflict ended with a clear winner in 1994, the state has the moral legitimacy to carry through its policies, and any opposition can be dismissed as supporting ‘divisionism’ and genocidal ideologies. While Rwanda is concerned with social engineering, Burundi is concerned with what we might term ‘consociational engineering’. In other words, the complex, time-consuming and often frustrating path out of conflict has been characterised by constant negotiations with countless factions and complex power-sharing deals, trying to take the concerns of all parties into account.

Today Rwanda is far ahead of Burundi in terms of economic growth and stability. Moreover, at first glance Rwanda seems to have achieved more in terms of institution building, and security and national unity appear to have substituted ethnic identities. However, upon closer scrutiny, we see that Rwanda’s institutions lack popular legitimacy and security is achieved through surveillance rather than social justice whilst issues of ethnicity have simply been banned from public discourse.

In contrast, the Burundian state appears at a first glance to be more fragile than the Rwandan one. Institutions are weak, corruption is rampant, decision making is blocked by political conflicts, foreign investment is low and security is fragile. However, the Burundian state might turn out to be the more robust in the long run, due to its inclusiveness and commitment to social justice. Burundians may not have faith in the present regime but they generally have faith in their ability to exercise influence. While the Rwandan state has produced peace and stability, it has also created political apathy, which is problematic for democracy and risks becoming a security problem when large sections of the population feel detached from the decision making process. In this sense, the Rwandan state might end up the more fragile.

## Abbreviations

<i>CNDD</i>	Conseil National pour la Défense de la Démocratie
<i>CNDD-FDD</i>	Conseil National pour la Défense de la Démocratie - Forces pour la Défense de la Démocratie
<i>EAB</i>	Forces Armées Burundaises
<i>FDN</i>	Forces de Défense Nationale du Burundi
<i>FNL</i>	Forces Nationales de Libération
<i>Frodebu</i>	Front pour la Démocratie au Burundi
<i>IDP</i>	Internally Displaced Person
<i>Palipehutu</i>	Parti pour la Libération du Peuple Hutu
<i>Parmehutu</i>	Parti du Mouvement de l'Emancipation Hutu
<i>RANU</i>	Rwandan Association for National Unity
<i>RPF</i>	Rwandan Patriotic Front
<i>Uprona</i>	Parti de l'Union et du Progrès National

## Introduction

Burundi and Rwanda have often been called false twins because they resemble each other in so many ways in terms of size, climate, precolonial political systems, ethnic and socio-demographic composition and colonial experiences, while still differing in a number of ways on closer scrutiny. The superficial similarities have led to the two countries being treated on similar terms by external powers – during colonisation and since – often with tragic effects. Similarly, the immediate similarities in ethnic composition have meant that ethnic tensions in one country have triggered tensions in the other.

This report compares the two countries for two reasons. First, there is a methodological advantage in comparing two states where a number of parameters are the same – and often quite unique in comparison with the rest of the continent – while the outcomes are different. This enables us to pinpoint the factors that make the difference, leading to a better understanding of each case. Second, such comparison allows us to go beyond the ‘one size fits all’ analyses of post-conflict reconstruction as well as the ‘one size fits all’ analyses of the ethnic conflicts in the Great Lakes Region and show the importance of local context in relation to peacebuilding efforts in Africa.

Based on theoretical debates on peacebuilding through statebuilding, this report explores the historical background to the conflicts in Rwanda and Burundi, how they developed, and how they affected the state. It argues that post-conflict Rwanda and Burundi have moved in two very different directions in terms of statebuilding, where Rwanda is focusing on security and development above democratic inclusion while Burundi is focusing on power sharing and political pluralism above security and development. Rwanda has a long history of a centralised and strong state as opposed to Burundi, where state power has always been fragile and based on compromise – except during the one-party rule for a few decades after independence. And while conflict and mass violence ended in Rwanda with a clear victor holding the unchallenged moral legitimacy to impose their version of history, the Burundian conflict ended due to a negotiated compromise with no clear winners. The report is based on fieldwork observations, interviews with key actors and secondary material on the conflict in the two countries.

The report argues that Rwanda appears to be ahead of Burundi in terms of economic growth, political stability and statebuilding. Likewise, it appears that national unity

has replaced ethnic tensions. On closer scrutiny, however, these achievements may only be temporary. In the long term, Rwanda risks renewed violence because of a lack of social justice and popular legitimacy of the state. Burundi, on the other hand, appears to be achieving meager economic growth and is experiencing political instability. However, this report argues that the long and complex path that Burundi has chosen may prove to be more durable in the long run.

## **Peacebuilding through statebuilding**

In recent years there has been an increased interest from a scholarly and policy perspective in the relation between statebuilding and peacebuilding after violent conflict. The idea in policy circles is to strengthen a holistic approach to post-conflict situations, ensuring that states are not only strong but also legitimate and responsive to civil society (Dudouet et al. 2012).

The present focus on peacebuilding reflects an understanding of peace as more than merely the absence of overt violence and follows an increased focus on human security rather than national security, as set out by UNDP in the 1994 Human Development Report. The UN defines peacebuilding as follows:

... a range of measures targeted to reduce the risk of lapsing or relapsing into conflict, to strengthen national capacities at all levels for conflict management, and to lay the foundations for sustainable peace and development. (From Haider 2012 [2010])

Central to present-day peacebuilding is to have a ‘comprehensive approach’ covering development, security, justice and social cohesion. The convergence of statebuilding and peacebuilding is due to a recognition that peacebuilding depends inter alia on a stable state. Without a state to ensure security, education, justice and development, positive peace will never take root.

Paris and Sisk argue that peacebuilding only emerged as a policy issue after the end of the Cold War, which resulted in a significant rise in peacebuilding missions in the 1990s (Paris & Sisk 2009a: 4–5). In the early years these missions were characterised by ‘quick fixes’ (Paris & Sisk 2009a: 2) and rather naïve assumptions that liberalising the economy and introducing multiparty electoral democracy would prevent further conflict. These missions were typically short-term and were criticised for causing instability due to the radical changes in society that they promoted and to lack of institutional resilience. Acknowledging that peacebuilding relies on complex and time-consuming processes of building institutions, a second generation of peacebuilding missions emerged around 2000, with a strong focus on statebuilding. Although this approach has many merits, there are also a number of inherent dilemmas and tensions in linking peacebuilding and statebuilding (Paris & Sisk 2009b: 305–9).

First, there is a tension between the need to create strong institutions and maintaining state legitimacy among the population. Statebuilding relies on an inclusive and responsive state in order to avoid marginalisation and future conflict (Haider 2012 [2010]). There are, however, tensions in trying to merge the two, as statebuilding basically is a top-down process of strengthening institutions while peacebuilding is a bottom-up process of strengthening societal relations. There may be cases of states that have strong institutions and a rule of law but where one faction captures the state after conflict, which causes resentment among sections of the population. This is observable in Rwanda. Meanwhile peacebuilding often requires power-sharing deals that include all factions, thus improving confidence in government. However, such power-sharing deals often lead to ineffective state institutions, as may be observed in Burundi.

