

## AFRICAN UNION RESEARCH PAPER 1

### ***Strengthening African states by regionally shifting towards an export-based industrial economy, focusing specifically on land-locked states***

#### *Socio-Economic Issues in Africa and The Slow Climb*

African countries had already been lagging economically and socially when they were seized by European colonialists in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Not only did colonising exacerbate their issues immensely, but little was solved following independence due to the failure of frequently externally generated programmes (e.g., import substitution industrialisation or structural adjustment programmes). In 2013 the UN Economic Commission for Africa recognized the on-going prevalence of the following issues:

- most African economies are driven by primary commodities with undeveloped manufacturing sectors
- despite the above, agricultural productivity remains at a low 56% of the global average otherwise due to a lack of modern technology
- due to an underdeveloped rural sector, massive rural-urban drifting is taking place, nonetheless the urban infrastructure is incapable of coping with such an influx of migrants leading to a proliferation of urban slums
- birth and death rates are high (birth rate clearly highest, death rate tied with Europe – according to WHO (2013)) with high HIV prevalence
- social protection programmes are underdeveloped and underfunded
- Africa has the world's highest proportion of poor persons, with a poverty rate of 47.5% (in 2008) based on the \$1.25/day benchmark

Despite the recent collapse of global commodity prices, which have slowed growth in North Africa, substantial economic development took place across the continent within the past two decades. Between 2000 and 2010 the average real annual GDP growth was 5.8%, slumping to 3.3% between 2010 and 2015. Such growth resulted in societal and medical improvements (e.g., decreased maternal and infant mortality rates, improvements in governance) and in an increasing middle class (34% of the total population in

2010). But despite these improvements, the listed issues still prevail, especially in countries that have experienced little to no growth.

Egypt, Libya, and Tunisia did not grow between 2010 and 2015 primarily due to political convulsions associated with the Arab Spring. The growth of top oil exporters (Algeria, Angola, Nigeria, Sudan) recently fell from 7.1% to 4%. Other countries, such as Ethiopia, The Democratic Republic of Congo or Ghana continue to experience incredible growth. It must be understood, therefore, that immense generalizations occur when speaking of the growth or decline of the African economy. Albeit most countries of the continent face common issues associated with their economies, their methods and resulting successes or failures in dealing with them are specific to each one individually.

Thus, generally speaking, Africa's rise has slowed in the past years, but not yet reached a halt. If an economic transformation that helps provide new, efficient technology and urban areas for employing its young population takes place, the continent may experience unprecedented growth.

### *The Issues Facing Landlocked Countries*

A landlocked country is one that lacks a direct border with the sea and is thus geographically surrounded by other countries. In Africa there are a total of 15 landlocked countries, which are as follows: Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Central African Republic, Chad, Ethiopia, Lesotho, Malawi, Mali, Niger, Rwanda, Swaziland, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. Having no maritime access and thus being required to travel through neighbouring countries entails the following difficulties:

- dependence upon transit neighbours
  - with whom they must have a good political relationship
  - that offer a high standard of transport infrastructure
  - that can assist if issues of political convulsions or natural disasters arise, which may affect the shipment
- delays due to border crossing, bottlenecks in ports or the transfer of shipment

- additional costs due to tariffs in tandem with all of the above

Overall, landlocked countries tend to struggle economically and hence have lower levels of human development than their neighbours. Ethiopia, for instance, is a clear exception to this trend, as it has proven to be the most successful and stable growing economy in the continent the previous year. Nevertheless, the listed disadvantages still apply and must be considered when seeking to boost the overall economy of Africa.

### *Plans for Industrialization*

When on 25 July 2016 the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution proclaiming the period 2016-2025 as the Third Industrial Development Decade for Africa, it noted that Africa remains “the poorest and most vulnerable region in the world,” and stressed that African countries have primary responsibility for their own economic and social development. Industrializing should lead to the solution of issues including those listed in the first part of the research paper. Thus, earlier that year, African leaders attending the “Operationalization of the 2030 Agenda for Africa’s Industrialization” event emphasized goal 9, which is to “build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation.” Specifically, they encouraged the private sector to recognize Africa’s export and domestic market potential and invited foreign investors to increase their commitments to the continent.

