

## The Rwandan Genocide: The Guilty Bystanders

Written by Bernard-Alexandre Merkel

# The Rwandan Genocide: The Guilty Bystanders

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History has seen its share of wars, deaths, failures, successes and heroes. Never had it experienced horrors as it had in the 20<sup>th</sup> century; as technology continued to evolve, so did the atrocities of war. A new kind of horror emerged, one that was not targeted towards soldiers, but towards the very core of civilizations, towards specific races; genocide. Armenians in Turkey were the first unfortunates of these horrors, but nothing has matched the six million Jews killed in the Holocaust. Other genocides have continued to occur, almost one every decade since the Second World War. The world cries out “never again” every time but has not yet managed to stop a genocide. This is not something humans can simply look back on as a mistake in history, this is not yet something from the past, it is still very much something from the present. It did not end in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, as Darfur proves that it continues to plague our society.

The question that remains is why does no one stop these atrocities once they begin? Why are they simply ignored until they “resolve” themselves? This essay will be seeking to answer why the humanitarian intervention failed to prevent the genocide in Rwanda. The reason for the genocide will not be the focus point, as this essay will assume that there was no possible way to prevent it. It will focus on three main possible reasons why the intervention failed; the first being that the roots of the conflicts were too deep to simply stop it, the intervention was poorly designed and executed, and there was a lack of interest from foreign governments to intervene.

### The Rwandan Genocide

Before focusing on these main points, it is important to give some background on the events in Rwanda. This was the biggest genocide of the 90s, with an estimate 800,000 deaths. There were only one-hundred days separating the beginning and the end of the killings. This massacre started with a plane shot down, killing the Rwandan president. Tensions had been mounting between the two ethnic groups in Rwanda, the Tutsis and the Hutus. There was a history of rivalry between the two, which was augmented by the Belgian colonization, and in 1994 the tensions reached its breaking point. All it needed was the assassination of the Hutu president which launched a wave of attacks from Hutu militants on Tutsi civilians. But why was it considered a genocide?

Genocide is a term that was defined by the United Nations (UN) convention in 1949 after the end of the Second World War. This convention was ratified by most of the UN members, stating that if genocide occurs, they must act to stop it. The word is rooted from both Greek (*geno*) and Latin (*cide*) literally meaning “the killing (*cide*) of a race (*geno*.” Although the UN has a list defining what consists of genocide (see appendix A[1]), for the purpose of this essay, the definition used when describing genocide will be “the systematic killing of an ethnic group or race”.

In 1994, Hutu militants took to the streets and engaged in the systematic killing of the Tutsis. They were not fighting rebels, or even armed men. They would kill anyone that was Tutsi and in some cases would also kill those who were “moderate Hutus” (Hutus that did not see the same way they did).

### Primordialism versus Modernism

The Tutsis and Hutus are two different nations. What is meant by nations? When most of the English speakers think of the word “nation”, its synonym would be country or state. However, there is a distinction between these words which can drastically change their meaning. Definitions of nations differ depending on the school of thought, two in particular, primordialism and modernism. Both schools believe that a state is the government,

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geographical lines and elites of the nation. However, the primordialists, consider nations as people coming together because of one or more factors. These issues can be ethnicity, religion, language, etc... Their beliefs are that nations are created because of people's common identity which binds them together to fight in some instances for their autonomy of a nation that they do not have an identity with. Conversely, modernists believe that a nation is created by the elites and the state. The people that 'belong' to a nation are simply told what they belong to and create their nation around what their elites tell them. Neither one of these schools is necessarily more right than the other. There is in fact a spectrum between these two schools of thoughts which takes from both ideas. For example, if a state (with all the same ethnicity) engages in a war with a neighboring state, they would not fight simply on the basis of being different; politicians (elites) would have used massive propaganda to have the country feel as though they were in danger and needed to fight. This would be an example of a primordialist state (all ethnicities are the same) but there are modernist components to it (elites tell the people what distinguish them from others). Why is this important in this case?

One possible reason for the failure was that the conflict was rooted too deeply in primordialism. It is true that Hutu killings were initially instigated by the Rwandan radio station Radio Mille Collines broadcasters. But was this conflict rooted too deeply in primordialist behavior? Tutsi and Hutu have been two different groups for a long time and this was aggravated by the Belgians when they colonized the country. To discover the answer to this question, we will investigate its history when the Tutsi herders came onto the territory.

