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The Genesis of the Rwandese Patriotic Front

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**THE GENESIS OF
RWANDESE PATRIOTIC FRONT**

A Case Study of Roots of Insecurity
in an Independent African State

Submitted to the Committee on Security

**Rwandese Patriotic Front
Department of Information
RUHENGARI
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intermarriages and constant social and economic interactions. Banyarwanda evolved common culture, they believed in one traditional religion and they shared national aspirations. Accordingly, Banyarwanda lived together in harmony, in each and every village all over the country.

The term Batutsi, Bahutu and Batwa in their original connotation refer to social stratification which was based on different economic activities and individual fortunes. Until the advent of the white colonial rule, Banyarwanda managed their society in a clear simple but effective manner. Administration was headed by a hereditary monarch who, by custom did not claim ownership of any property. Below the King were county chiefs, subcounty chiefs, army commanders, land chiefs (for agriculture) and pasture chiefs (for livestock). Appointments to these positions were open to all Banyarwanda irrespective of birth. This group represented the high class in society known as Batutsi.

Below this class were the larger masses of agriculturist peasants. The majority of this class practiced mixed farming. They owned few animals, mainly cows, goats and sheep at the same time tilled the land for food. In this group were people of specialized skills such as tannery, making clothing out of hides and skins, builders, blacksmiths who made such useful tools as hoes, knives, spears, arrow heads, copperwire, etc. This class was commonly known as Bahutu.

The third group were the artisans, who were skilled in making clay pots for containers as well as for cooking. This class also produced entertainers and music composers. It was commonly known as Batwa.

It must be emphasised that these three classes were interdependent. They each needed the services of the other

In the first instance the colonial administrators recognised the existence of county and sub-county chiefs and rejected the existence of land and pasture chiefs and yet these provided a system of checks and balances in the management of society. The monarch was stripped of all the traditional powers and reduced to mere ceremonial status so that the entire administration rested in the hands of the Belgian administrators.

Secondly, the normal social free mobility up and down the social status ladder was blocked. Those whom the colonialists found in position as chiefs were either reconfirmed in their jobs or replaced by their sons. On the other hand those who were found in the lower class had no more avenues through which to move up the social status ladder. The lucky few who were found in the relatively higher class were offered whatever little education there was and they had job opportunities. People who were found on the lower scale, the general masses, were denied education and had therefore no job opportunities. This created sharp class differences as years went by.

Thirdly a new but antagonistic economic order was introduced. The traditional manufacturing sector was harshly discouraged and uprooted. Imported substitutes flooded the market. Imported hoes, saucepans, clothes, salt, knives, etc. replaced those made locally. As a result, the whole class of inventors and skilled entrepreneurs was reduced to poverty and misery.

Fourthly a draconian system of forced labour was instituted in the country. Men and women were forced to work long hours cultivating such cash crops as coffee, and buckwheat. These crops took up the best and fertile lands and the people had little time to grow food. Periodic devastating famines ensued. Construction of roads and highways.

In 1959, soon after the mysterious death of King Mutara Rudahigwa, in Bujumbura, a number of political parties were launched in preparation for independence. These were Union Nationale Rwandese (UNAR) which called for national unity and cherished the continuation of a constitutional monarch; Association pour la promotion sociale de la masse, (APR@SOMA) whose objectives were to get rid of both the colonial rule and remains of feudalism and thereby to emancipate the masses of all Banyarwanda; and (PARMEHUTU) parti de mouvement pour l'émancipation Hutu" whose objective was to promote Bahutu and declare themselves emancipated from the Batutsi aristocracy and establish domination of Bahutu over other classes in the country. This party, interestingly, had no quarrel with the colonial administration. The colonial power in their turn, gave their undivided support to PARMEHUTU and they put all their weight and repression against all the other political parties.

Towards the end of 1959 when open fighting began between supporters of the two main parties UNAR and PARMEHUTU, the Belgian administration morally and physically supported PARMEHUTU. Bands of young Bahutu were organised by Belgian paracommandoes, given matches and led to villages with orders to kill Batutsi and burn their huts. Very many people died and thousands had to run into exile. This act of atrocity, masterminded and enforced by the colonial government still in authority, sowed dangerous seeds in the country. A culture of violence and political murders was introduced and it was institutionalised by Kayibanda and Habyarimana regimes since no arsonist or murderer were charged in courts of law even though many criminals were known.

a "moral revolution". However, like the "social revolution" of his predecessor the regime was characterised by bloodshed and consolidation of group divisions. Soon after the coup nearly all the ex-ministers including Kayibanda himself were arrested and killed in cold blood.

