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## **RWANDA**

### **WHO IS KILLING; WHO IS DYING; WHAT IS TO BE DONE**

A DISCUSSION PAPER

*Sometimes on the radio I hear some individuals denying that people have been killed in Rwanda. I am here to say that hundreds and hundreds of people were killed in front of my own eyes. They were killed, I was there and I want my testimony to show this truth. They died but the killers are still there.*

Vestine Mukarubayiza, a seamstress from Kigoro, interviewed by African Rights at Rwamagana Hospital on 8 May 1994.

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## SUMMARY

The scale of the tragedy in Rwanda today needs no underscoring. What has occurred, and continues to take place, is a crime of enormous proportions. It is appropriate to call it genocide.

This paper is concerned with the crime of genocide: the evidence that genocide is indeed taking place, the identities of those responsible for it, their motives, their means, and the implications of the mass murder for Rwanda, east and central Africa, and the world.

It is increasingly clear that the physical liquidation of the political opposition to Hutu extremism and the genocide against the Tutsi people was a carefully-planned strategy, designed in advance. Whether or not the 6 April assassination of President Habyarimana was carried out by those who then seized control of the government and launched the killings is unclear, but this event was certainly the trigger for implementing a prepared plan. African Rights presents evidence that proves that the killings amount to such a systematic plan, and names some of the leading extremist politicians--many of them holding senior positions in the government headed by President Theodor Sindikubwabo--who are responsible for the crime.

A crime requires motive, means and opportunity. The motive of the Hutu extremists responsible was to continue to monopolize power and to seek a "final solution" to the political opposition. The roots of genocide lie in the racist ideology of Hutu extremism, which is anchored in Rwanda's political history. This group held power under successive postindependence governments, but its position was threatened by the transition to pluralism and the agreement with the rebel Rwandese Patriotic Front (RPF), and attempts by President Habyarimana to stall on the implementation of these agreements were not succeeding.

The primary means is mobilization of the militias that had been established by the hardline parties, MRND and CDR, since late 1991. Use of the civil administration to encourage ordinary people to participate in killings is a supplementary strategy. Both these methods of mass killing had been successfully tried during the last three-and-a-half years, leading to thousands of civilian deaths. A third means is the use of the Presidential Guard to kill members of the opposition and other dissidents. The provision of military supplies to the Rwandese armed forces by France, Egypt and South Africa is well documented, and enabled the killers to carry out their plans. Radio broadcasts were used to incite the population.

The opportunity was provided by a conjunction of circumstances, which allowed the hardliners to confuse the international community for sufficiently long to be able to perpetrate the crime with extraordinarily little international response. Sowing confusion was the key to the killers' success. These circumstances, contrived or fortuitous, included: (1) The downing of the presidential plane, which allowed the surviving members of the government to portray themselves as victims. (2) The almost-immediate withdrawal of UN troops after the killings of the Belgian soldiers--who were possibly murdered for this very reason. (3) The resumption of fighting between the army and RPF, enabling the issues of the war and the genocide to be confused. (4) The inaccurate portrayal of the killing as "tribal violence." (5) The failure of the French government--the leading international actor in Rwanda alongside Belgium and the

UN--to respond, and the slowness of other countries to seize the initiative. Hence--in contrast to the October 1993 coup in Burundi, which fizzled out after prompt international condemnation--the coup was mounted and the genocide perpetrated without international denunciation of those responsible.

The absence of clear and concerted international condemnation of those responsible for the massacres has been deeply demoralizing to ordinary Rwandese, especially those opposed to the government. They feel betrayed by the international community. If international statements blame all Rwandese political forces for the killings, it gives those who are not actually involved less reason to respect human rights. Media coverage that blames Rwandese society or "tribes" as a whole is demeaning to ordinary Rwandese who are horrified by the actions of a murderous minority. Identifying them with the killers impedes their ability to respond courageously and positively. Demoralized and bitter Rwandese are far more likely to undertake revenge killings and other human rights abuses, while the sense of betrayal and estrangement may manifest itself in hostility to international initiatives.

The killings are continuing to date, particularly in the south-west of Rwanda. There is no indication that they have stopped or are likely to stop.

The RPF launched a military offensive on 7 April with two stated aims: to relieve its battalion stationed in Kigali under the Arusha accords, and to save Tutsi and opposition Hutu from being massacred. These motives are doubtless genuine and thus make it highly unlikely that the RPF would agree to a cease-fire. The RPF also has the intention of taking power from the interim government. The RPF does not have a good human rights record--there are documented cases of killing of suspected militia members and indiscriminate attacks on civilian targets. However, the RPF is not implicated in the genocide, and its advance has halted the massacres in the areas it now controls. It is a fact that the major reason for the abatement of the killings has been the advance of the RPF.

The crisis is far from over. There are several major immediate concerns of varying magnitude. They include:

(1) The continued massacre of civilians, chiefly Tutsi, in the government-held areas of Rwanda. This is the single most serious concern simply because of the numbers of lives at stake.

(2) There is a real possibility of an eruption of violence in Burundi. This could be provoked by a confrontation between Rwandese government militia fleeing the RPF advance and the Burundi army. This could prove as bloody as the killing in Rwanda. There is also the possibility of destabilization of adjoining areas of Zaire, Tanzania and Uganda, with associated violence.

(3) If the coup and genocide are seen to succeed--i.e. if the perpetrators are able to hold on to a share of power, or at least to escape justice--this will be an encouragement for similar would-be dictators to attempt similar actions to solve the problems posed by their oppositions.

(4) Feeling abandoned by the international community, the Rwandese opposition may itself resort to mass killing and other abusive political methods as the best means of dealing with those suspected of government sympathies. The political future of Rwanda lies with Rwandese, and at this critical moment it is vitally important to express solidarity with the majority of Rwandese who are shocked and appalled by the genocidal violence, and help them play a positive role in the future of Rwanda.

(5) Continued killing and disruption caused by the fighting between the army and the RPF is a less serious problem in terms of numbers of people killed and injured, and it is highly unlikely that a cease-fire could be established and maintained, for reasons alluded to above.

(6) The outbreak of epidemic communicable diseases, throughout Rwanda and in refugee camps in neighbouring countries. The massive displacement of people makes famine probable unless farmers can quickly return to their homes. A humanitarian tragedy cannot be prevented without access for humanitarian agencies to populations in need of emergency assistance; this is possible in RPF areas but very difficult in government-held areas. The great majority of people in need of assistance are within Rwanda, but to date the major international response has focused on refugees. However, if there is rapid action to create the confidence that people can return to their farms, at least in RPF areas, famine may be pre-empted.

Longer term concerns include the need for communal reconciliation, the reconstruction and protection of civil society in Rwanda, and the economic rehabilitation of the country. It is important that inappropriate external formulae are not imposed upon a fragile and vulnerable Rwandese society, and that Rwandese are enabled to find their own solutions. However, it is also important that Rwandese are not left to face an uncertain future without international solidarity.

The crisis is also a crisis for the United Nations. The decision to withdraw the UN Assistance Mission to Rwanda (UNAMIR), except for a nominal presence, has dealt UN credibility a severe blow in Africa and the world. The UN could have played a positive role in preventing the genocide, but chose not to. As it tries to re-engage in Rwanda, the UN finds its options severely constrained, and the danger remains that it will intervene too late, in a manner that brings little benefit, and possibly creates more long-term problems.

## **Recommendations**

(1) It is imperative that the genocide be condemned internationally in the strongest possible terms. Those responsible are known and should be named. The Rwandese government has flagrantly failed to fulfil its obligations under international law, notably the Convention on Genocide, which it signed in 1975. Hence all other countries should sever diplomatic ties with Rwanda, expel Rwandese ambassadors and refuse admission to government representatives. Anyone who represents a government that presides over genocide--and in fact perpetrates it--should have no place in the civilized world. Such condemnations would have an important stabilizing effect in the region, especially in Burundi, and would give reassurance and confidence to Rwandese opposed to the killings.

(2) The revived UNAMIR force should be given the mandate and means to protect civilians in specific places where they are under threat from government forces. It should not have the mandate to enforce a cease-fire as this is both impractical and--insofar as the RPF advance is the major reason for halting the genocide--it is undesirable.

(3) Human rights monitors should be stationed throughout the country. In government areas, their presence should help to deter further killings, and to gather information on those responsible for killings. If they are not permitted to enter these areas, that itself is a powerful statement about the responsibility of the authorities. In the RPF areas the monitors can investigate allegations of RPF abuses, ensure that the RPF does not slide away from its public commitments to human rights, and give displaced people and refugees the confidence to return home. Given the slowness with which the UN is likely to act, organizations such as the World Council of Churches should consider facilitating human rights monitoring.

(4) Considerations of political neutrality have so far prevented a major international relief effort in RPF held areas. It is deplorable that concern with perceived neutrality should have impeded active solidarity with the victims of a massive human disaster. The UN should launch a special assistance programme for these areas, with the primary aim of providing an umbrella to guarantee and protect the neutrality of operational agencies in all parts of Rwanda. Assistance should concentrate on returning refugees and displaced people to their villages to resume cultivation.

(5) Preparations should be made to bring to justice those responsible for the crimes committed. Various possibilities can be considered, including an international tribunal for crimes against humanity, and assistance to the Rwandese judiciary to set up the office of a Special Prosecutor. The UN Human Rights Commission should hold a special session and set up a Commission of Inquiry. In the meantime, those suspected of responsibility for the killings should not be awarded political asylum nor be permitted to take a position in any future Rwandese government.

### **Acknowledgements**

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A full report of African Rights' research on Rwanda during April-May 1994 will be published shortly.

## BACKGROUND

Rwanda is a small landlocked country in central Africa. Although lying just south of the Equator, its high altitude and hilly topography make it a green and fertile country, with plentiful rainfall. Partly for this reason, Rwanda is also the most densely populated country on the African continent--before the killings it was home to about seven million people. It is an overwhelmingly rural country, with over 90% of its people making their living from the land.

