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Burundi's Regroupment Camps: Environmental Decline and the Role of Collective Discontent

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Once *it* has established its premise, its point of departure, experiences no longer interfere with ideological thinking, nor can it be taught by reality.
— Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*

In 1993, Melchior Ndadaye was elected as the first Hutu president, in the first ever free and fair elections of the Burundian republic. Three months later Ndadaye was executed by the Tutsi dominated army. Following the ousting of two presidents amidst intra-party clamoring, Major General Pierre Buyoya regained the presidency in a bloodless coup for the second time. Immediately after the regime change, neighboring states placed an economic embargo on the state of Burundi due to widespread misuse and abuse of power. In addition, renegade Hutu elements of the Council for the Defense of Democracy (CNDD), National Liberation Forces (FNL), Forces for the Defense of Democracy (FDD), and the Party for the Liberation of the Hutu People (PALIPEHUTU) began stepping up attacks on mainly the Tutsi citizenry, prominent politicians (Hutu as well as Tutsi), government institutions, and even foreign NGO's. To counter

these acts of aggression, the Burundian army began a "scouring" campaign in an attempt to combat these extremist actions with their own methods of terror on the citizenry (both Hutu and Tutsi) and politicians as well. Political and social instability have since continued to be erratic and widespread, which have further divided the government and society.

Following Buyoya's coup in 1996, the government instituted a policy of uprooting the Hutu and placing them in "regroupment camps," all in the name of security. In Burundi, much like its northern neighbor of Rwanda, the Hutu constitute 85% of society, the Tutsi make up 14–15%, and the Twa compose the remaining 1%. The pro-Hutu forces have attracted a lot of support and sympathy amongst the citizenry for their cause of overthrowing the government, which they see as the Tutsi minority oppressing the Hutu majority. In 1998, the World Food Program (WFP) estimated as much as 9 % of the population, known as *regroupés* (the regroupes), have been placed in as many as 250 camps dispersed throughout the country (see Table 1). Amnesty International's 1997 report *Forced Relocation: New Patterns of Human Rights Abuses* states,

TABLE 1
Burundi: Estimated Number of People Living in Camps

Provinces	Pop. of the Province	Number of Sites	Total Pop. in the Sites	% of Population
Bubanza	280,152	68	152,616	54
Bujumbura M.	311,037	12	20,206	6
Bujumbura R.	384,128	—	37,198	10
Buruzi	438,811	—	64,426	15
Cankuzo	163,311	—	—	—
Cibitoke	366,129	15	79,329	22
Gitega	648,011	17	22,004	3
Karuzi	346,508	14	38,563	11
Kayanza	509,588	11	17,211	3
Kirundo	464,684	17	27,582	6
Makamba	264,103	23	36,100	14
Muramvya	505,679	20	28,505	6
Muyinga	442,832	25	26,636	6
Ngozi	555,696	11	17,195	3
Rutana	227,430	8	2,494	1
Ruyigi	291,881	9	2,127	1
Total	6,200,00	250	572,642	9

** This estimate of the total population is based on the results of the last census in 1990, updated with UNPFA data in January 1998, and also takes account of all the entries and exits recorded by the UNHCR and other organizations in the second half of 1997. [<http://www.fao.org/WAICENT/faoinfo/econ...giiews/english/alertes/1998/srbd983.htm>]

the Burundi Government has defended its policy of regroupment on several grounds. It claims that the camps are for the inhabitants' own protection, that they are voluntary, that regroupment applies to all ethnic groups equally, and that it is a short-term measure. It has accused those who criticize the camps of trying to sabotage the government's efforts to restore peace, and has declared that those who criticize regroupment are opposed to the destruction of "terrorist groups."¹

Due to the political instability and socio-economic disparities that exist, the not so obvious threats to the state's stability are the stresses that emanate from the decline of environmental resources. Environmental decline has the potential to increase tensions within a state that is highly dependent upon renewable and non-renewable resources for its livelihood. The underlying stresses of resource access and resource availability may further lead to possible conflict amongst competing groups, specifically within societies that experience ethnic polarization.² "By making some people poorer and weaker and others richer and more powerful, by causing people to move to new locations where they are often not wanted, and by weakening key institutions such as the state, environmental scarcity boosts grievances and changes the structure of opportunities facing challenger groups."³

Environmental decline is defined here as the *availability* (resource scarcity) of a specific resource(s), and the capacity of an individual or competing group's ability to *access* a specific resource(s) (not quality) within a nation-state or society. Environmental decline is an important factor, which has contributed to the crude political atmosphere in Burundi, and will likely increase the chances for greater instability and further conflict. This paper seeks to address the following question: how is environmental decline *aggravating* the regroupment camp situation in Burundi? As long as the regroupment camps are maintained as status quo, environmental decline will increase, socio-political tensions will intensify, further instability will result, and more violence will likely occur. In the ever-changing nature of security, this paper contends that environmental decline is specifically linked to the security and stability of the state of Burundi.

