

8-9-2005

### Rwanda: The Preventable Genocide

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## Rawson, David P.

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**From:** SYS.Administrators.OCHA@intlhub.un.org on behalf of rw\_viaemail [rw\_viaemail@un.org]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 09, 2005 4:13 PM  
**To:** Rawson, David P.  
**Subject:** Rwanda: The Preventable Genocide

David Burns invites to read

Preventable genocide report

Source: Organisation for African Unity  
Source Data: 07/07/2000

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY Mandate

E.S.1. The International Panel of Eminent Personalities to Investigate the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda and the Surrounding Events was created in 1998 by the Organization of African Unity (OAU) with a mandate "to investigate the 1994 genocide in Rwanda and the surrounding events in the Great Lakes Region... as part of efforts aimed at averting and preventing further wide-scale conflicts in the... Region." The OAU asked the panel "to establish the facts about how such a grievous crime was conceived, planned, and executed, to look at the failure to enforce the [United Nations] Genocide Convention in Rwanda and in the Great Lakes Region, and to recommend measures aimed at redressing the consequences of the genocide and at preventing any possible recurrence of such a crime."

E.S.2. The Panel was asked specifically to investigate the 1993 Arusha Peace Agreement, the 1994 killing of Rwandan President Juvenal Habyarimana and the genocide that followed, and the subsequent refugee crisis that culminated in the overthrow of the Mobutu regime in Zaire. It was also directed to investigate the role, before, during, and after the genocide, of the UN and its agencies, the OAU, "internal and external forces," and non-governmental organizations. The Panel was also mandated to investigate "what African and non-African leaders and governments individually or collectively could have done to avert the genocide."

### Before independence

E.S.3. It is possible to identify the key steps that led from the late pre-colonial period to the genocide a full century later. There was nothing inexorable about this process. At its heart was the deliberate choice of successive elites to deepen the cleavages between Rwanda's two main ethnic groups, to dehumanize the group out of power, and to legitimate the use of violence against that group. In the process, a culture of impunity gradually became entrenched.

E.S.4. It was under Mwami ("King") Kigeri IV Rwabugiri, a Tutsi who ruled during the late 1800s, that the chief characteristics of modern Rwanda were fixed for the next 100 years. A powerful head of a centralized state, dominated first by Tutsi until 1960 and then by Hutu until the 1994 genocide, provided firm direction to an elaborate series of subordinate structures. In the colonial era, under German and then Belgian rule, Roman Catholic missionaries, inspired by the overtly racist theories of 19th century Europe, concocted a destructive ideology of ethnic cleavage and racial ranking that attributed superior qualities to the country's Tutsi minority. These 15 per cent were approaching, however gradually, the exalted level of white people, as contrasted with the declared brutishness and innate inferiority of the "Bantu" (Hutu) majority. Since the missionaries ran the colonial-era schools, these pernicious values were systematically transmitted to several generations of Rwandans, along with more conventional Catholic teachings.

E.S.5. The alleged differences between ethnic groups were arbitrary and baseless, yet they soon took on a life of their own. The Belgians made the Mwami's complex structures more rigid and ethnically inflexible. They institutionalized the cleavage between the two groups, culminating in the issuance to every Rwandan of an ethnic identity card. This card system was maintained for more than 60 years until in a tragic irony it became the

instrument that enabled Hutu killers during the genocide to identify the Tutsi, who were its original beneficiaries.

E.S.6. While it served them, the Tutsi elite was only too pleased to believe in their own natural superiority and to run the country for its Belgian patrons. The Hutu majority was treated with a harshness appropriate to a lower "caste." Soon many Hutu came to agree that the two ethnic groups, distinguished mostly by vocation in prior centuries, were indeed fundamentally dissimilar in nature and irreconcilable in practice. Tutsi came to be demonized by the Hutu as a foreign invading power with no entitlements in Rwanda.

E.S.7. As the colonial era drew to its close during the 1950s, democracy throughout Europe's former colonies in Africa became synonymous with majority rule. The tragedy of Rwanda is that the majority came to be defined by ethnicity alone. A national independence movement, an umbrella under which all citizens could unite to oppose colonial rule, failed to thrive in Rwanda. Voices of moderation and inclusiveness were drowned out by extremists advocating ethnic exclusivity.

E.S.8. Yet there had been little open violence before the independence period. Hutu were unquestionably considered the "serfs," but only some Tutsi benefited from colonialism. In fact, many Tutsi led lives no better than the Hutu peasantry. Then, as always, the notion of ethnic homogeneity was contradicted by the divisions within both Hutu and Tutsi communities.

E.S.9. While Hutu resented their status and treatment, some intermarriage took place between the two groups which, after all, shared a common language, religion, geography and, often as not, appearance. Tutsi cattle herders and Hutu farmers complemented each other. Hatred between the two groups needed careful nurturing. Until political parties formed on the basis of ethnic origins, there were no massacres of either ethnic group by the other.

