



Weekly Report

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Burundi

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- 1 Opposition Members Get Life Sentences for Protest
- 2 Parliament Rejects Proposed Constitutional Amendments

“It’s getting dangerous because the frustration has always been the cause of war. If people feel the needs of justice are not met, people try and express themselves and they crackdown, then in the end there is [an] explosion.”

Opposition Members Get Life Sentences for Protest

- On Friday, March 21st, 21 activists from the opposition group, the Movement for Solidarity and Development (MSD) were sentenced to life in prison for an armed revolt after a protest in the capital earlier this month.
- The revolt took place on March 8th when a demonstration by members of the MSD turned into a violent clash with police who fired tear gas to break up the protest.
- Political tensions in Burundi are increasing in the lead-up to the 2015 presidential elections. The revolt on March 8th led to the suspension of the MSD party for four months.
- Sources: Al Jazeera, Voice of America

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2014/03/burundi-opposition-members-get-life-sentences-2014321164445954478.html>

<http://www.voanews.com/content/political-tensions-in-burundi-simmer-after-crackdown-on-opposition/1874610.html>

Parliament Rejects Proposed Constitutional Amendments

- On the same day as the life sentences were handed down, Burundi’s ruling party failed to win parliamentary approval for constitutional changes which would have altered the current power-sharing arrangements.
- The proposed amendments included eliminating two vice presidential posts currently shared between majority Hutu and minority Tutsi ethnic groups.
- Source: Reuters

<http://uk.reuters.com/article/2014/03/21/uk-burundi-politics-idUKBREA2K1MO20140321>