



French arms, war and genocide in Rwanda

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Abstract. France is now the world's second largest arms exporter, and the largest supplier of weapons to the developing world. The record of France's involvement in Rwanda from 1990 to 1994 has motivated the NGO lobby within France to subject French government policy – towards the developing world in general, and on arms supplies in particular – to unprecedented scrutiny. Accordingly, the level and volume of criticism of French involvement in Rwanda resulted in the first ever parliamentary commission to scrutinise French military activity overseas, although this and other official inquiries stopped short of identifying arms supplies as instrumental in exacerbating the Rwandan crisis.¹ A consideration of French arms supplies to Rwanda can offer a template by which to measure the nature and degree of France's support for the Habyarimana regime which planned, and the Sindikubwabo interim government which oversaw, the 1994 genocide in that country. Moreover, French arms supplies after France's own and the UN's arms embargo demonstrate how a process of unchecked militarisation may involve the supplier as well as the supplied in illegality.

Introduction

The Rwandan genocide of 1994 marked a watershed for French civil society, notably those Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and individuals who had been to the forefront in advocating humanitarianism as a defining component of their country's foreign and development policy. France, uniquely in Europe, prides itself on having a global humanitarian mission, and evidence that this “homeland of human rights” was implicated in genocide through its military support until 1994 for the extremist regime in Rwanda shocked many who had applauded the declared pro-democracy, pro-humanitarian stance of President Mitterrand since 1981. Indeed, Mitterrand had been the first to appoint a Minister for Humanitarian Action in the person of *Médecins sans frontières* co-founder Bernard Kouchner, France's most prominent advocate of the right or duty of humanitarian intervention.²

The unprecedented creation in 1997 of a parliamentary commission to investigate France's role in Rwanda, presided by socialist deputy, former defence minister and chairman of the National Assembly's defence committee Paul Quilès, was seen as a direct result of the pressure generated by civil society, notably NGOs, some journalists and a number of academics, who had raised serious questions about the degree and extent of French support for the Habyarimana regime which planned and the Sindikubwabo interim

government which oversaw the 1994 genocide. Yet the overwhelmingly military nature of this support, through training and major arms transfers from France to Rwanda, was not exceptional in the overall context of French military involvement in Africa over four decades and five presidencies since decolonisation. Yet many new NGOs, seeking to identify the cause and effect of French policy in the developing world in general and Africa in particular, emerged in France as a direct result of these events, notably *Agir ici*, *Survie*, *l'Observatoire permanent de la Coopération française* and *l'Observatoire des transferts d'armements*. The latter's newsletter noted, when the Quilès Commission's report was published in December 1998, that: "The implication of France in this tragedy, already denounced by NGOs, is thus confirmed. The Parliamentary Commission was forced to yield to this pressure from civil society, while attempting to diminish France's responsibility. The details on arms sales nonetheless speak volumes".³

The Quilès Commission⁴ and other reports published to date – by the Belgian Senate⁵ and the UN Security Council⁶ – may represent an attempt to draw a line under the débâcle of the international response to the Rwandan genocide. However, all of these officially-sanctioned reports have failed to address the issue of the source of weapons supplies, although control of such supplies was identified in the UN report as key to preventing and defusing conflicts in Africa.

Crucially, it may be seen from the Rwandan case study that illegality in arms transfers flows from originally "legal" arms supplies, and that states overwhelmingly are the suppliers of new weaponry to civil conflicts. Boutwell and Klare have identified this "legal export from the major supplier states" as one of three factors along with domestic manufacture and black-market sales which have resulted in the circulation of "literally hundreds of millions" of small arms and light weapons throughout the world.⁷

War and genocide in Rwanda

It is now accepted by all except its perpetrators and their supporters that the Rwandan genocide of 1994, which resulted in the deaths of at least 800,000 people in three months, was one of the largest-scale crimes of the twentieth century. However, unlike the century's other genocides or mass politically-motivated killings – of Armenians, Jews and Cambodians – it is commonly assumed that the Rwandan genocide was spontaneous and conducted by a frenzied population armed with machetes, an impression created by much media coverage which typically fed stereotypes and reinforced Western prejudices that "Africa is a place of darkness, where furious savages clobber each other on the head to assuage their dark ancestral bloodlusts".⁸ Two of

France's best known observers of African affairs, Stephen Smith and Antoine Glaser, wrote in 1994 that: "[T]he hands which cut to pieces men, women and children were Rwandan. They were not puppets' hands. They weren't even hands equipped with our help. Because, horror upon horror for their victims, the killers used machetes and not the firearms which we had delivered to them in abundance".⁹

In contrast, Stephen Goose and Frank Smyth of the Human Rights Watch Arms Project emphasised the significance of firearms to the Rwandan genocide: "The proliferation of weapons in Rwanda expanded the conflict . . . Much of the killing was carried out with machetes, but automatic rifles and hand grenades were also commonly used. Their wide availability helped Hutu extremists carry out their slaughter on a horrendous scale. (. . .) Rwandan authorities distributed large numbers of firearms to militia members and other supporters months before the genocide began".¹⁰ Michael T. Klare notes, in light of the Rwandan war and genocide and its spillover into the former Zaire, that: "While it is true, of course, that many factors contributed to these outcomes, it is also evident that, at each stage in this process, the acquisition of relatively small quantities of light weapons – never exceeding a few million dollars' worth at a given time – played a decisive role in sustaining and escalating the violence".¹¹ And a letter to the *Observer* a year after the genocide pointed out that: "Although the vilest images from last year are of massacre by machete, it is important to remember that Rwanda's government was backed in its tyranny by a formidable armoury provided by the West".¹²

Kathi Austin, researcher for Human Rights Watch Arms Project's reports on arms transfers to Rwanda, points out that: "Between 1992 and 1994, Rwanda was [sub-Saharan Africa's] third-largest importer of weapons (behind Angola and Nigeria), with cumulative military imports totaling \$100 million"; and she concludes that: "Much of the killing was carried out with traditional weapons and farming implements, including machetes, knives and hoes; however, the security forces often finished off the survivors seeking refuge in churches, stadiums, or school buildings with automatic rifles and grenades. Sadly, a UN arms embargo was not imposed on Rwanda until a month and a half after the genocide had commenced".¹³ It is also important to note that many of these traditional weapons and farming implements were specially imported for the purpose of killing; orders for such implements during the period of preparation for the genocide greatly exceeded Rwanda's agricultural needs.

The Rwandan genocide of 1994 was in fact highly organised¹⁴ – Rwanda's *génocidaires* killed at five times the rate of the Nazis – and must also be viewed in context of the transformation of Rwanda in under four years from a sectarian but stable "hard state" to a "weapons state" and thence to a geno-

cidal state; it has been argued that this would not have been possible without externally-sponsored militarisation.¹⁵

Motives and mechanics of French arms transfers

The headwaters of the flow of weapons to conflict in the African Great Lakes are to be found in those Western countries with the world's largest arms industries, notably the US, France, UK and Belgium. France's part of this one-way flow of weaponry, military equipment and expertise is labelled "co-operation" (which of course implies a two-way process); and this Franco-African military cooperation is given legal personality through bilateral treaties although equally influenced by traditions, personal interests, networks, covert operations and "bad habits".¹⁶ Guy Martin notes that:

Although camouflaged under the mantle of *coopération*, France's African policy is, in fact, primarily motivated by a narrow conception of its national interests, and blatantly disregards African concerns and interests. As former President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing once bluntly declared, "I am dealing with African affairs, namely with France's interests in Africa".¹⁷

French military support for favoured African regimes is based on a pyramid of militarism, built in the first instance on the defence treaties and military assistance accords which obtain between France and nearly half (23) of Africa's 51 states. France is the only ex-colonial power which retains this number of military agreements and such a complex system of military cooperation with so many states. This baseline of exceptionality, dating from the very inception of the African states concerned, has provided a firm foundation for the other aspects of French militarism in Africa. France is the only country to station its own troops in Africa – constituting what has been called "a permanent intervention"¹⁸ – despite an OAU resolution as early as 1978 condemning the existence of foreign military bases on the continent.¹⁹ France is also the principal supplier of weaponry and military equipment to Africa and, since 1996, the leading arms merchant to the developing world as a whole and, after the US, the world's largest arms exporter.²⁰ It is also the principal creator and instructor of African armies. This creation of military protégés on the French model is seen as a key aspect of Franco-African cooperation; Guy Martin also points out that:

French leaders tend to link the concepts of security and development by arguing that their help in creating strong national armies has contributed to the stability and hence to the economic benefit of all concerned.