During all this period Habyarimana has followed policies which are similar to the apartheid of South Africa. Under the system known as "equilibre ethnique et regional", every "ethnic" group is assigned water-tight quotas in national opportunity based on annually computed population census which cover education, business and job opportunities.

Habyarimana also introduced the use of pass-book or identity cards which classify a person on the basis of his ethnicity or caste. This book is used to segregate people within one country and to make them appear strangers to one another. The principle of separate development has been consolidated and expanded to interfere with individual social matters including marriage. In order for Muhutu to get a job in the government or to be promoted in the army he must not have a Mututsi wife. Any one who has done so suffers severe discrimination. Habyarimana himself is known to have prevented his own daughter from marrying a son of the Rwanda Ambassador to Italy simply because the boy was a Mututsi. Under the circumstances human rights abuses are endemic. Innocent persons are often arrested and either eliminated or kept in prison for years without trial.

Apartheid Philosophy:

The philosophy of the ruling clique in Kigali is well stated in an article published in a magazine known as KANGURA issue of 10, December 1990. The paper is owned by Col. Serubuga, Deputy Chief of Staff and Col. Segatwa, Principal Private Secretary to the President. In this paper the

6. The education sector (pupils, students teachers) must be majority Hutu.
7. The Rwandese Armed forces must be exclusively Hutu. The experience of October war has taught us a lesson. No military person should marry a Mututsi woman.
8. The Bahutu should stop having mercy on the Batutsi.
9. The Bahutu, wherever they are, must have unity solidarity and be pre-occupied by the fate of their Hutu brothers. The Bahutu both inside and outside Rwanda must constantly look for friends and allies for the Hutu cause, starting with our Bantu brothers.
 - They must constantly counteract the Tutsi propaganda.
 - The Bahutu must be firm and vigilant against their common enemy who is Batutsi.
10. The 1959 social revolution, the 1961 referendum and the Hutu ideology must be taught to every Muhutu and at all levels. Every Muhutu must spread widely this ideology. We shall consider a traitor any Muhutu who will persecute his Muhutu brother for having read, spread and taught this ideology.

These are the principles which underly the thinking and actions of Habyarimana and his government in Kigali. They fall within the circle of the white supremacists in the Apartheid of South Africa. It is not suprising therefore to realise that since his ascendance to power he has propagated sectarianism and antagonistic regional divisions. In Rwanda today there is no room for dissent. Any sign or suspicions of sympathy to opposition leads one to arrest which often ends in death.

- To bring about and cement national unity
- To institute genuine democracy right from grass-roots to the legislative level.
- To promote intergrated and self sustaining economy.
- To eradicate corruption in all its forms.
- To guarantee security of persons and property.
- To provide a permanent solution to the refugee problem.
- To promote social welfare for the benefit of all the citizens.
- To promote peace and cooperation between our neighbours and all the peace loving nations of the world.

Rwandese Patriotic Front has the confidence that these objectives will be achieved. Detailed strategies on how each of these objectives will be achieved are well stated in the Manifesto of the Front.

On the 15th Feb. 1991. President Habyarimana called upon all the refugees to return home. He promised them appropriate reception and proper resettlement. There is evidence that he made this statement as a propaganda gimmick. He had not drawn up any plans for the event. It is known that for the past 17 years he insisted that Rwanda was already over populated and that there was no room left for resettlement of repatriated refugees. President Habyarimana has celebrated the total defeat of RPF on many occasions but the Front is growing from strength to strength poised for eventual victory. More significantly, the Rwanda Government has declared that it is preparing for multiparty elections. This is stated at the time when the hot war is continuing. It is hard to believe that free and fair democratic process can be organised in the country which is raked with instability. Moreover, while the Government is pronouncing guidelines for multiparty elections, the political party in power is openly preaching sectarianism and spreading malicious rumour that RPF plans to exterminate all the Bahutu in the country. This is a clear indication that conducting election under these conditions would throw the country once again into another wave of bloodshed.