Second, there is a tendency, both in practice and in the literature, to assume that state fragility causes conflict and that strong states are resilient to conflict. Despite their nuanced and critical approach, Paris and Sisk implicitly reproduce this assumption, claiming that “virtually all the countries at the top of states-likely-to-fail lists are those where there has been, or which are highly vulnerable to, armed conflict” (Paris & Sisk 2009a: 14). However, as Engberg-Pedersen et al. argue, state fragility is not a singular term that can be applied to a one-dimensional axis with degrees of fragility – from state collapse to the fully-fledged Weberian ideal state. They argue that states can ‘fail’ or be fragile in a number of different ways while functioning well in other aspects, and rarely does a state fail on all counts. They conclude:

The general conclusion from this is that the category of fragile states is not a separate group of countries that is qualitatively different from other countries. Most countries, and in particular low-income countries, will exhibit various signs of institutional instability, which may or may not push them into the group of so-called fragile states. (Engberg-Pedersen et al. 2008)

Finally, it may be argued that the ‘political settlement’ is an important factor in relation to peacebuilding. A political settlement can be understood as “the forging of a common understanding, usually among elites, that their interests or beliefs are served by a particular way of organising political power” (Whaites 2008, quoted in McLoughlin 2010: 50). In other words, rather than looking for legitimacy broadly speaking, it is the ability to include broad sections of the elite that matters. This implies that issues of legitimacy and political settlements need to be explored concretely in each individual case. This report explores the political settlements made

after conflict in both countries, as ‘elite bargaining’ may be of more importance to political stability than good governance and statebuilding. Such elite bargains also allow for the diverging political interests of different sections of society, allowing for true political compromise.

Rwanda and Burundi have taken very different routes in this regard. In the case of Rwanda, both the pre- and the post-genocide states rank high in international indexes of accountability and good governance. Yet the events of 1994 speak for themselves. A strong state did not prevent violence at a massive scale but rather organised the violence. Similarly, the present situation is extremely volatile – not in spite of these measures of good governance but due to them (Straus & Waldorf 2011). In Burundi, on the contrary, political compromise has been the name of the day – often at the expense of principles of justice and reconciliation, resulting in chaotic parliamentary situations as well as weak economic development.

## **A history of Conflict**

As opposed to many other African states that were the result of colonial border demarcation, Burundi and Rwanda have existed (with changing territorial borders) for at least five centuries, with complex state institutions and hierarchies around the central courts. The ethnic composition of these false twins is also similar, with roughly 85% Hutu, 14% Tutsi and 1% Twa. The nature of ethnicity is heavily disputed, as Hutu and Tutsi live together and share the same language, religion and traditions. Both countries were colonised by Germany until World War One and were, in 1919, handed over to Belgium as a League of Nations-mandated trusteeship. They both gained independence in 1962 and have since experienced ethnic violence on a massive scale.

Despite the apparent similarities between Rwanda and Burundi, there are also a number of differences; some of which go back to precolonial times. In this section, we explore the emergence of the differences in state formation and in ethnic relations historically.

History in the Great Lakes region is heavily contested and strongly politicised, making it almost impossible to analyse and write about without becoming part of what Rene Lemarchand has called the 'meta-conflict' (Lemarchand 1996a). A common understanding among observers is that Hutu and Tutsi existed before colonialisation but they lived in relative harmony and engaged in patron–client relationships, in particular the cattle contract (Pottier 2002: 110). This relationship was supposedly reciprocal and allowed for fluid categories and social mobility. While this is partially true for Burundi, historians such as Catherine Newbury (Newbury 1988) have shown that this is a rather simplified and dehistoricised picture of precolonial Rwanda. First, it ignores the other kinds of clientship that existed, based on labour and land. Second, it ignores the shifts in power relations in Rwanda in the mid-eighteenth century under the rule of King Rwabugiri. In this period the central power of the kingdom expanded, imposing harsh rule over previously semi-autonomous lineages, ethnic rule was consolidated and social mobility became virtually impossible. Vertical relationships between ruler and ruled were characterised by exploitation more than by reciprocity.

Precolonial Burundi differed from Rwanda in terms of public authority and governance. Whereas the Rwandan kingdom was highly hierarchic and centralised – especially

after 1850 – Burundian society was more complex and ambiguous. Power was less centralised and political rivalry took place between numbers of princely clans – the so-called *baganwa*. These princedoms were often semi-independent of the central royal court and often relied on Hutu and Tutsi loyalty in order to counter pressure from other *ganwa* clans (Lemarchand 1970).

### **Colonial administration; hardening ethnic divisions**

The tragedy for Burundi, Lemarchand argues, was that Germans and Belgians governed the two kingdoms jointly as Ruanda–Urundi and that the colonialists decided to impose the rigid Rwandan model on both societies (Lemarchand 1970). They assumed that Burundi would also be governed more centrally and coherently under normal circumstances, and that the kingdom was experiencing a temporary exceptional crisis of authority. Historically speaking, the case was the inverse. Rwanda was the exception from the rule, as it was only in the last decades before German rule that the kingdom had become so centralised and hierarchical (Lemarchand 1977).

European rulers, supported by the Catholic Church, introduced a racial way of perceiving society when they arrived in the African Great Lakes at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In this way the Hamitic thesis was invented, explaining the presence of complex and well-organised political systems as the result of Tutsi migration from Ethiopia or Egypt to central Africa (Prunier 1995). Adopting indirect rule, the Germans and later the Belgians claimed that the Tutsi were born to rule while the Hutu were born to till the soil. Therefore, Tutsi chiefs were given positions in the administration and Tutsi children were offered schooling. Missionaries mostly ran the schools. As des Forges has shown in her analysis of missions in Rwanda, however, the relationship with the Tutsi was not always positive and easy (des Forges 1969; des Forges 2011). Often the Tutsi chiefs resisted Christianity and despised the schools, so at first it was in fact Hutu who converted and sent their children to school. Finally, the local population did not just passively appropriate these categories but used them strategically for their own purposes as best they could. The Hutu would, for instance, ally with the Catholic Church in order to counter the king's conquests. The king for his part would at times attempt to manipulate the colonial administration in order to resist the church or rebellious chiefs. These alliances would shift according to shifting balances of power (des Forges 2011).

While German rule had mostly consisted of supporting the royal court in quelling rebellions, the Belgian administration introduced more thorough administrative

reforms (Gahama 1983; Lemarchand 1970). While on paper the reforms were meant to support traditional authority through streamlining existing institutions, they de facto changed the nature of public authority and governance. For example, the reforms removed the system of ‘three types of chief on each hill’ – a chief of the land (often a Hutu), a chief of the people and a chief of the cattle. In Rwanda in 1929 and in Burundi 1929–33 these were fused into one chief – most often a Tutsi (Gahama 1983; Prunier 1995: 26). Also, land use and ownership changed. The common grazing lands, the Ibikingi, would gradually fall into the hands of local Tutsi chiefs, just as the Hutu-owned Ubukonde land holdings in the northwest and southwest of Rwanda would come under central state control (Prunier 1995). The result was to harden ethnic identities and remove ‘irregularities’ such as Hutu – and female - chiefs. Furthermore, the means of legitimising power changed. Whereas power had been based on patron–client relations that involved mutual obligation to some degree, the legitimacy of the new chiefs came from their relations to the Belgian administration. This resulted in a more brutal exercise of power. This was new to Burundi (Gahama 1983; Lemarchand 1996a), and in Rwanda it reinforced the process already set in motion that transformed a relationship of protection and obligation with possibilities of social mobility to a relationship of exploitation and the creation of a rural proletariat (Newbury 1988).

In sum, precolonial Rwanda and Burundi were characterised by complex, highly organised and centralised states. In both countries the Hutu–Tutsi divide played a role, as the Tutsi more often held public office and more often would be the patron in patron–client relationships. Despite the resemblances, Rwanda and Burundi also differed, just as they were constantly changing. At the time of European conquest, the Rwandan kingdom was expanding its influence and consolidating its power. This also meant that relations between patron and client were becoming increasingly exploitative. In Burundi various princes were constantly contesting the central kingdom and alliances were constantly being negotiated to maintain power. This also meant that the divide between Hutu and Tutsi was less important, as princes needed the support of all their subjects in their competition with other princes. Belgian rule reinforced the processes that were already set in motion in Rwanda and furthermore introduced these to Burundi. The result was to remove ambiguity and fluidity in the system of governance, which also meant a hardening of ethnic divisions. It would be too simplistic, however, to assume that the Rwandan and Burundian Hutu and Tutsi merely followed the new rules, laid out by the Belgian administration, as is often implied in present-day historiography of both countries. Rather, the royal court, the Tutsi and wealthy Hutu all manoeuvred as best they

could vis-à-vis the Belgian administration and the Catholic Church. This would have consequences for the outcome of the struggle for independence and the Hutu struggle for emancipation.

