



153rd GREAT LAKES POLICY FORUM

A Look Ahead: The Upcoming Burundi Elections

Thursday, April 1, 2010 from 9am - 11am

Speakers

ALMAMI CYLLAH

IFES Africa Region Director

BRIAN STOUT

USAID Desk Officer for Burundi

EDOUARD BIZIMANA

First Counselor at the Embassy of Burundi

Moderator

MAME-KHADY DIOUF

Wilson Center Africa Program Associate

Location

Johns Hopkins University
School of Advanced International Studies
Rome Auditorium, Rome Building
1619 Massachusetts Ave, NW
Washington, D.C.

The upcoming elections in Burundi represent a critical test for democracy and stability in the country. The ruling CNDD party seeks to strengthen its position, which it hopes will lead to greater stability and more freedom to enact its policies. However, some observers have expressed concern about the upcoming elections based on recalcitrance from some CNDD members as well as the expense and complexity of the Burundian electoral process. Burundi also has a large number of NGOs working on the election and a history of response to outside pressure. Will Burundi reinforce the progress it has made in recent years or will it suffer a reversal? What role will NGOs and outside organizations play in this election? What can be done to help facilitate a positive outcome for Burundi and for the region?

ALMAMI CYLLAH has more than 25 years' experience in conflict resolution, political affairs and democracy development. As former Chief of Party in Liberia he provided technical assistance to the National Election Commission (NEC) at every stage of the electoral process. IFES currently advises the NEC on issues such as the development of its electoral calendar, liaising with civil society organizations, demarcating

electoral districts and establishing procedures and protocol for party registration and candidate nomination. Cyllah also previously worked as IFES' Chief of Party in Haiti. He has field experience in Kenya and Cote d'Ivoire and has worked in Washington, D.C., as director of African Affairs for Amnesty International. Cyllah earned a bachelor's degree in politics from the Catholic University of America. He has been published in the *Washington Post*, the *Christian Science Monitor*, and *Africa Report*.

BRIAN STOUT is a Presidential Management Fellow with the Africa Bureau at the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). He serves as Country Desk Officer in the Office of East African Affairs, supporting development activities in Burundi, the Central African Republic, and Djibouti. Brian graduated from the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) with a Masters in International Affairs focusing on conflict management (his graduate thesis discussed the peace process in Burundi). He received his undergraduate degree from Amherst College.

EDOUARD BIZIMANA is a diplomat and writer. Dr Bizimana is currently the First Counselor at the Embassy of Burundi in Washington DC. As First Counselor, Edouard also serves as Deputy Chief of Mission and regularly manages the activities of the Embassy at the absence of the Head of Mission. Prior to this position, Edouard served as Deputy Chief of Protocol in the 2nd Vice-Presidency of the Republic of Burundi. Before joining the Second Vice-Presidency, he worked as Advisor to the Director General for North America, Europe and International Organizations in the Ministry of External Relations and International Relations and international Cooperation in Burundi. Edouard Bizimana graduated from International Relations Institute of Cameroon (IRIC), the University of Yaounde I (Cameroon) and the University of Burundi. His Doctorate thesis focuses on Armed conflicts and protection of fauna and flora in the Great Lakes Region (Burundi, Rwanda and Democratic Republic of Congo). His previous academic works focused on the Rwandese and Ugandan military interventions in DR Congo. Edouard Bizimana has been published in *The International Library of Poetry* and by *L'Harmattan*. He recently published a book on post-conflict diplomacy and has just completed his second book, due to come out soon. Edouard Bizimana is fluent in French, English, Kirundi and Kiswahili.

MAME KHADY DIOUF is a Program Associate with the Africa Program at the Wilson Center, working with the Program's training projects in Burundi, as well as its Washington-based publications and conferences. Prior to joining the Wilson Center, Mame Khady completed her Masters in International Affairs focusing on African Affairs. The program focused on issues such as governance, conflict resolution, development and leadership. Her past experience includes a research internship with the National Council of Negro Women's (NCNW) International Development Center. As a Research Intern, she contributed to a report documenting the partnership between (NCNW) and African women's organizations. She grew up in Senegal and is fluent in French, English and Wolof. She has a Masters in International Affairs, Comparative and Regional Studies: Africa from the School of International Service at American University and a BA in Political Science from the University of Michigan.

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