A second reason for Rwanda's high population is that it escaped the ravages of the nineteenth century slave trade. This was because, along with its neighbours to the north and south, Rwanda had a sophisticated precolonial state system, with a strong military. The Rwandese state first developed in the sixteenth century, and reached the height of its powers in the nineteenth century. When the first Europeans arrived a century ago, they found a true nation: the Banyarwanda people. The Banyarwanda were divided into three groups: Tutsi, Hutu and Twa. The three shared the same language, the same customs, the same political institutions, and the same territory. What made them separate was not that they were distinct "tribes", but that they were distinct categories within the same nation.

The colonialists projected their own theories of racial typology onto the Banyarwanda. The Tutsi they identified as aristocratic rulers, and surmised that they had originated in Ethiopia. Though numbering perhaps only 15% of the population, the colonial powers--first Germany and then Belgium--preferred to rule exclusively through the Tutsi, cementing their position at the apex of the hierarchy and enabling them to exploit the other groups more effectively. The Hutu majority were characterised by the Europeans as Bantu peasants, and consigned to the status of serfs. In the north-west, where Hutu kings had wielded authority over Hutu and Tutsi alike, the colonists sought homogeneity and imposed Tutsi overlords, creating a deep resentment that lasts to this day. The tiny minority of Twa were seen as aboriginal pygmies, relegated to the status of ethnographic curiosities, and treated with contempt. The Twa in fact consist of two distinct groups, the Impunyi hunter-gatherers of the north-western forests, and a caste of potters.

Thus was a hierarchical but nonetheless flexible and reciprocal political system transformed into a rigid politicized caste structure. Unable to adapt, the structure shattered as independence approached. The Roman Catholic church and the Belgian rulers switched their support to the Hutu, recognizing that the Tutsi could not retain power in any democratic system. In 1959, following the unexpected death of the Mwaami (king) Mutara Rudahigwa, who had been a force for moderation, Hutu leaders incited the population against the Tutsi. Over the following seven years, perhaps 20,000 Tutsi were killed in a series of pogroms, while about 150,000 fled the country. The Tutsi population in Rwanda was halved.

After independence in 1962, Rwanda was ruled by President Kayibanda and his Parmehutu party, on an explicitly ethnic political platform. All policies favouring Tutsi were reversed, but such was the latter's dominance among the educated, that the middle classes--notably the professions and commerce--continued to be largely Tutsi. However, the army, police and civil service were dominated by political appointees of Parmehutu.

In 1973, a further round of violence resulted in a coup d'etat led by the Minister of Defence, Major-General Juvenal Habyarimana. Kayibanda was deposed and died shortly afterwards. Habyarimana presented himself as a force for moderation and progress: he adopted policies avowedly supporting national unity and stressed the need for economic development, using community self-help. In 1975, Rwanda became a single party state under the National Revolutionary Movement for Development (MRND).

The achievements of Habyarimana's first decade in power were considerable: unprecedented stability and genuine moves towards development. In particular, communal work (umuganda) by cooperative work groups (interahamwe) succeeded in furthering many rural development projects, such as terracing hillsides and growing woodlots. With tragic irony, the name interahamwe was later used for the MRND militias. Rwanda received generous international assistance. However, Habyarimana's rule became increasingly authoritarian and corrupt; power became concentrated in members of the President's Akazu (literally: "little house" or clan) from the north-west, and not only Tutsi but Hutu from other parts of the country were excluded.

Meanwhile, Tutsi refugees in neighbouring countries were exposed to discrimination and abuse, notably in Uganda. In 1982-3, thousands of Tutsi refugees were expelled from south-west Uganda by the then government of Milton Obote. In response, many joined the National Resistance Army (NRA) led by Yoweri Museveni, which succeeded in capturing Kampala and forming a government in 1986. However, Rwandese were never fully accepted into Ugandan society, and, unable to return home, they increasingly sought a military solution to the problem of their statelessness. An alliance between these Tutsi exiles and dissident Rwandese politicians formed the Rwandese Patriotic Front (RPF), which in October 1990 invaded northern Rwanda from Uganda.

The war came at a disastrous moment for the Habyarimana government. For several years it had been under pressure from its western donors to adopt a structural adjustment programme, and in 1990 it finally agreed. This involved a public sector pay freeze and a devaluation of the currency, plus other austerity measures. Combined with the collapse of coffee prices (Rwanda's main export) in 1989, these cut deeply into the country's prosperity and, as elsewhere, undermined government support. At the same time, Habyarimana was under domestic and international pressure for political liberalization. After holding out for many months, he capitulated in July 1990, and Rwanda was overtaken by a political renaissance. Numerous political parties were formed, together with independent journals and human rights organizations. There was a vigorous and open debate on the future of Rwanda, much of it highly critical of the government.

Democratization against a backdrop of war and economic crisis was hazardous from the start. The President responded with a series of strategies designed to split and undermine the civilian opposition, and defeat the RPF. The name (but not initials) of his own party was changed, to National Republican Movement for Democracy and Development, and a hard-line Hutu extremist party, the Coalition for the Defence of the Republic (CDR) was also formed by some of his close colleagues. Meanwhile, Habyarimana infiltrated his supporters into the opposition parties, splitting all of the major ones save the Social Democratic Party (PSD).



Thus for example, the Liberal Party was split into a "Power" faction, pro-government, headed by the extremist Justin Mugenzi, and an anti-government faction. The largest opposition party, the Democratic Republican Movement (MDR), was similarly divided.

From October 1990 until August 1993 the war continued on-off, with intense fighting interspersed with negotiations under international auspices. The RPF quickly overran northern districts of Rwanda, and the fighting displaced over 300,000 people. The government responded by increasing the size of the army from 5,000 to 35,000 men, importing arms from France, Egypt and South Africa, and mobilizing militia forces. A cease-fire was negotiated but broke down in February 1993; a further month of intense fighting drove another 600,000 people from their homes. A new peace agreement, mediated by the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and signed in Arusha, Tanzania, on 4 August 1993 formalized the peace agreement and Habyarimana's rapprochement with both the RPF and the civil opposition. With strong support from the UN, and in particular from Belgium, the Arusha accords laid down a formula for power sharing with the civilian opposition and a timetable for the establishment of transitional institutions, including the integration of RPF fighters into the national army, preceding elections for a democratic government. A United Nations assistance mission to Rwanda (UNAMIR) was sent to oversee the implementation of the military aspects of the accords.

The Arusha accords generated a wave of optimism throughout Rwanda: they were seen as a model for power sharing, and opened up the prospect for peace and democracy.

Throughout 1993 and into 1994, the chief obstacle to the peace accords was a series of obstructions thrown up by the government, either on their own account or by using the CDR. These frustrated not only the opposition but the international mediators, who convened a series of meetings to pressure President Habyarimana into sticking to his word. The President was also under intense pressure from his own supporters not to yield. By the time he travelled to Tanzania in early April to meet with the leaders of neighbouring countries, Habyarimana was reportedly severely depressed. In Tanzania on 6 April he gave in to the international pressure and agreed to speed up the transition to democracy. At 8.30 p.m. that same evening, as his aeroplane approached Kigali airport, it was shot down, killing all on board. Also killed in the plane were the newly-chosen President of Burundi, Cyprien Ntaryamira, and senior members of Habyarimana's staff.

On 8 April, an interim government headed by President Theodor Sindikubwabo was formed, entirely under the control of Hutu extremists .

## **1. EVIDENCE FOR GENOCIDE**

African Rights has compiled extensive evidence from many parts of Rwanda that indicates that the killings of April-May 1994 were a carefully planned and deliberately orchestrated attempt to kill all actual and potential opposition to the Hutu extremists who assumed power following the death of President Habyarimana on 6 April. Some of this evidence is presented in this section. Further evidence will be published in a forthcoming report. African Rights' full dossier of evidence will be made available to the appropriate Judicial authorities in order to facilitate the prosecution of those responsible.

### **FIRST TARGET: ELIMINATING POLITICAL OPPOSITION**

The first killings occurred within hours of the death of President Habyarimana at 8.30 p.m. on 6 April. According to the interim government, the killings were the result of a spontaneous expression of animosity towards the RPF--whom the people allegedly held responsible for the assassination--and the Tutsi populace in general. The government claims that, because its forces were engaged in resisting the aggression of the RPF, it was unable to maintain law and order, and the killings spread out of control.

This version of events is contradicted by every independent witness present in Kigali at the time. The detailed sequence of events--which will not be presented here--is powerful circumstantial evidence in favour of the theory that the plane was brought down by the Presidential Guard as part of a coup attempt to bring hardline politicians to power and to destroy the peace process and transition to democracy, and that the mass killing of political opponents was the next stage in a carefully-planned sequence of events.

The most compelling refutation of the Sindikubwabo government's claim is that it was government forces--specifically the Presidential Guard--that carried out the killings of opposition politicians and other critics of the regime in the first days. It is important to note that the structure of the government under the Arusha accords allowed for members of opposition parties to take government posts. In particular, the post of Prime Minister was awarded to the opposition faction of the MDR. This means that some individuals who were critics of the government also held positions in government.

### **Leaders of Opposition Parties**

The first people to be killed, starting at about 5:00 a.m. on 7 April were the leaders of the political parties opposed to the hard-line Hutus of the MRND and CDR. Most of them were Hutus. They included:

- Frederic Nzamurambaho, the Minister of Agriculture and president of the Social Democratic Party. A Hutu from Gikongoro, he was a lawyer by training. He was killed on the first day.
- Felicien Ngango, vice-president of the Social Democratic Party and designated as speaker of parliament in the new-broadbased-government that was to take power. He was

killed together with his wife. It is not clear if their children were also killed. He was a Hutu from Kibungo.