### **Towards independence**

In both countries, movements for more independence emerged in the 1950s. In Burundi, the ethnic question had not yet become a central source of antagonism in political life and political competition revolved more around the different Ganwa clans. Two political parties emerged: UPRONA (Parti de l'Union et du Progrès National) which wanted independence and to break away from the West, and PDC (Parti Démocrate Chrétien) which wanted continued cooperation with Belgium. Despite Belgium's support for PDC, UPRONA led by the charismatic Ganwa Prince Louis Rwagasore won the first elections in 1961. Although not communist, UPRONA found support from China and non-aligned countries in its struggle against 'Western imperialism' (Chrétien 2003; Lemarchand 1996a).

Similar dynamics were at play in Rwanda, where the Belgian administration and the Catholic Church tried to curtail independence movements (Chrétien 2003). In Rwanda, however, these political tensions became aligned with ethnic ones. In 1959 conservative monarchists created UNAR (Union Nationale Rwandaise), which was strongly anti-Belgian and worked for immediate independence. Due to the binary logic of the Cold War, the communist bloc in the UN Trusteeship Council supported UNAR, despite its conservative ideology (Prunier 1995: 47). Meanwhile, an emergent group of Hutu *évolués*, trained in mission schools and dissatisfied with Tutsi privileges, created a movement to ensure the social and political rights of the Hutu. In the context of the Cold War, the Church and the Belgian administration feared the demands of the radical Tutsi and supported the Hutu movement. In 1959 a so-called 'social revolution' took place, displacing Tutsi from power and installing the Parmehutu (Parti du Mouvement de l'Emancipation Hutu) (Chrétien 2003; Prunier 1995; Mamdani 2001). The Belgian administration showed partiality for the Hutu, perhaps – as Prunier claims – because they “felt betrayed by their erstwhile protégés. They now considered them as a mixture of backward traditionalists and revolutionary communists...” (Prunier 1995: 50). Parmehutu incited a strong anti-Tutsi sentiment, claiming that Tutsi belonged to another race and were alien to Rwanda, whereas Hutu were the true autochthons (Mamdani 2001). This resulted in pogroms in 1959 and in 1961, forcing hundreds of thousands of Tutsi to flee the country, mostly to neighbouring Zaire, Burundi, Tanzania and Uganda.

Meanwhile, in Burundi, years of political turmoil ended in a military coup in 1966 where a group of young officers from a low-class Tutsi group from the south took power. They were determined to break with the power of the traditional Tutsi and Ganwa elite. They believed in meritocracy, technocracy and progress in their struggle against the old elite and against neo-colonial attempts to re-introduce 'tradition' (Lemarchand 1970; Turner 2010). They were therefore also fiercely against the labels 'Hutu' and 'Tutsi' which they perceived to be colonial attempts to divide and rule, although this ironically did not mean sharing power with the Hutu. Due to the violence in Rwanda, they feared that any mention of vindicating the rights of the Hutu would end in ethnic rule, and associated mention of ethnicity as neo-colonial attempts to divide and rule an African nation.

In sum, the two countries experienced many of the same dynamics and tensions at the time of independence. However, due to the differences that still existed in terms of governance and the relationship between ethnicity and state power, they ended up being each other's mirror image. The Hutu–Tutsi divide had solidified significantly in Rwanda, which meant that Hutu *evolués* were able to mobilise the Hutu masses against the Tutsi whom they perceived as the true oppressors to a higher degree than the less visible Belgian administrators. Although ethnic differences had hardened in Burundi during Belgian rule, Ganwa rivalry continued to dominate politics even around independence. The revolt came a few years after independence and was not led by Hutu against Tutsi but by disgruntled Tutsi *evolués* who perceived the West together with the high caste traditionalist Tutsi as the oppressors. In Rwanda a Hutu-dominated government supported by the Catholic Church advanced a racial ideology, claiming that Rwanda belonged to the autochthonous Hutu (Mamdani 2001). Meanwhile in Burundi, a Tutsi minority represented an ideology of progress and national unity, combating tradition and ethnicity, which it claimed were invented by Europeans in order to split an essentially unified people. The Burundian state was highly sceptical of the Catholic Church, due to its alleged complicity with colonialism. However, despite the discourse of national unity, power was concentrated in the hands of a small, regional, Tutsi elite – as a result not of an openly racial ideology as in Rwanda, but of a fear of a Hutu revolution.

### **Towards ethnic conflict**

There are a number of explanations and therefore also heated debates as to what caused the conflicts and violence. In the following the different positions regarding history and conflict are outlined in some depth because different understandings of

the causes were themselves an essential part of the conflicts. In other words, cause and effect create a kind of hermeneutic circle in the historiography of the Great Lakes, as parties to the conflict act upon their interpretations of the conflict, which then in turn affects the nature of the conflict. Similarly, the perceived causes of the violence are important for the post-conflict response to peace and statebuilding.

Depending on ideological standpoint, the conflict is interpreted variously as caused by age-old ethnic animosity, by greedy political elites, or by colonial mentalities and foreign influence. The official Rwandan interpretation, often presented in the popular media, claims that the terms ‘Hutu’ and ‘Tutsi’ were invented by the Europeans – usually represented by the Catholic Church. The argument goes that Hutu and Tutsi speak the same language, live on the same hills, have the same customs and believe in the same god, wherefore they must belong to the same ethnic group. According to this narrative, the Germans and Belgians superimposed their turn of the century racial thinking onto Burundi and Rwanda, naming everyone who owned more than ten head of cattle a Tutsi and the rest Hutu. Identity cards stating ethnic group were introduced and the Tutsi were given special privileges in government and education. More subtle versions of this official history claim that Hutu and Tutsi did indeed exist prior to colonisation but that the terms were more markers of occupational class rather than ethnicity, and that they lived in harmonious patron–client relationships of reciprocity (Pottier 2002).

Opposed to the official version of Rwandan history are those who claim that ethnicity in Rwanda is essential and eternal. This was the stance of the regimes in Rwanda up until the genocide, claiming Hutu autochthony and describing Tutsi as invaders from the north (Mamdani 2001). While the first president Kayibanda (1961–1973) led a racial ideology, claiming that the Tutsi did not belong to Rwanda, his successor, Habyarimana, tried to accommodate the Tutsi by focusing on technocratic issues of progress and development. “Habyarimana spoke of the Tutsi as an ethnic group, not a race, as a *Rwandan*, not an *alien*, minority” (Mamdani 2001: 190). Ethnicities did, however, remain an important part of rule and became central in the emergence of ‘Hutu power’ in the 1990s.

Conflicts over history also exist in Burundi, albeit with different results. The Tutsi-dominated regimes of the 1970s and 1980s banned any mention of ethnicity, claiming it was the invention of colonialist powers to divide and rule the Burundian people (Turner 2010; Lemarchand 1996b). Meanwhile, in spite of a policy of national unity, state power was kept tightly in the hands of a group of Tutsi from the south

(Lemarchand 1996a. While this policy on ethnicity indeed served the purpose of covering up the ethnic imbalance of power in Burundi, it also expressed a modernist ideology of wanting to rid the country of colonial legacies (Turner 2010).

The standard Hutu interpretation of the causes of the conflict in Burundi emerged among refugees in camps in the 1970s and 1980s (Malkki 1995), substantially challenging and inverting the government version of history. They claimed that the Hutu are autochthons while the Tutsi are foreign invaders (Turner 1998; 2008).