## *Background*

A caste system based on ethnicity began over 400 years ago when Tutsi herders moved into the Rwandan-Burundi lands. Rwanda is a very small country, with an area of about 26,338 km<sup>2</sup>. Most of its land is used in agriculture to maintain the high density population. "The whole country looks to some degree like a gigantic garden, meticulously tended, almost manicured resembling more the Indonesian or Filipino paddy fields than the loose extensive agricultural pattern of many African landscapes." [2] This high density population, "together with such a capacity for producing all the basic necessities of life in plenty, led at a very early stage to centralized forms of political authority and to a high degree of social control". [3] Thus, a monarchy developed, with Tutsi kings being in control of a mostly Hutu population. There was in fact little difference between the two ethnicities as "they shared the same language, culture, and religion; interethnic marriages were commonplace." [4] The only differences between the two ethnicities were purely physical. Tutsi were describes by colonizers as "extremely tall and thin, and often displaying sharp, angular facial features" [5] and a lighter skin color while Hutu were described as "generally short and thick-set with a big head, a jovial expression, a wide nose and enormous lip." [6] These physical differences are important to the history between the two groups because throughout colonization, Tutsi will be deemed more human and better than their Hutu counter parts.

Going back to the Rwandan King, although Tutsi, this was not much of a problem until after Western countries came into the country and colonized. Although he had great control over the land and was usually surrounded by mostly Tutsi personnel, his decisions did not affect Tutsi or Hutu any differently. The only difference between the two during the Rwandan monarchy was that the Tutsis were usually seen as a higher societal class than Hutu. However, before colonialist powers invaded, a Hutu could become Tutsi if he/she had a certain amount of cattle, just as a Tutsi could become Hutu if he/she lost a certain amount of cattle. The name was not originally used to distinguish ethnicities but rather economic differences.

Germany was the first colonizer in Rwanda, staying only a short period of time, leaving in 1916. Their presence was nonetheless important for two reasons; the first is that they categorized Hutu and Tutsi as genetically different, the second is that their indirect rule led to increase centralization of the government. By believing that the Tutsi were genetically superior, the Germans created a psychological effect that would continue with the Belgians and remain in Rwanda. The genetic superiority coupled with keeping a centralized government left Tutsis solely in charge of the country with no representation of Hutus.

When Belgium came into the country in 1916, they continued to depict Tutsi and Hutu's as two different ethnic groups. Like the Germans, they gave greater preference to the Tutsi and kept them in charge of the government.

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The Belgians were able to manipulate the government and the King in charge. In 1931, the Belgians successfully brought a new King that was more "westernized". Mutara III Rudahigwa, the new king, "dressed in Western clothes...drove his own car, was monogamous and in due course converted to Christianity." [7] His rule was seen nothing more than a white man's king; taking orders from the Belgians in adopting policies. He died the same year a Hutu revolt gained political power. Thousands of Tutsis fled the country in order to escape the violence and in 1962 Rwanda and Burundi gained independence from Belgium and split up right after. [8] The Hutu leadership quickly abolished the democratic system and it became a single party rule. President Kayibanda was president from early 1960 until 1973 when a coup gave Major General Habyarimana, also a Hutu, power of the country. He died in 1994 in the plane crash which instigated the genocide.

Before the end of colonization, there was a radical change between the two ethnic groups. The younger generations which were educated through the colonial system believed that the Tutsi and Hutu were two different ethnic groups. Some Hutu radicals began to believe that the Tutsis were colonizers, the same as Belgians and by the "end of the 1950s, an ethnic awareness had certainly developed among the Rwandan elite." [9] This belief continued to exist up until the 1990s. The four decades after colonization were difficult for Tutsi civilians as they "were blamed for almost all problems the country faced." [10] A large percentage of the Tutsi population fled to neighboring countries in order to escape violence that was perpetuated on them. This also led to the organization of a rebel group up in Uganda which was called the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF).

In 1990, a civil war between the Hutu government and the RPF broke out. Ethnic violence occurred between these years but on a very small scale. As the conflict grew towards a stalemate, the parties were signing peace treaties. That is when the Hutu president's plane got shot down. It was never known whether the plane was shot down by RPF forces or Hutu militias that did not want the deal to go through. The consequence, however, was devastating.

The history and background of this country is important to understand not only for the reason of the genocide, but whether or not it was possible for someone to stop it. Looking at the history, "the massacres in Rwanda are not the result of a deep-rooted and ancient hatred between two ethnic groups." [11] This is very important in answering the question we are seeking on whether or not the history between the two groups would have led to this eventual outcome. The colonizers were the first ones to implement a division between the two groups which unfortunately continued after they left and this led to the genocide. Speaking the same language, having the same culture and the same territory should qualify "Rwanda as a nation in the true sense." [12] In this case the failure in the state lies with the elites. The clash in history between Tutsi and Hutu is not primordialist and the failure in the intervention does not derive from any deep hatred but rather the failure of elites to recognize each other as brothers and sisters. There is no denial that psychological effects were at hand in this; both groups were targeted at one time and their education was tarnished by unfounded information on both Tutsis and Hutus. Additionally, "the tendency of Hutu peasants to conform collectively to the orders of their leaders has been frequently remarked upon by those seeking to explain the manner in which they participated in the genocide". [13] This obvious pressure by elites proves that deeply rooted hatred was non-existent. It is also important to realize that 90% of the population was rural and had poor education. As a result, it is much easier for elites to manipulate the population. However, outside help might have prevented the ethnic cleansing to occur because these attacks were instigated by elites and not true hatred. Primordial hatred is not to blame for the failure of the intervention, is the United Nations?