The Identity Complex

Particular events in time and space help to shape and construct new identities amongst individuals and groups within a specific setting. In dramatic acts of violence, actions become so powerful and destructive that they sometimes lead to the re-defining of the past, present, and "unknown" future. History tends to become blurred, and in extreme cases, lost. When history loses sight of itself, a "myth" based on fact and fiction is created.⁴ The myth becomes entangled within the complex web of the present socio-political dynamics that exist in society. Depending upon the

externalities that permeate a society (predominant belief structures, government institutions, and the form of governance), the myth can take on various forms in many different shapes and sizes. In Burundi,

the political system [of Burundi] did not favor historical memory...It was in everyone's interest to forget the past, whether it was the *ganwa* who had taken the land, the subchief who had been dismissed, or the king himself who relied now upon one faction, now upon another. The former senior regent of the country told me that history was of no interest at the court so there were practically no historical accounts. The political system shows why.⁵

The myth in Burundi took on the form of "history," and led to the re-shaping of past events, present actions, and of things to come. More specifically, it set itself down on the "ethnic-identities" of the minority Tutsi and the majoritarian Hutu population. As Liisa H. Malkki points out, "the Tutsi" were constructed, not only as a categorical opposite and enemy, but also as the embodiment of such abstract moral qualities as evil, laziness, beauty, danger, and malignity. "The Hutu" tended to emerge out of this, reflexively, as that which "the Tutsi" were not."⁶ The Tutsi and Hutu emerged as contrasting ethnic groups in a caste like system, and not as Burundese citizens. The plight and misery of each group became the fundamental rationale for the juxtaposition of competing ideological processes of subordination (Hutu) and domination (Tutsi). More specifically for the dominant Hutu,

the Hutu history, however, went far beyond merely recording events. It represented, not only a description of the past, nor merely an evaluation of the past, but a subversive recasting and reinterpretation of it in fundamentally moral terms. In this sense, it cannot be accurately described as either history or myth. It was what can be called a *mythico-history*.⁷

The mythico-history tended to perceive the past and present events as a grand Tutsi plot in disguise. For the Hutu, Tutsi actions were deceptive in nature and aimed at subverting "the truth" in ways to maintain their positions of authority and dominance. The Tutsi became the "few" that oppressed the "many." The assassination of Pierre Ngendandumwe in 1965, Burundi's first Prime Minister, by a Tutsi refugee signaled the growing ethnic antagonisms that were prevalent among the elite of Burundi.⁸ More importantly, the overthrow of the *mwami* (the king) in 1966, Mwambutsa IV, and the birth of the predominantly Tutsi controlled First Republic, signaled the aggressive mentality and lust for power by the Tutsi. If these events had not convinced the Hutu of a Tutsi plan of hegemonic rule, the 1972 massacres became the final nail in the coffin.⁹

The 1972 massacres, it has been estimated, resulted in the death of between one and two hundred thousand Hutu.¹⁰ This event, like the 1959 carnage in Rwanda, is seen as the defining period of the identity complex, which helped to crystallize the ethnic-tensions between the Hutu and Tutsi. "The massacre stood in the mythico-history as the climatic moment of the discovery of "the secrets of the Tutsi."¹¹ Not only were massive numbers of people killed in 1972, but "the massive exodus of Hutu refugees, numbering approximately 150,000, to neighboring territories is certainly one of the most politically consequential aspects of the 1972 carnage."¹² As Malkki has shown in her seminal work on the Hutu refugee comprehension of the 1972 crises, many of the uprooted Hutu are still living in refugee camps due to the extreme dehumanizing nature of the violence that was witnessed and experienced.