The key to transforming Africa’s economy probably lies with export-based industry, but when concocting a solution, the disadvantages of landlocked states as well as unpredictable threats must be considered. Such threats include climate-related hazards, political instability, and terrorism. Moreover, the transformation agenda must effectively utilize Africa’s youthful population and provide much-needed technology and improved urbanization.

In conclusion, resilient policies insuring the growth of African economies through export-based industrialization must be prepared with special considerations towards landlocked states. Though Africa is currently rising

economically, this growth must be boosted and fortified, so that much-needed improvements in social conditions can occur without major disruptions. The UN Economic Commission for Africa sees policies for industrialization as a possibility to “create wealth, reduce poverty, minimize inequalities, strengthen productive capacities, enhance social conditions of its people and achieve sustainable development.” This conference is the first major step.

### *Major Parties Involved*

**Strongest African economies by GDP:** Algeria; Angola; Egypt; Ethiopia; Kenya; Nigeria; Morocco; South Africa; Sudan; Tanzania.

**Growing African economies:** Central African Republic; Democratic Republic of Congo; Djibouti; Ethiopia; Ghana; Ivory Coast; Kenya; Mozambique; Rwanda; Senegal; Sierra Leone; Tanzania; Uganda.

**Decelerating or declining African economies:** Angola; Equatorial Guinea; Libya; Mali; Nigeria; South Africa; Sudan; Tunisia.

**Land-locked African countries:** Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Central African Republic, Chad, Ethiopia, Lesotho, Malawi, Mali, Niger, Rwanda, Swaziland, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

**Partner countries in trade:** United States of America (through AGOA); countries of the European Union (through EPA).

**Organizations for the welfare of poor African communities:** Africare; Aid for Africa; The Red Cross; UNICEF.

### *Key Events & Attempts for Improvement*

- African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), May 2000
  - to improve sub-Saharan economies as well as their relationship with the United States of America
- Economic Partnership Agreements (initiated by the Cotonou Agreement, June 2000) (EPA)

- cooperation between the European Union (EU) and the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group States (ACP), focusing on reciprocity to create a free-trade area, whilst avoiding discrimination
- US-Africa Summit, August 2014
  - discussed trade, investments, and security
- 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development adopted by the UN General Assembly, September 2015
  - a global focus on sustainability and development emphasized the importance of Africa’s economic transformation (see *Bibliography*)
- African Union Summit, July 2016
  - 27<sup>th</sup> annual; suggested tax imports to finance the African Union (see previous summits as well)
- African Economic Conference “Towards Agro-Allied Industrialization for Inclusive Growth”, December 2016

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## AFRICAN UNION RESEARCH PAPER 2

### *Political crisis in Burundi: Establishing a redistribution system for regional migrants and providing them with a social safety net*

#### *Introduction*

Burundi was thrown into a crisis, categorised by the UNHCR as level 2 emergency, when President Pierre Nkurunziza announced he would run for a third term in office. More than 300 000 people have fled Burundi to the neighbouring countries of Tanzania, Rwanda, Democratic Republic of the Congo and Uganda since the announcement in April 2015. As the political situation in Burundi does not seem to be improving, in spite of the international efforts to engage in peaceful dialogue, refugees are continuously crossing borders in order to escape the civil unrest causing the decline in economic opportunities and endangering their safety. Since there is currently no effective redistribution system in practice on an international scale, the neighbouring states are bearing the weight of an increasing refugee population, putting a strain on the host countries resources and consequentially limiting the quality of life of Burundian refugees.

#### *Definition of Key Terms*

**Regional Migrant** - A person that temporarily or permanently lives in a country in which they were not born, including people who do not necessarily flee to escape immediate danger or prosecution, yet seek a better social, political or economical situation than in the country of their origin.

**Refugee** - A person fleeing their country in order to escape danger or prosecution. Refugees are defined and protected by international law.

**Humanitarian Aid** - The material and logistic short term help seeking to safe lives and alleviate suffering of people in need, funded by donations from governments or NGOs.