E.S.10. Instead of an independence struggle directed against their colonial masters, the Hutu party targeted their masters' surrogates: the Tutsi. Surprisingly enough, Hutu politicians now found themselves supported by the Belgians and the Catholic church, both reversing their original stance once they realized Hutu rule was inevitable. This support continued even when violence broke out. Between 1959 and 1967, 20,000 Tutsi were killed, and 300,000 fled in terror to neighbouring countries.

The first Rwandan governments.

E.S.11. The newly independent government of Grégoire Kayibanda made its colours apparent from the start. As early as 1961, the United Nations reported that, "The developments of these last 18 months have brought about the racial dictatorship of one party. ... An oppressive system has been replaced by another one." The government pleased no one, not even the large majority of its fellow Hutu. Life for the peasantry remained precarious, while a small Hutu elite from the north and northwest grew increasingly dissatisfied with its marginal role in the government.

E.S.12. As pressure grew on Kayibanda, he unleashed ethnic terror once again, hoping to save his regime by uniting the Hutu against a common Tutsi "enemy." At the same moment, ethnic cleavages were reinforced, neither for the first nor last time, by events south of the border in Burundi. After an appalling massacre in 1972 of the Hutu majority by the Tutsi government, terrorized Burundian Hutu flooded into Rwanda, where they inflamed ethnic tensions and joined in anti-Tutsi attacks. While relatively few Tutsi were killed, many thousands joined their ethnic kin in exile.

E.S.13. But Kayibanda's exploitation of ethnic fears failed to save his regime. He was replaced in 1973 by Juvenal Habyarimana, head of the Rwandan army. For about the next 15 years, Rwanda enjoyed good times, with little ethnic violence. Habyarimana opened the country to the world, and efficient, stable little Rwanda soon became the darling of the West's burgeoning development industry. As for the Tutsi, first and foremost, they were now safe for the first time since ethnic violence had broken out in the late 1950s. While it is true they were allowed to play only a marginal role in politics, were shut out of the military, and were limited by quota to 10 per cent of education placements, they thrived in the public sector and were successful in the liberal professions as well as some public service institutions.

E.S.14. More than 60 per cent of Rwandans were Catholics, and the church remained a

trusted ally and reliable bulwark of the Habyarimana regime, giving it legitimacy and comfort until the end. In common with the foreign governments and aid agencies that were involved with Rwanda, church leaders rarely challenged the ethnic basis of public life or Habyarimana's one-party military dictatorship.

E.S.15. By the late 1980s, however, all economic progress ended. Rwanda's economic integration with the international economy had been briefly advantageous; now the inherent risks of excessive dependence were felt. Government revenues declined as coffee and tea prices dropped. International financial institutions imposed programs that exacerbated inflation, unemployment, land scarcity, and unemployment. Young men were hit particularly hard. The mood of the country was raw.

E.S.16. It was at this vulnerable moment, on October 1, 1990, that Rwanda was invaded. The children of the Tutsi refugees who had earlier fled from the Kibiyanda pogroms into Uganda now emerged as a rebel army, the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF). Often scapegoated and persecuted while in exile in Uganda, Rwandan Tutsi also remained unwelcome back in Rwanda. According to Habyarimana, his country was too poor and had too little land to accommodate the exiled community. If their right to return home peacefully were thus denied, the rebels had decided, it was time to use more forceful means.

E.S.17. The October 1990 RPF invasion of Rwanda and the Government's response constituted a giant step on the road to genocide. Habyarimana at that moment had a choice. Contrary to RPF expectations, few Rwandans of any background welcomed these unknown "Ugandan" soldiers. A united front among all Rwandans against outside invaders would have been possible, but an opportunistic and threatened Habyarimana government chose the opposite course. With great deliberation, it awakened the sleeping dogs of ethnic division. The Tutsi were portrayed as alien invaders. Any question of class or regional divisions among Hutu was to be submerged in a common front against the intruders. All Tutsi were denounced as fifth columnists, secret supporters of the RPF. Anti-Tutsi propaganda, largely muted for the previous 17 years, was unleashed anew.

E.S.18. At the same time, Habyarimana called on his foreign friends for military help. Rwanda was a French-speaking country, and the response from France was the most positive. Its forces prevented a swift RPF victory over the inept Rwandan army, and French soldiers and advisers remained in the country counselling Habyarimana's people politically and militarily on keeping these "anglo-saxon" interlopers from English-speaking Uganda at bay. The Habyarimana government learned it could always count on the unconditional public and private support of the French President and government.

E.S.19. Immediately after the RPF raid, the OAU threw itself into peacemaking and attempts to resolve the conflict. For the OAU in Rwanda and then in the Great Lakes Region, the 1990s were a time of well-meant initiatives, incessant meetings, commitments made, and commitments broken. In the end, however, the OAU as such had the resources and the power to do nothing more than bring adversaries together, hope first that they would agree, and then hope they did not violate their agreements.