Other events like the 1988 killings of Hutu and Tutsi civilians, which were more localized than those in 1972, can be historically traced and viewed as specific acts that have occurred as a large result of the Hutu vs. Tutsi identity complex. The purpose here is not to beat the subject matter into the ground anymore than it has already been by numerous scholars. The main point to be observed and understood is that the identity construction and re-construction amongst the Tutsi and Hutu of Burundi is one in which most, if not all, events since 1965, if not all, have resulted from a misconception of truth.

It is within this ideological context and framework that the events that transpire within Burundi, until fundamental changes take place, must be observed and taken into consideration. Although the identity complex is inseparable from the socio-political crisis of Burundi, other factors such as environmental decline and decapitalization do have a role in the instability that permeates the country.

Non-Environmental Sources of Tension

The contextual focus here is how environmental decline is *aggravating* the regroupment camp situation. The concept of aggravation has a connotation that it interacts with other variables in conjunction with each other, not always in a nice neat linear fashion that is easily discernible or evident to human perception.¹³ There are two factors that are adding to the tension in the state of Burundi. The first is the impact of the 1996 economic embargo that has recently been lifted amid resource scarcity. The other source of tension is Nelson Mandela and the stature that he has brought to Arusha, Tanzania, as the mediator of the Burundi peace process.

Impact of the Embargo

The recent annulment of a three year long embargo has not had its intended desire, which was seen as a way to punish the government for its oppressive and domineering rule amidst widespread abuses of power. Assessing the full im-

act of an embargo upon a society that earns 80% of its income from coffee production is difficult to determine due to the lack of comparable statistics. According to United Nations and World Bank figures (see Table 2), Burundi's gross domestic product (GDP) fell from \$1208 (U.S. millions) in 1995 to \$950 (U.S. millions) in 1998. The data seem to suggest that the embargo had a definite impact upon the economy. Import trends between 1996 and 1998 were cut in half when compared to pre-embargo years, which tends to point to an extreme deficit in adequate food and resources for the state.¹⁴ Economic embargoes have the most severe implications at the micro level, specifically on an individual's purchasing power.

TABLE 2
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) & Growth Rate

Year	Total GDP (U.S. Millions)	GDP per Capita	Growth Rate As a %
1990	1148	209	3.5%
1995	1208	199	3.7%
1996	1030	166	3.6%
1997(1)	960	140	?
1998(1)	950	140	?

*** These figures were taken from the 1999 United Nations Statistical Yearbook: Forty-Third Issue.*

(1) These figures were taken from the WorldBank database. [http://www.worldbank.org]

World bank figures show a drastic decline in the measurement of GDP per capita. In 1995, before the embargo was put in place, GDP per capita was \$199. In 1996, GDP per capita fell to \$166, and continued on a steady downward fall to \$140 in 1998, where it has remained ever since. This trend seems to also reflect the dramatic 31.1% increase in consumer prices between 1996 and 1997.¹⁵ Not only have individual incomes declined, but food prices have been on a steady climb since the embargo was put in place. The importation of food has declined by 1%, while the population since the early 1990s has grown on average at a steady 3% rate.¹⁶ In March of 1998, the World Food Program conducted a food and crop assessment in Burundi in response to the embargo. The report concluded that

with the escalation in prices, purchasing an adequate amount of foodstuffs is now beyond the reach of the majority of the population. This has aggravated a situation that has been precarious since 1994, owing to the combined effects of the political crisis, the embargo and the adverse weather conditions. In a move to counter rising food prices, the government has recently imposed a requirement of prior authorization for rice, maize, bean, cassava and cassava flour exports, and has suspended import duties on these items.¹⁷

The embargo has had an impact on the macro level. The decline in the gross domestic product has influenced the overall economic situation in Burundi. More specifically, the impact of the embargo seems to have been the most destructive at the micro level. As previously stated, the individual purchasing power has been dramatically affected, food prices have increased while there has been a steady incline in population growth rates, and the general food security situation and ability to purchase necessary goods is beyond the means of the majority of the citizenry.

Nelson Mandela

After the unfortunate death of the former Tanzanian President Julius Nyerere, Nelson Mandela agreed to take over as the mediator of the Burundi peace process. The not so obvious threat to Burundi's stability is the stature that Nelson Mandela brings to the table. Considerably the world's most respected African leader, Mandela brought worldwide attention to the situation in Burundi, specifically the regroupment camp issue. Mandela has likened the regroupment camp situation in Burundi to "Nazi-style concentration camps."¹⁸ He has also taken a different approach to peace than his predecessor Julius Nyerere.