In fact, the French government's objective in creating African national armies at the time of independence was to build up units that could work closely with French units and effectively serve as branches of the French army overseas.²¹

The Rwandan state and the inherent conflict which led to war in 1990 functioned entirely outside of the Cold War framework which determined the context and distorted the nature of wars elsewhere on the continent until that date. Rwanda was of strategic importance to no extra-African power during or after the Cold War except, for its own unique reasons, for France. As early as 1975, Franco-Rwandan military cooperation was formalised in a military technical assistance accord. The Franco-Rwandan accord would be the twenty-second such document, and entailed an initially modest annual transfer of arms and military equipment from France to Rwanda worth about FF4m (£0.5m) per year. With regard to the deployment of French troops in the country, the accord states: "The government of the French Republic places at the disposal of the government of the Rwandese republic the French military personnel whose services are required for the organisation and instruction of the Rwandese national police".

Faced in October 1990 with an armed insurgency by his own exiled nationals organised as the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), then Rwandan President Habyarimana swiftly contacted his principal foreign backers, President Mitterrand and his son Jean-Christophe (then head of the advisory "Africa Unit" attached to the French presidency), and claimed Rwanda had been attacked by an expansionist Ugandan President Museveni. This appeal struck the right chord in Paris, where defence of France's African sphere of influence was (until recently) a key pillar of foreign policy; and it produced the desired effect, a military intervention, and rapid, exponential militarisation. Three hundred French troops (Foreign Legionnaire paratroopers of the *1er* and *2e Régiment étranger parachutiste* (REP) and Marines of the *Régiment parachutiste d'infanterie de Marine* (RPIMa)) arrived in Rwanda on October 4, 1990. They brought with them 60-mm, 81-mm and 120-mm mortars and 105-mm light artillery guns.²² In an interview with a former Foreign Legion officer who participated in this operation, codenamed *Noroît*, Stephen Bradshaw asked about the significance of these weapons on the development and outcome of the war:

Bradshaw: How important was the artillery in preventing the RPF advance?

Officer: Obviously very important because the RPF didn't have very much heavy artillery and the Rwandan government had that advantage over the RPF and there was no way that the RPF could go through the lines of heavy artillery.

Bradshaw: If the French hadn't been there what would have actually happened?

Officer: Well the Rwandan army would have been totally incapable of defending the country, and since they scarcely knew how to use the weapons and they knew very little about military tactics, the war would have been lost. There would have been a very, very small battle and in a day it would have been over, if the French hadn't been there.²³

French troops were deployed in Kigali, initially to evacuate French citizens, but remained for three years. During this time, French personnel were directly responsible, through arming and training, for the exponential growth of the Rwandan Government Army (*Forces Armées Rwandaises* – FAR), which swelled from 5,200-strong in 1990 to 35,000 in 1993. Eventually, a Frenchman, Lt.-Col. Gilles Chollet, was made special military advisor to President Habyarimana and given overall command of operations. However, when it became apparent that France's first direct military intervention there necessitated the long-term support of Habyarimana's weak and disorganised army, the 1975 Franco-Rwandan military technical assistance accord was amended on 26 August 1992 to include the "Rwandese armed forces" as eligible for French assistance. It is noteworthy that French justificatory discourse changed at this time; the intervention, by then approaching its second anniversary with official troop levels near 700, was no longer intended merely to protect French nationals, but, according to French ambassador Martres, "to prevent destabilisation of Rwanda".²⁴ Uniquely, both sections of the Franco-Rwandan accord were classified, and did not appear alongside similar accords published in the *Journal officiel*.²⁵ The accord is only now in the public domain following its publication in the report of the Quilès Commission in December 1998.²⁶

The extraordinary development of the FAR, comparable in scale, expense and inefficiency to the eventually fruitless American backing of the South Vietnamese Army, has been extensively documented. A UN-commissioned report published by the Danish foreign ministry on the international response to the Rwandan war concluded that: "The influx of weapons from foreign sources to the Rwandese government as well as to the RPF contributed significantly to the civil war. . . as well as to the massacres in 1994."²⁷

Acknowledged French arms transfers to the FAR during the Rwandan civil war from 1990 to April 1994 included some heavy weaponry: three Gazelle helicopters with spare parts, as well as spare parts for French-manufactured Panhard automatic machine guns. Indeed, the use of this French-supplied matériel as helicopter gun-ships by the FAR and – allegedly – by their French allies, also radically altered the nature of the war in its early stages, confining

the numerically-superior RPF to a small arc of territory in the mountainous north of the country (in Byumba préfecture).²⁸

Former French Captain of Gendarmerie (and later military advisor to the Rwandan president) Paul Barril gives an enthusiastic description of the role of France's special military services in Rwanda, notably the use – redolent of *Apocalypse Now* – of French-piloted helicopter gunships to destroy RPF supply lines early in the campaign:

France's official special services blocked in '90 the attack by the RPF terrorists and Uganda, a DGSE [*Direction générale de la Sécurité extérieure*, French military intelligence] job. A remarkable job which was a source of great pride in this first phase of the war. There were heroes on the French side who will never be known, extraordinary stories of guys who took crazy initiatives, who went out and blasted all around them with just a few helicopters and a few guns. There is material for a book on the heroism of the Secret Services in Rwanda, against Uganda and the RPF. . . which explains their hatred for France.²⁹

Barril's account is corroborated by those on the receiving end,³⁰ Tito Rutaramera, a leading RPF tactician, explained that the use by the FAR of French helicopters forced the RPF to abandon their conventional advance on Kigali from their northern stronghold around Byumba, and to adopt the tactics of the *guerre mobile*.³¹

Given this evolution of the combat from conventional war to *guerre mobile* by the time of the second RPF offensive in 1991, French arms transfers thereafter consisted overwhelmingly of small calibre light weapons and ammunition, including assault rifles, anti-tank rocket launchers and hundreds of thousands of rounds of ammunition of all calibres; official policy throughout the war was to ensure that “the Rwandan Armed Forces were kept regularly supplied with munitions during the different serious offensives launched by the RPF”.³² This was demonstrated most effectively at the time of the RPF's successful capture and subsequent retreat from Ruhengeri in February 1993; the Quilès Commission quotes the report of Col. Philippe Tracqui, commander of the French troops of *Opération Noroît* in early 1993, as follows: “Friday 12 February 1993: landing of a DC8 with 50 12.7mm machine guns plus 100,000 rounds for the FAR. Wednesday 17 February 1993: landing of a Boeing 747 with discreet unloading by the FAR of 105mm shells and 68mm rockets (Alat)”.³³ The Commission notes that: “The deliveries of arms and munitions, along with the operational assistance mission led a few days later by Lt.-Col. Didier Tauzin, will allow the FAR within a fortnight to recover spectacularly the situation against the RPF”.³⁴

The Quilès Commission refuses to draw any conclusions from the record of French arms shipments to Rwanda; in response to multiple accusations of French complicity with the perpetrators of genocide through continued military support, the Commission's report starts with a disclaimer: "The Mission does not believe that it has uncovered the whole truth on this subject and particularly it does not claim, in respect of arms transfers, to have elucidated all the cases evoked in various articles and publications about parallel markets and deliveries carried out at the time of the massacres, in April 1994, or after the embargo announced by the United Nations on 17 May 1994".³⁵

However, the Commission obtained unprecedented declassification of documents which otherwise would have been subject to *secret défense* for at least a further 30 years. Usefully, these were attached in annexes, which for the first time allow us to trace a pattern of French arms transfers to a country at war, and draw our own conclusions about the effect these transfers may have had on the evolution of the military and political situation there. Recent reports have underlined the need for "greater transparency efforts to illuminate just how small arms and light weapons [made] their way to the killing grounds of the 1990s".³⁶ The urgency of such transparency was demonstrated most dramatically in Rwanda where, as Michael Klare notes: "When societies are deeply divided along ethnic, religious, or sectarian lines and the existing government is unwilling or unable to protect minorities and maintain domestic order, the introduction and use of even small quantities of small arms and light weapons can have profoundly destabilizing effects".³⁷

Technically, exports of light arms from France must be authorised by the Prime Minister in consultation with Interministerial Commission for the Study of Exports of War Materials (*Commission interministérielle pour l'étude des exportations des matériels de guerre* – CIEEMG), based on a set of confidential criteria.³⁸ This Commission includes representatives of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Defence, Economy and Finance. It examines all applications for arms exports and must give its consent before the deliveries can take place. The Commission's deliberations are confidential and subject to official secrecy.