### **Pressure to reform**

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, both countries came under pressure from the international community and from internal opposition to introduce democratic reforms (Uvin 1998; Lemarchand 1996a; Prunier 1995). They were also under pressure from opposition groups based in exile. In the Burundian case, Hutu refugees in camps in Tanzania created Palipehutu (Parti pour la Libération du Peuple Hutu) in 1980, closely associated with Hutu intellectuals exiled in Europe and Rwanda (Turner 2006; 2007a). They began mobilising the peasant population inside Burundi and launched their first attacks inside the country in 1990. In the case of Rwanda, the Tutsi who had fled the waves of anti-Tutsi violence since 1959 were experiencing hostility from host nations – in particular Uganda (Reed 1996; Otunnu 1999; Mamdani 2000). In the 1980s they created RANU (Rwandan Association for National Unity) (Reed 1996: 484) that later was transformed into the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) with the ultimate goal of enabling return to the homeland – by force if necessary. In October 1990, the RPF crossed the border from Uganda and launched an offensive in the northeast, beginning a civil war that would last until July 1994 when they defeated the government armed forces and ended the genocide.

While the governments in Rwanda and Burundi were experiencing pressure from exile groups, they were also experiencing internal pressure from opposition groups to democratise the one-party state. Finally, international pressure after the end of the Cold War to introduce good governance in Africa had an impact because it also affected development aid and military assistance upon which both regimes were highly dependent (Uvin 1998; Prunier 1995; Marysse et al. 2006).

### ***Burundi – from transition to war***

In Burundi this led to gradual democratic reforms in the early 1990s, culminating in the 1993 general and presidential elections. A moderate Hutu party, Frodebu (*Front*

*pour la Démocratie au Burundi*) won a landslide election and Melchior Ndadaye became the country's first democratically elected president. He attempted to create a broad-based government, including many Tutsi and members of the defeated Uprona party. General optimism reigned, and commentators commended the smooth transition (Lemarchand 1994; Reyntjens 1993). The optimism did not last long, however. After only three months in office, the president was kidnapped by Tutsi officers and later killed, leaving the country in a constitutional deadlock with a number of tiny 'Tutsi' parties demanding a power-sharing agreement and blocking any legislation. Their pretext to do so was the violence against Tutsi civilians that the death of Ndadaye had triggered. Within a day, roadblocks had been erected and Tutsi civilians were hunted down and killed. The Tutsi-dominated army reacted swiftly, brutally killing tens of thousands of Hutu (Reyntjens 1995; Lemarchand 1994; Chrétien 2003).

The violence that followed was multifaceted and changed character as the conflict evolved. In the capital, Tutsi youth militias, *sans échec* and *sans défaite*, effectively cleared the city centre of Hutu. A group of high-ranking Frodebu members, dissatisfied with the party's concessions to the Tutsi opposition in parliament, created an armed movement: the CNDD (*Conseil National pour la Défense de la Démocratie*), led by Leonard Nyangoma (Nindorera 2008; 2012). The goals of the movement were to restore the institutional legality in conformity with the June 1993 elections and to create a 'truly national' (i.e. ethnically mixed) army.

In the following years the violence escalated and an estimated 300,000 lives have been lost since 1993. Hundreds of thousands of Hutu fled to neighbouring countries, while tens of thousands of Tutsi living in rural areas were forced to live in camps near urban centres, protected by the army against Hutu violence.

The Hutu rebel movement split several times into new factions and splinter groups due to disputes over leadership (International Crisis Group 2002; Nindorera 2012). Later, there would be differences concerning whether or not to join the peace process. Meanwhile, other rebel movements emerged, most notably an armed wing of Palipehutu called FNL (*Forces Nationales de Libération*).

### *Rwanda – from war to genocide*

In Rwanda the armed rebellion remained concentrated in the northeast of the country and quickly reached a stalemate. Meanwhile, the one party state was under massive strain not only from the rebellion and from internal opposition, but also from plummeting coffee prices on the world market. The economic crisis and a crisis of

governance made certain factions within the government – as well as within opposition parties – appeal to the Hutu's historical sense of social injustice and exploitation by the 'cunning Tutsi'. In 1993 an internationally brokered peace agreement between the government, opposition parties and RPF outlined a process of power-sharing and democratic reforms. It was political factions close to the government who rejected this agreement and who instigated the genocide (Prunier 1995).

Around 800,000 Tutsi and moderate Hutu were killed between April and July 1994 in a centrally orchestrated genocide. When the genocide started the RPF – which had stopped fighting due to a ceasefire agreement – resumed the war and in the general havoc of the killings and looting made extraordinary military progress – 'liberating' the country from the northeast in a very short time.

Meanwhile, the old leadership together with the armed forces and the *interahamwe* militia withdrew together with millions of Hutu to the refugee camps in Tanzania and Zaire, where they took over the leadership of the camps, preparing for their military return (Prunier 2009).

### **Two rebellions compared**

The massive ethnic violence in both countries in the 1990s is evidence that ethnicity has been politicised historically. It is tempting to explain the two countries' trajectories as mirror – but opposite – images, with the Hutu oppressing the Tutsi in Rwanda and vice versa in Burundi. Despite the similarities and the interdependence, it is important, however, to keep in mind the differences and remember that it was not just a question of the Tutsi being 'on top' in Burundi and the Hutu 'on top' in Rwanda. Even before colonial times the two kingdoms differed and these differences continue today.

One difference between Rwanda and Burundi was the character of the rebel movements. In Burundi the movement split several times and new factions emerged. In Rwanda the RPF remained united and more or less under the same leadership throughout the conflict.

One reason for this difference could be that RPF was simply better organised and better trained from the beginning. The officers were highly trained and experienced. Furthermore, they followed a Maoist inspired ideology, which in itself meant serious ideological training of the recruits and an ethic of hard work and discipline (Dorsey 2000). Less is known about the Burundian rebel movements – in part because there

is not one movement that has been successful to the degree that RPF has, and therefore able to control the 'victor's account' of the past. From what is known, however, (International Crisis Group 2002) some of these movements – such as the faction of CNDD–FDD that was led by the present President, Pierre Nkurunziza, and the faction of Palipehutu led by Agathon Rwasa – also followed a strict discipline. There were reports that this was so harsh and the punishments so severe that the movements resembled personal rule of terror. There were also personal cults around the leaders. In other words, while RPF was characterised by rational, military discipline and ideological clarity, the Burundian rebel movement relied on personal rule based on a mixture of terror and charisma.

Another reason for the divisions in Burundi's rebel movements could be that they actually represented a broad section of the population and therefore naturally became split between exiles and non-exiles and along regional divides. The RPF on the other hand was almost exclusively an exile movement, controlled by the elite Tutsi in Uganda with support from Rwandan Tutsi refugees in Tanzania and Congo (and to a far lesser degree Rwandan Tutsi in Burundi). The result of a unified RPF that came out the unchallenged victor – due to the genocide that defeated the old regime – was that the RPF was able to set the agenda with regard to the course taken in peace and statebuilding. The RPF had the military power and the moral upper hand and was able to dictate its ideology of national unity.

## **From conflict to peace**

Both countries have been through internationally brokered peace agreements and exercises in peacebuilding. However, just as the backgrounds to the conflicts were very different, so were their passages to peace. In Burundi the situation was becoming increasingly complex with different factions of the rebel movements fighting each other rather than the common enemy. An international embargo was devastating the economy just as the peasants no longer were planting crops for fear of having them looted by rebels or by government soldiers. The stalemate meant that a negotiated deal was the only solution. In Rwanda such a deal had been agreed in Arusha 1993, but had then been sabotaged by 'Hutu Power' – finally ending in the genocide. The result was a clear winner after the genocide. The massive killings had devastated the country morally, and the clear victory of the RPF meant that there was an urge to clean the slate and start anew. In Burundi the long civil war had worn down the economy and infrastructure. Furthermore there was no clear winner and no single narrative to start building a nation with. In the following we explore the concrete measures put in place to end the conflicts and to build peace.