In the eyes of the majority, the Hutu population, Mandela's criticism of the camp situation has only legitimized and heightened their determination for an end to the government's historically documented misuse and abuse of power. In turn, this criticism has raised the tensions and grievances of the extremists (Hutu, Tutsi, as well as the army). In the case of the Hutu extremists, they have stepped up their reign of violence in recent years on the citizenry, and specifically Tutsi individuals and groups. The Tutsi extremists have, through the use of the army and elements of the citizenry, sought to further crackdown on society through the use of violence and regroup even more citizens in the name of security. The army has drastically increased its ethnic-purge of society only to aggravate further Hutu extremists' violent reactions. This criticism has aided each group in justifying their actions, which has only helped complete the circle of violence amongst the competitors. Whether or not Mandela's criticism will destabilize the situation for the long term remains to be seen. For the short-term prospects, Mandela's criticism has made an already extremely shaky foundation more chaotic.

Nelson Mandela has brought to the Burundi peace process an ideal method of reconciliation of "forgive and forget," which is based upon the South African approach of coming to terms with the history of *apartheid*. South Africa's history is much more linear and less clouded than the history of Burundi. It was fundamentally based on the white minorities' suppression of the black majoritarian population. In Burundi, the "forget" aspect, or ethnic amnesia, is the fundamental reason why the state of Burundi is in the shape that it is in.¹⁹ Too many politicians, soldiers, and citizens of the state have "forgotten" the history of Burundi. Instead they have clouded their memories with "ethnic-fic-

tion" that simply misconstrues the true history of the republic of Burundi. What Burundese citizens do not need to do is "forget" their past, but remember their true history in its entirety, and to understand the historical significances that have led them to their present state of affairs. To forget the past is to commit future mistakes, and in the case of Burundi, very violent and bloody ones.

Unlike Julius Nyerere's approach to peace, which disavowed the FNL and FDD parties to participate in the process, Mandela has stated that all parties who have direct interest and stake in the Burundi situation will be brought into the fold. Nineteen parties are presently represented in Arusha. A few of the existing parties have stated that they would pull out if the fanatical elements were allowed to participate in the decision making process. The parties' view their concerns as issues of "life" and "death." The Tutsi parties are afraid they will be killed if they give power to the Hutu majority, as they point to the history of Rwanda. As the dominant group of Burundi, the Hutu see their participation in the decision-making process of government as their inherent right. Obvious "distractions" and "obstacles" are bound to slowdown the process with the numerous parties that are represented in Arusha, which *will* (emphasis added) have repercussions at the societal level. With extremist elements on both sides of the "ethnic-isle," and the few parties that exist in the center, the question remains to be seen. Can the parties come to a consensus of understanding amidst all the finger pointing and accusations?

Environmental Stress

Like many countries on the African continent, the population in Burundi is highly rural. According to 1999 World Bank statistics, population figures show that a total of 6.5 million people inhabit Burundi. Out of this number, 7.5% of the population resides in urban areas, and 92.5% inhabit rural territory (see Table 3). The citizenry relies heavily on subsistence agriculture for their food security, economic, and social well-being. 80% of Burundi's GDP comes from coffee production alone. Some of the other cash crops produced are beans, maize, sorghum, cassava, and potatoes. The health of the environment is of the utmost importance for the average Burundese citizen and general welfare of the state.

TABLE 3
Population Dynamics

	Total Population (Per 1000)	Change in Population (1995–2000)
Urban	600	5.19%
Rural	6095	1.36%
Total	6695	3.1% (per annum)

** These figures were taken from the 1999 United Nations Statistical Yearbook: Forty-Third Issue

Burundi's total surface area has been measured at 27,834 sq. km, with a density of 223 persons per square kilometer; the per hectare density was 2.4 persons in 1996.²⁰ With such a limited amount of space and a high rate of density, Burundi qualifies as one of the most densely populated countries on the African continent. These figures in conjunction with a 3.1% population growth rate do not bode well for the health of the environment.