E.S.20. The impact of the RPF raid was devastating in every way. RPF advances, together with the government's anti-Tutsi propaganda drove terrified Hutu into internal settlement camps. In a short time, close to 300,000 Rwandans had been driven from or had fled their land either to become "internally displaced persons" or refugees abroad. In early 1993, another large-scale RPF attack led to a further million, mostly Hutu, internally displaced persons. The country was in turmoil. The ailing economy had little chance to recover. Anti-Tutsi violence, organized by the government or its allies, spread like wildfire, while RPF insurgents similarly showed little restraint, dealing brutally with Hutu civilians in the areas they "liberated."

E.S.21. Within the Habyarimana government, real power increasingly resided with a small faction of insiders from the northwest called the Akazu ("the little house"). It was also widely known as "le Clan de Madame," since its core was the President's wife and family and close associates, who were the chief beneficiaries of the corruption that characterized the regime. As the economic collapse significantly reduced the available spoils of power and called into question the very legitimacy of the regime, the Akazu began playing on ethnic cleavages to divert attention from serious divisions among the Hutu; the main division was between those from the northwest and everyone else.

E.S.22. This should not be taken to mean that planning the genocide was initiated at a precise, documented moment. It is true that a campaign of both physical and rhetorical

violence against the Tutsi continued to escalate from the 1990 RPF raid until the genocide started in April 1994. It is true this campaign was organized and promoted. It is also true that at some point in this period these anti-Tutsi activities turned into a strategy for genocide. But that exact point is unknown.

E.S.23. What is known, however, is that from October 1, 1990, Rwanda endured three and a half years of violent anti-Tutsi incidents, each of which in retrospect can be interpreted as a deliberate step in a vast conspiracy culminating in the shooting down, on April 6, 1994, of President Habyarimana's plane and the subsequent unleashing of the genocide. But all such interpretations remain speculative. There is no generally accepted version of the plane crash, nor can it be demonstrated that the countless manifestations of anti-Tutsi sentiment in these years were all part of a diabolical master plan. The evidence most plausibly suggests that the idea of genocide could have emerged only gradually, beginning after the 1990 RPF invasion, continuing possibly through 1991 and 1992, and accelerating in determination through 1993 and into 1994.

E.S.24. Later, when it was finally over, a major international argument broke out over who knew what about the events unfolding in Rwanda. There can be no debate on this question: The facts speak for themselves. The world that mattered to Rwanda - its Great Lakes Region neighbours, the UN, all the major western powers - knew exactly what was happening and that it was being masterminded at the highest levels of the Rwandan government. These observers knew this was no senseless case of "Hutu killing Tutsi and Tutsi killing Hutu," as the genocide was sometimes dismissively described. They knew that a terrible fate had befallen Rwanda. They even knew that some individuals in Rwanda were talking openly of eliminating all Tutsi, although few observers could then contemplate that an actual genocide was even conceivable.

E.S.25. Anti-Tutsi violence, it was widely known, was revived immediately after the RPF invasion, when some organized anti-Tutsi massacres began (and ended only when the genocide itself ended). Massacres of Tutsi were carried out in October 1990, January 1991, February 1991, March 1992, August 1992, January 1993, March 1993, and February 1994. On each occasion, scores of Tutsi were killed by mobs and militiamen associated with different political parties, sometimes with the involvement of the police and army, incited by the media, directed by local government officials, and encouraged by some national politicians.

E.S.26. As the terror heightened, the organizers learned that they could not only massacre large numbers of people quickly and efficiently, they could get away with it. A culture of impunity developed as the conspirators grew bolder. Extremist army officers conspired with the circles surrounding Habyarimana and the Akazu to form secret societies and Latin American-style death squads known as "Amasasu" (bullets) and the "Zero Network." They did not long remain secret; in 1992, their existence and connections were publicly exposed.

E.S.27. But contrary forces were at work at the same time. Pressure for democratization from both within and outside the country forced Habyarimana to accept multiparty politics. A host of new parties emerged, most of them Hutu, wanting to participate in the process. However, one of these new parties, the Coalition Pour la Défense de la République (CDR), represented Hutu radicals and had links to the death squads. Worse, parties organized their own youth militia, the most notorious being the "interahamwe," formed by Habyarimana's own Mouvement Républicain National pour la Démocratie et Développement (MRND). At the same time, new hate-propagating media sprang up, most infamously a radio station calling itself Radio-Télévision libre des mille collines, sponsored by the Akazu faction. While his militia terrorized opponents and beat up Tutsi and his radio station incited ethnic hatred and violence, Habyarimana nonetheless, and with great reluctance, agreed to accept a coalition government.