- Joseph Kavaruganda, President of the Constitutional Court. He was a Hutu from Ruhengeri.

- Landoald Ndasingwa, Minister of Employment and Social Affairs and vice-president of the Liberal Party, the faction opposed to the government. He was killed together with his Canadian wife and their two children. He was a Tutsi from Kigali and the only Tutsi head of a political party. He was killed on the first day.

- Faustin Rucogoza, Minister of Information. He was a Hutu from Byumba, and was killed on the first day.

It is said that almost the entire leadership of the Social Democratic Party was wiped out because it was the only political party in the coalition that the president had not managed to split. One of the few who managed to escape the killing was Marc Rugenera, Minister of Finance.

Also killed the same day was the Prime Minister, Agathe Uwilingiyimana, a Hutu from the southern city of Butare. Ten Belgian soldiers serving with the UN who were trying to protect her were captured and murdered. She headed the faction of the MDR opposed to the government. Her husband, a lecturer at the University of Butare, was killed some days later in Butare.

### **Other Opposition Politicians**

- Charles Ntazinda, a member of the Democratic Republican Movement;
- Theoneste Gafaranga, from the Social Democratic Party was from Gitarama;
- Venansia Kabageni, a member of the Liberal Party was from Kigali;
- Cyprien Rugamba, Social Democratic Party, was from Gikongoro;
- Charles Ntakirutinka, Social Democratic Party, was from Gikongoro;
- Alain Mudenge, Social Democratic Party, was from Butare. He was killed together with his wife.
- Thomas Kabeja, Social Democratic Party, was from Kigali;
- Charles Kayiranga, Liberal Party, was from Gitarama;
- Paul Secyugu, Social Democratic Party, was from Nyanza;

### **Civil Servants**

- Dr. Deo Havugimana, directeur de cabinet in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. A Hutu from Cyangugu, he was trained as a lawyer.

## **SECOND TARGET: ELIMINATING DISSENT**

In the following days, the killings concentrated on (1) the remaining opposition politicians; (2) people highly placed in the administration of justice; (3) intellectuals, including priests, lawyers, journalists and human rights activists regarded critical of the regime; (4) wealthy businessmen with ties to the opposition; (5) prominent Hutus from the south and (6) Tutsis. This section lists some of those killed. It is not an exhaustive list by any means. A particular shortcoming is that many people have simply disappeared--they are feared to have been killed, but it is possible that they are in hiding, and may reappear when it is safe to do so. The list includes only those confirmed to have been killed.

### **Human Rights Activists**

- Fidele Kanyabugoyi, founder of Kanyarwanda; he came from Ruhengeri;
- Ignace Ruhatana; a member of the same organization;
- Joseph Mudatsikira, a member of Kanyarwanda and also a journalist with *Rwanda Rushya*. He was killed on the first day.
- Charles Shamukiga, a leading human rights activist He was also a wealthy businessman in construction and the consul for Luxembourg. He was a Tutsi from Byumba.

The human rights community was decimated in the first days of the killing.

### **Lawyers**

- Joseph Kavaruganda, head of the Constitutional Court, who had a history of independence from the government.
- Pio Mugabo, a member of the Liberal Party, was from Butare;
- Ruhumulita, from Byumba
- Freddy Mutagwera, in private practice in Kigali;

### **Academics**

- Pierre-Claver Karenzi, professor of physics at the University of Butare. A Tutsi.
- Dr Gaetan, a professor in applied sciences at the University of Butare, from Gitarama.
- Ntaganda, a teacher at ASPEG in Gahini, killed in the massacre at a church in Rwamagana.

## **Journalists**

- Vincent Rwabukwisi of the paper Kanguka. He was also head of a small political party, the Union Démocratique du Peuple Rwandais. He came from Gitarama;
- Andre Kameya, of the newspaper Rwanda Rushya ('New Rwanda'); he came from Butare and was a member of the Liberal Party. He was killed on the first day.
- Gratien Karambizi of Imbaga;
- Adrien Rangira, FlambeaulKanguka
- Obed Bazimaziki, FlambeaulKanguka;
- Charles Kalinganire, FlambeaulKanguka;
- Marie-Goretti Mukakamli, a manager at Imbaga;

## **Businessmen**

- Emmanuel Havugimana and his wife; a Tutsi.
- Innocent Gusenga, chairman of the taxidriviers' association and a member of the Liberal Party. He came from Nyanza. Towards the end of 1993, he was injured when a grenade was thrown at him;
- Hus Umugwaneza and his Belgian wife. He came from Kibungo and was a member of the Liberal Party. One of his younger brothers was also killed. Another brother escaped because he was at the time attending the wedding of his sister in Kinshasa, together with their mother. But the wife and children of this brother were killed.
- Anselm Sakumi and his wife. He was a Tutsi, came from Butare and was a member of the Liberal Party;
- Samuel Kamegeri, a Hutu businessman from the south of the country. He was apparently killed while trying to escape.
- Rwemarika Shyirakera, a member of the MDR from Butamwa in Kigali;
- Rwumariaka, was killed together on 7 April in the area of Kiyovu in Kigali; a Hutu, he was regarded as a member of the opposition;
- Eduard, Vedaste and Ozlel Rubangura were three brothers from Gitarama;
- Saidi, a Hutu businessman living in the Kanombe area of Kigali. His wife and children were also killed;
- Sebera, a Tutsi businessman living in the Kiyovu area of Kigali; he was killed on or around 16 April together with his wife.

A fuller list of prominent dissidents and intellectuals is being prepared by African Rights and will be published in a future report.

## **ATTACKS AGAINST CHURCHES AND THE KILLING OF PRIESTS AND NUNS**

About 60% of Rwandese are Catholics, and 25-30% are Protestants. Around ten per cent of the population is animist and there is also a very small Muslim community. For the first time in the history of Rwanda, the church as an institution came under sustained attack. People--tens of thousands of them--have been slaughtered inside churches, both Catholic and Protestant, as well as in schools, hospitals and homes that form part of the parish. Also for the first time, priests and nuns have been targetted in the violence that has swept the country.

Even during the worst of the violence in 1959 and 1963, priests were not killed. In addition to those who have died, scores have disappeared.

There seem to be several reasons why priests have been attacked. The most obvious is that priests had offered refuge to the people fleeing the violence. For perpetrators determined to kill the largest number of people, the thousands of people who had congregated in churches were easy prey. Secondly, for historical reasons, there is a disproportionately high number of Tutsi priests, and many Tutsi children who were denied a state education under the quota system instead joined seminaries. As priests have a certain influence, they could say in church what Tutsis could not say elsewhere. The church remained the only place that remained open to Tutsis to speak freely. Therefore the perception was growing that priests had a privileged social status. Since 1990, a number of priests used the pulpit to denounce many injustices. But some have paid a heavy price. In 1989, Sylvio Sindambiwe of Butare, one of the most outspoken priests, was killed in a suspicious car accident.

## **The City of Kigali**

### *Centre Christus*

Among the very first victims were priests, visitors and staff at Centre Christus in Kigali. At about 7:00 a.m. on 7 April, soldiers came to the retreat house and entered the chapel. They asked to check everyone's identity cards. But no one had brought their identity cards with into the chapel. After about ten minutes, the soldiers separated the nineteen Rwandese from the Europeans and locked the Rwandese in a room while locking the Europeans, which included three Belgian Jesuits and three Spanish women belonging to a religious organization Vita and Pax, in the dining room.

At 2:20 in the afternoon, the expatriates were released. They found seventeen bodies in the room where the Rwandans had been held; eight young women belonging to Vita and Pax who were on retreat; four diocesan priests meeting there; a visiting social worker; three Jesuit priests and the cook. Survivors included a young woman and a diocesan priest.

The victims included:

- Chrysologue Mahame, 67, a Jesuit, was since a long time the Superior at the Christus Centre. Born in Kibeho, he was the first Rwandese Jesuit, becoming a Jesuit in 1952 in Djuma, Zaire. He studied theology at Eagenhoven in Belgium, was ordained in 1,961 and took his final vows in 1970. Two years ago, he established a human rights organization, the "Association des Volontaires de la Paix." He was involved in a number of missions between the government and the RPF. But he and the president are reported to have drifted -apart before the events of April. A Tutsi.

- Patrick Gahizi, a Jesuit, was 48; He studied in Bujumbura at the Jesuit College du Saint-Esprit and then at the University of Bujumbura. He joined the Society in Cyangugu in 1977, studying philosophy at Kimwenza in Zaire and theology at the Gregorian University in Rome. He was ordained in 1984 and went for further studies to Rome and Quebec. He took his final vows in 1990. When the war broke out in 1991, he was imprisoned for two weeks.

Last year, he became the Provincial's Delegate and became Superior of the residence at Butare for scholastics studying at the University of Butare. A Tutsi.

- Innocent Rutagambwa, a Jesuit, 46 was born in Shangi and attended high school at the College du Christi-Roi in Nyanza. He entered the Society in 1969 in Cyanguu. He studied philosophy and theology at Kimwenza and African linguistics at the University of Lubumbashi in Zaire. Later he studied at the Gregorian University in Rome. He was ordained in Rome in 1979 and took his final vows in 1987. He worked at the high school in Gisenyi and then served as socius to the Provincial from 1990 to February 1994. At the time of his death, he was on sabbatical and was due to return to the high school in Gisenyi. He translated the Spiritual Exercises into Kinyarwanda. A Hutu.