Environmental decline is becoming a reality that farmers and peasants are being forced to come to terms with. Homer-Dixon has identified three forms of resource scarcity. These are *supply-induced scarcity*, *demand-induced scarcity*, and *structural scarcity*.²¹ More specifically, he states that "*supply-induced scarcity*" (often called "environmental change") gets worse when the resource pie shrinks because it has been depleted in quantity of degraded in quality."²² Furthermore, he states that

demand-induced scarcity is caused by either population growth or an increase in per-capita consumption of the resource; either factor serves to increase the overall demand for the resource, which, if the supply of the resource remains constant, increases its scarcity. *Structural scarcity* arises from the unequal distribution of a resource, as occurs when a resource is concentrated in the hands of a small percentage of the population while the rest experiences shortages.²³

Environmental decline, which is in essence resource scarcity, but also concerned with the role of *access*, is a phenomenon taking place in the state of Burundi that is having adverse reactions within and upon society. Specifically, when looking at the regroupment camp issue, environmental decline becomes a deadly combination that is *aggravating* and intensifying the socio-political situation. One recognizes that much of the resource degradation that Burundi is facing is a combination of human actions, geographical factors, and the possible result of "natural" environmental

change. Because of Burundi's geographic location, the focus on *availability* is concerned with human-induced resource scarcity, and is not intended to reduce it simply to a socio-economic or socio-political issue. The ability to unravel the true causes of resource depletion can be a daunting and very challenging task. The function of *access* to a resource is a human-induced spectacle that is wrapped up in the socio-political process. More specifically, the role of *access* is a product of Burundi's identity complex. One will now look at three specific areas of the environment that are being degraded. These areas are cropland, soil erosion, and forests.

Cropland: Supply-Induced Scarcity

According to 1998 Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) statistics (see Table 4), Burundi has a total availability of 2,783 (per 1000 Ha) hectares of land. The total land area that is available, which does not take into account the geographic location or quality of land used, is 2,568 (per 1000 Ha) hectares of land. In other words, the farmers and peasantry of Burundi have an extremely limited amount of land that is available for them to cultivate. As Homer-Dixon points out, "a country is generally considered land scarce when 70 percent or more of its potential cropland is being used."²⁴

Burundi's cropland is limited by geographical factors. Land that is fit for cultivation and used for permanent crops, has been measured at 1,100 (per 1000 Ha) hectares. This is land that is used for cultivating crops like cassava, beans, maize, and sorghum. The remaining 1,468 (per 1000 Ha) hectares of land are considered non-arable. Presently, this land is being used for non-permanent crops. Because of Burundi's vast and hilly terrain, and limited use of arable land, extensive use of the hillsides are being used to counteract the scarcity of arable land, which is leading to large amounts of soil erosion and further resource depletion. Like many landlocked countries, Burundi also relies heavily on cattle, which are having adverse effects on cropland fertility and availability.

TABLE 4
Total Land and Land Use Availability (Per 1000 Ha)

	1995	1996	1997	1998
Land Use Total Area	2783	2783	2783	2783
Land Use Land Area	2568	2568	2568	2568
Land Use Agricultural Area	2200	2200	2200	2200
Land Use Arable Land	770	770	770	770
Land Use Non Arable & Non Permanent	1468	1468	1468	1468
Land Use Arable & Permanent Crops	1100	1100	1100	1100

** These figures were taken from the 1998 FAOSTAT database.

[<http://apps1.fao.org/servlet/XteServlet...temTypes=LandUse&OutputLabel=&Language=>]

According to 1997 United Nations statistics (see Table 6), there are 400 (per thousand head) head of cattle in Burundi, which is not a considerably large figure. When one considers that there is only 1,100 hectares of permanent pasture (see Table 4) available for cattle grazing, the numbers become critical. Within Burundi, because of arable land scarcity and soil depletion that is taking place, arable land (land with the most nutrients) is slowly becoming the grazing land for cattle. In turn, the depletion of the soil nutrients is disappearing along with the vegetation, and further constraining farmers and peasants' future abilities to cultivate their crops.

These geographical factors have a direct impact on the farmers and peasantry's ability to grow sufficient food supplies. In any event, like many countries that rely on subsistence agriculture for their mainstay, the peasantry and farmers have turned to pesticides and fertilizers to increase their yields. Furthermore, the implications of pesticide use, overgrazing of cattle, deforestation, geography, and slash and burn methods of farming have led to massive soil erosion.