### **Burundi – complex negotiations and power-sharing**

The Arusha Accords, signed in August 2000, and the 2004 constitution have been commended for their ability to make the necessary power-sharing agreements that would satisfy the Hutu sense of historical social injustice and the Tutsi fear of majority rule. They are a prime example of consociationalism.

The logic of the model is predicated on the assumption that majority rule is a recipe for failure where society is deeply divided by religious, racial or ethnic cleavages. In such an environment the existence of group identities needs to be recognised and accommodated through inclusion rather than exclusion. The challenge, therefore, is to work out a formula whereby minority rights can be reconciled with the claims of the majority. (Lemarchand 2006: 12)

The accords agreed on a transitional government, which would comprise a mixture of the G7 and the G10.<sup>1</sup> The first president in the transitional government was the

<sup>1</sup> The formal names for the parties that were signatories to the accords, where 7 parties were predominantly Hutu and 10 were predominantly Tutsi.

incumbent, Major Pierre Buyoya, a Tutsi from Bururi and member of Uprona, who had taken power in July 1996 in a military coup d'état. Meanwhile Domitien Ndayizeya, a Hutu from Frodebu was vice president. It was agreed that after 18 months, they should swap, and that general elections should be held after three years.

It was agreed that government seats (after the transition period) should be shared according to ethnic quotas: 60% Hutu and 40% Tutsi. The same ethnic distribution was also established in parliament and in public enterprises. A number of more complex mechanisms were also put in place in order to ensure representation from both groups. Apart from political power sharing, the accords ensured a reform of the armed forces, a reform of the justice system, national and international justice for war crimes and the deployment of international peacekeepers.

Despite the merits of the Arusha accords, there were also problems. Firstly, many of the parties, in particular in the G10, did not have much faith in the agreement and only signed due to pressure from the regional superpower, South Africa. Secondly, a number of small factions emerged in order to gain influence over the process and part of the power-sharing deal afterwards. Some were factions from the Hutu rebel groups, which decided to join the peace process. Others were new Tutsi parties without any substantial support or legitimacy in the population. Finally, two rebel groups rejected the peace accords and continued to fight the government army. This meant that after August 2000 Burundi, paradoxically, had a peace agreement but no ceasefire agreement.

A global ceasefire agreement was signed on 16 November 2003, between the CNDD–FDD of Pierre Nkurunziza and the transitional government. Nkurunziza rejected the ethnic terms of the Arusha accords and demanded instead that the army be integrated at all levels with 40% CNDD–FDD soldiers and 60% FAB (Forces Armées Burundaises) soldiers, whatever their ethnicity (International Crisis Group 2004:3).

Interestingly, Nkurunziza's demands received support from the armed forces that traditionally had been a Tutsi stronghold, while the established 'Hutu' party, Frodebu, had difficulties accepting his demands because it stood to lose greatly on the deal. This marked a turning point in Burundian politics where the conflict began transforming from one organised around an ethnic divide to one characterised by intra-ethnic competition (See also International Crisis Group 2006: 1). On 6 January 2004 a presidential decree called for the establishment of an integrated high command with 60% FAB officers and 40% CNDD–FDD officers with the mandate to establish a new National Defence Force

(FDN) (International Crisis Group 2004: 8–9). The advantage of the integration of the armed forces was that they were able to deliver security to the population as a whole, rather than in particular groups, for the first time in decades, which meant that neither side could feel victimised. A new *esprit de corps* was seen to be developing (Uvin 2009: 19–20). This was a great achievement, considering that the ethnic composition of the armed forces had been a major obstacle in the conflict since 1993.

Pierre Nkurunziza did not negotiate any positions for himself or his movement in the transitional government because he did not accept the ethnic quotas in the system and because he was more interested in winning the elections after the transition period. When elections were finally held in 2005, Nkurunziza's CNDD–FDD enjoyed an overwhelming victory. There may be several reasons for this victory. The International Crisis Group indicates that CNDD–FDD managed to present itself as the party that fought for the Hutu while also appealing to the population as the movement that restored security (International Crisis Group 2006). Nkurunziza, also gained much support due to his post-ethnic agenda. While Burundians were getting tired of ethnic conflict and of their political leaders instrumentalising ethnicity for their own agendas (Lemarchand 2006), they had also lived with fear of 'the ethnic other' for decades and therefore found it safer to vote for 'their own.' Therefore Hutu would vote for Nkurunziza because they would never trust a Tutsi while simultaneously supporting his visions of going beyond ethnicity. Reyntjens mentions another important factor; namely that Pierre Nkurunziza had not been part of the political establishment and ordinary Burundians therefore perceived him to be unspoiled by corruption and compromise as opposed to the rest of the political class (Reyntjens 2006). Lemarchand supports this argument, claiming that the politicians of G7 and G10 who won positions in the transitional government were perceived by the population as 'ventriotes' who were more interested in filling their own bellies than the future of the nation (Lemarchand 2006). In the transitional period people in Bujumbura would jokingly call a part of the city with many new buildings 'quartier d'Arusha', allegedly because the owners of the new houses were returning politicians who had earned fortunes by participating in the lengthy talks in Arusha, receiving daily allowances (Turner 2007b). Finally, it is important to stress that the CNDD–FDD also used its presence in the countryside, where it had managed to establish parallel systems of public authority already during the war, to intimidate villagers into supporting the party at election time (Human Rights Watch 2010a).

The elections represented a big defeat for the two old parties, Frodebu and Uprona, whose political cadres had a lot to lose. Traditionally, capturing the state was one of

the only routes to wealth in Burundi, and losing a position within the government therefore meant large personal costs (Uvin 2009: 18). However, in the years after the conflict it appeared that this was changing and that the real career possibilities were with the international NGOs, not the state. Many young, well-educated Tutsi from the old elite were able to find positions based on merit rather than ethnicity or political connections – ironically leaving behind many Hutu who had fought for state power for a decade.

Nkurunziza's victory was presented as a break with the old elite towards more local control and a president who knew the suffering of the people. Nkurunziza has since become famous for his Pentecostalism and his interest in football. He also attends numerous village events – often dressed in a tracksuit, sneakers and a cap. While the new government had political advantages in being uncontaminated by old political compromises, it had its limits with regard to running a bureaucracy. The experienced civil servants belonged to Uprona and Frodebu while CNDD–FDD members were mostly ex-combatants, which has meant that there is a highly personalised line of command, an authoritarian tendency, a tendency towards clientelism and an obsession with secrecy (Lemarchand 2006: 26).

### *Truth, justice and reconciliation*

In a study of a broad section of ordinary Burundians' perceptions of peace, Peter Uvin found that their perceptions to a large degree coincided with the international post-conflict peacebuilding agenda, “thus contradicting the academically popular but simplistic notion that this is all a mere neo-colonial agenda” (Uvin 2009: 51). According to Uvin's study, the majority of Burundians understand peace in a manner resembling ‘positive peace’ and use much the same terms to define peace as the literature does when defining ‘positive peace’; namely security, development, and the restoration of social relations. However, while the international community and a number of Bujumbura-based civil society organisations and human rights groups perceive truth and justice as a cornerstone in peacebuilding efforts, the majority of rural Burundians “prefer partial justice, or even silence and ‘no justice’” to formal transitional justice mechanisms (Uvin 2009: 169).