- Alfred Nzabakurana, was a young priest killed at the Christus Centre; A Tutsi;
- Jean-Marie Niyirema, a young priest, also killed at the Christus Centre; A Tutsi;
- Boniface Kanyoni, a priest in his fifties, was killed at the Christus Centre; A Tutsi;
- Ananie Rugasira, from the diocese of Kigali; A Hutu, he was related to the Archbishop;
- Straton Gakwaya, in his fifties, was Econome General (accountant) of the new diocese of Gukongoro. He was previously responsible for the accounts at the Seminary of Rutongo. A Tutsi;

#### *Other Clergymen Killed in Kigali Area*

- Jean-Baptiste Rugengamanzi, in his forties, was the cure of the parish of Ndera in the archdiocese of Kigali. He was apparently killed in his church; A Hutu;
- Andre Caloon, in his seventies, was a French priest in the parish of Ruhuha, the diocese of Kigali. He was killed on 7 April by a drunken officer who grabbed his spectacles from him and shot him when he tried to take back his glasses.
- Father Mathieu Ngirumpatse and two nuns were killed at Nyanza.
- Spiriton Kageyo, aged about 50, was the cure at Rambura, the President's parish. A Tutsi. -
- His two vicars, Antoine Niyitegeka, a Tutsi, and Antoine Habiyakare, a Tutsi, were also killed;

#### **Prefecture of Gisenyi**

- Augustin Ntagara, was in his sixties. A former professor of philosophy at the Grand Seminary of Nyakibanda near Butare, he was a priest at the parish of Gisenyi at the time of Ills death. He was imprisoned from October 1990 to February 1991, at first in Gisenyi and later in Kigali; A Tutsi;
- Fabien Rwakareke, in his forties, was the cure of the Cathedral of Nyundo. A Tutsi;
- Edouard Simba, in his forties, was the rector of the Small Seminary of Nyundo. A Hutu;
- Abbe Twagirayezu at the Small Seminary of Nyundo. He was killed together with 25 lay teachers; A Tutsi;
- Callixte Kalisa, in his fifties, was the "coordinateur diocesain" at the diocese of Nyundo; a Tutsi;
- Herman Mwambari, in his eighties, was resting at the diocese of Nyundo; A Tutsi;
- Sylvere Mutiganda, was a young priest at Nyundo;

## **Prefecture of Butare**

- Joseph Niyomugabo and Marc Ntimugara were priests at the parish of Cyanika, about 5 kilometres from Butare;
- Abbe Modeste;
- Nobel;
- Three nuns were killed at Simbi;
- One nun was killed at Nyumba;
- Boniface Musoni, a Tutsi priest at a seminary in Butare, was wounded.

## **Prefecture of Kibungo**

- Elisee Mpongano, a Hutu, was killed in the massacre at St. Joseph Centre, Kibungo. He was director of traditional medicine in Bare;
- Michel Nsengiyumra was cure in the parish of Rukoma. He fired on a group of interahamwe when they attacked him; they came back for him and he was killed in a massacre in Kibungo; a Tutsi.
- Joseph Gatara, killed in Mukarange;
- Jean-Bosco Munyare, killed in Mukarange;
- Justin Ruterandongozi, killed in Rukoma;
- Evode Mwanangu, killed in Rukoma. A Tutsi.

A fuller list of priests and active members of the church is being prepared by African Rights and will be included in a later report.

## **THE KILLING OF MEDICAL DOCTORS AND HOSPITAL STAFF**

The genocide has involved flagrant violations of the protected status of hospitals and medical staff. African Rights has gathered extensive information on deliberate attacks on hospitals and the killing of patients. This material will be published in a future report. This section briefly recounts some of the health professionals who have been killed.

*Kigali:* a number of leading doctors and nurses were killed.

- Dr. Theonest Kavaronga, a heart specialist. He studied in Belgium where he lived for a long time. He escaped from Kigali but was hunted down and killed in his home district of Gitarama.
- Dr. Camille Munyangabe, a doctor at Kigali Hospital;
- Lt.Col. Kazenga, a doctor in the army;
- Straton Boyi, a nursing assistant in private practice at Nyamirambo;

*Butare:* the following doctors worked at the University Hospital and also taught at the University of Butare; and were killed.



- Dr. Etienne Mbarutso, 67, was a gynaecologist. Trained in Belgium, he was director of the department of gynaecology and obstetrics at the hospital. He was considered as sympathetic to the Social Democratic Party. He was a Hutu;
- Dr. Jotham Nshimyumukiza, an ophthalmologist, was medical director of the hospital. He was trained in Belgium. He was a Hutu and a member of the Social Democratic Party. He and his wife, Therese, had four children. It is not clear what happened to his family. At the time, a sister-in-law, Immacule and her four-year old daughter, Pugi, were staying with the family in Butare;
- Dr. Jean Gahungu was an ophthalmologist;
- Dr. Gatera, a surgeon, was a Hutu;
- Abel Dushime, a nutritionist, was a Hutu;

A nurse working with MSF-International was beaten to death during the massacre at Butare Hospital;

### **A POLICY OF MASSACRES: ONE MASSACRE AFTER ANOTHER**

*This is not a war but a policy of massacres. In a war, the wounded outnumber the dead. But in Rwanda, far more people have been killed than wounded. The aim in Rwanda is to kill.*

Dr. Jean-Herve Bradol of MSF, speaking to African Rights.

African Rights has interviewed dozens of survivors of massacres in northern, eastern, central and southern Rwanda. With virtually no exceptions, they survivors all have serious wounds-wounds that would often be fatal if untreated. We found that their accounts are detailed and coherent, including those of children.

The following section presents a very small selection of the numerous testimonies from survivors of massacres gathered by African Rights in Rwanda. A fuller selection, giving a better indication of the geographical spread of the killings and the manner in which they were carried out, will be published in a future report. At the time of writing, research is still continuing.

#### **The Parish of Rukara, Prefecture of Kibungo**

The first testimony presented is from a boy who was one of the very few people who survived the massacre in the parish of Rukara. His name is Jean-Baptiste Ndeze, he is aged ten, and he comes from Rwinkuba near Gahini. His father was the director of the Centre d'Enseignement Rural and Artisanal at Rwinkuba. When African Rights interviewed him in the Hospital of Gahini on 7 May, the left side of his face and the back of his head were heavily bandaged. He talked with great difficulty.

As soon as we learned of the President's death, they started to kill people living on the hill of Kawangire. Everybody from Kawangire went to the parish of Rukara. We kept hearing about rumours of massacres. On Thursday evening [7th] my parents sent me and my brothers and sisters to the church in Rukara. Papa told us to go in search of

security. We arrived at night and found many other refugees there. Some people had brought food, but many others had nothing.

The next morning more refugees arrived. We had nothing to eat till the evening, but we drank the water of the parish [well]. There was no attack on Saturday. The attacks started on Sunday morning. The attackers, who were not wearing uniforms, beat the refugees with big clubs and other weapons. But the refugees tried to fight back and protect themselves. So the attackers left. They came back in the afternoon. This time they threw grenades. A few people died, but many more were wounded. The refugees continued to defend themselves. Some of them had a few traditional weapons, but most fought with bits of brick and stones. The attackers left and came back with more arms in the evening. On Monday, some men refugees continued to come, helping those defending the parish. Some of the other children and I hid in the maternity clinic of the parish while the men refugees fought. [The maternity clinic is very close to the church]. Policemen arrived that day and helped to organize and direct the attackers. But they did not fire that day.

The next day, a lot of the refugees went into the church. Attackers threw grenades into the church. Gendarmes shot those who tried to leave. The attackers also tried to attack the maternity. Adults ran out of the maternity clinic, not the children. So it was adults who got the bullets of the gendarmes. Then the attackers entered the maternity clinic. They assembled the children and started to beat us with machetes. They kept hitting us with the machetes. I tried to get up and flee but I could not because the machetes kept coming at me. The attackers left the clinic when they thought everybody was dead. They went back to the church where there were many more people. There were a few other children who survived, but everyone was badly wounded. We stayed inside with the dead and the wounded for several days until the Inkotanyi [RPF] arrived. There was nothing to eat; at night we went out to fetch water.

My three brothers and three sisters also died in the attack. My parents who joined us when things got very hot in Rwinkuba were also killed in Rukara.

African Rights visited the parish of Rukara on 9 May, nearly a month after the massacre. The RPF had not yet buried bodies which had been left there. Many of the bodies were thrown by the assailants into nearly Lake Muhazi or thrown into the surrounding bushes. There were bodies everywhere in the parish--inside the church, including right under the altar, in the courtyards, in the maternity clinic, inside the private houses and outside all the buildings where people trying to flee must have been gunned down. There were bodies of men, women and children, including very small babies. They were in a terrible state. Near some of the bodies were spears. One of the most depressing sights was the personal, intimate belongings of people spread out everywhere, including inside the church--toothbrushes, combs, sleeping mats, clothes, ID cards.

## **The Parish of Kibungo**

The second testimony is that of Jean-Claude Karangamuna, aged 22, who comes from the commune of Biriyege. He was a student at the Institute of St. Alois, a private school. At the time of the interview in Gahini Hospital, his entire head and much of his neck was heavily bandaged. He is very lucky to be alive at all for he survived two massacres. His story illustrates one of the most traumatic aspects of the killing: the fact that the killers were personally known to many of the victims:

I heard the news of the President's death on the radio on the morning of the 7th. We had to stay at home because of the curfew. On the 8th, we started to hear of massacres and of houses being burned down. The rest of the family left and went to the Centre d'Eveche of St. Joseph in Kibungo. Only I remained. I thought that these events would finish quickly.

On Saturday the 9th, I was at home when I saw a mass of people coming towards our house. An interahamwe told me that they were going to attack the house and said I should leave. His name is Bahati, a driver in Kibungo. I had no choice but to leave the house. I did not go far. I went into the bush. I saw our house looted and then burned. Since our home was burned, I went to join the rest of my family at St. Joseph Centre. That was on Saturday.