Rwandese Patriotic Front, on their part, believe that genuine peace can only be achieved in Rwanda if the following steps are taken:

1. Total end of war activities and other hostilities by both parties;
2. Renunciation, on the part of the Rwanda Government, of the policy of apartheid where Bahutu are constantly called upon to hate and dominate other Banyarwanda.

RPF feels that for President Habyarimana and his clique to continue upholding the principles akin to Nazism of Germany during World War I and II in RWANDA undermines the moral obligation of the entire African leaderships to oppose the apartheid of South Africa.

Accordingly, all men of goodwill are called upon to assist RPF in finding ways and means to rescue Rwanda from the present fascist regime. RPF is convinced that Civil Strifes and bloodshed which have characterised Rwanda for the past 32 years must come to an end. Peace, reconciliation and national unity are the overriding objectives which RPF is determined to achieve.

MWANZA COMMUNIQUE

1. At the invitation of President Ali Hassan MWINYI of the United Republic of Tanzania, the President of the Republic of Uganda, H.E. Yoweri Kaguta MUSEVENI and the President of the Republic of Rwanda, H.E. Major General Juvenal HABYARIMANA, met in Mwanza in Tanzania, on 17th October, 1990.

2. The three Presidents discussed the current armed conflict in Rwanda and agreed to resolve the problem by peaceful means. They also took note of the positive steps recently taken by the Government of the Republic of Rwanda to open up the political system in Rwanda. With regard to this conflict the Government of the Republic of Rwanda undertook to initiate a dialogue with both the internal and external opposition, under the auspices of the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity.

3. Following upon this solemn declaration by the President of the Republic of Rwanda, the Presidents of the United Republic of Tanzania and of the Republic of Uganda undertook to persuade the armed opposition in Rwanda to observe a ceasefire. The ceasefire should be monitored by neutral troops mutually agreed upon by the parties concerned. Following upon the ceasefire, a regional conference to be attended by all the parties affected by the question of refugees would be convened to discuss the refugee problems in the region, in a comprehensive manner.

4. The Presidents of the Republic of Rwanda and of the Republic of Uganda expressed their profound gratitude to President Ali Hassan MWINYI of the United Republic of Tanzania for the hospitality extended to them during their short visit. The three Presidents agreed to meet at a date to be fixed in the future.

Done at Mwanza on 17th October, 1990.

~~SECRET~~

1. At the invitation of Marshal MOBUTU SISE SIKO KUKU NDEMBU WA LA SANGA, President of the Republic of Zaïre, their Excellencies Presidents Ibrahim BABANGIDA of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, and current Chairman of the Organisation of African Unity, Juvénal HADIHUKANA of the Republic of Rwanda, Pierre BUYOTA of the Republic of Burundi, H.E. John Samuel KALECHLA, Prime Minister and First Vice-President of the United Republic of Tanzania, representing President Ali Hassan Mwinyi, Hon. Paul BUSEMUKIRERE, 2nd Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Uganda, representing President Yoweri MUSEVENI and His Excellency Salim Ahmed SALIH, Secretary General of the Organisation of African Unity, met in Gbadolite, in the Republic of Zaïre, on September 7, 1991.

2. After hearing reports presented by the concerned Heads of State and by the Secretary General of the OAU on the implementation of the decisions taken at the Kwanza, Gbadolite, Goma and Dar-es-Salaam summits concerning the cease-fire in Rwanda, the initiation of a dialogue between the parties to the conflict, the deployment of neutral military observers, the participants reviewed the situation prevailing in Rwanda since the signing of the Cease-fire Accord on 29 March 1991 in K'olo, Zaïre.