While they emphasised the importance of restoring social relations, they were not interested in the establishment of a commission for truth and justice. The only exceptions to this were the Tutsi who had been internally displaced during the war and who still were living in IDP camps. They were in general less optimistic about the future and less inclined to forget and forgive. The protocols in the Arusha accords

on 'justice and reconciliation' were merely expressions of intentions, and a system for implementing them has still not been put in place (Human Rights Watch 2000; Vandeginste 2007). Similarly, neither the present government nor the rural population have been very keen on re-establishing the traditional institution of the *bushingantabe* as proposed in the Arusha accords (Uvin 2009: 62–66). In precolonial times this council of elders whose members, the *abashingantabe*, were appointed because of their age and social skills, would solve local disputes (Laely 1992; Naniwe-Kaburahe 2006). As in many other countries coming out of violent conflict, Burundi is rekindling traditional institutions in order to restore social relations (Buur & Kyed 2007). As part of its 'support for the Promotion of Good Governance' project, the UNDP has actively supported the rehabilitation of the *bushingantabe* institution (Naniwe-Kaburahe 2006: 162). However, Nkurunziza's government has not been very cooperative and has delayed the process. Firstly, the ruling party would stand to lose influence at the 'hill' level, because the *bushingantabe* institution could constitute an alternative space for public authority (Uvin 2009). Furthermore, the rural Hutu population in particular does not have much faith in this institution, because it was used by the one-party state in the 1970s and 1980s to control the peasantry (Laely 1992). By contrast, the urban Tutsi elite has always been in favour of the institution (Author's field observations, Bujumbura 2003).

Despite not having any formal reconciliation policies and despite no informal, traditional public rituals of cleansing and reintegrating the communities, Burundians seem to get along, even after massive violence. They emphasise their ability to 'go with the flow', to compromise, to let sleeping dogs lie and to be flexible as means to cohabit after violence (Uvin 2009: 166). Ingelaere found similar mechanisms at play in Rwanda despite a very different approach to reconciliation at the official, state level (Ingelaere 2009a). Burundians have very little faith in any kind of justice system and believe that it would always be politicised and therefore only offer justice for one side. Again there are similarities with Rwanda where Ingelaere found that people saw the Gacaca courts as the government's project and did not believe that they contributed to reconciliation (Ingelaere 2009a).

To sum up, Burundi's transition from war to peace has been marked by complicated negotiations, renewed fighting, political infighting and unclear approaches to justice, truth and reconciliation (Human Rights Watch 2000; Vandeginste 2007). The result has been poor economic growth (Marysse et al. 2006), widespread corruption, and harassment of political opponents (Human Rights Watch 2010 b). The regime has grown increasingly authoritarian, for instance by imprisoning political rivals, jour-

nalists and human rights activists (Human Rights Watch 2010b). Youth wings of political parties are engaged in pre-election violence (Human Rights Watch 2010a). In 2010 all opposition parties called a boycott of the elections due to lack of faith in the electoral process (Boshoff & Ellermann 2010). Despite these obvious shortcomings, the media continue to play an important role, openly criticising authorities, and Burundians in general feel that they now can express their opinions (Turner 2007c; Ingelaere 2009c; Uvin 2009). Furthermore, while no official truth and reconciliation system has yet been put in place, Burundians get along as neighbours, colleagues and friends, letting bygones be bygones. Ethnicity is no longer taboo and it is part of the complex consociational agreements. The basic logic behind consociationalism is that all (minority) groups are secured representation and a share in political power. The result is paradoxical in that one is now able to speak about ethnicity while political conflict has been de-ethnicised. In everyday life Burundians are proud that they can speak openly in this way – often explicitly referring to neighbouring Rwanda where this is not the case – while also being proud that ‘ethnicity no longer matters any more.’ There is no doubt, however, that ethnicity still does matter to people and that there are still social taboos around ethnicity. But there is a sense of hope for the future due to the fact that ethnicity is no longer so politically toxic.

### **Rwanda: carefully controlled development**

While Burundi has experienced a chaotic transition from conflict to peace, involving countless negotiations, compromises and renegotiations, Rwanda’s transition has been more straightforward – if not exactly smooth. Immediately after winning the war in July 1994, the RPF respected the 1993 peace accords and created a transitional power-sharing government, although positions that had been agreed for members of the previous regime were given to RPF members on the grounds that the original scheme could give seats to *génocidaires*. The genocide had been a shock for everyone in Rwanda and internationally, leading to a sense of emergency and exception both as regards rebuilding a new country that had to be radically different from the old, morally delegitimised regime, and as regards securing that genocide would never happen again. The result was a twofold policy of heavily centralised social engineering on the one hand and a strong emphasis on national security on the other (Waldorf 2011; Beswick 2010).

In both cases a strong, centralised state was needed. The creation of such a state was made possible by several factors. First, one might argue that Rwanda has a long tradition of centralised statebuilding, and although the post-genocide regime does what

it can to distance itself from the previous regimes, there are striking resemblances in the style of governance (Stys 2012). Second, the RPF provided an experienced, disciplined and highly hierarchical organisation that was able to transfer its military experience to statebuilding (Dorsey 2000). Third, the previous state had produced the genocide and was therefore unequivocally dismissed, which meant that there was no internal opposition or competing narratives about the nature of the conflict. This allowed the RPF leadership to bring in members of the Tutsi diaspora to be in charge of creating a new state from scratch. In other words, there was a very strong element of statebuilding in terms of institutional capacity building without any need for consociational power sharing or elite bargaining.

In 2011 interviews were conducted with a number of the Tutsi who had returned shortly after the genocide from Tanzania, Zaire, Uganda, Burundi and Europe and North America. Some had been persuaded by RPF cadres to return while others had returned due to a sense of responsibility (Author's field observations, Rwanda 2011). They expressed a great enthusiasm and often a degree of humility towards what they saw as a historic responsibility that had been put on their shoulders to rebuild a country from nothing. Two men who had fled to Tanzania as children in 1961 and who had held important positions in Tanzanian ministries in Dar es Salaam, explained, in a series of interviews in October and November 2011, how they had hoped to return slowly with due planning but had been compelled to return to Rwanda only weeks after the genocide to use their experience and professional skills to rebuild institutions there. A younger man, born in Uganda, explained: "We had been given a country". These returnees would emphasise how the country had been devastated when they returned in 1994; that there was nothing in terms of infrastructure, production, human resources, etc.

While, indeed, the country was devastated morally and large segments of the population had been killed or displaced, one might however question their statements on an infrastructure in ruins. Apart from the northeast, the country had only been ravaged by war and genocide for three months and most of the killing took place at road blocks and in people's homes using *pangas* (machetes) and clubs which means that roads, buildings, electricity plants – even many crops – were more or less intact. This is not to imply that they did not have a large task ahead of them but it was far less devastated than Burundi, where ten years of conflict had meant that a whole generation had not attended school, fields had not been cultivated for years and infrastructure had fallen into disrepair. However, this narrative of a country in ruins is important in their image of themselves as heroic saviours of the country.

The new, centralised state, intent on providing security and economic development, was generously supported by international donors, despite its increasingly problematic human rights record and engagement in wars in the DRC (Zorbas 2011; Straus & Waldorf 2011; Marysse et al. 2006). First, the Rwandan government is skilfully playing on the international community's guilt due to its disastrous lack of engagement during the genocide (Zorbas 2011). Second, a techno-bureaucratic vision of development among donors allows them to see only the success of their development projects isolated from the larger socio-political context (Uvin 1998). Finally, many donors are attracted by the fact that RPF strongman and later president, Paul Kagame, seemed to be a 'man with a plan' (Beswick 2010: 246). Ironically, Kagame has been able to combine a 'donor-friendly language' with a defiant stance against 'western neo-colonialism' (Straus & Waldorf 2011: 15). The UK and US in particular became important donors after 1994. Pottier argues that the post-genocide regime skilfully disseminated the RPF 'truth' about the roots of ethnic conflict through journalists and 'overnight experts.' This was particularly the case in the Anglo-Saxon world where prior knowledge of the Great Lakes did not exist to the degree that it did in France or Belgium, for instance (Pottier 2002).