However, in Rwanda there were also regular direct, complimentary transfers (*cessions*) from the Military Cooperation Mission (*Mission militaire de coopération*) within the Cooperation Ministry (*Ministère de la Coopération*).³⁹ According to documents declassified for the Quilès Commission, nine out of nineteen arms transfers by the Military Cooperation Mission were not subject to War Matériel Export Authorisation (*Autorisation d'exportation de matériels de guerre* – AEMG) controls. Moreover, the Quilès Commission notes that: "31 direct transfers of arms and munitions to Rwanda were carried out in disregard of correct procedure",⁴⁰ as well as regular deliveries of

state-of-the-art communications systems. According to the *Observatoire des transferts des armements*: “This indicates clearly that these non-‘authorised’ bequests took place under the sole authority of the army”.⁴¹ Quilès suggests, regarding the French army’s “reconstruction” of the FAR, that: “In this context of reorganisation, it is scarcely surprising that certain French military decision-makers could have felt that they were building an army, for which it was necessary moreover to ensure that it would be regularly supplied with munitions”.⁴² Acknowledged direct transfers of arms and ammunition during the 1990 to 1994 period were worth approximately 42 million French francs (c. £4m).⁴³

Overall, according to official, declassified documents reproduced in annexes to the report of the Quilès Commission, total arms sales by France to Rwanda during the period 1990 to 1994 were composed of 62 contracts examined by the CIEEMG, 84 passed by AEMG and 19 free transfers. There is no indication whether the 146 arms “purchases” were actually paid for by the Rwandan government, or whether the majority of these transfers were in fact complimentary and paid for by Defence or Cooperation Ministry budgets. Other than these declassified documents, no official account of the total amount of arms supplied by France to Rwanda between 1990 and 1994 is available, but African Rights concludes that such supplies amounted to “at least \$6m worth in 1991–92 [alone], including mortars, light artillery, armoured cars and helicopters. . . France also supplied spare parts and technical assistance to maintain the vehicles of the FAR”.⁴⁴ The authoritative account of the establishment of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda by Morris and Scharf cites a further expenditure of \$6 million, stating that: “The Rwandan authorities distributed six million dollars worth of firearms provided by France to militia members and other supporters of President Habyarimana from 1992 to early 1994.”⁴⁵

The Arusha Accords, signed by the warring parties in 1993, included stipulations that foreign forces should be withdrawn from Rwanda, and that arms supplies to the belligerents should cease. However, the Rwandan government’s arms suppliers found means of circumventing these restrictions, as direct shipments were not the only means of rapid militarisation used by Rwanda and its supporters. South Africa (pre-Mandela), the only major arms manufacturer on the continent, was well-placed to sell material to Habyarimana, and arms acquisition was greatly facilitated by French financial aid to support the Rwandan war effort, which grew from a peacetime FF4m to FF55m per annum in 1993, a nearly fourteen-fold increase, placing wartime Rwanda sixth of the 26 African states which received such aid from France.⁴⁶ Human Rights Watch’s 1993 annual report also noted that:

France has consistently supported President Habyarimana over the years and continued this policy during 1993 despite evidence of human rights abuses by his regime. Just after the beginning of the war in 1990, France sent a contingent of troops “to protect French citizens and other expatriates” in Rwanda. After the RPF violated the cease-fire in February, France sent an additional 300 soldiers some of whom actively supported Rwandan troops in the combat zones. Some of the French troops were withdrawn after the March cease-fire, but others remained in Rwanda, in violation of accords which called for the departure of all foreign troops. France supplied Rwanda with arms and with political and propaganda support within the European Community.⁴⁷

Light weapons were also supplied by France through third parties (notably Egypt). Klare notes that, as illustrated in Human Rights Watch Arms Project’s 1994 report, “The multiplicity of suppliers. . . facilitates the acquisition of arms by potential belligerents, particularly those that might be shunned by the traditional suppliers for political or human rights reasons. Prior to the massacres of 1994, for instance, the government of Rwanda was able to purchase large quantities of small arms from producers in Egypt and South Africa”.⁴⁸ However Goose and Smith, authors of Human Rights Watch’s report on arms supplies to Rwanda, note that Rwanda’s principal supplier, France, was still involved in the Egyptian deal:

A \$6 million contract between Egypt and Rwanda in March 1992, with Rwanda’s payment guaranteed by a French bank [the state-owned *Crédit Lyonnais*], included 60-mm and 82-mm mortars, 16,000 mortar shells, 122-m D-30 howitzers, 3,000 artillery shells, rocket-propelled grenades, plastic explosives, antipersonnel land mines, and more than three million rounds of small arms ammunition.⁴⁹

Kathi Austin confirms these conclusions. In summary of her findings re non-French and third party transfers to the Rwandan *ancien régime*, she notes that: “President Juvenal Habyarimana also acquired rifles, machine guns and ammunition from South Africa in contravention of an international ban on South African arms exports. In addition, the Egyptian government provided Habyarimana with long-range artillery pieces, artillery shells, explosives, grenades, land mines and Egyptian-made Kalashnikov rifles in exchange for cash and tea; this \$6 million transaction was financed with a loan provided by the French government bank, the *Crédit Lyonnais*”.⁵⁰

Nonetheless, the president of the state-owned bank Jean Peyrelevade has since denied that there had been any credit guarantee for this transaction, and the Quilès Commission’s report stated that no definitive conclusion could be drawn from the supporting document supplied by Human Rights Watch.⁵¹

Mobutu's Zaire was an essential conduit for arms shipments which could not be sent directly to Rwanda for reasons of security or political sensitivity throughout this period. At France's request, the late Marshal-President's Presidential Guard had been in the frontline in repelling the first RPF offensive; and Zaire remained an indispensable supply route for weapons up to, including and subsequent to the Rwandan state's recourse to genocide. (Indeed, the significance of Mobutu's Zaire as a source of regional instability, comparable to that of apartheid South Africa, partly explains the subsequent imperative for post-genocide Rwanda and other threatened states to cooperate in its destruction in 1997.⁵²)

Arms transfers to Rwanda during the genocide and post-embargo

The UN-commissioned report published by the Danish foreign ministry on the international response to the Rwandan war concluded that: "The influx of weapons from foreign sources to the Rwandese government as well as to the RPF contributed significantly to the civil war... as well as to the massacres in 1994."⁵³ Goose and Smith concur that "Governments that supplied weapons and otherwise supported those forces [responsible for the genocide] bear some responsibility for needless civilian deaths."⁵⁴

And on 20 August 1995, BBC Panorama's study of French involvement in Rwanda, "The Bloody Tricolour" included testimony from Belgian UNAMIR (United Nations Assistance Mission in Rwanda) Colonel Luc Marchal (Commander of UN Forces Kigali Sector 1993-94) who stated, in an interview with Stephen Bradshaw, that the French army had delivered munitions to the FAR when the genocide had already been underway for two days. Colonel Marchal described the arrival of French military aircraft on 8 April 1994 at Kigali airport:

Marchal: The first lift was composed of three planes. Two of those three planes were carrying personnel and one was carrying ammunition.