### **International Humanitarian Intervention**

The world did not act, at least not very fast, to save the Tutsis. UN representatives and commanders were there and they also had some peacekeepers on the ground but their efforts were minimal. "Western" countries or more developed countries did not act either. Even though most countries ratified the UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, nothing was done to stop the on-going slaughter. There are several reasons nothing was done. The first is that this might have been a civil war and foreign states should not intervene in national self-determinations. Another explanation is that no one knew about the massacres that were occurring. The last reason that other countries did not intervene is because they did not really care what was

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happening in the country.

Unfortunately, Rwanda is not the only nation that has been ignored when genocides occurred. Iraq, Bosnia, Kosovo, Cambodia and Sudan have all had some “ethnic cleansing” which occurred after the ratification of the UN convention and yet, nothing was done to stop it. However, before putting blame on a single state or league of states, it is important to investigate their claims for no or poor intervening.

### *Self Determination*

Intervening, whether humanitarian or not, has always been a dilemma for states. “It is focused on the conflict of values – state autonomy versus state responsibility.”[14] The conclusion usually finds that a state should not involve itself in a sovereign state for two simple reasons; to preserve autonomy and freedom. Although critics of this could say that intervention would indeed help preserve the autonomy and freedom of a state where basics rights have been violated, it is unlikely that a country would do this. The only time that this has actually happened in history has been the recent invasion of Iraq by the United States to give “freedom” to people. However, the world has seen how the Iraq war has turned out and how the Iraqi government is still struggling. States are much more cautious and are much more likely to not get involved.

Although the United Nations was created to continue communication and cooperation between nations, it was not created to solve world problems, especially not within countries. Since the creation of the United Nations, there have actually been fewer wars between countries and instead civil wars have exponentially grown. This is a result of the Western colonizing powers creating artificial boundaries between their colonies, not taking into consideration ethnic groups and divides. As a consequence, ethnic clashes are more prevalent and the world, as well as the UN, is unsure how to deal with the problem.

However, the UN provides basic services to countries in need. Services range from food relief, to imposing sanctions on countries, to peacekeeping. These services are seen, not as violating any sovereign entities, but rather as ways of helping civilian populations whom may not be involved in the conflict. The UN has sent hundreds of missions around the world, Rwanda being one of them.

### *Rwanda*

Rwanda was in civil war from October 1990 until August 1993 between the government troops and a rebel group, the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF). The two were mostly divided based on ethnicity; the government troops were Hutus and the rebel group consisted mostly of Tutsis. When they signed a cease fire in 1993, the UN sent a peacekeeping mission (UNAMIR) in order to help reconcile the two parties.[15] However, in 1994, the fighting began once again and the entire UN mission collapsed. The UN decided to pull most of its troops because it was believed that the civil war would begin again.

It is important to understand why the United Nations decided to pull troops out instead of bringing more in. As mentioned earlier, states and organizations do not want to get involved in autonomy issues. It was seen as a civil war between two legitimate groups that were trying to fight for their autonomy. A simple example to use to compare this would be the American Revolution. Rebels were fighting the English crown, in order to have representation in their land. Intervention from another power would have changed the outcome of the result, and in consequence, the United States and most of other Western countries do not want to intervene in self-determination fights. So, the United Nations was going to pull most of their forces out to let the two groups fight for their self-determination. The second reason the UN does not want to get involve is that it does not want to get itself involved in local politics. By getting itself engaged in local politics, it might end up taking sides and not be neutral as they are supposed to be. The United Nations believes itself a neutral organization and will go to great lengths to continue maintaining this neutrality; otherwise it might lose some of its legitimacy. The final reason why they usually do not involve themselves very much in conflicts is because the countries do not want to lose their men. As it was seen in Rwanda, when several soldiers were slaughtered by the government troops, Belgium and Bangladesh decided to pull out their troops. UNAMIR started with over 2,500 military personnel, and when fighting

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broke out in 1994, "UNAMIR was directed to mediate a cease-fire, and to evacuate all but 270 UN personnel." [16]

With the war beginning once again, the personnel that were left in Rwanda were not there to protect civilians or kept even necessarily for peacekeeping but rather in order to attain a cease fire once again. The problem this time however was that this was not the continuation of the civil war, it was the ethnic cleansing of Tutsis in Rwanda.