Soil Erosion: Supply-Induced Scarcity

Soil erosion is occurring at an immensely rapid pace mainly due to the factors listed in the previous section. Particularly, in large part due to rampant use of pesticides, farmers and peasants are degrading the soil to the extent that irreversible damage is setting in. According to 1998 FAO statistics (see Table 5), non-organic fertilizer, chemical pesticide, consumption has averaged 3,000 metric tons per year since 1994, and was measured at 4,700 metric tons in 1997 (which is a low figure due to inconclusive data). FAO statistics have estimated that 80% of all soil in Burundi is chemically degraded, and has listed Burundi, along with Rwanda, as the two most soil degraded countries in Sub-Saharan Africa.²⁵

Soil erosion is not only occurring because of chemical pesticide use, but also because of the immense overgrazing of cattle on the land. Cattle are depleting the soils of their necessary nutrients and vegetation, which are crucial in sustaining soil vitality. In turn, farmers and peasants are using

more pesticides and slash-and-burn methods of farming to counteract the soil degradation, which are further damaging the soil.

Another factor leading to the loss of soil fertility is the rapid decline in fuelwood, which protects the topsoil from UV rays. The disappearance of fuelwood and wood products allows for the possibility of soil erosion during the rainy seasons due to the lack of soil cover, and possible desertification in the future. Presently, the fuelwood production rate is at 5% (per thousand cubic meters).²⁶ With a population growth rate of 3.1%, the outlook for an adequate supply of fuelwood to sustain the citizenry is extremely bleak. When all supplies of fuelwood have been exhausted, the peasantry and farmers will likely turn to cutting down trees, not to say they already have not.

Forests: Supply-Induced Scarcity

The present degradation of forests in Burundi is mainly due to the increased production and consumption of fuelwood, which was briefly stated in the previous section. The FAO reported in 1998 that the gradual disappearance of Burundi's forests was due to the rapid depletion of fuelwood.²⁷ For the vast majority of the citizenry, fuelwood is a necessary part of their daily lives. Fuelwood is wood that is found in the rough, wood that is removed from forests and from trees outside the forest, including wood recovered from natural logging losses during the calendar year or forest year.²⁸ According to World Bank statistics, fuelwood production increased by 594.3% between the years of 1980 and 1990.²⁹ With the high rate of present consumption, and the massive rate of production of fuelwood, the next logical step is to look at the rate of deforestation in comparison.

FAO statistics state that Burundi is forested with 12.3% forest cover.³⁰ The majority of these forests are protected reserves. Within the forests there is a vast diversity of trees that exist such as exotic eucalyptus, hardwood trees, and large amounts of bamboo. As a whole, when compared to the other resource scarcities that persist, surprisingly, Burundi's deforestation rate between the years of 1990 and 1995 was -.4%.³¹ The areas of greatest deforestation seem

TABLE 5
Non-Organic Fertilizer Use (Per Thousand Metric Ton)

	1994	1995	1996	1997
Phosphate Fertilizer	2400(1)	2000	1800	?
Nitrogenous Fertilizer	1400(1)	1000	1000	4600
Potash Fertilizer	100(1)	100(1)	100(1)	100(1)

** These figures were taken from the 1998 FAOSTAT database.

<http://apps1.fao.org/servlet/XteServlet.jrun?Areas=29&Items=1360&Items=1369&Items=1380&Items=1391&Items=1375&Items=1386&Elements=151&Years=1998&Years=1997&Years=1996&Years=1995&Format=Table&Xaxis=Years&Yaxis=Countries&Aggregate=&Calculate=&UserName=&Domain=LUI&ItemTypes=Fertilizers&OutputLabel=&Language=>

(1) These figures were taken from the 1999 United Nations Statistical Yearbook: Forty-Third Issue.

to reside in the brushlands and vast savanna woodlands (mainly cleared for cropland), which consist of smaller less exotic species of trees.

As a whole, deforestation has yet to have a serious impact on the protected reserves. It seems highly appropriate to suggest that with the present population growth rate, rapid declining levels of fuelwood, and the rampant depletion of existing cropland and soil vitality, the forest reserves will gradually become a necessary resource for purposes of consumption and production.

It is within this context of resource *availability* for the citizenry, and the factors of non-environmental sources of tension, that one can now look at the regroupment camp situation. More importantly the issue of resource *access* can be addressed and how environmental decline is aggravating the regroupment camp issue.