E.S.28. Immediately the new ministers joined with the OAU and western powers to pressure Habyarimana to agree to negotiations with the RPF in Arusha, Tanzania. In August 1993, after long, drawn-out sessions, agreements were reached on a series of key issues, including power sharing within the government and military and the future of refugees. But these were never implemented. Ultimately, the Arusha process backfired. The more it appeared that power and the limited spoils of office would have to be shared, not only with other Hutu parties but also with the RPF, the more determined became Akazu insiders to share nothing with anyone.

E.S.29. At the same moment, a deadly new weapon was unexpectedly delivered into the hands

of the Rwandan Hutu. The assassination in October 1993 of Burundi's democratically elected Hutu President Melchior Ndadaye and the appalling massacres that followed were taken by many Hutu as final proof that power-sharing between Tutsi and Hutu was forever doomed: The Tutsi could never be trusted. "Hutu Power," as an explicit and public organizing concept, was the immediate consequence of the Burundi upheaval. Large Hutu Power rallies attracted members of all parties attesting to the new reality that ethnic solidarity trumped party allegiances. Political life, in these last turbulent months before the genocide, was re-organized strictly around the two opposing ethnic poles.

E.S.30. As the conspiracy thus widened and deepened, so did knowledge of the conspirators' intentions. Virtually everyone in Rwanda associated with the UN, the diplomatic community, or human rights groups, knew about death lists, accelerating massacres, and threats to opposition politicians. International arms traders worked overtime behind the scenes. Rwanda's capital, Kigali, resembled an arms bazaar, with modern weaponry easily available in the city's markets. The UN military mission uncovered a high-level interahamwe informant, whose revelations led UN commander General Romeo Dallaire to send his famous fax of January 11, 1994 to the UN's headquarters in New York. In his fax Dallaire reported that "Jean-Pierre [the interahamwe informer] has been ordered to register all Tutsi in Kigali. He suspects it is for their extermination. Example he gave was that in 20 minutes his personnel could kill up to 1,000 Tutsi."

E.S.31. When it was finally unleashed, only three months later, the violence was organized and co-ordinated. Its goal was explicit: genocide. A clique of Rwandan Hutu supremacists planned to mobilize the Hutu people with the express intention of exterminating all Tutsi in the country, including women and children. The rest of the world knew that a great disaster loomed for Rwanda but did not envisage the possibility that the radicals would resort to genocide. They were soon proved wrong.

The external actors before the genocide

E.S.32. At the same time, several outside actors carry a heavy responsibility for the events now unfolding. Within Rwanda itself, those with the heaviest responsibility were the Catholic and Anglican hierarchies and the French government, all supporters of the Habyarimana government. Church leaders failed to use their unique moral position among the overwhelmingly Christian population to denounce ethnic hatred and human rights abuse. The French government was guilty of the same failure at the elite level. Its unconditional public backing of the Habyarimana government constituted a major disincentive for the radicals to make concessions or to think in terms of compromise. Though some French officials knew that many of their clients at the highest echelons of the Rwandan regime were guilty of human rights violations, they failed to use their influence to demand that such violations stop. The radicals drew the obvious encouraging lesson: They could get away with anything.

E.S.33. At the UN, the Security Council, led unremittingly by the United States, simply did not care enough about Rwanda to intervene appropriately. What makes the Security Council's betrayal of its responsibility even more intolerable is that the genocide was in no way inevitable. First, it could have been prevented entirely. Then, even once it was allowed to begin, the destruction could have been significantly mitigated. All that was required was a reasonable-sized international military force with a strong mandate to enforce the Arusha agreements. Nothing of the kind was ever authorized by the Security Council either before or during the genocide.

E.S.34. The US has formally apologized for its failure to prevent the genocide. President Clinton insists that his failure was a function of ignorance. The facts show, however, that the American government knew precisely what was happening, not least during the months of the genocide. But domestic politics took priority over the lives of helpless Africans. After losing 18 soldiers in Somalia in October 1993, the US was unwilling to participate in any further peacekeeping missions, and was largely opposed to the Security Council's authorizing any new serious missions at all, with or without American participation.

E.S.35. In October 1993, the first UN mission to Rwanda (UNAMIR), was set up, notable mostly for its weak mandate and minimal capacity. No amount of credible early warnings could persuade either the members of the Security Council to treat the mission seriously or the UN Secretariat to authorize the mission to interpret its mandate flexibly. The single occasion in the life of UNAMIR when it was authorized to go beyond its passive observer mandate was at the very outbreak of the genocide, when several European nations

evacuated their nationals. UNAMIR was in this case authorized not only to assist the evacuation, but also to go beyond its mandate, if that were required to assure the safety of foreign nationals. Never was such permission granted for the protection of Rwandans.

E.S.36. The significance of the Security Council's action should not be underestimated: Its refusal to sanction a serious mission made the genocide more likely. The feeble UN effort helped persuade the Hutu radicals that they had nothing to fear from the outside world, regardless of their deeds. This assessment proved only too accurate, as will be described later.