## *The United Nations*

Could the UN have done anything to stop the on-slaughter? It is easy to blame the UN for their failure in stopping the violence, especially seeing emotional movies such as *Hotel Rwanda* or listening to testimonies recounting the horrors. However, it is important to understand the UN was, especially at the beginning, unaware of the atrocities happening. Once knowledge that ethnic cleansing was occurring, the UN had to continue its primary purpose of establishing a cease-fire as well as keeping itself neutral in the conflict. Immediate action on the ground was difficult as the personnel had to follow UN procedures, and the UN Security Council was indeed trying to stay informed. However, "not enough accurate analysis was available to the Council" and thus it failed "to recognize the systematic and one-sided nature of the ethnic massacres until a few weeks later when more numerous reports, relating death totals of much great magnitude, became available." [17] With poor information reaching the Security Council, and nothing that could be done on the ground, it is not surprising that nothing was done to stop the atrocities. Critics point out that UN personnel were at killing sites, not doing anything. They also mention that the UN could have taken out the Radio and Télévision Libre des Mille Collines, the national radio which was instigating the killings. However, as mentioned earlier, killing violence instigators or disabling the radio would have put the UN in the middle of the political problem. This would have been seen as giving an edge to the RPF, and would have taken the UN's neutrality away. Even with reports on the grounds, the UN cannot act as decisively as a sovereign state, because of the bureaucracy involved in situations. It is also important to remember that the UN does not have a standing army, and thus would have needed to assemble a force comprised of multi-nationalities which most likely would have taken several months to create; and by that time the damage would have been done; the atrocities would be over.

There was a UN document (Appendix B [18]) that showed that the UN's commander on the ground in Rwanda, General Romeo Dallaire, had an informant that gave the UN information of the atrocities that were going to happen. A fax sent to the UN headquarters in January of 1994 (a few months before the actual killings began) gave indications that executions were going to happen: "In 20 minutes [his Hutu militia] could kill up to 1,000 Tutsis." [19] This is overwhelming evidence that the UN knew something more was going to happen, or was it? This information was from a single source. The UN had to make a decision on how credible this source was and how to act afterwards. Although there is no information on the credibility of the source (it is assumed he was credible because the facts given occurred later on that year), it is still important to realize that the United Nations could not do too much differently. There is no denying that this document was concerning, however it is unrealistic to assume that at the time the UN could have been able to act. In all probability, placing more troops in Rwanda would not have changed much since the UN had to stay neutral and would need to continue working on reaching a cease-fire.

The UN was in a difficult position to act because of its responsibilities as a neutral organization; however, foreign sovereign states could have intervened in order to prevent the horrors. Hindsight is always 20-20, and the UN did have some information on the ground that suggested there was going to be a massacre occurring. However, the UN could not do anything because of their mandates; they were bound as an organization to continue with their mission. Looking at the UN as an organization and their mandate concerning Rwanda, the UN did not fail in any intervention. There was no success either, but from the evidence, the organization did what it could under its protocol. The failure from the UN does not come from its mission, but rather from the organization itself. The UN is only a communication tool, and it should be remodeled to be able to deal with crises that need intervention. Although the UN was not able to act, foreign countries were able to deal with the situation. The fax sent by Dallaire in early 1994 was sent to the UN, but those UN members consist of countries. The US, France, or others had the possibility of intervening. In my opinion, these states did not intervene until later on because the conflict

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was not in their interest and they did not want the same catastrophe that happened in Somalia only a few years earlier.

### Lack of Interest

No state intervened until after the genocide was over because there was essentially a lack of interest in stopping the atrocities. There are several reasons explaining this position by foreign countries. The first is the idea of self-determination, once again, the second is that the conflict in Somalia had happened a few years earlier. The final reason is that there was a genuine lack of information about the conflict. These different reasons established a slow response; not only by the UN but by independent foreign nations.

### *Self Determination or Self Interest?*

As mentioned previously, states all over the world, especially the West, use the principle of self-determination when not getting involved in a civil war. Although it is understandable that Western nations would use this philosophy, it is important to look at whether this was simply a case of self-determination.

There is an exception to the self-determination rule; a neighboring nation has the right to intervene if this conflict will affect them. Burundi, Tanzania, Uganda and Zaire (now called the Democratic Republic of Congo) were all neighbors and all had the right to intervene. They all played minor roles as they did not have the resources to deal with the clash as it would have been necessary and had their own internal conflicts. Uganda was obviously pro-RPF since the rebel army attacked Rwanda from Uganda. Both Zaire and Burundi had internal conflicts which resulted in no interest in Rwanda. Tanzania did indeed try to act as a mediator. Even though this rule states that neighboring countries can intervene, especially if the civil war will affect them, none of those states contributed much to a possible intervention for Rwanda. If the neighbors cannot do anything, then the intervention falls to the rest of the world.

Although bordering countries have the right to intervene in self-determination conflicts, there are problems with this notion. While it is very true that a conflict would affect their neighbors, such as refugees seeking shelter from the conflict, any intervention by the neighbors would probably be more for self-interest. One of the neighboring countries may want one party in power instead of another and this would defeat the idea of self-determination. Near Rwanda, Uganda was Tutsi controlled, and in consequence the RPF army was able to operate from a separate country. It was for self-interest that Uganda was involved in the conflict. An argument against the theory of self-determination mentions that neighboring states would actually get involved for self-interest, instead of keeping their region stable. And it may, against all previous belief, be more beneficial if states that have nothing to do with the conflict intervene. This leads me to believe that the theory of self-determination may have to be revisited on a world scale, especially when conflicts degenerate into genocidal murders, which they have tended to do in the past fifty years.