On Sunday 17 April, the parish was attacked. The attackers threw grenades, leaving many people wounded. We brought some of the wounded to our Centre. Some of the priests also fled to the Centre. After a few days, we were attacked at about 3: 10 in the afternoon. Soldiers and interahamwe came together. Some of the interahamwe had guns. One of them was someone called Twagirayezu, a businessman in Kibungo. He was also a reservist in the military. Another man was Boniface, a businessman and also a reservist in the army. Charles Nsabimanya, a truck transporter, and also a reservist, was heading the interahamwe. Among the soldiers, I recognized a former chef d'etat major adjoint [deputy chief of staff]. They were killing until 6:00 p.m. with guns, grenades, machetes. There were about a thousand refugees.. Seventy-three people survived, forty-eight adults and twenty-five children. All were seriously wounded. The children who survived were taken by Charles who later brought them back to the Centre.

As soon as the attack started, I hid in the underground drain. Since the attackers did not see me, I was not wounded. After they left, Rwandese priests tried to pull the survivors out from under the dead, to wash them and to help them. But they had no medicines.

Very early the next morning, the interahamwe and soldiers came back to loot the Centre, including the Eveche. After they left, we spent another three days there. Charles came to verify the number of survivors. He counted us and then left. We realized we could be killed if we stayed, but we felt we had no choice. There were checkpoints manned by interahamwe everywhere. The next day, Charles brought four vehicles and made us get in. He took us to place where they make bricks, very near the hospital in Kibungo. There is a huge ditch there. At about 5:00 p.m. they started the killings. Some people were shot, some were bayoneted and others killed by machete. The bodies were thrown onto the ground near the ditch. One of the victims was a priest called Michel Nsengiyumua, cure of the parish of Rukoma. I was hit with the machete on the side of

my face, neck and head. When they thought we were all dead, they put us in the ditch. They left about an hour later. Shortly afterwards, I crawled out. I did not stay anymore than an hour because I heard them say that they would come back the next day to bury us.

At first, I hid in the bush and then came back to the Eveche at about 3:00 a.m. By then, I had little strength left in me because I had lost so much blood. A priest there tried to help me but they had no medicines. In the next few days, an old woman and a young boy, also Tutsis, arrived at the Eveche, escaping atrocities elsewhere. We heard that somebody had told the interahamwe that there were three people at the Eveche. So the priest advised us to hide in the bush and to come back at night-time to eat something at the Eveche. That is what we did for a few days. Then the RPF came to Kibungo on 22 April, in the afternoon at about 3:00 p.m. At 6:00 p.m. when the sound of gunfire ceased, we ventured out to find out what was happening. We saw them standing on the street and recognized their uniform. I approached them and told them what had happened. They told us to return to the Eveche and said that they would come the next day to fetch us, the priests and the retired bishop who is now living in Rwamagana. So on the 23rd, they came and brought us to Gahini. By then, I was really sick as I had not received medical assistance.

All my immediate family was killed in the attacks, except my father who was dead already.

### **Parish of Kaborondo**

African Rights took the testimony of Abbe Oreste Incimatata, parish priest, at Gahini Hospital, 6 May. He described what happened in Kaborondo, including details that make it clear that the killings were scrupulously planned:

I heard the news of the President's death early on Thursday morning on the national radio. Immediately, I felt for everyone in my parish. I knew that nothing would be sufficient to stop killings. Already in March, we had heard of lists being prepared of people opposed to the government in Kaborondo, Birenga, Kigarama etc... It was said that the bourgmestres of these communes were behind these lists. The cadres of the MRND were also implicated. My brother lives in Kigarama and he heard that he was on a list.

After 8 April, I could have no further doubts about the existence of these lists. That day, we took a young wounded boy to the health centre who had fled from another sector. He said that interahamwe had killed his father. I went to our bourgmestre to ask him to arrest the people responsible for the death. I told him it was important to intervene immediately so that the killings do not spread. I told him that there was a witness who knows the people who killed his father. The bourgmestre and I went together to the health centre of Kaborondo to see the boy. The boy detailed who killed his father and how, as well as the names of others who had died. While the boy was talking, the bourgmestre was busy writing down names of people killed that the boy had not even mentioned, including some that were still alive. If there was not a list how could he have known who had died, and should have died?

Kaborondo was calm on the 7th. But that same day, we learned that killings had already started, very early in the morning, at Birenga. and Gasetza. A group of interahamwe, who were well trained, led the attacks. Many of these people had been chased out of the military, but the bourgmestres had given them arms. Celestin Senkware, bourgmestre of Kayonza, had also distributed arms to the militia of Gasetza which is where he comes from. Col. Rwagafilita who had been posted to Kaborondo, also ensured that the interahamwe were well-armed.

On Friday the 8th, very early in the morning, I started to see many refugees come to our parish from Gasetza and Birenga. All day, refugees kept pouring in. The accounts from the refugees were all the same--there was a group of well-armed and well-organized interahamwe looking especially for Tutsis. At Kaborondo, Hutus and Tutsis remained united until Monday. The population organized itself to resist the assailants if they came. On Monday, I realized that the local officials--the bourgmestre and councillors--as well as some Hutu intellectuals, including some teachers and employees of the commune, 'Were not for this unity. The bourgmestre worked closely with the military in Kaborondo where there is a camp. But not all Hutus were on their side. For example, Jean-Marie Viane Munyangain, the director of a private farm, gave beer to those resisting the assailants.

From the 8th-11th, refugees kept coming from all these two sectors, and also from Kayonza. At Kayonza, their bourgmestre and communal police, had physically participated in the killings. Most of the refugees were Tutsis, but there were also some Hutus. In Kaborondo, the situation was becoming more and more tense. The bourgmestre came and told the refugees to leave. When they refused, he asked them 'what have you got to escape?' Many of the refugees were wounded. We went to the health centre to get some medicine for them. They said no, adding that 'we should bury them.' After some argument, they agreed to help some

with the most serious wounds. They insisted that the others would have to pay. We pointed out that the refugees had no money, but agreed that the parish would bear the costs.

Then we went to the commune to ask for police protection. The bourgmestre turned us down. So that evening [Monday] we called a security meeting concerning the sector of Kaborondo, which included some of the refugees. The bourgmestre came but said that he did not have time to attend such long meetings. He left and asked us to let him know the result. We continued with our meeting which councillors from the different sectors attended. We agreed to establish teams to patrol security. Later in the evening, the bourgmestre announced that there would be no such teams. It was at that moment that those who wanted to attack in Kaborondo knew that they had a free hand and that the bourgmestre would do nothing to protect the refugees.

On Tuesday, a huge number of refugees came from Kayonza. One of the refugees died. What really hurt me is that at first the bourgmestre even refused us a place to bury the person. Finally, he gave us a plot, near the health centre, saying 'it was to be the last time.' At the time, I did not understand the significance of his comment; it was a phrase I was to understand only too well.

Wednesday was to be a catastrophe. We started the day with 1209 refugees. As the hours went by, about another 500 arrived. But we did not have time to register them. At 8:30 a.m. the councillor of Kaborondo arrived and said he wanted the male

refugees to attend a meeting. Naively and tragically I agreed. The men had hardly gone 400 metres when arrows started flying, coming from bands we were not aware were there. We immediately grouped into three teams to protect ourselves. I ran to the commune [office] which was nearby, pleading for protection. I was told that the bourgmestre had gone to Kibungo. I spoke to the head of the police. He said that 'Colonel Rwegafilita. has already come by here and given other instructions.' It was clear where the choice would be between the orders of a parish priest and those of a colonel.

When I returned to the parish, I saw the interahamwe were throwing stones at the refugees. The refugees tried to defend themselves. At 9:30 the first grenades went off. It was the police of the commune, whom I knew well, who started shooting into the refugees. Four people died immediately, including a young student at the seminary, Olivier Ntirushwa from Zaza who was in his third year, and a peasant farmer called Sinafi and a young boy who worked with us, Elyse. Police blocked the exit to make it impossible for us to take the wounded to the health centre.

The refugees began to throw stones again. The bourgmestre came back from his trip to Kibungo. It soon became clear why he had gone there--to get soldiers to help in the attack. When they saw the three soldiers, the interahamwe withdrew. The bourgmestre placed the soldiers and eight gendarmes in front of the parish which was on the road. There were three machine guns. They began shooting into the refugees. The first group of men who tried to run were immediately gunned down. Then they came inside. The men among the refugees fought back with stones and bits of broken bricks. The women ululated to encourage them. But could stones do against machine guns? I hid inside my office and saw everything directly from my window. Towards the end, the window was hit and I went somewhere else to hide. They kept firing, firing. They had begun at 10:00 a.m. The guns became still only at 12:00. By then, all the men were dead.

They went inside the church where the women and children were hiding, together with some very old men. They threw grenades into the church. Those who came running out were shot. At 4:00 p.m. when they had finished the killing, the soldiers and gendarmes began looting the parish. They took everything of value. Then the interahamwe came in and looted everything else, chairs, pots, pans, clothes. They even took the priests' cassocks. The looting was completed at 6:30 p.m.

The interahamwe then came into my room. They looted it and left. Later, one of the soldiers came, put the light on and saw me. I gave him 300,000 francs which belonged to a project of the parish and he left.

Only one other priest survived. He was a Hutu. They found him outside, near the petrol station and beat him very badly. One of our priests, Eugene Ntagungira, a Tutsi, died with the refugees inside the church.

When I finally came out, it was a terrible scene. There were bodies everywhere. One of the most distressing sights was the children and babies crying over the bodies of their mothers.

I also felt threatened and fled towards the National Park of Akagera. I hid in the bush and in the homes of Hutu people. There were no Tutsis who could help me--they were either dead or had fled. Different Hutu people saved my life--they hid me and found ways for me to escape. I stayed in this region for two and a half weeks, until the RPF came to the area. I came to Gahini Hospital on 2 May.

## **THE FATE OF TUTSIS: ETHNIC CLEANSING AT FEVER PITCH**

A large number of the killings are not massacres in which large numbers of people were killed in one place, but rather the deliberate seeking out and murdering of people known to be Tutsi. They might be sought out in their homes, or stopped at roadblocks and their identities checked. African Rights has gathered extensive evidence about such selective killing, and presents two indicative testimonies here.