Consequently :

- a) the summit asked the parties to the conflict to observe the cease-fire with immediate effect ;

GBADOLITE COMMUNIQUE

At the invitation of Marshall Mobutu Sese Seko Kuku Ngbendu Wa Zabanga, President of the Republic of Zaire, Presidents Juvénal Habyarimana of Rwanda, Yoweri Museveni of Uganda and Pierre Buyoya of Burundi met at Gbadolite on Friday 26 October, 1990. His Excellency President Buyoya, Current Chairman of the CEPGL, informed President Museveni of the outcome of the discussions held in Gbadolite on 23 and 24 October, 1990. President Museveni fully supported the conclusions of that Summit on the problem in Rwanda. The four Heads of State reaffirmed their commitment to the Mwanza Communiqué which constitutes a sound basis for the Resolution of the conflict in Rwanda. In this context, the four Heads of State agreed on the following measures:

1. On the ceasefire, the Heads of State agreed on the need to have an African peace-keeping force and to that effect they mandated their colleague President Museveni of Uganda, in his capacity as Current Chairman of the OAU, to make the necessary consultations with a view to having this force in place.
2. As an immediate measure, they agreed on an observer team composed of 15 military officers each from Uganda, Zaire and Burundi. This team shall also be joined by up to 5 Representatives from the Government of Rwanda and from the armed opposition. The observer team shall work under the supervision of the Secretary-General of the OAU and shall assemble in Goma, Zaire on 29 October 1990. Each party shall provide logistical and financial support to its component of the team.
3. Concerning dialogue, the Heads of State mandated their colleague, President Mobutu of Zaire, to act as an intermediary between the two belligerents. In that regard, he shall keep the OAU Secretary-General regularly informed of the progress made.
4. With respect to the question of refugees, the Heads of State once again reaffirmed that the dialogue should culminate in a regional conference to find a final and lasting solution to the question of refugees. The Presidents of Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi expressed their deep appreciation to President Mobutu and the People of Zaire for the warm welcome accorded to them and their delegation.

Done at Gbadolite on the 26th October, 1990.

GOMA COMMUNIQUE

At the invitation of Marshal MOBUTU SESE SEKO KUKU NGENDU WA ZA BANGA, President of the Republic of Zaire, the Presidents Pierre BUYOYA of the Republic of Burundi and Juvénal HABYARIMANA of the Rwandese Republic and Mr. ABU-MA YANYA, Vice-Prime Minister of Uganda, paid a working visit to GOMA, regional capital of North Kivu, on Tuesday, 20 November 1990, following the quinquennial meeting of Gbadolite of 26 October 1990 which had brought together the Heads of State of Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi and Zaire.

Marshal MOBUTU SESE SEKO, appointed by his colleagues to play the role of mediation between the Rwandese Government and the Patriotic Front, seized this opportunity to inform his colleagues of his talks with the representative of the Patriotic Front. On his part, President HABYARIMANA appraised his colleagues of the development of the situation prevailing at present on the field. The three Heads of State and the Vice-Prime Minister, representing the Head of State of Uganda, finally listened to the report of the Executive Secretary of the OAU Liberation Committee, representing the Secretary-General, on the proceedings of the meeting of the Military Observer Team on Ceasefire, set up after the quadripartite Gbadolite Summit and which had been meeting since 29 October 1990. After a lengthy exchange of views, the three Heads of State and the Vice-Prime Minister agreed to do every thing to encourage the speedy restoration of peace in Rwanda.

Thus, the following provisions were adopted:

1. As regard the Ceasefire, specific instructions were given to the Military Observer Team pertaining to the role it should play;
2. As regards the dialogue between the two parties to the conflict, the President of the Republic of Zaire confirmed that he would relentlessly pursue his role of Mediator;
3. As regards the Regional Conference on Refugees and considering the importance of the problem, the President of the Republic of Uganda was mandated by his colleagues, in his capacity as the Current Chairman of the OAU, to inform the Head of State of Tanzania of the conclusions of the Goma meeting and to take urgent measures for the convening of the said conference. The meeting took place in an atmosphere of cordiality, brotherhood and serenity. The Presidents of Burundi and Rwanda and the Vice-Prime Minister of Uganda expressed their gratitude to Marshal MOBUTU SESE SEKO and the people of Zaire for the highly African warm welcome accorded them.

Done in Goma, 20 November, 1990.

ZANZIBAR COMMUNIQUE

1. President Juvenal HABYARIMANA of Rwanda and President Yoweri MUSEVENI of Uganda met in Zanzibar on 17th February, 1991 under the auspices of President Ali Hassan Mwinyi of the United Republic of Tanzania.

2. This meeting was a follow-up of the last Summit meeting held between the two leaders at Chanika border post, Rwanda, on 20th November, 1990.