Another reason why there was no foreign intervention, at least not American, after the genocide took place was what happened in Somalia in October of 1993. Eighteen American soldiers died in fighting in Mogadishu, the capital of Somalia. The US had been there assisting a UN mission to help civilians during Somalia's civil war. Soon after the deaths, the US quickly pulled out of Somalia. Going into Rwanda was obviously not a possibility after a public outcry of American dying "needlessly". Following the Somalia affair, "Senate Republicans demanded that the Clinton administration become less trusting of the United Nations." [20] America is a world leader; if they are not interested in intervening, the chances that someone else will go in and help are much less likely as well.

The Hutu militias involved in the genocidal acts were deliberate in their plans. Belgian peacekeepers were stationed in Rwanda, and "the militia planned first to provoke and murder a number of Belgian peacekeepers, in order to 'guarantee Belgian withdrawal from Rwanda.'" [21] The militia knew that states would pull out their personnel if they were targeted. Belgium did end up pulling their troops out of Rwanda after several died. No country was going to send troops in now; the US was not interested in intervening and the militias were targeting

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foreign troops in order for them to leave. This basically gave the green light for these atrocities to be perpetuated.

One excuse that foreign governments gave to their lack of involvement was the lack of information on the ground in order to actually do anything. While there were difficulties getting all the facts to state departments; it is in fact untrue that there was a lack of information. Romeo Dallaire, the UN peacekeeping force commander on the ground in Rwanda, relayed information to both the UN and to countries. In January of 1994, months before the actual genocidal acts began, Dallaire "relayed information to New York...that Hutu extremists 'had been ordered to register all the Tutsi in Kigali.'"[22] Although this did not necessarily mean that a genocide was imminent, these clues should have been seen with greater interest and concern. When the killings began in April, scores of reporters and foreigners coming back from Rwanda, told horrid stories of massacres. The *Washington Post* and *The New York Times* had front page stories about the atrocities in Rwanda. The State Department even met with RPF representatives to the UN to discuss the genocidal acts. It was clear from the beginning the US would not involve itself in any intervention as seen in a memo sent to Madeleine Albright, the US Secretary of State, "You should be in a listening mode during this meeting. You can voice general sympathy for the horrific situation in Rwanda, but should not commit the USG to anything."[23]

The philosophy that has been as an excuse in the past is becoming less and less of a justification. Although the philosophy states that no country should interfere in the dealings of another state, as this would affect that states self-determination, it is difficult to find a time in this globalizing world where there is not intervention in some way in other states. An intervention does not have to necessarily result in armies or personnel intervening, but instead can involve economical intervention. In Rwanda, France and Belgium played were important external actors which accelerated the atrocities and the fighting between the two. Although Belgium was for the Hutu government before the 1990s, it switched sides and sent over 500 troops in 1990s to protect their nationals. This act was seen by the Hutu government as support for the RPF. On the other side, the French are believed to have provided "substantial amounts of military training and equipment and political endorsement"[24] to the Hutu government. This clearly shows that before, and even during the war, there were external actors making a direct impact on the outcome of the war. The philosophy of self-determination does not apply anymore to these countries as they already have a hand in the politics of the nation.

## *The CNN Effect*

An interesting event that also had an impact on the outcome of the Rwandan genocide was the media attention given during the atrocities. Even though countries kept on denying that they had information, the media was able to create enough attention to what was happening in the country. "The programming directors of large television networks such as CNN have become some of the most influential actors on the international scene."[25] Their intense or lack of coverage have the ability to change international policies. The US government was pressured by media to act on the atrocities happening in Rwanda. At one press conference, the State Department issued a statement calling the horrors in Rwanda "acts of genocide". A reporter asked "how many acts of genocides does it take in order to intervene?" which left the speaker uncomfortable and unable to answer the question. This "CNN effect" has shaped international politics in the past few years and this may have been the reason that France intervened towards the end of the conflict.

## *France's Intervention*

In Rwanda's case, France finally did intervene in the conflict. The operation named Turquoise was undertaken in June and ended in August of 1994. The mission began when most of the killings had ended and the RPF was making great advances in the country. The timing of the operation seemed a little suspicious and was seen by the RPF as France trying to stop their advances and by the Hutu militia as the foreign power coming to save the Hutu from the Tutsis. Although France's efforts did save almost 9,000 Tutsis[26], the world was surprised by this change in administration to suddenly stop the conflict. This is an important point in looking at foreign interest levels because this shows that France or another country had the capability to stop what was happening. It was a conscientious decision not to get involved until after the atrocities were done. There is also a question of motives that has recently come out on the part of the French.