**Prima facie recognition of refugee status** - Asylum seekers are granted refugee status on the basis of apparent circumstances in the country of origin, primarily practiced in the times of a crisis or an influx of asylum seekers.

### *General Overview*

#### **Historical overview of the political situation in Burundi**

Since gaining independence in 1962, Burundi has experienced several episodes of civil unrest and mass violence, referring specifically to the two genocides in the previous century and the massacre in the early 1990s that resulted in the outbreak of a civil war, which can all be attributed to the divisions of the Hutu and Tutsi ethnic groups, rooted far back in the history of Burundi and Rwanda. The twelve-year civil war has ended as The Arusha Peace Agreement was signed in 2002. This international agreement has led to the longest period of peace in Burundian history by creating a power-sharing deal for the ethnic groups within political institutions and integrating the rebel groups to the political system, allowing for a more balanced representation. However, ever since the first democratic election in 2005, president Nkurunziza has been enforcing his power and consequentially subduing democracy through legislation changes that restrain the right of freedom of speech by curbing press freedom and restricting public gatherings.

In April 2015 President Nkurunziza announced he would seek third term in office. Complaints of the opposition arguing that this was in defiance of the constitution were dismissed by the government, claiming that President Nkurunziza's first term could not be officially recognised as he was appointed by the parliament and not through a popular vote. Protestors clashed with the police force and 6 people were reported to have been killed during the first two days upon the presidential announcement. A coup was attempted by the opposition, however the armed conflict in the northern area of the country bore no consequences on the elections that were held on 21 July 2015, without the participation of the opposition that previously declared it's intention to boycott this unconstitutional election. Pierre Nkurunziza was



announced to be president for the third time, with 69,41% of the votes in favour of him.

Upon Nkurunziza's inauguration, several cases of human rights violations by the government, in some cases described as borderline crimes against humanity, have been reported by independent United Nations research. The government deals relentlessly with any implication of opposition, seemingly with no liability to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights or fear of accountability on an international scale. Human rights defenders and other members of the civil community serve as the primary targets of the systematic repression and endeavour to abate the opposition, as instances of summary executions, torture and targeted assassinations have been reported.

### **Current status of regional migrants**

A multitude of social and economic issues stem from the political instability and current civil unrest in Burundi. Placing as one of the least economically developed countries in the world, the economic situation in Burundi is degrading due to the recession of external financial support. Failing to provide a social safety net for its citizens, there are currently 4.6 million people who are food insecure in Burundi and malaria has reached its highest levels in five years. The deteriorating humanitarian situation is one of the reasons why people migrate to the neighbouring countries along with the decline in economic opportunities, lack of social support and personal safety concerns, as majority of the regional migrants state having left their home for social and political reasons.

As the political and social situation in Burundi remains unstable with no signs of improving, it is expected that citizens will continue to flee to bordering countries, especially to Tanzania that now hosts up to 180 000 refugees in three camps. The regional RRP suggests that the entire refugee population might grow to as much as 534 000 people by the end of the year, enforcing the need to establish a integrated system for refugee distribution among the host states. Borders of the neighbouring countries persist to be

open, host countries being obliged to accept any asylum-seekers that are currently granted refugee status on a prima facie basis.

### **Protection of humanitarian needs of the regional migrants**

Continuos support is needed in the host countries to provide assistance for the growing refugee population. As the crisis moves to its third year with no promise of development of the political situation in Burundi that would allow the refugees a safe return, shifting to more permanent facilities is becoming a priority in the camps. Water trucking is still necessary in some areas where groundwater levels are insufficient and new WASH (water, sanitation, hygiene) facilities need to be built to provide a more long-term solution. The largest camp in Rwanda is currently facilitating an upgrade of the shelters to be semi-durable and the other primary host countries of Burundian refugees are expected to follow.

As children and youth form the majority of the refugees fleeing Burundi, a substantial percentage being unaccompanied minors, providing education to all school-aged children is prioritised in all refugee sites, however capacities are overstretched at many. Family reunification activities hope to minimise the number of unaccompanied or misplaced minors. The need of health care services remains urgent, since refugee camps are extremely prone to communicable diseases.