Bradshaw: Ammunition for the French soldiers?

Marchal: No, for the Rwandese army.

Bradshaw: How do you know this ammunition was for the Rwandese army?

Marchal: Because they [the cases of munitions] just remained a few minutes in the airfield. Immediately after they were loaded in vehicles and they [were] moved to the Kanombe camp [FAR HQ in Kigali].

There is no confirmation of this shipment in the report of the Quilès Commission. However, of the principal accusations of French complicity in the genocide, the following were addressed by the Commission: French diplomatic

and military personnel in Rwanda were partisans of the “Hutu Power” faction in the Rwandan government, and considered the RPF as an enemy; French military support for the FAR in its war against the RPF “bordered on direct engagement” (*est “allée jusqu’au limites de l’engagement direct”*); there was a secret dimension to Franco-Rwandan military cooperation; French support for the Habyarimana regime was never questioned despite the numerous human rights abuses which preceded the genocide; France had foreseen the risks of genocide from as early as 1990 and was aware of the implication of the most senior figures of the Rwandan regime in its preparation; a high-level meeting took place in May 1994 between the FAR and the head of the *Mission militaire de Coopération* at the *Ministère de la Coopération* in Paris even while the same FAR was overseeing the genocide in Rwanda; France maintained diplomatic relations until July 1994 with the interim government which carried out the genocide; and the “Safe Humanitarian Zone” created during *Opération Turquoise* facilitated the escape of the *génocidaires*.⁵⁵

The May 1994 meeting in Paris is detailed in documents recovered by journalist Colette Braeckman of Brussels daily *Le Soir*. In a letter and report addressed to the Rwandan Defence Minister and FAR Chief of Staff (both based in Gitarama, south-central Rwanda, where the interim government had moved after fleeing Kigali in the face of the RPF advance), Lieutenant Colonel Ephrem Rwabalinda, adviser to the Chief of Staff, describes his visit to the Military Cooperation Mission in Paris from 9 to 13 May.⁵⁶ Lt. Col. Rwabalinda was received by head of mission General Huchon on Monday 9 May 1994. They met for two hours, and Rwabalinda spelled out the FAR’s “urgent needs: munitions for the 105mm artillery battery (at least 2000 rounds); completion of the munitions for individual weapons, if necessary by passing indirectly via neighbouring countries friendly to Rwanda; clothing; transmission equipment.”

The report details General Huchon’s opinion that the French army was “tied hands and feet” by public opinion which would not permit a further direct French intervention to assist the FAR, and that there was an urgent need to limit damage to Rwanda’s reputation abroad and turn around international opinion so that French aid could recommence. In the meantime, the Military Cooperation Mission would send “a secure telecommunications system to allow General Huchon and General Bizimungu of the FAR to communicate without being overheard”; and 17 transmitters and receivers to allow communication between military units in Kigali. This equipment was ready to be shipped at Ostende. General Huchon also urged the creation of a zone under secure FAR control, where deliveries could take place safely.⁵⁷

However, in contrast to Braeckman, much of the francophone press supported official accounts that military supplies had ceased on April 8; Stephen

Smith of *Libération* stated in August 1995 that: “All the military sources whom I have been able to contact in the course of the last few months have denied categorically that there were French arms deliveries to Rwanda, even during the whole year of 1994”.⁵⁸

French arms transfers to Rwanda also continued after the 17 May 1994 UN arms embargo, to which France initially was opposed. The 1995 report of the *Observatoire permanent de la Coopération française* (formed as a response to French policy in Africa in general and Rwanda in particular) noted that: “At the UN Security Council on May 17, France [in the person of its permanent representative Jean-Bernard Mérimée] made common cause with the ambassador of the Rwandese interim government, who was trying to oppose the voting of an embargo on arms destined for Rwanda – on the pretext that this embargo would only penalise ‘government’ forces. France was opposed to it because the flow of arms deliveries was continuing, with the support of most of the [French] military personnel, who were hostile to the embargo”.⁵⁹

The Resolution – S/RES/918 (1994) – was finally adopted on 17 May 1994 by 14 votes to 1, the dissident voice being the Rwandan interim government which opposed the inclusion of the following, Section B of the draft resolution:

Determining that the situation in Rwanda constitutes a threat to peace and security in the region,

Acting under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations,

13. Decides that all States shall prevent the sale or supply to Rwanda by their nationals or from their territories or using their flag vessels or aircraft or arms and related matériel of all types, including weapons and ammunition, military vehicles and equipment, paramilitary police equipment and spare parts (. . .)

15. Calls upon all States, including States not Members of the United Nations, and international organizations to act strictly in accordance with the provisions of the present resolution, notwithstanding the existence of any rights or obligations conferred or imposed by any international agreement or any contract entered into or any licence or permit granted prior to the date of the adoption of the present resolution.

Of accounts of breaches of this embargo by UN member states, Human Rights Watch’s May 1995 report is the most categorical:

Arms flows to the FAR were not suspended immediately by France after the imposition of the arms embargo on May 17, 1994. Rather, they were diverted to Goma airport in Zaire. . . Some of the first arms shipments to arrive in Goma after May 17 were supplied to the FAR by the French

government. Human Rights Watch learned from airport personnel and local businessmen that five shipments arrived in May and June containing artillery, machine guns, assault rifles and ammunition provided by the French government. These weapons were taken across the border into Rwanda by members of the Zairian military and delivered to the FAR in Gisenyi. The French consul in Goma at the time, Jean-Claude Urbano, has justified the five shipments as a fulfilment of contracts negotiated with the government of Rwanda prior to the arms embargo. In the view of Human Rights Watch, these shipments constituted a clear violation of the UN-imposed embargo, and are all the more to be condemned because the recipients were carrying out a campaign of genocide at the time.⁶⁰

Kathi Austin also notes that: "In contravention of the UN arms embargo, weapons poured into eastern Zaire for the ex-FAR from governments or traffickers based in Belgium, China, France, South Africa and the Seychelles." But France's role was again exceptional; the Human Rights Watch Arms Project 1995 report "Rearming with Impunity" noted that: "France used private contractors to provide light weapons to ex-FAR units based in refugee camps in eastern Zaire and provided financial assistance to the Mobutu regime in 1996 for third-party arms transfers".⁶¹

Journalists corroborate accounts of arms deliveries to Goma in unmarked Boeing 707s⁶²; *Libération* noted an official denial, and unofficial admission, that such a delivery was possible: "All sources on the spot – including well-placed French ex-pats – have expressed their 'certainty' that these arms deliveries were 'paid for by France'."⁶³ And the defence attaché at "a French embassy in the region" (most probably in Burundi), while rejecting the suggestion that there had been an official French delivery of arms, added: "But an under-the-counter assistance, by parallel circuits, is always possible. You know, I could tell you a story or two about shady arms traffic deals in Paris. . ."⁶⁴

And key among the *Joint Evaluation of Emergency Assistance to Rwanda* Committee's findings, under the heading "Illegal Arms Trade Fuelled the Violence", was the following:

Outside arms suppliers contributed to and exacerbated the conflict in Rwanda in violation of the spirit if not the text of the Arusha Accords, preceding cease-fire agreements and the UN arms embargo. After the genocide, continued rearming of former government military and militia, as reported to have been occurring in Zaire, increased the threat of repetition of the cycle of massive violence. The recently established International Commission of Inquiry, charged with investigating these reports, will hopefully lead to a cessation of such arms shipments.⁶⁵

The Quilès Commission report acknowledges the accusations of post-embargo arms shipments, while questioning their sustainability. There is also an element of whitewash concerning France's deliveries of arms and military equipment after France's own ban and the UN embargo:

The press stated that France had violated its own embargo of April 8 and the UN's of May 17. The French state-controlled weapons and military equipment company SOFREMAS was accused of having broken the embargo by proceeding with deliveries via Goma in Zaire. Similarly, the Luchaire company, which is 100% owned by Giat Industries, was also accused of having made similar deliveries.