One of the most important factors in post-genocide Rwanda was the massive movement of people (Newbury 2005). By late 1994 an estimated 550,000–600,000 Rwandan Hutu lived in camps in Tanzania (Eriksson, 1996; Whitaker, 2002), while 1.2 million were in Zaire, 27,000 in Burundi and 10,000 in Uganda. Finally, an estimated 1.5 million people were internally displaced (UNHCR 2000). Meanwhile, an estimated 600,000 Tutsi who had fled from 1959 onwards, returned from Uganda, Tanzania, Zaire and Burundi, while smaller numbers returned from further afield (van Leeuwen 2001). Many claimed land, in particular in the east, while the majority chose to settle in Kigali for reasons of security and because the capital provided new opportunities in state institutions or the burgeoning private sector.

The Hutu in camps remained a threat to national security and in December 1996 the government of Rwanda finally launched attacks on the camps in Zaire, thinly disguised as support for the Rwandan minority in Kivu (Emizet 2000; Prunier 2009). The result was the repatriation of almost one million Hutu from Zaire and the start of the first Zaire war, which led to Mobutu's downfall and Joseph Kabila's victory in early 1997. Most refugees who were forced to leave the camps in Zaire, returned to Rwanda while others were forced into the Congolese jungle, some trekking as far as Congo-Brazzaville while others took to the mountains in Kivu and started a rebel-

lion against the RPF-led regime in Rwanda. Meanwhile, the Tanzanian government gave the more than half a million Rwandan Hutu, living in camps in Tanzania, one month's notice to leave the country which eventually they did around 20 December 1996 (Whitaker 2002).

After dismantling the camps in Zaire/DRC, Rwanda experienced increasing insecurity in the northwest due to cross-border raids from DRC. In addition, the northwest was historically a semi-autonomous Hutu kingdom before colonialism and was the stronghold of President Habyarimana prior to the genocide. From 1997 to 1999 government forces were engaged in serious counter-insurgency activities in the region. Due in part to these efficient operations and incursions into DRC, as well as an effective intelligence service, which bore down on 'genocidal mentalities' inside the country, the rebellion was quelled and Rwanda has experienced remarkable peace and stability since 2000.

#### *A developmentalist state*

Given this security and stability, the regime has been able to focus its attention on economic development, which has been significant and is often invoked as an achievement by state representatives when criticism is made of the lack of democratic achievements. In other words, the implicit argument is that African states in post-conflict situations must make a choice between economic growth and democratic freedoms. I would argue, however, that even the economic achievements might not be as impressive as they are made out to be. Rwanda is still number 166 on UNDP's Human Development Index, just below average for sub-Saharan Africa (UNDP Human Development Report 2011). In the first ten years after the genocide the economy grew fast, but since 2005 the country has been in the same position as it was in 1985. Its present average growth rates per capita are similar to those of neighbouring countries like Tanzania and Uganda. In other words, Rwanda's economy went into a deep crisis from the late 1980s – one of the reasons for the genocide (Uvin 1998) – and bounced back very quickly after peace was restored. Since then it has not fared better or worse than other countries in the region, despite the talk of the country becoming an 'African Tiger' and a middle-income country by 2020. Compared to Burundi, however, there is no doubt that the Rwandan economy is performing well, and it appears that the top-down and strongly controlled governance and the ability to make Machiavellian decisions has allowed for a fast economic recovery after conflict (Ansoms 2008; Marysse et al. 2006).

Scholars have criticised the development policies of the Rwandan state for being socially skewed (Ansoms 2008) and for privileging certain groups (Pottier 2006).

Rather than entering into such debates, it is more relevant for the purposes of this study to explore *how* economic development is being promoted by the state, as this reveals the process of post-conflict statebuilding at work. While proclaiming a neo-liberal economic policy, the Rwandan state is also engaged in social engineering at a level reminiscent of Maoist ideals of development planning. Hence, there is a strong emphasis on good governance, but good governance risks becoming very technical and focused more on accountability and efficiency than on allowing basic freedoms and democratic rights. Similarly, neo-liberal concepts such as decentralisation and new public management are being implemented in ways that allow the construction of a top-down managerial state that can control every corner of the country at all levels. Local government at all levels must produce development goals and contracts that allow for upward accountability but not for accountability towards those who are governed (Ansoms 2009).

### *Social engineering in practice*

As opposed to many weak states in Africa – whose reach rarely goes further than the capital – the Rwandan state not only creates ambitious policies of social engineering; it also implements them. James Scott's concept of a state that almost religiously believes in the beauty of development (Scott 1998: 231) seems appropriate in Rwanda. In most cases such 'schemes to improve the lives of citizens' usually fail due to bureaucratic incompetence, corruption and resistance from the so-called 'beneficiaries' (Scott 1998: 253). In Rwanda, however, these schemes appear to be implemented to a large degree by a competent, non-corrupt bureaucracy without much resistance from 'beneficiaries' who are fearful to criticise the state because they may be accused of harbouring 'genocidal mentalities' (Buckley-Zistel 2006; Beswick 2010). School children are punished for not washing their hands, poor people are fined for not wearing shoes (Ingelaere 2009b: 11), people are fined or imprisoned for not taking part in *umuganda* (monthly communal workdays), grass roofs are torn off houses by village leaders and peasants are forced to pull up crops that are not planted in the right place (Ansoms 2009). There might be several reasons why this social engineering is implemented. First, Rwanda is a small country with a good infrastructure, which allows for the central state to be present everywhere. Second, the RPF has brought with it a military-style discipline that does not allow corruption. Third, Rwanda has a long tradition of a centralised, efficient state. As Patrycja Stys argues, the Rwandan state has always sought to be strong, hierarchic and centralised, but it has also always been fraught with intrigue and resistance. This may be changing now, however.

Rwandan rulers have played a tactical chess game of manipulation since before colonialism. They have embraced the same ideological justification of the state and its administrative structure. For the first time they are winning, and the ideal of state centralisation, and to an extent expansion, is becoming a reality. (Stys 2012: 719)

In other words, Rwanda is following a path to statebuilding and economic development that is tightly controlled from above by a new elite that is not inhibited by compromise. However, while it may have been captured by an elite (which is dominated by Tutsi returnees from Uganda), the Rwandan state is neither 'predatory' nor 'neo-patrimonial', because this elite is genuinely concerned with rebuilding state institutions and boosting the national economy. This commitment can be witnessed in the public-private enterprises that may be nepotistic but which are not corrupt (Booth & Golooba-Mutebi 2012). This has led to social engineering on a massive scale. The aim of this is not, however, simply to ensure economic growth. The aims are much larger, as the new regime sees it as its duty to rebuild the moral tissue of a population devastated by genocide. This search to re-establish morality and patriotism is evidenced in the policies to revive precolonial institutions such as the *gacaca* courts, used to try minor genocide offences, the *umuganda* monthly communal workdays and *ingando* re-education camps. While they all have practical components, judging genocide suspects, keeping neighbourhoods clean and safe and re-integrating ex-combatants, they also have clear and explicit objectives of nation building.

For example, the monthly communal labour days are meant to create a sense of community in the local area while also creating a sense of belonging to the nation's history and 'traditions' by sacrificing one's labour directly to the soil of the nation. In this sense a direct link is created between the individual citizen and the cleanliness and aesthetics of the nation. Furthermore, the *umuganda* reify structures of public authority, as village and sector leaders are in charge of organising labour days and of punishing those who do not participate.

In sum, social engineering in Rwanda is not only a means to promote economic development and security. It also appeals to vague ideas about installing positive values and pride in the population, which serve the purpose of creating a new nation with a new moral community of citizens. To do this, traditional institutions are re-established at national level and implemented with the same efficiency as that with which the economic programmes are implemented.