Celestin Mazimpake owned a small shop in Sake, Prefecture of Kibungo, selling clothes and other items. She was interviewed by African Rights on 6 May 1994 at Gahini Hospital:

Even before the President died, the consciousness of Hutus in our area had already been awakened. They had been given a very clear idea of who to kill if events turned sour. Hutus in our hill were always being called to secret meetings with the bourgmestre, councillors and other officials from which Tutsis were excluded.

The killings started around midnight on 6 April, within hours of the plane crash. Burundi refugees who were living in a camp near the commune and some interahamwe started with rich Tutsi families. They killed Ladislav Semuhungu and his entire family, Francois Masabo and his family, Cyril Musoni and his family. Others died as well, together with their families--Silas Kanyamibwa, Sengoga, Gatambire and all the Tutsi families who lived near the centre of Mabuga.

On Thursday the 7th, very early in the morning, they began killing the Tutsi families on the hills of Nshiri, Ngoma and Ruyema I and 11. I live on Ruyema 11, in an area called Munege. Around 11:00 a.m. the bourgmestre and the councillor of the sector came to the Catholic Centre of Munege, together with a soldier. There were also a lot of people with them. They found shot someone at the Centre which I later found out was my uncle. I had just bought some things for my shop and ran into the group while on my motor[bike]. I heard the shots and one of the officials turn to the group of people, saying 'we have given you an example; now do the work yourselves.' I ran as fast as I could. I hid in a banana field near the house of an interahamwe as I thought his house would not be targeted. From there, I was able to follow what happened. They then went to the house of the man they killed and looted it, as well as a number of other neighbours.

Many Tutsis have been killed either because their ID card marked them out as a Tutsi or because they did not have their card with them at the time and were therefore unable to prove that they were not Tutsi.

Many Tutsis tore up their ID card in the hope of avoiding certain death. Some who did so were lucky, at least to remain alive. One of them was a woman from Murambi who was nine months pregnant at the time. In early May, she was a refugee in Tanzania.

My husband, mother and I decided to leave Murambi on 14 April because the interahamwe were searching for Tutsis. There was also my younger sister and my child. My husband, Mwalimu Issa Mutabati, taught Koranic school in Murambi. There had

been a lot of killings by then. Also, we wanted to avoid a war between the military and the RPF. There were checkpoints everywhere. My husband was walking behind my mother and I. We managed to cross one of the checkpoints at Kayonza. After a few minutes, I looked back and I saw that they had stopped my husband at the checkpoint. They took him aside, made him dig a big hole and then they shot him.

My mother and I continued walking with our little group. That night, we slept at the parish in Kabarondo. Then we went onto Kinzove where we stayed two nights. By now, many Hutus were also on the move, afraid of the arrival of the RPF. We decided to tear up our IDs. Since there were also so many Hutus running, they would not be able to tell who is a Hutu or who is a Tutsi.

Then I bought a laissez-passer which was stamped for me by a councillor from Rukara who had fled with his official seal. A laissez-passer was safe because it does not say if you are a Hutu or Tutsi. We continued our journey to Rusurno where we spent a few days. I delivered my baby, a girl, in Gatore and then crossed the border into Tanzania on Friday [29th].

## **RESISTING THE KILLING**

One of the most important pieces of evidence that refutes the government's contention that the killings are spontaneous ethnic violence is the fact that many Hutus courageously protected Tutsi, often at great danger to themselves. Every single Tutsi spoken to by African Rights acknowledges the fact that many, many Hutus have saved the lives of many Tutsi. Also, Tutsi readily acknowledge the fact that in the frenzied atmosphere whipped up in the country, it took a great deal of courage for Hutus to stand up against this madness. One example is Cyprien Rugamba who worked in the office of National Tourism in Kigali. He refused to hand over a group of Tutsis who had taken refuge in his home; he was threatened with death, and he said they would have to kill him too. They did.

In many places, Hutus and Tutsis initially made joint security arrangements for their area, for example setting up joint security patrols. Government and party officials did everything in their power to disrupt these efforts, in order to turn the Hutus against the Tutsis.

## **THE RPF ADVANCE**

For some months, the RPF had been broadcasting warnings that the hardliners within the government planned to derail the transition and re-start the war. Although party to the Arusha accords and thereby bound not to continue arming and mobizing, the RPF stayed on a war footing. The morning after the Presidential plane was shot down, the RPF battalion in Kigali broke out of its encampment, and the RPF troops in the north opened an offensive on all fronts.

This offensive had several stated objectives.. One was to relieve the battalion in Kigali, which was outnumbered and under military pressure. A second was to halt the killing of Tutsi and Hutu opposed to the regime. It would have been very difficult for RPF



commanders to restrain their troops, the great majority of whom are Tutsi, while their kinspeople--including family members--were slaughtered en masse nearby.

The RPF advance took them through the demilitarized zone in a matter of hours. The rebels then overran Byumba and Kibungo in two weeks, and entered the northern and eastern parts of Kigali prefecture. The army rapidly fell back: it was a war of skirmishes interspersed with brief, heavier encounters for strategic hilltops. Only in Ruhengeri in the north-west, and in Kigali itself, has there been serious and sustained fighting using heavy weapons.

In the face of this advance, the interahamwe and the gendarmerie fled. Many ran to Tanzania as refugees, discarding their weapons and party cards on the way. Others ran south and west into government-held areas. A few escaped into the Akagera national park.

The RPF advance has been associated with several kinds of human rights abuse. In the course of conflict, there has been shelling of civilian areas and attacks on civilian targets. However, outside Kigali, the low intensity of the fighting and the speed of the RPF advance has limited the damage to civilian infrastructure and the number of people killed in the conflict. Most of the RPF-captured towns and villages show little sign of war damage, and in the rural areas there are relatively few people with injuries characteristic of modern warfare, such as shrapnel wounds--the great majority of wounds are those sustained during the interahamwe massacres, inflicted with "traditional" weapons.

Most foreign observers have commented on the high degree of discipline and generally good behaviour of the RPF forces in the field. In this context, it should be noted that the Rwandese army has also not been implicated in massive human rights abuses in the context of the war--i.e. *the war in the rural areas between the RPF and the FAR is not a major source of human rights violations.*

The fighting in Kigali has been more intense than elsewhere in the country, and has involved the use of heavy weaponry in thickly-populated areas. Artillery exchanges have cost civilian lives--the largest number of deaths occurring when the FAR has targetted concentrations of Tutsi civilians. However, even the civilian casualties caused by seven weeks of conventional warfare in the city pales into insignificance in comparison with the deliberate bloodshed perpetrated by the forces of the Sindikubwabo government against unarmed civilians.

The other significant type of abuse has been against captured militiamen. RPF commanders readily admitted to foreign visitors that they summarily executed gendarmes and members of the interahamwe whom they captured. More recently, under pressure from international organizations, the RPF has kept prisoners of war in camps.

Refugees fleeing to Tanzania have reported mass killings of civilians by RPF soldiers using methods very similar to those of the interahamwe. The instances that African Rights has been able to investigate have all been hearsay, rather than eyewitness accounts--in contrast to the testimonies of massacres by the government militia, which are all first-hand accounts.

Moreover, the presence of a significant number of interahamwe among the refugees gives reason to suspect such stories. Nonetheless, such allegations warrant careful investigation.

However, it is indisputable that many ordinary Hutu are deeply fearful of the RPF. For years, government propaganda has portrayed the RPF in the darkest terms imaginable, and rural people are understandably frightened of what vengeance the Tutsi soldiers might wreak on Hutu who may have been associated with the killings. The lack of an RPF civil administration, and the small number of Hutu in the RPF ranks, have done little to allay their fears. If the hundreds of thousands of people who are displaced from their homes and farms by the RPF advance are to return home, the RPF will need to make dramatic gestures to build confidence.

African Rights has travelled extensively in RPF-controlled areas of Rwanda, unescorted by RPF soldiers or civilian members. We have also talked to Rwandese and foreigners who have visited more widely, and interviewed numerous refugees in Tanzania. Although there is evidence for human rights abuses by the RPF, there is absolutely no evidence that the RPF is responsible for large scale indiscriminate killing of civilians. *The RPF is not implicated in genocide.*

## **II. THOSE GUILTY OF GENOCIDE**

African Rights has gathered extensive information on the identities of those responsible for the mass killing, and is carefully checking every name. A preliminary list is presented here, which includes the politicians and military officers who have been primarily responsible for the atrocities. Lists for each prefecture will be published in a future report.

### **POLITICIANS WITH AN EXTREMIST HUTU AGENDA**

The leading figures behind the genocide have positions in the interim government headed by President Theodor Sindikubwabo set up on 8 April. Most of them also held positions of power during Habyarimana's presidency. They include:

- Major-General Augustine Bizimana, Minister of Defence, and formerly Chief of Staff of the FAR. He was responsible for arming the militia in Kibungo and is at the summit of the current military hierarchy.
- Dr Casimir Bizimungu, Minister of Health and MRND. His writings in the journal Kangura helped to incite ethnic hatred. A former intelligence officer, he was the government signatory of the 1991 cease-fire with the RPF, but publicly denigrated it soon afterwards. After the formation of the interim government on 8 April he has been active in neighbouring Zaire trying to obtain support for the Sindikubwabo government.
- Joseph Nzirorera, secretary-general of MRND. He is a renowned hard-liner who is reported to have played a central role in arming the militias and authorizing the massacres, taking responsibility for transmitting instructions to commence the killing to militia commanders in various regions.
- Ferdinand Nahimana, a key extremist ideologue. Formerly a history professor at the Ruhengeri campus of the National University, Nahimana was appointed head of the Rwandese Information Office (ORINFOR), and used broadcasts on Radio Rwanda to incite the population against Tutsi in Bugesera in 1992. He was dismissed by the then Prime Minister Sylvestre Nsanzimana. Shunned by the academic community, and rejected as a potential ambassador, he instead then helped to found the private hard-line radio station RTLM, which has played a key role in inciting the genocide. Nahimana is reported to be currently in Zaire.
- Justin Mugenzi, Minister of Commerce, Liberal Party-Power. Mugenzi was a prominent opposition politician who switched sides, and worked on Habyarimana's behalf to split the opposition Liberal Party. It is not clear if he was intimidated into joining the extremists (there was an assassination attempt made against his sister in December 1992, and he was singled out as an enemy in public by extremists on more than one occasion), whether he was bribed, or whether he was a clandestine extremist all along. However, Mugenzi only emerged into the open with an extremist agenda in February 1994. Since then, he has frequently incited the population in radio broadcasts to "kill all the Tutsi, so as not to repeat the mistake of 1959" and also to kill "others who do not hear the truth." Shortly before the April killings, he visited his home area of Rukara and held meetings to tell the Hutu populace that their only enemies were the Tutsi.
- Eriestar Nlyitega, Minister of Information. He is responsible for numerous of inflammatory speeches.