In its May 1995 report, Human Rights Watch claims to have learned from airport staff and from a local businessman that five convoys had arrived at Goma in May and June 1994 containing weapons and munitions from France for the FAR.

On these different points, the Mission has not been able to this day to gather substantive proof, despite requests it made to obtain, notably from Human Rights Watch, copies of documents or memos relating to SOFREMAS and found in Zaire in an abandoned bus near Goma.⁶⁶

However, the French authorities have also proved slow to respond to requests; in November 1998, the UN International Commission of Inquiry reported that: "On 13 August 1998, the Chairman wrote to the French Ministry for Foreign Affairs to inquire if the Government of France was aware of the findings of the Attorney-General of Switzerland concerning the Banque nationale de Paris and the South African arms broker, Willem Ehlers, as described in the Commission's report (S/1998/63, paras. 16–27). The Commission has not yet received a response from the Government".⁶⁷

Goose and Smith conclude that: "The leakiness of existing and past arms embargoes on individual nations is ample evidence of the difficulties involved. A major reason those embargoes have been difficult to enforce is that without any mechanism to control transfers, states can easily buy arms through second- and third-party transfers, without the knowledge of the original producer. (. . .) Clearly, private arms dealers would seek ways to illegally circumvent any control mechanism. 'Yet the biggest regular suppliers of weapons to the covert arms trade are not freelancing private arms dealers, but governments themselves,' reports *The Economist*. 'The main motive is cash.'"⁶⁸

There is also evidence that arms transfers from France to the Former Government of Rwanda (FGOR) in exile continued at least until the collapse of the former Zaire in May 1997. *Joint Evaluation of Emergency Assistance to Rwanda* noted in March 1996 that: "Overt rearming and reorganization of the

former leadership, military and militia in or beside internationally-supported camps in Zaire have posed a threat of war in the region for well over a year".⁶⁹ And William Cyrus Reed concludes his assessment of the FGOR by stating that:

In short, the French ensured that the FGOR possessed a large, well-equipped military and that it could escape to Zaire, with its command structure and key troops largely in place. If troops were disarmed at the border, they quickly rearmed on the other side (. . .) [T]he FGOR gained access to the resources it needed to sustain itself by using its former sovereign status to loot the country of human and physical resources. Utilizing well-established alliances with France and Zaire, the FGOR then exported these resources across the border to Zaire. Here, the FGOR built upon the hospitality of its pariah host by activating long-established international contacts to re-establish its military and to recreate its de facto authority over its now exiled population (. . .) Within the military, ranks had been re-established, the former militias had been integrated into the regular forces, and because of the FGOR's control over the refugee camps, young recruits were constantly being added to the ranks. Now combined, the former military and the militias brought the total number of soldiers under the FGOR to 50,000.⁷⁰

However, it is important to note that France was by no means alone in supplying weapons to the FGOR. In November 1996, it emerged that UK company Mil-Tec brokered the sale of arms from Albania and Israel to the former Rwandan government both before and during the 1994 genocide. In January 1997 it was reported that the British government had "failed to implement all the requirements of a United Nations arms embargo on Rwanda, thus allowing a British company to supply weapons to extremist Hutu militia".⁷¹ The then British Foreign Secretary Malcolm Rifkind responded by claiming that the company concerned, Mil-Tec Corporation Ltd., was based in the Isle of Man and hence not subject to the UN embargo. Eavis and Benson note that: "Despite the scandal that ensued and an interdepartmental report that called for brokering to be tackled, the issue remains unaddressed in both the United Kingdom and the majority of EU states".⁷²

Conclusion

Sales and particularly transfers, i.e. donations of arms to one party in a conflict, constitute a direct intervention in that conflict's development, and often contribute directly to its prolongation; Boutwell and Klare emphasise "the dynamics by which the increased availability of low-cost small arms and light

weapons contributes to the likelihood, intensity and duration of armed conflict within states".⁷³

In Rwanda, rapid, externally-sponsored militarisation of an already authoritarian state (built on sectarianism, discrimination and enforced exiling or elimination of its opponents) acted as a catalyst for the hardening of the regime, and the state-sponsored emergence of extremist militias and assassination squads. External military support for the regime, in the form of arms supplies and sales, training, and direct military intervention, was perceived as open-ended and unconditional. This perception reinforced extremists to the extent that there was no room for the state to move from a military to a political counter-insurgency strategy; any form of compromise (such as that represented by the 1993 Arusha accords) was deemed betrayal by the state's military and the unaccountable militias it had created. Accordingly, assassination of any potential agents of compromise, and the subsequent implementation of a long-planned genocide, were perceived by newly dominant warlords as appropriate and effective responses to their enemies' political and military successes. Such a response was intended to eliminate all the state's opponents of any ethnicity who could constitute a support base for opposition, by applying an extreme counter-insurgency strategy: genocide, by inverting the Maoist principle, was an attempt to remove the water from the fish.

Initially, the Rwandan case was not unique. Most analysts would agree that the recurring causes of intrastate conflict on the African continent may be summarised as one or a combination of a struggle for political power, a struggle over basic resources, or a struggle for political participation in a multi-ethnic state. However, when the catalyst of militarisation is added to this powder-keg, the situation becomes correspondingly explosive, and locked into a vicious circle. As Wadlow explains: "Militarisation is part of a cycle which leads to the impoverishment of the state, to aggravated debt concerns, to an ever narrower political base requiring ever more violence to stay in power."⁷⁴

Externally-sponsored militarisation of Rwanda was a key factor, some would argue the key factor in the intransigence of that state's rulers. Swift militarisation reinforced a chronically hard state, creating a weapons state in which radical, sectarian, militant extremism could flourish. The failure to make continued support, especially military, conditional on human rights or anti-sectarian criteria scuppered the Arusha peace process. The maintenance of French support for the regime despite Habyarimana's subsequent dismissal of the Arusha accord convinced the regime's extremists that such support would always be forthcoming. Christopher Clapham has identified this radicalisation of extremist regimes through external backing:

[A]n apparently inexhaustible supply of arms and aid from an all-powerful external patron encouraged rulers to suppose that their own hegemonic ambitions were ultimately unstoppable, and that they could therefore proceed with the establishment of a monopoly state which need take no account of internal opposition or the indigenous characteristics of the societies which they governed . . . Ultimately, it was not the imported armaments which conferred power on the government, but the indigenous people who had to use them. When they failed, it failed.⁷⁵

During 1991 and 1992 the EU Council of Ministers had adopted eight criteria which should be applied to arms sales by EU member states. The third of these stipulated that the exporting states should consider, with regard to the recipient state, “the internal situation in the country, according to the existence of conflict or tensions within its borders”.⁷⁶ In June 1997, EU-wide agreement was obtained during the Netherlands’ EU presidency on the Programme for Preventing and Combating Illicit Trafficking in Conventional Arms; and during the UK’s EU presidency in 1998, agreement was reached on an EU Code of Conduct on arms exports. However, a major weakness of the code is that it does not provide any mechanisms for public accountability or parliamentary scrutiny of arms exports, the need for which has been reinforced by the investigations and report of the Quilès Commission.⁷⁷

The UN International Commission of Inquiry concluded in November 1998 that international embargoes without effective implementation mechanisms are largely ineffective. Controls at the “Demand-Side” – the warring parties in the developing world – may be deemed ineffective and impracticable in conflict situations; controls are therefore imperative at the “Supply-Side”, in countries with active civil societies and existing mechanisms of democratic scrutiny and public accountability: including the French National Assembly’s Defence and Foreign Affairs committees. Kathi Austin concludes that: “Clearly, any effort to reduce the violence in the Great Lakes region must tackle the degree of internal militarization resulting from unimpeded flows of weapons and foreign military assistance (. . .) While an international arms embargo against the entire region would hold the most promise for curbing arms proliferation, such a measure is opposed by France and the United States – both of which continue to vie for strategic advantage in the region. Given the region’s high degree of conflict and lack or respect for the rule of law, it would appear timely and useful to institute better controls on the supply side of the arms equation”.⁷⁸

However, Eavis and Benson note that; “The vast number of light weapons already in circulation in regions of conflict. . . means that supply-side initiatives to tackle the problem will not be enough on their own”.⁷⁹ And in January

2000, a meeting of African observers of arms trafficking passed a resolution at a meeting in the Ugandan capital Kampala which:

underlined the need for all states, especially those which produce, export or import arms to take the necessary measures to prevent, curb, combat and eradicate the illicit manufacture of and trafficking in firearms, their parts and components as well as ammunition. It also encouraged states to consider measures to enhance and facilitate cooperation and exchange of data and other information among states with a view to preventing, curbing, combating and eradicating the illicit manufacturing of, and trafficking in, firearms.⁸⁰

Such initiatives from within the continent most devastated in recent years by unchecked arms flows may act as a foil to Afropessimists' portrayals of Africa as a victim only, and counter the received Western wisdom that solutions may only be found in the capitals of those Western countries which are also the source of the arms which have so exacerbated Africa's recent crises.