#### The genocide

E.S.37. The rockets that brought down President Habyarimana's plane on April 6, 1994, became the catalyst for one of the great calamities of our age. After the chaos of the first hours following the plane crash ended, the government military structure built since the 1990 RPF invasion of Rwanda was used by the interim Hutu Power government and the Rwandan military leaders to execute the genocide, as well as to fight a civil war. It could now be seen clearly that the instigators of genocide had an overall strategy they implemented with scrupulous planning and organization. They had at their disposal control of the levers of government, highly motivated soldiers and militia, the means to kill vast numbers of people, the capacity to identify and kill the victims, and tight control of the media to disseminate the right messages both inside and outside the country.

E.S.38. When the genocide ended, little more than 100 days later, between a half -million and 800,000 women, children and men - the vast majority of them Tutsi - lay dead. Thousands more were raped, tortured, and maimed for life. Victims were treated with sadistic cruelty and suffered unimaginable agony.

E.S.39. The attacks had many targets. The priority list for elimination included government and opposition members; Hutu moderates, thousands of whom were slaughtered without mercy in the first days; critics such as journalists and human rights activists; any Tutsi seen as a community leader, including professionals, political activists, lawyers, and teachers; priests, nuns, and other clergy who were Tutsi or who sheltered intended victims.

E.S.40. Together, military leaders and the new interim government of Hutu Power supporters sworn in after the crash made the overall decisions, while Rwanda's elaborate governing structure implemented the genocide with gruesome efficiency. All received indispensable support from the Hutu leadership of the Catholic and Anglican churches. With some heroic exceptions, church leaders played a conspicuously scandalous role in these months, at best remaining silent or explicitly neutral. This stance was easily interpreted by ordinary Christians as an implicit endorsement of the killings, as was the close association of church leaders with the leaders of the genocide. Perhaps this helps explain the greatest mystery about the genocide: the terrible success of Hutu Power in making so many ordinary people accomplices in genocide. In no other way could so many human beings have been killed so swiftly.

E.S.41. Because of the nature of the event, it has always been difficult to establish the numbers killed in the genocide. The highest persuasive figure for Tutsi killed seems to be 800,000, the lowest, 500,000. Even if the most conservative figure is used, it still means that over three-quarters of the entire population registered as Tutsi were systematically killed in just over 100 days. As well, millions of Rwandan Hutu became internally displaced within the country or fled to become refugees in neighbouring countries.

#### The world during the genocide

E.S.42. Until the day the genocide ended with the RPF's military victory in the civil war, the UN, the governments of the US, France, and Belgium, African governments, and the OAU, all failed to define the massacres as a full-blown genocide. All continued to recognize members of the genocidaire government as legitimate official representatives of Rwanda. All except the French government retained a neutral public stance between a government practising genocide and that government's sole adversary, the RPF. In practice, however, neutrality allowed the genocide to happen. Once the genocide began, the US repeatedly and deliberately undermined all attempts to strengthen the UN military presence in Rwanda. Belgium became an unexpected ally in this goal. On Day Two of the crisis, the day after the April 6, 1994, plane crash that killed President Habyarimana, 10

Belgian soldiers were murdered by Rwandan soldiers. As the radicals had anticipated, Belgium immediately decided to pull out all its troops, leaving the 2,000 Tutsi they were protecting at a school site to be slaughtered within hours. The Belgian government decided that its shameful retreat would be at least tempered if it were shared by others and strenuously lobbied to disband UNAMIR entirely. Although the US supported the idea, it was too outrageous to pursue. Instead, with the genocide taking tens of thousands of lives daily, the Security Council, ignoring the vigorous opposition of the OAU and African governments, chose to cut the UN forces in half at the exact moment they needed massive reinforcement. As the horrors accelerated, the Council did authorize a stronger mission, UNAMIR II, but once again the US did all in its power to undermine its effectiveness. In the end, not one single additional soldier or piece of military hardware reached the country before the genocide ended.

E.S.43. The French government, for its part, remained openly hostile to the RPF throughout the genocide. In June, after two months of conflict that started with the fatal plane crash, the French government, with the surprising concurrence of the Security Council, sent a force to Rwanda. Called Opération Turquoise, it soon created a safe zone in the southwest of the country. As the RPF advanced, frightened Hutu peasants escaped to the protection and safety of this zone, but so too did a significant number of government and military leaders involved in the genocide as well as many Rwandan soldiers and militia. All the genocide leaders, soldiers, and militia who succeeded in reaching the French safe zone were then permitted to cross the border into eastern Zaire, joining there with fellow genocidaires who had escaped through other routes. All were ready to resume their war against the new government in Kigali that had replaced Hutu Power. The French troops pulled out in August 1994, a month after the new government was sworn in.