TABLE 6
Total Livestock (Per Thousand Head)

1993	440
1994	420
1995	400
1996	390
1997	400

*** Livestock, data refer to livestock numbers grouped into twelve-month periods, ending 30 September of the year stated and cover all animals irrespective of their age and place or purpose of their breeding (United Nations, p.405). These figures were taken from the 1999 United Nations Statistical Yearbook: Forty-Third Issue.*

Implications

The issue of resource access is compounding the regroupment camp issue, due in large part to the ethnic polarization that permeates Burundi. The numerous camps have been set up and maintained by the government on the grounds that they are for the citizens' security. In 1997, Amnesty International reported that

while humanitarian agencies, UN human rights monitors and others have been able to visit some camps, movement is restricted for inhabitants of the camps. This is a crucial difference between the regroupment camps, whose inhabitants are mainly Hutu, and the displaced camps, whose inhabitants are predominantly Tutsi. The camps may be very close to each other. For instance, in Kayanza Province two such camps are effectively divided by a tiny barrier, yet those in the camp for the displaced may, if they wish, move freely in and out of the camps and leave to return to their homes.³²

The Tutsi camps are placed under protection by the Burundian army, which has allowed the Tutsi the freedom to leave and come back whenever they feel the need for

protection. Those who have been moved to the regroupment camps, mainly Hutu, have been denied the right to leave the campsites. This lack of mobility has led to increased tensions amongst the groups in and outside of the camps, which have led to greater insecurity and violent conflict in some provinces. More importantly, because Burundi is highly dependent on subsistence agriculture for its survival, the denial of access to one's land as a productive member of society is perpetuating the ethnic polarization and insecurity that exists. Not only are ethnic tensions widening, but the issue of access to one's land is in direct relation to the issue of food security. The issue of food security will have serious implications in the coming year(s).

Food Security

According to a 6 January 1997 FAO report, due to the political insecurity within Burundi, and a lack of sufficient rainfall, the food security situation of 1996 was estimated at "a drop of some 8 percent from the 1988–1993 pre-crisis average and 2 percent lower than in the previous year."³³ The lack of adequate food in 1996 was a contributing factor to the mass discontent, which eventually resulted in violence. In turn this led to the large regroupment of Hutu in 1996 and on into 1997.

In 1998, the FAO reported,

there was an improvement in security conditions which allowed some of the population in regroupment and displacement camps to return to their farms during the second half of 1997. Thus the number of people in camps fell by 14 percent between June 1997 and January 1998 from 665,734 to 572,462, representing 9 percent of the total population in February 1998. This population movement, together with repatriation from outside the country, led to an increase in planted areas in 1998A season.³⁴

The FAO statement shows the relationship of the *regroupés* to the *access* to resources, which had a direct impact on the amount of land that was utilized in 1998. What it fails to show is that the overall food production in 1998 was 9% below the 1988–93 average.³⁵ More importantly, the relationship of resource access and food security is a fundamental factor that is contributing to the widening of ethnic tensions, political instability, and insecurity within the state of Burundi.

The food security outlook for 2000 is extremely bleak. Due to continued political instability and lack of adequate rainfall, Burundi's food production is on the decline. On 5 November 1999, the FAO reported,

notwithstanding the impact of population displacement on food production, crop prospects for the first season of 1999/2000 (September–January) are also affected by unfavorable weather. In areas

where planting took place with first rains in late September, such as in the highlands of the central plateau, crops are reported to be stressed by lack of soil moisture. Even if more rains are received in the coming weeks, serious reductions in plantings and yields can be expected, thus compounding the food supply difficulties further over the next year.³⁶

The issue of food security is extremely critical to the stability and security of Burundi. As long as certain groups (Hutu) are denied access to resources in an environment dependent upon the maximization of available resources, tensions are bound to rise, and conflict is likely to be the ensuing result.

Prospects

The regroupment camp situation in Burundi is being aggravated due to the issue of environmental decline. Specifically, the impact of the economic embargo, Mandela's approach to the Burundi peace process in Arusha, and general access to scarce resources amongst the regrouped population is leading to further political instability. As political instability grows, the government will likely place more of the Hutu citizenry in the regroupment camps. In turn, this will have an enormous impact on the food security situation in the coming year(s) and the ability of the Burundese citizenry to feed itself. The spiral of further instability and violent conflict will likely be the ensuing result.