Notes

1. This consideration of arms transfers stems from an earlier paper, "Intervention and accountability: the enduring limits on parliamentary scrutiny of French military operations overseas since the Quilès Commission report", presented to the Security and Intelligence Studies Group panel on Parliamentary Oversight of Security and Intelligence at the PSA Annual Conference, University of Nottingham, 23 March 1999.
2. See Bernard Koucher, *Le malheur des autres*, (Paris, Odile Jacob, 1991). Kouchner is currently UN administrator in Kosovo.
3. "On a ainsi la confirmation de l'implication de la France dans cette tragédie, déjà dénoncée par les ONG. La Commission parlementaire a dû céder à cette pression de la société civile, tout en tentant d'atténuer la responsabilité française. Le détail des ventes d'armes est pourtant éloquent. . ." Observatoire des transferts d'armements, *La lettre de l'Observatoire* no. 17: 1, March 1999, p. 2.
4. Assemblée nationale, *Rapport d'information déposé par la Mission d'information de la Commission de la défense nationale et des forces armées et de la Commission des affaires étrangères, sur les opérations militaires menées par la France, d'autres pays et l'ONU au Rwanda entre 1990 et 1994*, Paris 15 December 1998; see, www.assemblee-nationale.fr
5. Bureau du Sénat belge, *Rapport de la commission d'enquête parlementaire sur le Rwanda*, Brussels 17 December 1997; see, www.senate.be
6. UN Security Council document S/1998/1096, *Final Report of the International Commission of Inquiry (Rwanda)*, New York 18 November 1998.
7. Jeffrey Boutwell and Michael T. Klare eds., *Light Weapons and Civil Conflict: Controlling the Tools of Violence*, (Oxford, Rowman & Littlefield, 1999), "Introduction" p. 3.
8. Gérard Prunier, *The Rwanda Crisis 1959–1994: History of a Genocide*, (London, Charles Hurst, 1995), p. xii.
9. "[L]es bras qui ont coupé en morceaux hommes, femmes et enfants étaient rwandais. Ce n'étaient pas des bras de pantins. Ce n'étaient même pas des bras armés par nos soins.

- Car comble de l'horreur, pour leurs victimes, les tueurs se sont servis de machettes et non pas des armes à feu que nous leur avons livrés abondamment". A. Glaser and S. Smith, *L'Afrique sans Africains*, (Paris, Stock, 1994), p. 35. Smith is *Libération's* Africa specialist, Glaser editor of *La Lettre du Continent*.
10. Stephen D. Goose and Frank Smyth, "Arming Genocide in Rwanda", *Foreign Affairs* 73: 5, September/October 1994, p. 90.
 11. Michael T. Klare, "The International Trade in Light Weapons: What Have We Learned?" in Jeffrey Boutwell and Michael T. Klare (eds.), *Light Weapons and Civil Conflict*, p. 20.
 12. Neil Middleton, "Rwanda killers armed by West", *Observer*, 9 April 1995; the writer quantified this armoury as follows: "From March 1992 until June 1993, Egypt sold arms, including mortars, long-range artillery, rocket-propelled grenades and landmines to Rwanda in a deal worth about £4 million. It was financed by Crédit Lyonnais, which still has an interest in getting its money back. France also supplied arms and maintenance for French-manufactured armoured cars and helicopters. With straightforward opportunism, South Africa sold automatic rifles, rifle grenades, high-explosive grenades, M26 fragmentation grenades, light and heavy machineguns, grenade launchers and mortars, worth nearly £4 million in total".
 13. Kathi Austin, "Light Weapons and Conflict in the Great Lakes Region of Africa" in Jeffrey Boutwell and Michael T. Klare (eds.), *Light Weapons and Civil Conflict*, pp. 31, 34.
 14. Many accounts also emphasise Rwanda's post-colonisation culture of obedience; Philip Gourevitch quotes Laurent Nkongoli, vice-president of the Rwandan national assembly: "In Rwandan history, everyone obeys authority. People revere power, and there isn't enough education. You take a poor, ignorant population, and give them arms, and say, 'It's yours. Kill.' They'll obey." Philip Gourevitch, *We Wish to Inform You That Tomorrow We Will be Killed With Our Families*, (London, Picador, 1999), p. 23.
 15. See Mel McNulty, "The Militarization of Ethnicity and the Emergence of Warlordism in Rwanda, 1990-94" in Paul B. Rich (ed.), *Warlords in International Relations*, (London, Macmillan, 1999), pp. 81-102.
 16. Jean-Marie Kalfèche, "En Afrique, la France n'a plus de politique, seulement des mauvaises habitudes", *L'Express* 4 November 1988.
 17. Guy Martin, "Continuity and Change in Franco-African Relations", *Journal of Modern African Studies* 1995, 33:1, p. 6.
 18. Robin Luckham, "Le militarisme français en Afrique", *Politique africaine*, 2: 5, février 1982, p. 96.
 19. Keith Somerville notes that: "At the Khartoum summit of the Organisation of African Unity in late July 1978, France came under very heavy attack for the role it had played in Zaire, Benin and Sao Tome. . . President Giscard d'Estaing's calls for a pan-African military force (backed by France and other Western powers) was denounced by President Nyerere of Tanzania as 'the height of arrogance'. He went on to say that 'it is quite obvious, moreover, that those who seek to initiate such a force are not interested in the freedom of Africa. They are interested in the domination of Africa'. (. . .) Resolutions of the summit and of the earlier OAU Council of Ministers meeting in Tripoli denounced foreign military intervention in Africa and the use of mercenaries to overthrow or threaten governments." Keith Somerville, *Foreign Military Intervention in Africa*, (London, Pinter Publishers/New York, St Martin's Press, 1990), p. 104.
 20. Jacques Isnard, "Selon le Congrès américain, la France a été le deuxième exportateur d'armes en 1998", *Le Monde* 10 September 1999.