E.S.44. The facts are not in question: A small number of major actors could directly have prevented, halted, or reduced the slaughter. They include France in Rwanda itself; the US at the Security Council; Belgium, whose soldiers knew they could save countless lives if they were allowed to remain in the country; and Rwanda's church leaders. In the bitter words of the commanders of the UN's military mission, the "international community has blood on its hands."

E.S.45. In the years since, the leaders of the UN, the US, Belgium, and the Anglican church have all apologized for their failures to stop the genocide. No apology has yet come from the French government or the Catholic church. Nor has any responsible government or institution suggested that Rwanda is owed restitution for these failures, and in no single case has any responsible individual resigned in protest or been held to account for his or her actions during this period.

#### Rwanda after the genocide

E.S.46. When the war and the genocide ended on July 18, 1994, the situation in Rwanda was almost indescribably grim. Rarely had a people anywhere had to face so many seemingly insuperable obstacles with so few resources. Their physical and psychological scars are likely to linger for decades.

E.S.47. The country was wrecked, a wasteland. Three-quarters of Rwanda's original population of seven million inhabitants had been killed, displaced, or had fled. Of these victims, as many as 15 per cent were dead, two million were internally displaced, and another two million had become refugees. Many of those who remained had suffered greatly. Large numbers had been tortured and wounded. Many women had been raped and humiliated, some becoming infected with HIV/AIDS. Ninety per cent of the children who survived had at the least witnessed bloodshed. An entire nation was both brutalized and traumatized. They were, in their own phrase, "the walking dead."

E.S.48. This was the situation a new, inexperienced government had to face. Its challenges were monumental and its strategies not always convincing. While it called itself a Government of National Unity, most observers have always been convinced that real power in the land, political and military, has been exercised by a small group of the original "RPF Tutsi." Some saw a government not trusted by its people and a people not trusted by their government.

E.S.49. Nor, for very compelling reasons, did the new government trust the international community. Yet it immediately found itself overwhelmingly dependent on western nations, international agencies, and financial institutions to begin reconstruction. Given its past record, the world's response to Rwanda seemed far from optimistic or wholly anal-



ES.0. T mkematers worse, only months after the genocide ended, many of the foreigners who had returned to help with re-building began to argue that Rwandans ought to get on with the task of rebuilding their society. "Quit dwelling on the past and concentrate on rebuilding for the future," Rwandans were earnestly advised. Within six months of the end of the genocide, relief workers were already saying, "Yes, the genocide happened, but it's time to get over it and move on."

E.S.51. It was not so easy then, nor is it now. Among an endless host of problems, highly complex questions and dilemmas of justice, guilt, and reconciliation haunt Rwanda to this day. The UN set up an International Criminal Tribunal in Arusha, Tanzania, and Rwanda has its own courts. In both cases, the process of trying accused genocidaires is long, laborious, and frustrating. Only seven convictions have been handed down in Arusha after five years of work, while in Rwanda only some 2,000 cases have been disposed of. At least 120,000 Hutu rot in prison in appalling circumstances, often without proper charges. At the present rate it is estimated it will take anywhere between two and four centuries to try all those in detention. The Rwandan government has developed a new procedure called "gacaca," lower-level tribunals that attempt to blend traditional and contemporary mechanisms to expedite the justice process in a way that promotes reconciliation. The impact of gacaca remains to be seen, and as a process it certainly needs substantial external resources to function properly.

E.S.52. In the meantime, questions of justice and reconciliation, perplexing in any post-conflict situation let alone a genocide, will remain to bedevil government decisions and popular expectations. Reconciliation is not just a matter to be assigned to the justice system. All governmental institutions and policies must foster a culture of reconciliation, and all opposition to government must function in the same manner. This is no easy task, given the reality of a badly polarized country. In the words of one scholar, "The Tutsi want justice above all else and the Hutu want democracy above all else. The minority fears democracy. The majority fears justice. The minority fears the demand for democracy is a mask for finishing an unfinished genocide. The majority fears the demand for justice is a minority ploy to usurp power forever." Somehow, justice and democracy must both prevail, and ethnicity must stop being the sole element in determining a Rwandan's interests and identity.

#### The regional consequences

E.S.53. While these questions absorbed Rwandans internally, beyond its borders the genocide had created another monumental crisis. Two million citizens fled the conflict in every direction: more than a half-million east to Tanzania, more than a quarter-million south to Burundi, and most dramatically, at least 1.2 million west to the eastern Kivu region of Zaire. At the same time, much of the leadership and many of the troops and militia of the genocide had escaped from Rwanda into eastern Zairian refugee camps, where they had unlimited access to weapons. This was a sure-fire formula for disaster.

E.S.54. The international media, which had first ignored and then largely misinterpreted the genocide as nothing more than tribes fighting tribes, now made the Kivu refugee camps a universal cause célèbre. Foreign aid and foreign aid workers flooded in. Unfortunately, the Ex-FAR (the former Rwandan army) and the militia had almost completely taken over the camps and were benefiting from the work of the humanitarian community. Genuine refugee needs could be met only when the non-governmental agencies finished serving the demands of the military controlling the camps.