Burundi's realistic and only chance for true peace is wrapped up in its past. The identity complex that engulfs the state and competing groups is the fundamental problem to be solved. All problems that Burundi will face, whether they are social, economic, ecological, or political in context, are going to be rooted in the dynamics of Burundi's identity crisis. Whether or not this issue can be addressed and overcome remains to be seen.

Endnotes

1. See Amnesty International, *Amnesty International Report-AFR 16/19/97*. "Forced Relocation: New Patterns of Human Rights Abuses" [<http://www.amnesty.org/ailib/aipub/1997/AFR/11601997.htm>], 15 July 1997.
2. Thomas Homer-Dixon and Jessica Blitt, "Introduction: A Theoretical Overview," in *Ecoviolence: Links among Environment, Population and Security*, ed. Thomas Homer-Dixon and Jessica Blitt (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 1998); Thomas Homer-Dixon, *Environment, Scarcity, and Violence* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999); and Michael Renner, *Fighting for Survival: Environmental Decline, Social Conflict, and the New Age of Insecurity* (Washington, D.C.: Worldwatch Institute, 1996).
3. See Homer-Dixon and Blitt, "Introduction: A Theoretical Overview," p.11.

4. Mary Lefkowitz, *Not Out of Africa: How Afrocentrism Became an Excuse to Teach History* (New York: New Republic Books, 1997).
5. These comments were made by Jan Vansina in his work *Oral Tradition as History*, and reproduced by René Lemarchand, *Burundi: Ethnic Conflict and Genocide* (Washington D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press and Columbia University Press, 1996), p.19.
6. See Liisa H. Malkki, *Purity and Exile: Violence, Memory, and National Cosmology among Hutu Refugees in Tanzania* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), p.54.
7. Ibid., p.54.
8. René Lemarchand, *Rwanda and Burundi* (London: Praeger, 1970).
9. Thomas Patrick Melady, *Burundi: The Tragic Years* (New York: Orbis, 1974).
10. Lemarchand, *Burundi: Ethnic Conflict and Genocide*.
11. Malkki, *Purity and Exile*, p.101.
12. Lemarchand, *Burundi: Ethnic Conflict and Genocide*, p.104.
13. Homer-Dixon, *Environment, Scarcity, and Violence*.
14. The figures for the declining import and export trends for Burundi are available on-line at the WorldBank web site at <http://www.worldbank.org>.
15. Ibid.
16. Ibid.
17. See the FAO report at <http://www.fao.org/WAICENT/faoinfo/econ...giiews/english/alertes/1998/srbdi983.htm>.
18. This quote was taken from the South African newspaper, *Mail & Guardian*, 24 January 2000.
19. Lemarchand, *Burundi: Ethnic Conflict and Genocide*; Malkki, *Purity and Exile*; and Jan Vansina, *Oral Tradition as History* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985).
20. These figures were taken from the United Nations, *The United Nations Statistical Yearbook* (New York: United Nations Press, 1999).
21. Homer-Dixon, *Environment, Scarcity, and Violence* and Homer-Dixon and Blitt, "Introduction: A Theoretical Overview."
22. See Homer-Dixon, *Environment, Scarcity, and Violence*, p.48.
23. See Homer-Dixon and Blitt, "Introduction: A Theoretical Overview," p.6.
24. Ibid., p.3.
25. This general figure can be found at <http://www.fao.org>.
26. These figures were taken from the United Nations, *United Nations Statistical Yearbook, 1999*.
27. See the FAO website at <http://www.fao.org>.

28. See United Nations, *United Nations Statistical Yearbook, 1999*.
29. These figures can be found at the World Bank website at <http://www.worldbank.org>.
30. See the FAO website at <http://www.fao.org>.
31. Ibid.
32. Amnesty International, Amnesty International AFR 16/19/97, "Forced Relocation: New Patterns of Human Rights Abuses."
33. See the FAO website at <http://www.fao.org>.
34. FAO, Global Information and Early Warning System on Food and Agriculture: World Food Programme, "FAO/WFP Crop and Food Supply Assessment Mission to Burundi." [<http://www.fao.org/WAICENT/faoinfo/econ...giews/english/alertes/1998/srbdi983.htm>], 20 March 1998.
35. FAO, Global Information and Early Warning System on Food and Agriculture: World Food Programme, "Special Alert No. 299:Burundi," [<http://www.fao.org/giews/english/alertes/1999/sa299bur.htm>], 5 November 1999.
36. Ibid.