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In August of 2008, a Rwandan commission looking at the genocide believes that the French government was involved in the actual genocide. The commission “accuse Paris d’avoir été au courant des préparatifs du massacre qui a fait entre 800 000 et 1 million de morts”[27] (accuses Paris to have known about the preparations of the massacre that had between 800,000 and 1 million dead). This is the first time that the French have been formally accused by a commission regarding their dealings with Rwanda as previous French and journalistic commissions found that France was not involved in the genocide.

It is unsure whether France was involved in the genocide or not and it may be the reason that they intervened was to stop their own doing. One certainty is that intervention was possible from the very start. Looking at the evidence, I do believe that foreign countries were capable of acting sooner and could have stopped most of the massacre. States can go in unilaterally into a conflict and use as much force as they deem necessary to accomplish the mission. States also have the right to take sides, because it is not expected for any states to always remain completely neutral in all conflicts. It is a lie when states say they should not intervene in self-determination conflicts because they do get involved some different way. It is also a lie that the US and France did not know what was happening as media coverage was bountiful and reports from UN commanders were available at these states’ disposal.

## **Genocide’s Future**

Although genocide has existed for around a century, it is possible to get rid of it. It just needs the cooperation of countries around the world. Simply putting foreign troops in an area where a genocide is occurring will drastically reduce the chance that these people will be killed. A UN search commission could quickly assess whether a genocide is occurring or not if reports have come to the surface in a certain country. This neutral, unaffiliated committee would say whether it is happening or not and countries could send troops to stop the murder. There could also be camps set up with foreign guards and troops protecting the innocent.

If a genocide occurs or is attempted, all commanders involved must face judicial actions. In the Kosovo case, the president Milosevic was tried at the international court and sentenced to prison for his role in the genocide. Although many of these solutions would invade self-determination principles, this goes beyond just one country. Such a massacre affects the entire world and the whole world should hold these people accountable, not just one country. And with these implementations, it is likely that genocides would happen less often because they are surely not deeply rooted hatred (if they were, genocides would have existed for centuries), but instead they are commanded killings in order to achieve greater power.

## **Conclusion**

The failure in stopping the genocide in Rwanda falls not to primordial roots, not even to the UN but to foreign western countries who had the means to stop it (such as the US and France). The genocide might have been avoidable, but it is certain that the genocide could have been avoided if countries were willing to act. It is true that hindsight is always 20-20 however, looking at the reasons why these countries did not intervene, we can see that they were just using lies in order not to intervene. There was no deeply rooted hatred between the Hutu and the Tutsis, which means that this entire massacre was led by only a small amount of people. The UN was indeed on the ground but they had their hands tied down by the mandate. They could not use force except to protect themselves and were only there to find a peaceful resolution between both parties. The only failure of the UN is the organization itself. The failure to stop this genocide lies only with the countries that were unwilling to help, unwilling to take a stance and stop this brutal murder. After the Holocaust, the world stood up and said “never again” but history has shown us that in the past 50 years, genocide happens time and time again.

Questions remain on humanitarian intervention and what the international community should do. The remains of colonialism are a great cause for the ethnic wars that occur today, should it be the West to fix its mistake or would this been seen again as an act of colonialist power? The world cannot change its past, but it can learn from its mistakes; yet these mistakes happen time and time again. Self-interest has played a powerful role in international politics, but maybe it is time to protect the people who have no protection.



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There are also concerns about what humanitarian intervention should consist of. Should the slightest abuse in human rights give the right for states to “intervene”. Who decides those human rights? The West? The U.S invaded Iraq because of weapons of mass destruction and because of the horrible man Saddam Hussein was. However, when he gassed his own people, there was no invasion of the country. The world may not be able to agree on all human rights issues; however they should realize that everyone has the right to live. When there is systematic killing of an ethnic civilian group, genocide is occurring. There are no acts of genocides, there is just genocide.

Rwanda is not the last genocide and unfortunately genocidal violence continues to ravage certain African regions. The Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda’s neighbor, has been in a long civil war. Genocide may be occurring; it is uncertain. The CNN effect has not yet taken affect, once it does, maybe someone will intervene. Genocide can be eradicated; the world has the ability to stop it right after it begins. It is up to countries around the world to finally say “never again” and make sure it never happens again.

## **Appendix A**

United Nations Convention- 1949

*The Contracting Parties,*

Having considered the declaration made by the General Assembly of the United Nations in its resolution 96 (I) dated 11 December 1946 that genocide is a crime under international law, contrary to the spirit and aims of the United Nations and condemned by the civilized world,

Recognizing that at all periods of history genocide has inflicted great losses on humanity, and

Being convinced that, in order to liberate mankind from such an odious scourge, international co-operation is required,

Hereby agree as hereinafter provided:

### **Article 1**

The Contracting Parties confirm that genocide, whether committed in time of peace or in time of war, is a crime under international law which they undertake to prevent and to punish.

### **Article 2**

In the present Convention, genocide means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such:

- (a) Killing members of the group;
- (b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;
- (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;
- (d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;
- (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.