21. Guy Martin, "Francophone Africa in the Context of Franco-American Relations" in John W. Harbeson and Donald Rothschild (eds.), *Africa in World Politics: Post Cold-War Challenges*, (Boulder CO, Westview Press, 2nd edn. 1995), p. 176.
22. Human Rights Watch Arms Project, *Arming Rwanda: The Arms Trade and Human Rights Abuses in the Rwandan War* (New York, Human Rights Watch, 1994), Section III, "Arms Flows to the Government of Rwanda".
23. Ex-Foreign Legionnaire, interviewed by Stephen Bradshaw for BBC Panorama, "The Bloody Tricolour", broadcast 20 August 1995.
24. The Quilès Commission report tells how: "L'offensive du FPR en juin 1992 déclenche l'envoi d'une deuxième compagnie 'Noroît'. Dans un télégramme du 10 juin 1992, l'ambassadeur à Kigali estime que cette décision jointe à la livraison de munitions et de radars et à la nomination d'un conseiller sont autant de signes de la volonté de la France de ne pas laisser déstabiliser le Rwanda."
25. Unpublished in either the *Journal officiel* (Paris), or the Defence Ministry's *Bulletin officiel des armées*, a copy of the Franco-Rwandan military technical assistance accord of 1975, with its 1992 amendment, was passed to the author by a French journalist, who recovered his copy from the Rwandan Defence Ministry in July 1994.
26. Annexe 2.5, "Accord particulier d'assistance militaire du 18 juillet 1975", Assemblée nationale, *Enquête sur la tragédie rwandaise (1990–1994)*, Tome II, Paris, 1998, pp. 80–85.
27. Steering Committee of Joint Evaluation of Emergency Assistance to Rwanda (JEEAR), *The International Response to Conflict and Genocide: Lessons from the Rwanda Experience*, (JEEAR, Copenhagen, March 1996), p. 67.
28. The Rwandan government army (*Forces Armées Rwandaises* – FAR) numbered 5,200 in 1990 against the RPF's estimated 7,000, and were by all accounts poorly trained and initially short of munitions.
29. "Les services spéciaux français officiels ont bloqué en 90 l'attaque des terroristes du FPR avec l'Ouganda, le travail de la DGSE. Un travail remarquable dont on peut être très fier dans cette première phase de guerre. Il y a eu du côté français des héros que l'on connaîtra jamais, des histoires extraordinaires de types qui ont pris des initiatives folles, qui ont fait des cartons à l'extérieur avec quelques hélicoptères seulement et quelques canons. Il y aurait matière à un livre sur l'héroïsme des Services Secrets au Rwanda, face à l'Ouganda et au FPR. . . ce qui explique leur haine à l'encontre de la France. L'homme de la rue ne peut sans doute pas comprendre, mais ça a été une belle partie". Captain Paul Barril, former head of the GIGN (*Groupe d'intervention de la Gendarmerie nationale*), and currently director of the "private security firm" SECRETS (*Société d'études, de conception et de réalisation d'équipements techniques et de sécurité*), one of five constituent companies of *Groupe Barril Sécurité*, interviewed in *Playboy* (French edition, Paris), February 1995.
30. Interviews: Tito Rutaremara, Major Sam Kaka, Major-General Paul Kagame, Kigali October-December 1996.
31. Interview with the author, Kigali, October 1996.
32. "Les autorités françaises ont. . . tenu à ce que les forces armées rwandaises soient toujours régulièrement approvisionnées en munitions lors des différentes offensives sérieuses menées par le FPR". Assemblée nationale, Mission d'information commune Rapport no.1271, *Enquête sur la tragédie rwandaise (1990–1994)*, Paris 1998, Tome I: Rapport, p. 175.
33. Assemblée nationale, Mission d'information commune Rapport no.1271, *Enquête sur la tragédie rwandaise (1990–1994)*, Paris 1998, Tome I: Rapport, p. 175.

34. "Les livraisons d'armes et de munitions, jointes à l'opération d'assistance opérationnelle menée quelques jours plus tard à partir du 23 février par le Lieutenant-Colonel Didier Tauzin, permettront aux FAR de redresser spectaculairement la situation en une quinzaine de jours face au FPR". Assemblée nationale, Mission d'information commune Rapport no.1271, *Enquête sur la tragédie rwandaise (1990-1994)*, Paris 1998, Tome I: Rapport, p. 176.
35. "La Mission n'entend pas sur ce problème épuiser la réalité du sujet et notamment elle ne prétend pas, s'agissant du trafic d'armes, élucider tous les cas évoqués à travers différents articles ou ouvrages, de marchés parallèles ou de livraisons effectuées au moment des massacres, en avril 1994, ou après la déclaration d'embargo des Nations Unies le 17 mai 1994." Assemblée nationale, Mission d'information commune Rapport no.1271, *Enquête sur la tragédie rwandaise (1990-1994)*, Paris 1998, Tome I: Rapport, p. 168.
36. Jeffrey Boutwell and Michael T. Klare eds., *Light Weapons and Civil Conflict*, "Introduction", p. 3.
37. Michael T. Klare, "The International Trade in Light Weapons: What Have We Learned?" in Jeffrey Boutwell and Michael T. Klare (eds.), *Light Weapons and Civil Conflict*, pp. 18-19.
38. See Belkacem Elomari & Bruno Barillot, *Armes légères, de la production à l'exportation: le poids de la France*, (Lyon, Observatoire des transferts d'armements, September 1999), p. 97.
39. There have been structural reforms of these ministries since the election of the Jospin government in June 1997. Current Cooperation Minister Charles Josselin's full title, since the merging of Cooperation and Foreign Affairs in February 1998, is Minister Delegate with responsibility for Cooperation and Francophony. The Military Cooperation Mission is now the responsibility of the Defence Minister, Alain Richard.
40. "31 cessions directes d'armes et munitions au Rwanda ont . . . été réalisées sans respect des procédures". Assemblée nationale, Mission d'information commune Rapport no.1271, *Enquête sur la tragédie rwandaise (1990-1994)*, Paris 1998, Tome I: Rapport, p. 172.
41. "Cela signifie en clair que ces dons non 'autorisés' ont été fait sous la seule autorité de l'armée". Observatoire des transferts d'armements, *La lettre de l'Observatoire*, no. 17: 1, March 1999, p. 3.
42. "Dans un tel contexte de reprise en main, il n'est guère étonnant que certains responsables militaires français aient pu avoir le sentiment de construire une armée, dont il fallait de surcroît s'assurer qu'elle serait régulièrement alimentée en munitions". Assemblée nationale, Mission d'information commune Rapport no.1271, *Enquête sur la tragédie rwandaise (1990-1994)*, Paris 1998, Tome I: Rapport, p. 340.
43. "En valeur, les cessions directes représentent un total d'environ 42 millions de francs". Assemblée nationale, Mission d'information commune Rapport no.1271, *Enquête sur la tragédie rwandaise (1990-1994)*, Paris 1998, Tome I: Rapport, p. 172.
44. African Rights, *Rwanda: Death, Despair and Defiance*, (2nd ed, London, 1995), p. 67.
45. V. Morris and M.P. Scharf, *The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda*, New York: Transnational Publishers 1998, p. 52.
46. Statistics from Human Rights Watch Arms Project, *Arming Rwanda: The Arms Trade and Human Rights Abuses in the Rwandan War*, Section III, "Arms Flows to the Government of Rwanda".
47. *Human Rights Watch World Report 1994*, (New York, HRW, December 1993), p. 38.
48. Michael T. Klare, "The International Trade in Light Weapons: What Have We Learned?" in Jeffrey Boutwell and Michael T. Klare (eds.), *Light Weapons and Civil Conflict*, p. 18.

