

CENTRAL AFRICA: TURNING A TIDE

1. SUMMARY

Violence looms - Can We Respond in Time?

- The growing threat of a Hutu invasion of Rwanda from camps in Zaire gives a new urgency to the central African crisis. Events in fragile Burundi, as always, depend heavily on the unfolding of Rwandan events. The international community understands the urgency of the central African problem but is unable to agree on how to respond. The UN's ability to deal with the camps is hampered by an inability to agree on a new mandate, the costs of a new operation and the difficulties in finding troop contributors. If the UN cannot act in time, there may be a significant renewal of violence; even if it does, there remains a critical need to find a durable solution to the region's problems.
- New approaches are needed. The international community can have a significant influence provided that it makes clear to the parties that there will be rewards for responsible behaviour and sanctions for irresponsibility.

A Strategy for Peace and Stability

- **Short-Term:** with the end of the war in Rwanda, the humanitarian rationale for the refugee camps is gone. As soon as possible, and with the concurrence of the relief agencies, the camps should be closed according to a schedule corresponding to the opening of humanitarian way-stations inside Rwanda. This may not require changes to the existing Security Council resolutions. If international military force is needed outside Rwanda, it should be used for only a very short period of days and only to facilitate evacuation of the camps.
- **Medium-Term:** there must be a serious international effort to reconstruct basic services in Rwanda and focus attention on the political and economic situation in Burundi.
- **Long-Term:**
 - Prospects for Tutsi/Hutu reconciliation must take account of the importance of the fundamental ethnic mathematics (85 % Hutu and 14 % Tutsi) and of the difficulty in making pure western-style