- Jean Bosco Barayagwiza, spokesman of CDR. He has publicly advocated ethnic cleansing. He is heading the international diplomatic efforts on behalf of the regime.
- Theoneste Nahimana, Vice-President of CDR.
- Faustine Munyazesa, Minister of Interior, leading MRND member and protege of Habyarimana.
- Stanislas Mbonampeka, Liberal Party-Power;
- Juvenal Renzaho, Prefet of Kigali; he is said to own many businesses in Kigali and is said to be using the chaos to "protect" them.
- Theodor Sindikubwabo, President of the interim government, MRND;
- Jean Kambanda, Prime Minister;
- Matthieu Ndirumapatse, Chairman of MRND.
- Froduard Karamira, Vice-President of MRND. He was originally a Tutsi, who abandoned his identity at birth and became accepted as a Hutu. He is responsible for much propaganda in support of ethnic separation.
- Donat Murego, MDR-Power;

## **MILITARY OFFICERS**

- Colonel Theoneste Bagosora; Chef de Cabinet in the Ministry of Defence. He has been responsible for arming the interahamwe since their creation in 1991 and is a renowned extremist who reportedly considered mounting a coup against Habyarimana to bring a hardline government to power. He played a key role in organizing the militias in early April.
- Captain Pascal Simbikangwa; he previously held an official position in intelligence and has been named as one responsible for organizing death squads. Simbinkangwa currently does not have an official position, but remains very powerful and active in organizing militia. He is reported to have used the President's office to direct the killing.
- Captain Gaspard Hategekimana; worked in close collaboration with Capt. Simbikangwa to direct the killing, using his own house as an occasional headquarters.
- Col. Anatole Nsengiyumva, is strongly implicated in the killing. He is responsible for killing in Gisenyi, and has had a prominent role in the gendarmerie. He has also spread extremist ideology, describing all Tutsi, moderate Hutu and those married to Tutsi as the enemy.
- Col. Muvunyi, took command of operations in Butare on 20 April, whereupon this region--until that moment relatively peaceful--suddenly became a major centre of killing. He requested military helicopters to assist him in his operations in Butare, which was at that time far away from the front line.
- Major-General Ndindiliyimana, head of the gendarmerie. While he has not publicly incited violence, his complete failure to object to it, or to instruct his officers and men to protect civilians, makes him at the very least complicit in the killings.
- Lt-Col. Mpiranya, one of those responsible for coordinating the killings. He is reported to have been particularly responsible for linking the efforts of the army and militias.

### **III. THE MOTIVES**

What does it take for a group of people to resort to genocide as a political strategy? Perhaps genocide can never be explained fully: it requires such a systematic and widespread negation of the basis of humanity, that by its very nature no reasonable explanation can be found. Nonetheless, a host of reasons for Hutu extremists to resort to political violence can be found in Rwanda's history, and in the political and economic developments of the early 1990s.

#### **THE ROOTS OF HUTU EXTREMISM**

Hutu aspirations and any Hutu political agenda were completely suppressed until the late 1950s. The only exception was the Roman Catholic church, which sought Hutu converts. As pressure for granting independence grew, however, the Belgian authorities began to switch their patronage away from the pro-independence Tutsi intellectuals, to Hutu politicians whom they assumed to be more pliable.

The entire colonial ideology was based on the racial identification of groups, and discrimination based on racism. A flavour of this can be given by quotation from Europeans in Rwanda at the time. Mgr Classe, the first Roman Catholic bishop of Rwanda, described the Tutsi as "having something in common with the Aryan and Semitic types." A Belgian administrator named J. Gishlain wrote that "the Hutu is ... a big child--superficial, light, fickle. [He has] an abject soul and habits like herds of beasts."

Under the circumstances, it is not surprising that Rwandese politicians also produced self-serving racist ideologies. The official Parmehutu ideology was that the Tutsi were "a minority race of intruders, originating from Ethiopia, who exploit the 'authentic Rwandese' who are the Hutu." Such a position left no room for Tutsi in Rwanda.

Independence and Hutu supremacy promised much to Hutu politicians. Control of the state brought power, privilege and control of foreign aid. There was also a modest but appreciable improvement in the quality of life for ordinary farmers. But Rwanda remained poor, with a fragile economy. Fierce competition for scarce resources, notably salaried jobs in public service and land, underlay a peaceful veneer. The economic shocks of the late 1980s combined with the suddenly-renewed military threat of the RPF--portrayed as an army bent on restoring Tutsi supremacy--to provide fertile ground for the further growth of Hutu extremism.

It is not clear whether President Habyarimana cynically exploited Hutu extremism to mobilize people in the war against the RPF and to entrench himself and the Akazu in power, or whether the crises provided him with the opportunity for furthering an agenda that had been hidden during the earlier years of his rule. Either way, the MRND became more and more committed to an extremist agenda, while the CDR was created with an explicitly chauvinist programme.

Historians and social anthropologists are adamant that Hutu and Tutsi are not "tribes" but rather different segments within one nationality. Historically, this is indisputable.

However, the weight of the last century of history bears heavily on modern citizens of Rwanda--especially when selectively interpreted by ideologues. Hutu and Tutsi have had such vastly different political experiences over the last generations that the common identity between them has eroded. Extremist Hutu propaganda has exacerbated the problem. What is most important is that many ordinary Rwandese believe that there are fundamental differences between the two groups.

Government propaganda has used history to justify current pogroms. Whether this history is real or invented, it serves its purpose. There is constant emphasis on "1959 Revolution" having been "left unfinished." Extremist politicians say that they made a mistake in 1959 by not finishing off the Tutsis--merely forcing them to flee. That, they say, is why the Tutsi were able to come back in 1990 and invade. Therefore, they conclude, this time they must not make the same mistake.

### **VESTED INTERESTS IN THE HABYARIMANA REGIME**

Control of the state in a country like Rwanda amounts to a licence to print money. The Akazu became rich under President Habyarimana.

From 1959 until now, Hutu have had a monopoly on the privileges of power. Under Habyarimana, those privileges became more and more concentrated in a small group from the north-west. This clique--the Akazu--was able to dispense massive government patronage, exercise near-total control of the army and police, and take the lion's share of the generous international assistance to Rwanda.

With the Arusha accords, the Akazu and their fellow travellers faced the prospect of losing these privileges. Hutu from other regions and Tutsi were to be allowed to claim their share of favours dispensed by government. Democratic elections would have shown the narrowness of support for the Akazu. A particularly threatening component of the Arusha accords was the provision for the incorporation of RPF fighters into the national army, and the reform of other security institutions. This would have ended the thirty-year old monopoly of Hutu in the military. Habyarimana's elite Presidential Guard was to be replaced by a Republican Guard, more representative of the entire country.

It was clear that the government entered into the agreements unwillingly, under pressure from its international donors. Following the first truce in the war in March 1991, Habyarimana said that the cease-fire had been imposed upon him by "Rwanda's friends"--making it clear that he was deeply frustrated by his inability to pursue a military solution to the threat of the RPF. However, Habyarimana was forced to lock himself in to a peace process that would, seemingly, ultimately deprive him of power. Hardliners within the government and army searched for ways out of their corner with increasing desperation.

## **COMPETITION FOR SCARCE RESOURCES**

Most minority groups are vulnerable because of their poor and marginal status. The Tutsi in Rwanda are vulnerable precisely because they are, on average, more wealthy and more educated than the Hutu. Despite three decades of Hutu supremacy, the Tutsi are still over-represented in salaried jobs and in commerce. In rural areas, though differences have narrowed, Tutsi still tend to keep more cattle than Hutu, and cattle remain the chief means of capital accumulation for rural people. Hence, it is easy for Hutu politicians to play upon the envy that many ordinary Hutu feel for their Tutsi neighbours.

One of the issues most successfully manipulated by Hutu extremists was the issue of land. The extremists told peasants that the RPF was coming back to take their land, using this issue to generate fear and hostility. At the same time they also promised the land occupied by Tutsis in order to provide incentives for killing Tutsis.\$

Many Tutsi own small businesses, such as rural shops. While shopkeepers provide an essential rural service, they also make profits. It is easy to portray them as exploiters and mobilize people against them. When the 1994 killing started, many interahamwe spent the first few days looting shops and stores--literally making a killing out of the dying.