## **Conclusion: social engineering versus consociational engineering**

Rwanda and Burundi resemble one another in a number of ways and have in many ways had comparable experiences of colonisation, conflict and genocide. There have, however, also been significant differences. From the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Rwandan central state expanded its geographical scope and sought to consolidate its sovereignty over all citizens, while Burundi remained largely an incoherent conglomerate of rival princedoms with shifting alliances. This also meant that the Hutu–Tutsi divide became more significant in Rwanda than in Burundi. The strongly centralised state institutions in Rwanda have been strengthened and exploited by successive regimes during and after colonialism. Meanwhile German and Belgian administrations attempted to streamline Burundi's fragmented state and model it along the lines of the Rwandan state, and in the 1970s and 1980s the one-party state was indeed hierarchic and centralised to some degree. Since the war in the 1990s and the negotiated peace of the last decade, state power in Burundi has once again been open for contestation, and despite various attempts by the state to silence journalists and opposition politicians, the political debate is open at all levels of society.

In Burundi the regime does not have a firm grip on power or on nurturing a state-sanctioned version of history and the causes of conflict to the degree that the RPF does in Rwanda. Formally, both states are multi-party democracies and in Burundi, as in Rwanda, the ruling party has an absolute majority in both houses of their respective legislatures. However, the government in Burundi meets resistance and criticism in civil society and in the media, and even the judiciary shows a high degree of independence (Human Rights Watch 2010b). In contrast, opposition is muted in all institutions and civil society is extremely weak in Rwanda. This may, to some degree, be explained by the authoritarian measures taken by the Rwandan government.

Today the two countries, both having come out of violent conflict and genocide in the 1990s, are on very different paths to post-conflict peacebuilding, reconciliation and development. Rwanda is following a path of social engineering, creating a radically new national identity with a new citizenry in order to break with what is perceived as a national culture that led to the genocide. The state has the moral legitimacy to do this, and any opposition may be dismissed as supporting 'divisionism' and 'genocidal ideologies'. While distancing itself morally and ideologically from anything that can be associated with the pre-genocide state, the present state is simultaneously drawing

on and reproducing the same strong institutions as existed in the pre-genocide regime. There are, thus, striking similarities between the pre- and the post-genocide states.

While Rwanda is concerned with social engineering, Burundi is concerned with what we might term ‘consociational engineering’. In other words the complex, time-consuming and often frustrating path out of conflict has been characterised by constant negotiations with countless factions and complex power-sharing deals, trying to take the concerns of all parties into account – from government, to the armed forces, to the judiciary. We might claim that while social engineering is a belief in the ability of government to shape the social life of its citizens through well-calculated planning from above, consociational engineering is the belief in the ability of government to include all groups in decision making through equally well-calculated planning from above.

As a result, Rwanda is far ahead of Burundi in terms of economic growth and stability. At first glance it has also achieved more in terms of institution building and security. Finally, national unity appears to have substituted ethnic identities. At closer scrutiny, these achievements may only be temporary. The institutions may well be efficient and strong but they lack popular legitimacy. Security is achieved through surveillance rather than social justice, and ethnicity is simply banned in public discourse. Burundi on the other hand is experiencing poor economic performance and is politically unstable and often violent. How then, does this translate into the lives of ordinary Burundians and Rwandans? In an interesting comparative study of Rwandan and Burundian rural youth, Uvin and Sommers find that despite worse living conditions and poorer education at national level, poor Burundian youth had significantly greater hope for their future, while Rwandan youth felt that they had no options for social mobility and for obtaining social adulthood (Sommers & Uvin 2011). They are, as Sommers has so aptly highlighted in the title of his book on youth in Rwanda: ‘stuck’ (Sommers 2012). One explanation for this difference could be that the amount of control and regulation in Rwanda leads the rural poor to believe that they have limited room for manoeuvre and hence limited options to change their present situation. By comparison, Burundian youth have faith in their ability to ‘make it’ and get a better life in the future through hard work and some luck. Despite the political violence and the corruption, many Burundians feel that the government is ‘theirs’ or at least that they have the power to change it, which is not the case in Rwanda, where most Rwandans admire the president for his strength and determination but do not sense that they have any say in the future of the country.

Not only are the perceptions of the rural poor important for the legitimacy of the state; they are also vital for peace and security in the long term. As long as they believe that their voices may be heard, there may well be struggles and antagonisms but they will remain more or less within the framework of the political system and hence the state. In Rwanda the political system is free of antagonisms and struggles, due mostly to political apathy. The state is legitimate and people have faith in it in general but they see no options for changing it. In the long run this might turn out to be explosive.

Uvin argues that it is essential for Burundians to maintain good social relations with all. This is not due to some Putnamian concept of social capital based on trust but, on the contrary, it derives from widespread mistrust. Because nobody trusts anybody any longer, everybody needs to maintain as many social relations as possible. Having no social relationships or only putting one's faith in one ethnic group, social group or political faction makes one vulnerable, if it turns out to be the wrong one. In this way, Burundians are constantly scanning the social horizon to glean any signs of danger, hence the culture of rumours and conspiracy theories (Turner 2009; 2005). It is difficult to assess whether it is the war that has removed faith in others or if this lack of faith in others goes deeper. Uvin suggests that the nuclear family was the only meaningful social unit in precolonial Burundi. There were no real villages, no formalised peer groups and no secret societies as in other African societies (Uvin 2008: 69–77). The kingdoms were hierarchical and based on patron–client relationships. However, these relationships broke down; first with the administrative reforms in the 1930s (Gahama 1983; Lemarchand 1977) and later when low caste Tutsi took power in the 1960s. The result, according to Uvin, is that Burundian culture has become very individualist and that there are high levels of mistrust. It has also resulted, he argues, in Burundians becoming angry with the state (Uvin 2009: 76). They feel that they have nothing to lose and no obligations towards the state and therefore they may pose critical questions to authorities. Rwandan traditional society is basically the same as Burundi's in terms of social units. Here, patron–client relations became transformed from the late nineteenth century from relations of mutual obligation and respect to an exploitative relationship (C. Newbury 1988). The lack of trust in others is at least as present in Rwanda today as in Burundi. Rwanda differs significantly from Burundi though on one account, namely in the idea of criticising authorities. This never happens in public in Rwanda and even in private, Rwandans prefer to avoid voicing any critique. Similarly, rumours and conspiracy theories – which basically are means to interpret the workings of power – are more or less absent in Rwanda. The difference, I would contend, is in the political systems in both countries – in particular since the turn of the millennium.

I argued that the difference between Rwanda and Burundi is in part due to two historically different state models. It is also due to the different ways the countries have come out of war. In Rwanda there was a clear victor and loser, which gave the emergent regime legitimacy and a free rein to create the society it wished to create. This is clear in the 2003 law against genocide ideology, which is sufficiently vague to allow any criticism to be classified as inciting ethnic hatred and divisionism. Burundi, on the other hand, experienced an end to war not because one party won over the other but because the population was tiring of conflict and no party saw a victory ahead in the near future.

In terms of state fragility, the Burundian state appears in all respects to be more fragile than the Rwandan state. Institutions are weak, corruption is rampant, decision making is blocked by political conflicts, foreign investment is low and security is fragile. Nevertheless, in the long run the Burundian state might turn out to be the most robust due to its inclusiveness and commitment to social justice. Burundians may not have faith in the present regime but they generally have faith in their ability to influence not only their own future but also the future of the state. They may express their dissatisfaction and may shape their own fortunes. Despite the progress in economic development, institutional capacity building and security (or perhaps due to these), Rwandans do not feel part of the decision-making process; they feel happy that they have a strong president who can make the right decisions for them (IRDP survey 2011). While this has produced peace and stability, it has also created political apathy, which is not only problematic for democracy from a normative point of view; it also risks becoming a security problem when large sections of the population feel detached from the decision-making process. In this sense, the Rwandan state might end up the more fragile.

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