

Burundi Unbowed Despite US Interventionism in Central Africa

By [Ann Garrison](#)

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Region: [sub-Saharan Africa](#)

The tiny East African nation of Burundi remains unbowed despite pressure from Western officials.

Transcript:

KPFA Weekend News Anchor Sharon Sobotta: Burundi's President Pierre Nkurunziza, speaking to the press yesterday, remained firm in his rejection of a proposed African Union peacekeeping force in his country. KPFA's Ann Garrison has more.



President Pierre Nkurunziza, center, US Ambassador to the UN Samantha Power to his left, Angolan Ambassador to the UN Ismael A. Gaspar Martins to his right Photo: Reuters

KPFA/Ann Garrison: Burundian President Pierre Nkurunziza told a visiting delegation of the UN Security Council that the African Union "must respect Burundi as a member state, and we must be consulted." In mid-December last year, the African Union Peace and Security Council voted to deploy 5,000 peacekeeping forces in Burundi without the government's consent.



Burundi borders Rwanda to the north, the Democratic Republic of the Congo to the west, and Tanzania to the east. UN officials and the NGO Refugees International have documented Rwanda's recruitment of Burundian refugees into a new rebel army.

However, international law prohibits the deployment without a two-thirds vote of African Union member states, and the approval of the UN Security Council, whose five permanent members, China, France, Russia, the UK and the US, have veto power. The Burundian government was no doubt encouraged by remarks of the Russian and Chinese Ambassadors on the importance of protecting Burundi's national sovereignty.

UN Ambassador to the US Samantha Power expressed her disappointment. In Berkeley, for [Pacifica](#), [KPFA](#) and [AfrobeatRadio](#), I'm Ann Garrison.

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