For the abiding nature of the issue, self-sufficiency of refugees is promoted. Refugees are encouraged to engage in agriculture and start their own businesses in order to not only assist possible financial independence but to also increase interaction with the local community and thus advocate for integration of the refugees into the society of their host country and enhance co-existence.

## *Major Parties Involved*

### **Burundi**

In spite of the worsening economical situation and alarming humanitarian situation, the government of Burundi is not willing to participate in international dialogue regarding peace settlements or the provision of humanitarian aid for its citizens. After refusing the help of both the UN and AU in the form of armed forces, Burundi has been further distancing itself from the international community by starting the process of withdrawing from the ICC. The political situation remains unstable with no signs of improvement in the upcoming year.

### **Tanzania**

Tanzania currently hosts the majority of Burundian refugees, along with regional migrants fleeing DRC in three refugee camps located in the northwestern region of the country. The government is committed to its legal obligations to accept anybody who seeks asylum and offer protection to the refugees, however the capacities of the three camps are on the verge of being fulfilled. The issue remains that in accordance to the 2003 refugee policy, freedom of movement of the asylum-seekers in the host country is restricted, which greatly limits their ability to become self-reliant and work towards being financially independent and thus integrating themselves to the society of the host country as working citizens.

### **Rwanda**

As Rwanda experienced the Burundian refugee influx in April 2015, the government has been cooperating with the UNHCR to establish a multi-sector response. The governments policy of progressive integration of refugees to the host country communities has enabled the minors fleeing Burundi access to primary and secondary education alongside Rwanda students. Nonetheless, the constant flow of refugees from Burundi puts a strain on the

already limited infrastructure and resources, which creates tension among the host communities.

## **DRC**

Considering the fragile political situation in DRC, the level of security in DRC asylums continue to be unstable majorly due to minor conflicts among refugees of different nationalities within the asylums and the presence of armed rebel groups of Hutu ethnicity. Moreover, the dwindling resources are a matter of concern for the co-existence of refugees and DRC citizens.

### *Timeline of Key Events*

1 July 1962

Burundi claims its independence

1972

First Burundian Genocide

1992

A civil war broke out after the government announced a new constitution, lasting for 12 years.

2003

Arusha Peace agreement signed between the Tutsi controlled government and Hutu rebel groups, marking the beginning of the longest period of peace in the history of Burundi.

2005

Former leader of a rebel group Pierre Nkurunziza elected president.

April 2015

Ruling party announced President Nkurunziza would seek for a third term in office.

13 May 2015

Attempted unsuccessful coup to dispose Nkurunziza triggers a wave of protests.

### *Previous Attempts to Resolve the Issue*

The UNHCR has released a Supplementary Budget Appeal for the Burundi situation that incorporates the needs of Burundi and the major host states. The organisation's needs of USD 180 million are funded at 51% as of November 2016. The UNHCR has made conscious efforts to meet the basic needs of refugees and continuously improve the living situation in the camps by increasing their capacity, providing them with a quality water and sanitation infrastructure as well as education to children.

There is currently no effective international redistribution system for regional migrants fleeing Burundi in practice. The host states are continuously working on increasing the capacities of the refugee camps to avert overcrowding with the aid of UNHCR, as the number of people fleeing Burundi remains constant and the camps are reaching their full capacities. Transfers of refugees have been officiated merely on a national scale within the camps of the individual host states.

The international community has attempted to promote dialogue with the Burundian government, however the Ugandan President Museveni, appointed as the mediator of peace talks between Burundi and the opposition, has not yet yielded success in bringing the parties together. Moreover, the African Union authorised the deployment of peacekeepers as part of the African Protection and Prevention mission in Burundi, however the AU was forced to abandon this plan as President Nkurunziza threatened to arm against any force. The UN's proposal of sending police force of 3 000 to Burundi has also been rejected by president Nkurunziza, responding he would only accept 20 unarmed officers.

## *Appendix*

Burundi Regional Refugee Response Plan 2017

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UNHCR Regional Update - Burundi Situation #31

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