### **Article 3**

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The following acts shall be punishable:

- (a) Genocide;
- (b) Conspiracy to commit genocide;
- (c) Direct and public incitement to commit genocide;
- (d) Attempt to commit genocide;
- (e) Complicity in genocide.

## **Article 4**

Persons committing genocide or any of the other acts enumerated in article III shall be punished, whether they are constitutionally responsible rulers, public officials or private individuals.

## **Article 5**

The Contracting Parties undertake to enact, in accordance with their respective Constitutions, the necessary legislation to give effect to the provisions of the present Convention, and, in particular, to provide effective penalties for persons guilty of genocide or any of the other acts enumerated in article III.

## **Article 6**

Persons charged with genocide or any of the other acts enumerated in article III shall be tried by a competent tribunal of the State in the territory of which the act was committed, or by such international penal tribunal as may have jurisdiction with respect to those Contracting Parties which shall have accepted its jurisdiction.

## **Article 7**

Genocide and the other acts enumerated in article III shall not be considered as political crimes for the purpose of extradition.

The Contracting Parties pledge themselves in such cases to grant extradition in accordance with their laws and treaties in force.

## **Article 8**

Any Contracting Party may call upon the competent organs of the United Nations to take such action under the Charter of the United Nations as they consider appropriate for the prevention and suppression of acts of genocide or any of the other acts enumerated in article III.

## **Article 9**

Disputes between the Contracting Parties relating to the interpretation, application or fulfilment of the present Convention, including those relating to the responsibility of a State for genocide or for any of the other acts enumerated in article III, shall be submitted to the International Court of Justice at the request of any of the parties to the dispute.

## **Article 10**

The present Convention, of which the Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish texts are equally authentic,

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shall bear the date of 9 December 1948.

### **Article 11**

The present Convention shall be open until 31 December 1949 for signature on behalf of any Member of the United Nations and of any nonmember State to which an invitation to sign has been addressed by the General Assembly.

The present Convention shall be ratified, and the instruments of ratification shall be deposited with the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

After 1 January 1950, the present Convention may be acceded to on behalf of any Member of the United Nations and of any non-member State which has received an invitation as aforesaid. Instruments of accession shall be deposited with the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

### **Article 12**

Any Contracting Party may at any time, by notification addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, extend the application of the present Convention to all or any of the territories for the conduct of whose foreign relations that Contracting Party is responsible.

### **Article 13**

On the day when the first twenty instruments of ratification or accession have been deposited, the Secretary-General shall draw up a proces-verbal and transmit a copy thereof to each Member of the United Nations and to each of the non-member States contemplated in article 11.

The present Convention shall come into force on the ninetieth day following the date of deposit of the twentieth instrument of ratification or accession.

Any ratification or accession effected, subsequent to the latter date shall become effective on the ninetieth day following the deposit of the instrument of ratification or accession.

### **Article 14**

The present Convention shall remain in effect for a period of ten years as from the date of its coming into force.

It shall thereafter remain in force for successive periods of five years for such Contracting Parties as have not denounced it at least six months before the expiration of the current period.

Denunciation shall be effected by a written notification addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

### **Article 15**

If, as a result of denunciations, the number of Parties to the present Convention should become less than sixteen, the Convention shall cease to be in force as from the date on which the last of these denunciations shall become effective. Article 16

A request for the revision of the present Convention may be made at any time by any Contracting Party by means of a notification in writing addressed to the Secretary-General.

The General Assembly shall decide upon the steps, if any, to be taken in respect of such request.

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## **Article 17**

The Secretary-General of the United Nations shall notify all Members of the United Nations and the non-member States contemplated in article XI of the following:

- (a) Signatures, ratifications and accessions received in accordance with article 11;
- (b) Notifications received in accordance with article 12;
- (c) The date upon which the present Convention comes into force in accordance with article 13;
- (d) Denunciations received in accordance with article 14;
- (e) The abrogation of the Convention in accordance with article 15;
- (f) Notifications received in accordance with article 16.

## **Article 18**

The original of the present Convention shall be deposited in the archives of the United Nations.

A certified copy of the Convention shall be transmitted to each Member of the United Nations and to each of the non-member States contemplated in article XI.

## **Article 19**

The present Convention shall be registered by the Secretary-General of the United Nations on the date of its coming into force.

## **Appendix B**

TO: BARIL/DPKO/UNATIONS NEW YORK FROM: DALLAIRE/UNAMIR/KIGALI FAX NO: MOST IMMEDIATE-CODE CABLE-212-xxx-xxxx INMARSAT: FAX NO: 011-xxx-xxxxx SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR PROTECTION OF INFORMANT ATTN: MGEN BARIL ROOM NO: 2052 TOTAL NUMBER OF TRANSMITTED PAGES INCLUDING THIS ONE: 2

1. Force commander put in contact with informant by very very important government politician. Informant is a top level trainer in the cadre of interhamwe-armed militia of MRND.