3. The two Heads of State reviewed progress made in their efforts to find a peaceful solution to the conflict affecting Rwanda.

4. The two Heads of State renewed their commitments under the Mwanza Communiqué for the observance of an immediate ceasefire, for a dialogue with the internal and external opposition and for the holding of a Regional Conference on the problem of Rwandese Refugees. In this regard:

(a) The President of the Republic of Rwanda renewed the Rwanda Government's offer to observe an immediate ceasefire starting on 18th February, 1991 at 10.00 hours or earlier as mutually agreed upon between the concerned parties.

(b) The President of the Republic of Uganda undertook to persuade the armed opposition to reciprocate and observe a ceasefire starting on 18th February, 1991 at 10.00 hours or earlier as mutually agreed upon between the concerned parties.

(c) The two Presidents undertook to accelerate the process of dialogue as stipulated in the Mwanza and Gbadolite Communiqué.

(d) The two Heads of State also expressed their satisfaction with the progress of the Regional Conference on Rwandese Refugees and expressed the hope that the forthcoming Regional Summit on Rwanda Refugees to be held in Dar es Salaam on 19th February, 1991, would go a long way towards finding a global and lasting solution to the problem on Rwandese Refugees.

5. The two Presidents committed themselves to restore harmony, brotherhood and good neighbourliness between the two countries especially along their border.

6. President Habyarimana and Museveni, thanked their host President Mwinyi of Tanzania for the warm and generous hospitality accorded to them.

Done at Zanzibar on 17th February, 1991.

DAR ES SALAAM DECLARATION ON RWANDESE REFUGEES PROBLEM

1. At the kind invitation of H.E. Ali Hassan MWINYI, President of the United Republic of Tanzania, their Excellencies Presidents Pierre BUYOYA of the Republic of Burundi, Juvenal HABYARIMANA, of the Rwandese Republic, Yoweri MUSEVENI of the Republic of Uganda and Lando BULULU, Prime Minister of the Republic of Zaire, met in Dar es Salaam, United Republic of Tanzania, on 19 February 1991. Also in attendance were H.E. Dr. SALIM AHMED SALIM, Secretary-General of the OAU, and Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello, Representative of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

2. Considering the long standing traditional and historical ties that exist amongst the countries and peoples of the region, the Conference underlined the spirit of good neighbourliness, solidarity and brotherly co-operation that have always served as a basis for addressing and resolving common problems.

3. Having heard the reports of the Heads of State concerned and the Secretary-General of the OAU on the implementation of the decisions taken at the MWANZA, GBADOLITE and GOMA Summits regarding the initiation of a dialogue between the parties to the conflict, the establishment of a ceasefire and the deployment of the Military Observer Team to be followed by the Regional Conference, the five Heads of State reviewed the situation prevailing in Rwanda as a result of the events that began in October 1990 and, in particular, the problem of Rwandese refugees in the region.

4. The Conference expresses its thanks and appreciation to H.E. Marshal MOBUTU SESE SEKO, President of the Republic of Zaire, for his efforts in instituting a dialogue between the Rwandese Government and the Armed Opposition and also took note of the difficulties that have been encountered in this respect. The Conference, however, urges President Mobutu to maintain the momentum of the dialogue so that the latter can find a solution to the problem facing the parties concerned.

5. Fully aware that the fate of the Rwandese refugees is the responsibility of the people of Rwanda and its Government, the Government of Rwanda reiterated its commitment to finding a definitive and durable solution to this problem. In this respect, the Government of Rwanda:

a) recognizes that voluntary repatriation is a legitimate right of Rwandese refugees and constitutes a factor for peace and national reconciliation;

b) undertakes, within the spirit of its policy of political opening towards all political groupings, to remove all obstacles which impede the return of Rwandese refugees to their country and to guarantee their full participation in the democratic political process of the country;

c) is ready to take appropriate steps to facilitate the harmonious return and reintegration in all sectors of national life of refugees who would have expressed the wish to do so and to declare a comprehensive general amnesty for refugees as defined by the 1951 UN Convention and the 1969 OAU Convention on Refugees;

d) Agrees, on the conclusion of the ceasefire agreement and a positive end to the dialogue, to extend the general amnesty to include persons who may have committed acts against the State prior to their departure or during their stay outside the country.