E.S.55. The goals of Hutu Power were transparent and well known to everyone involved in dealing with the Kivu crisis. Hutu Power was determined to overthrow the Kigali government. Almost immediately after their leaders resettled in the Zairian refugee camps, Hutu Power supremacists started to raid back into Rwanda, adding yet another major emergency for the Kigali government to deal with. Widespread demands for the international community to disarm the killers went unheeded. Once again, the leaders of the Security Council badly failed Rwanda. In some ways they actually added, once again, to Rwanda's woes. The French government, with tacit American approval, supported Zaire's President Mobutu as the only person who could help with the refugee crisis in his country. In fact, important groups in the Zairian government became the primary supplier of arms to the Ex-FAR and militia, although many other countries and groups were involved in weapons trading as well.

E.S.56. The consequences for Africa of these international decisions were largely

foreseeable and wholly disastrous. The post-genocide Rwandan government had long made it abundantly clear that it would not forever tolerate the camps of eastern Zaire being used as launching pads for the genocidaires' return. By late 1996, the Kigali government had had enough. Hostility among Zairians to the many former Rwandan Tutsi lived in Zaire's Kivu region had increased ominously, and the Rwandan government secretly began training young Tutsi men in the region. Under the flag of an alliance of anti-Mobutu Zairians, and with the active support of Uganda, the Rwandan army launched a vicious attack on the entire complex of Hutu refugee camps in the Kivu region in October and November, 1996. A flood of refugees fled back into Rwanda, but the cost in human life was enormous. Large numbers of other camp dwellers fled west, deeper into Zaire. Some of these were genuine refugees, while some were EX-FAR and interahamwe. Led by the Rwandan army, the anti-Mobutu alliance pursued them ruthlessly, killing many. In the process, they perpetrated atrocious human rights abuses.

E.S.57. But the military action soon spread far beyond eastern Zaire. The anti-Mobutu alliance, led still by the Rwandan army and bolstered by the forces of Uganda, Angola and Burundi, now set its sites on Mobutu, launching what proved to be the first Congo war. In May 1997, only months later, Mobutu fled, and the government in Kinshasa fell. But there was to be no happy ending to the saga. The new head of Zaire (renamed the Democratic Republic of the Congo [DRC]) Laurent Kabila, soon clashed with his Rwandan advisers. In July 1998, little more than a year after the Rwandans had helped him become president, the Rwandan and Ugandan military were thrown out of the DRC by Kabila.

E.S.58. Within days they returned as an enemy force. The second Congo war in two years now began; it almost immediately escalated to continental dimensions. Directly or indirectly, some one-fifth of African governments and armies from across the continent are involved, as well as perhaps a dozen or more armed groups. The alliances between and among these groups, with their varied and conflicting interests, has been bewildering. The situation is further endlessly complicated by the DRC's enormous mineral resources - an irresistible lure for governments, rogue gangs and powerful corporations alike - and by the continuing problem of arms proliferation sponsored by governments throughout the world as well as a multitude of unscrupulous private hustlers. In July 1999, one year after the second Congo war began, the Lusaka agreement on a cease-fire and peace process was signed. Although the cease-fire has been repeatedly violated since, attempts to implement a genuine peace continue.

E.S.59. The original Rwanda catastrophe shows that what is now required in the DRC is a very large UN military mission with a mandate to enforce the Lusaka agreement. Yet what has been authorized by the Security Council is a modest monitoring mission, and even it is not to be deployed unless peace and co-operation among conflicting forces break out. The consequence, as OAU officials point out, is that the international community is only willing to intervene when it is not needed, a reflection of Africa's marginalized status within the international community. If, however, the governments now at war with each other in central Africa were prepared to turn their forces over to a UN mission, the moral pressure on the rest of the world to offer logistic support would be considerably increased.

Rwanda and the region today

E.S.60. The dilemma for the region is clear. Rwanda will not retreat from DRC so long as Ex-FAR and interahamwe are free to continue destabilizing the present regime. But so long as the conflict continues, reconciliation and reconstruction in Rwanda will be significantly retarded. The Rwandan government can hardly be expected to let its guard down against its mortal enemies. But in the government's determination to be vigilant, innocent Hutu are killed, and abuses of human right occur. Tutsi-Hutu tensions are inexorably heightened. Scarce funds are diverted to non-productive functions. Without peace, the chances of success for the government's ambitious initiatives for national reconciliation are seriously threatened.

E.S.61. This reality is equally true for Burundi and the DRC. While Rwanda, Burundi, and the DRC each has its own multiple challenges to meet, their interconnectedness can hardly be overestimated. Without peace, their futures are all jeopardized, with incalculable consequences not only for their own citizens but also for the entire continent. Beyond domestic solutions to domestic problems, therefore, must be found regional solutions to regional problems.