49. Stephen D. Goose (Washington Director of the Human Rights Watch Arms Project) and Frank Smyth (author of the Arms Project's report "Arming Rwanda"), "Arming Genocide in Rwanda", *Foreign Affairs*, September/October 1994.
50. Kathi Austin, "Light Weapons and Conflict in the Great Lakes Region of Africa" in Jeffrey Boutwell and Michael T. Klare (eds.), *Light Weapons and Civil Conflict*, pp. 30, 31.
51. Assemblée nationale, Mission d'information commune Rapport no.1271, *Enquête sur la tragédie rwandaise (1990–1994)*, Paris 1998, Tome I: Rapport, p. 177.
52. See Mel McNulty, "The collapse of Zaire: implosion, revolution or external sabotage?", *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 37:1, March 1999.
53. Steering Committee of Joint Evaluation of Emergency Assistance to Rwanda (JEEAR), *The International Response to Conflict and Genocide: Lessons from the Rwanda Experience*, (Copenhagen, JEEAR, March 1996).
54. Goose and Smith in *Foreign Affairs* Sept/Oct 1994; they reinforce their point by describing how: "In March 1993, following the release of a report detailing the massacre of several thousand unarmed Tutsi civilians between 1990 and 1993, Belgium withdrew its ambassador, Johan Swinnen, for two weeks to protest the abuses. In contrast, France apologized for them. Said French Ambassador Jean-Michel Marlaud, 'There are violations by the Rwandan Army, more because of a lack of control by the government, rather than the will of the government.' Hutu leaders got the message that they could get away with genocide facilitated by foreign arms."
55. This non-exhaustive list was suggested by Mehdi Ba – author of *Rwanda, un Génocide français* (Paris, L'Esprit frappeur, 1997) – in his commentary on the Quilès Commission's report, "Rwanda, encore un effort", *Le Nouvel Afrique-Asie*, 113, February 1999.
56. Lt. Col. Rwabalinda erroneously describes the MMC as the "maison militaire de coopération Française" [sic]. Agir ici/Survie, 1er "dossier noir" de la politique africaine de la France, Paris December 1994, Document 1; the documents are also reproduced in Mehdi Ba, *Rwanda: Un génocide français*, (Paris: L'esprit frappeur, 1997), pp. 106–109.
57. However, French attempts to present the interim government as an acceptable partner, or as part of the potential solution, were made impossible by the ongoing genocide. Quilès notes: "C'est en partie en raison de son attitude par rapport au gouvernement intérimaire qu'il lui fut difficile de faire accepter le caractère strictement humanitaire de l'opération Turquoise, puisque certains y voyaient une intention cachée de soutien au régime qui organisait le génocide." Assemblée nationale, *Mission d'information commune Rapport no.1271, Enquête sur la tragédie rwandaise (1990–1994)*, Paris 1998, Tome I: Rapport p. 344.
58. "Toutes les sources militaires que j'ai pu contacter au fil des derniers mois ont catégoriquement nié qu'il y ait eu des livraisons françaises d'armes vers le Rwanda, même pendant toute l'année 1994". Stephen Smith on Radio *France Inter*, 21 August 1995, quoted in Mehdi Ba, *Rwanda, un génocide français*, p. 23. This statement, however, contradicts Smith's own reports from that year, quoted below.
59. "Au Conseil de sécurité de l'ONU, le 17 mai, la France a fait cause commune avec l'ambassadeur du gouvernement intérimaire rwandais (GIR), qui tentait de s'opposer au vote d'un embargo sur les armes à destination du Rwanda – au prétexte que cet embargo ne pénaliserait que les forces 'gouvernementales'. La France s'y opposait parce que le flux des livraisons se poursuivait, avec l'aval de la plupart des militaires, hostiles à l'embargo". Observatoire permanent de la Coopération française, *Rapport 1995*, (Paris, Desclée de Brouwer, 1995), p. 157.

60. Human Rights Watch, *Rwanda/Zaire, Rearming with Impunity: International Support for the Perpetrators of the Rwandan Genocide*, (New York, Human Rights Watch, May 1995), pp. 6–7.
61. Kathi Austin, “Light Weapons and Conflict in the Great Lakes Region of Africa” in Jeffrey Boutwell and Michael T. Klare (eds.), *Light Weapons and Civil Conflict*, p. 36, and Human Rights Watch, *Rearming with Impunity*.
62. Michel Muller, “Trafic d’armes via Paris, pour la dictature rwandaise”, *L’Humanité* 31 May 1994; Franck Johannès, “Les Kalachnikov de l’étrange pasteur”, *Le Journal du Dimanche* 3 July 1994; Stephen Smith, “Les mystères de Goma, refuge zaïrois des tueurs rwandais”, *Libération* 4 June 1994.
63. “[T]outes les sources sur place – y compris des expatriés français bien placés – expriment leur ‘certitude’ que ces livraisons d’armes ont été ‘payées par la France’.” Stephen Smith, “Les mystères de Goma, refuge zaïrois des tueurs rwandais”, *Libération* 4 June 1994.
64. “Mais une aide en sous-main, par des circuits parallèles, c’est toujours possible. Vous savez, des officines de trafic d’armes à Paris, je pourrais vous en parler. . .” Stephen Smith, “Les mystères de Goma, refuge zaïrois des tueurs rwandais”, *Libération* 4 June 1994.
65. Joint Evaluation of Emergency Assistance to Rwanda, *The International Response to Conflict and Genocide: Lessons from the Rwanda Experience*, (Copenhagen, Steering Committee of the JEEAR, March 1996), Synthesis Report (John Eriksson) p. 54.
66. “La presse a . . . fait état d’une violation par la France de l’embargo posé par elle le 8 avril et par l’ONU le 17 mai. Il est ainsi reproché à la SOFREMAS, société française d’exploitation de matériels et systèmes d’armement contrôlé par l’Etat d’avoir rompu l’embargo en procédant à des livraisons via Goma au Zaïre. De même, la société Luçhaire, dépendant à 100% de Giat Industries, aurait également procédé par ce biais à des livraisons.
 Dans son rapport de mai 1995, Human Rights Watch indique avoir appris du personnel de l’aéroport et d’un homme d’affaires local que cinq convois étaient arrivés à Goma en mai et juin 1994 contenant de l’armement et des munitions venant de France et destinés au FAR.
 Sur ces différents points, la Mission n’a pas pu recueillir à ce jour d’éléments probants, en dépit des demandes qu’elle a formulées pour obtenir, notamment de l’association Human Rights Watch, copie des documents ou bordereaux relatifs à la SOFREMAS et trouvés au Zaïre dans un bus abandonné près de Goma”.
 Assemblée nationale, Mission d’information commune, Rapport no.1271: *Enquête sur la tragédie rwandaise (1990–1994)*, Tome I: Rapport, Paris: Assemblée nationale 1998, pp. 176–177.
67. UN Security Council document S/1998/1096, *Final report of the International Commission of Inquiry (Rwanda)*, New York 18 November 1998, para. 73.
68. Stephen D. Goose and Frank Smyth, “Arming Genocide in Rwanda”, pp. 92–93.
69. Joint Evaluation of Emergency Assistance to Rwanda, *The International Response to Conflict and Genocide: Lessons from the Rwanda Experience*, p. 12.
70. William Cyrus Reed, “Guerrillas in the Midst” in Christopher Clapham (ed.), *African Guerrillas*, (Oxford, James Currey, 1998), pp. 138, 140.
71. Michael Evans, “Whitehall lapse let UK firm sell arms to Hutus”, *The Times*, 22 January 1997.
72. Paul Eavis and William Benson, “The European Union and the Light Weapons Trade”, in Jeffrey Boutwell and Michael T. Klare (eds.), *Light Weapons and Civil Conflict*, p. 92.
73. Jeffrey Boutwell and Michael T. Klare (eds.), *Light Weapons and Civil Conflict*, “Introduction” p. 3.

74. René Wadlow, "African States: Security and Conflict Resolution", *Genève-Afrique* 19, February 1991, p. 96.
75. Christopher Clapham, *Africa and the International System: The Politics of State Survival*, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 156.
76. Quoted in *La lettre de l'Observatoire*, no.17:1, March 1999, p. 3.
77. Eavis and Benson note that: "If the aims of transparency and accountability are to be realized, the member states will need to adopt common, rigorous systems of parliamentary scrutiny over their arms exports, including prior notification of sensitive exports to a parliamentary committee (as occurs in Sweden and the United States)". Paul Eavis and William Benson, "The European Union and the Light Weapons Trade", in Jeffrey Boutwell and Michael T. Klare (eds.), *Light Weapons and Civil Conflict*, p. 95.
78. Kathi Austin, "Light Weapons and Conflict in the Great Lakes Region of Africa" in Jeffrey Boutwell and Michael T. Klare (eds.), *Light Weapons and Civil Conflict*, pp. 30, 36.
79. Paul Eavis and William Benson, "The European Union and the Light Weapons Trade", in Jeffrey Boutwell and Michael T. Klare (eds.), *Light Weapons and Civil Conflict*, p. 90.
80. Moses Draku, "Africa to have firearms control centre", Pan African News Agency, 14 January 2000, at: <http://www.woza.co.za/africa/jan00/armscentre14.htm>