2. *He informed us he was in charge of last Saturdays demonstrations which aims were to target deputies of opposition parties coming to ceremonies and Belgian soldiers. They hoped to provoke the RPF BN to engage (being fired upon) the demonstrators and provoke a civil war. Deputies were to be assassinated upon entry or exit from Parliament. Belgian troops were to be provoked and if Belgians soldiers restored to force a number of them were to be killed and thus guarantee Belgian withdrawal from Rwanda.*

3. Informant confirmed 48 RGF PARA CDO and a few members of the gendarmerie participated in demonstrations in plain clothes. Also at least one Minister of the MRND and the sous-prefect of Kigali were in the demonstration. RGF and Interhamwe provided radio communications.

4. Informant is a former security member of the president. He also stated he is paid RF150,000 per month by the MRND party to train Interhamwe. Direct link is to chief of staff RGF and president of the MRND for financial and

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material support.

5. Interhamwe has trained 1700 men in RGF military camps outside the capital. The 1700 are scattered in groups of 40 throughout Kigali. Since UNAMIR deployed he has trained 300 personnel in three week training sessions at RGF camps. Training focus was discipline, weapons, explosives, close combat and tactics.

6. *Principal aim of Interhamwe in the past was to protect Kigali from RPF. Since UNAMIR mandate he 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 1000 Tutsis.*

7. Informant states he disagrees with anti-Tutsi extermination. He supports opposition to RPF but cannot support killing of innocent persons. He also stated that he believes the president does not have full control over all elements of his old party/faction.

8. *Informant is prepared to provide location of major weapons cache with at least 135 weapons. He already has distributed 110 weapons including 35 with ammunition and can give us details of their location. Type of weapons are G3 and AK47 provided by RGF. He was ready to go to the arms cache tonight-if we gave him the following guarantee. He requests that he and his family (his wife and four children) be placed under our protection.*

9. *It is our intention to take action within the next 36 hours with a possible H HR of Wednesday at dawn (local). Informant states that hostilities may commence again if political deadlock ends. Violence could take place day of the ceremonies or the day after. Therefore Wednesday will give greatest chance of success and also be most timely to provide significant input to on-going political negotiations.*

10. It is recommended that informant be granted protection and evacuated out of Rwanda. This HQ does not have previous UN experience in such matters and urgently requests guidance. No contact has as yet been made to any embassy in order to inquire if they are prepared to protect him for a period of time by granting diplomatic immunity in their embassy in Kigali before moving him and his family out of the country.

11. Force commander will be meeting with the very very important political person tomorrow morning in order to ensure that this individual is conscious of all parameters of his involvement. Force commander does have certain reservations on the suddenness of the change of heart of the informant to come clean with this information. Recce of armed cache and detailed planning of raid to go on late tomorrow. Possibility of a trap not fully excluded, as this may be a set-up against this very very important political person. Force commander to inform SRSG first thing in morning to ensure his support.

13. Peux Ce Que Veux. Allons-y.

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[1] The United Nations. *Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide*.

[2] Prunier, Gérard. *The Rwanda Crisis :History of a Genocide*. (2)

[3] Ibid (3)

[4] Durch, William J. *UN Peacekeeping, American Politics, and the Uncivil Wars of the 1990s*. (369)

[5] Prunier, Gérard. *The Rwanda Crisis :History of a Genocide* (5)

[6] Ibid. (6)

[7] Ibid (31)

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[8] Rwanda and Burundi were actually one country, but during the Hutu revolt, the two separated, leaving a “democratic” Hutu government in charge in Rwanda.

[9] Destexhe, Alain. Rwanda and Genocide in the Twentieth Century (42)

[10] Durch, William J. UN Peacekeeping, American Politics, and the Uncivil Wars of the 1990s (370)

[11] Destexhe, Alain. Rwanda and Genocide in the Twentieth Century (36)

[12] Ibid. (37)

[13] Moore, Jonathan. Hard Choices :Moral Dilemmas in Humanitarian Intervention. (159)

[14] Ibid., 30

[15] Durch, William J. UN Peacekeeping, American Politics, and the Uncivil Wars of the 1990s. 367

[16] Ibid., 376

[17] Ibid., 377

[18] PBS. The Triumph of Evil: Outgoing Code Cable. 11-1-1994.

[19] Appendix B

[20] Power, Samantha. A Problem from Hell :America and the Age of Genocide. 341

[21] Ibid., 343

[22] Ibid., 343

[23] Ibid., 357

[24] Durch, William J. UN Peacekeeping, American Politics, and the Uncivil Wars of the 1990s. 375

[25] Monga, Célestin. The Anthropology of Anger :Civil Society and Democracy in Africa. 177

[26] Durch, William J. UN Peacekeeping, American Politics, and the Uncivil Wars of the 1990s. 387

[27] Le Monde Diplomatique. Le Rwanda accuse la France d'avoir participé au génocide de 1994

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*Date: 2008*