E.S.62. Predicting the future is not easy. Looking at Rwanda itself, it is possible to be

either relatively optimistic or quite pessimistic. In many ways, the progress the country has made since the 1994 genocide is remarkable. The ubiquitous devastation is no longer apparent. The country is beginning to think in terms of future development instead of emergency assistance. To the superficial observer, Rwanda has returned to normality.

E.S.63. At best, however, that status simply makes Rwanda a desperately poor, underdeveloped country, now eleventh from the bottom in the United Nations Development Programme's human development rankings. But in reality, the legacy of the genocide can be found in every aspect of society and governance. Just as there is no statute of limitations for genocidaires, so is there none for their victims.

E.S.64. Old ethnic tensions simmer beneath the surface. Political machinations are invariably dissected for their ethnic implications, whether they exist or not. The hold on real power by the "Ugandans," as the RPF is also still known, alienates Hutu moderates who courageously want to work with them. Tutsi who have returned home from elsewhere in the diaspora feel themselves underrepresented and neglected by the present government. This view is shared, surprisingly enough, by genocide survivors. There is also much regional antagonism to the government's insistence on its right to chase alleged genocidaires across any border it chooses. These "soldiers without frontiers" reinforce a widening conspiracy theory (grounded ironically in the same 19th century European racism that originally rigidified ethnic differences in Rwanda) positing a so-called pan-Tutsi plot to impose domination over the authentic "Bantus" of Africa (such as the Hutu). The present Rwandan government appears to be caught up in a militaristic logic likely to lead Rwanda and the region into deeper conflict. It is necessary to change this logic in order to strengthen the peace process.

E.S.65. Rwanda's situation goes well beyond the usual litany of deep-rooted social and economic challenges faced by any poor country with scarceland and a booming population. It must never be forgotten that we are dealing here with the extraordinary circumstances of a post-genocidal society. The burden of the onerous Rwandan government debt is exacerbated by the knowledge that it was largely incurred by the previous Habyarimana and interim governments for weapons that were ultimately used against the moderate Hutu and Tutsi in the genocide. There are, as well, enormous funding needs that spring directly from the genocide: for assistance to survivors; for orphans, traumatized children, street children, and child-headed households; for violated women; for the great burdens of the justice system; for programs to inculcate national reconciliation and human rights; for resettling the millions of refugees and internally displaced persons; for the army, for the battered education system. The list is virtually limitless, a burden that is the consequence of a tragedy that could have been prevented or mitigated. Yet Rwanda today is dependent on foreign sources for a third of its meagre budget, while almost all initiatives crucial to rehabilitation, reconciliation, and a culture of rights depend for their viability on outside funding sources.

E.S.66. Views on Rwanda are remarkably diverse. Some conflicting opinions can be discarded. Hutu Power advocates, still thriving, continue to deny the genocide. If a genocide took place, they insist, it consisted of the RPF's attacks on Hutu within Rwanda and in the DRC. But it is more difficult to dismiss the accusations of former supporters of the government who now accuse it of being controlled by an RPF-Tutsi version of the old Akazu, a small clique that controls real power and is guilty of corruption and gross human rights violations. The cancellation last year - for a further four years - of scheduled national elections adds weight to some of these criticisms of the "transition government."

E.S.67. But there are those who are hopeful for the future. As a lengthy Hutu Power insurgency in the northwest has finally been beaten back, so human rights abuses have decreased. A sense of the end of impunity for such abuses may be taking hold. Some voices continue to remind the world that Rwanda is, after all, not just another poor country, but one just beginning to recover from a vicious genocide. New programs for healing the wounds, for coming to grips with the past and its consequences, are just being put into place.

E.S.68. Of course the regional conflict must be settled. More genocidaire leaders must be brought to trial swiftly. The 120,000 Hutu held in prison in squalid conditions must be dealt with justly, fairly, and soon. The international community must be made to understand the need for reparations for its complicity in the calamities of the past decade. National elections must be held, under conditions that honour the majority's right to govern while guaranteeing the security of the minority.

E.S.69. For Rwanda to recover properly, it is essential that majorities and minorities will be perceived in non-ethnic terms. Governments, like civil society, must be based on interests and convictions beyond mere ethnicity. But there should be no pretence that ethnic identities do not matter in Rwanda. They do, and they will. But they need not be divisive categories. Diversity, properly appreciated, strengthens a society. Unity in diversity has the potential to be a great strength. People are far more complicated than their ethnic heritage makes them. In fact, the modern history of Rwanda has repeatedly demonstrated that members of the same ethnic group often have different interests, a phenomenon never more tragically played out than when Hutu Power slaughtered thousands of Hutu moderates in the early days of the genocide.

E.S.70. Putting these ideas, principles and concepts into practice is not a chore to be underestimated. But it is hard to see how anything less can create the new Rwanda in which the nightmares of the past can never again recur.

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