## **FEAR OF JUSTICE**

In addition to losing the power and privileges they had become accustomed to, many politicians, government officials and soldiers were afraid of being judged. Many had committed terrible crimes in the past. Rwandese human rights investigations had named some of those responsible. They had been riled by the findings of the International Commission which visited Rwanda in January 1993 and published its report shortly afterwards.<sup>1</sup>

This report is highly significant. It was scrupulously researched by a group of leading international human rights activists from Belgium, Burkina Faso, Canada, France, the Netherlands, Ivory Coast and the United States of America. The Commission received extensive cooperation from Rwandese human rights organizations<sup>2</sup>--which had taken the initiative in requesting the formation of the Commission. Not only did the findings undermine the legitimacy of the government, but it placed named individuals in severe jeopardy of prosecution for their crimes.

This fear of being brought to justice underlay the desire to wipe out the human rights groups in Rwanda.

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<sup>1</sup> International Commission of Inquiry into Human Rights Violations in Rwanda since October 1, 1990, Report, 1993.

<sup>2</sup> Comité de Liaison des Associations de Défense pour les Droits de l'Homme au Rwanda (CLADHO) and l'Association pour la Promotion de l'Union par la Justice Sociale (KANYARWANDA).

## **IV. THE MEANS**

### **HOW GENOCIDE WAS COMMITTED**

Killing huge numbers of people in a short space of time is a complex task requiring sophisticated mobilization. The industrial technology and logistics of the Holocaust against European Jewry perpetrated by the Nazi regime has recently received scholarly attention. The speed of mass killing in Rwanda in the last two months has equalled the rate at which the Nazis exterminated the Jews, gypsies, homosexuals and others, and it has been done in a country lacking in modern infrastructure and the technology of mass death.

Genocide requires weaponry, organized killers and a command structure. This section documents the means used to mobilize of the killers. It shows how the genocide was planned in advance by politicians and soldiers, who had opportunities in the years 1990-93 to develop their methods. During that period, the instruments of genocide were perfected.

### **PRELUDE: THE 1990-93 KILLINGS**

The architects of genocide were fortunate in that since 1990 they had several opportunities to practice their methods. With hindsight, it is possible to see how the methods developed from detention of suspected opponents and crude and relatively haphazard incitement of the civilian population in October 1990, through to the mobilization of the interahamwe militia, the use of radio and extremist propaganda to mobilize people, the formation of death squads, and the centralization of authority for killing. All the institutions of party, state and security were gradually prepared for a role.

The means of extreme political violence used are well documented in the 1993 report of the International Commission of Inquiry and will be only briefly summarized here.

The first method was the standard technique of mass arbitrary arrest. Shortly after the outbreak of the war, using the pretext of a faked attack on Kigali, the government rounded up and arrested between 8,000 and 10,000 suspected political opponents. Following an international outcry, the government was forced to release the detainees.

The hardliners within the government and army learned an unfortunate lesson from this episode: political prisoners are an international liability. The Rwandese government instead resorted to killing its opponents.

There is little doubt that death squads were at work in Rwanda during the transitional period, targetting opposition politicians. The killings were usually timed to prevent progress towards agreements between the government and the opposition. The International Commission of Inquiry detailed the existence of the "Zero Network", naming some of its members, including Colonel Elie Sagatwa, Protais Zigiranyirazo, and Captain Pascal Simbikangwa. A string of leading opposition figures were either killed or narrowly escaped during this period. Many of the killings happened just as the transitional process was regaining momentum after having been stalled by hardliners. The killing of Felicien Gatabazi,



the Secretary-General of the PSD on 21 February. 1994 was an example of this. It happened the day before President Habyarimana was--with great reluctance--scheduled to install a new government. The killing of Gatabazi, the leader of the sole opposition parties to remain united despite the President's strenuous efforts to divide it, led to a spate of militia

violence in which at least 37 people, mainly Tutsi, were killed. Gatabazi was himself a Hutu. The killings had the effect--desirable for the extremists--of postponing the inauguration of the new government. They also gave the hardliners a pretext for distributing more arms to the population.

The major cause of civilian deaths during the period 1990-93 was the rural massacre of Tutsi by civilians incited by the government, or by the militia. Perhaps 2,000 people were killed in a series of well-documented massacres.

Shortly after the outbreak of war, at least 348 people, entirely Tutsi, were massacred in the commune of Kibilira, between Kigali and Gisenyi. The massacre was instigated by a meeting of communal councilors, who mobilized influential local people and, encouraged local Hutu to attack the local Tutsi. Bands of killers moved systematically over the hills, burning the houses of Tutsi and killing the inhabitants.

In February 1992, between 500 and 1,000 members of the Bagogwe, a Tutsi subgroup who live in the mountains of north-western Rwanda, were massacred by Hutu extremists and soldiers. The massacres were planned by members of the central government in Kigali, who directed local administrators to incite the local population to attack the Bagogwe. When the killings failed to spread to the entire area planned, the army staged a faked RPF attack on a military camp, and the following day, soldiers searched the surrounding countryside looking for "accomplices" of the RPF, encouraging local people to do the same.

A third massacre, carried out at Bugesera in March 1992, displayed a new sophistication in the organization of massacre. The killers used two main innovations: the population was incited using Radio Rwanda, and the interahamwe militia were used on a large scale for the first time.

It is also evident that, during the four months preceding the Bugesera massacre, extremist politicians carefully prepared the ground, using public meetings and distributing inflammatory material. The signal was given by broadcast on Radio Rwanda on 3 March, after which bands of militiamen and uniformed soldiers searched the area for Tutsi. The army disarmed the Tutsi, while the militiamen killed them.

## **THE MILITIAS: THE INTERAHAMWE**

The interahamwe militia--the armed wing-of the MRND and CDR parties--has carried out the largest number of killings in Rwanda. It is an organization dedicated to genocide. Its formation and structure reflects the main challenge facing the architects of the genocide of the Tutsi: how to identify and kill every Tutsi in every corner of the country in a short space of

time. The solution to this task was found by -mobilizing militiamen who knew personally every single Tutsi family in every corner of the country.

The first evidence for the systematic formation of militias dates from September 1991. A memorandum from Colonel Deogratias Nsabimana the Ministry of Defence refers to the need to organize the population for "self defence" and refers to the creation of a system known as *nyumba kumi* (Swahili for "ten houses") whereby one man in every ten households would be mobilized and armed as a militiaman. Initially confined to the northern areas of Rwanda close to the front line with the RPF, these militiamen were to be trained by army units. At least 500 kalashnikov assault rifles were distributed.

The mobilization of party militias was at -first a separate phenomenon. The MRND already had "youth wings", that terrorized and sometimes killed people, forcing them to go to MRND demonstrations and meetings. The name *interahamwe* was given to them, referring to the communal work parties organized in the 1970s and '80s for community development projects. From the positive connotations of "those who work together," the word came to have the negative ones of "those who attack together." The choice of name is clearly intended to imply that participation in the militia is a civic duty. While many of the activists were young thugs who intimidated people into attending MRND rallies and contributing party dues, the fact that it was meant as a youth-wing did not limit members to people in their twenties. Many members are in their forties, if not even older, and many of them are reservists in the army. Their leaders and trainers include men dismissed from the army.

The *interahamwe* militias first became evident in early 1992. The distinction between the MRND and the CDR militias became blurred. As the self-defence forces organized by the army were extended away from the northern war zone, the distinction between them and the *interahamwe* also became blurred.

Several training camps for *interahamwe* were set up in 1992 and 1993. The army-including the Presidential Guard--were responsible for training, and light weapons including rifles and grenades were distributed to the militiamen.

Habyarimana publicly supported the *interahamwe* on numerous occasions, calling them a "force de frappe" for his party, and comparing them to the Boy Scouts. One prime minister was forced out of office for his insistence on enforcing the law on militias and adherence to the transitional agreements.

The *interahamwe*'s combination of centralized incitement and lack of discipline has been deadly. They have killed and pillaged for bloodlust and personal gain, encouraged by civil servants, politicians and military officers following central directives. Coming from every neighbourhood, they know the residence of every Tutsi, and have gone from house to house, seeking out and killing Tutsi.

According to most accounts, the *interahamwe* were drunk, particularly by the afternoon, while manning the scores of checkpoints they created, often holding a beer in one hand and brandishing a machete or a Kalashnikov in the other. When the killings first started,

they killed mainly with so-called traditional weapons--especially machetes, spears, bows and arrows and a wooden club which has a big round head with nails sticking out of it.

The interahamwe who have recently been captured by the RPF are now claiming that they were all coerced into participating in the massacres. Certainly there was coercion, and also a great deal of propaganda to create an atmosphere of fear and excitement--but also a great deal of willing and even enthusiastic participation in the slaughter. Captured militiamen also try to place the blame on the leaders, saying: "we walked, but the big guys--the bourgmestres, commune councillors, police--they were in their vehicles".

This is an ironic mirror image of the leaders' claims that the violence was spontaneous and unorganized ethnic killing. At a press conference in Nairobi on 27 April 1994, Manhieu Ngirumpatse, chairman of the MRND denied responsibility, saying that "People killed on their own, without any authority."

## **THE PRESIDENTIAL GUARD**

The Presidential Guard (GP) is an elite unit of the armed forces, formed during the rapid expansion of the army after the outbreak of war. The GP is drawn almost exclusively from the late President's home region, selected for loyalty. The creation of the GP reflects Habyarimana's adoption of a strategy perfected by President Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire, namely to create parallel security forces, answerable solely to the President, to prevent a coup d'etat.

The Habyarimana government officially put the size of the GP at 700 men, but it is widely believed to number at least 1,500. The GP was trained by the French army and supplied with French weaponry. According to the Arusha Accords, the GP was to be replaced by a "Republican Guard" drawn from a wider regional base. Having enjoyed enormous privileges under Habyarimana, the GP stood to lose a great deal if the Accords implemented. As in so many respects, it seems likely that Habyarimana was destroyed by the monster that he himself had created.

The GP killed most, if not all, of the prominent opposition politicians who died in the first days after 6 April.

## **THE RWANDESE ARMED FORCES**

The Rwandese Armed Forces (FAR) have played a smaller role in the genocide than the other forces mentioned, though they have been involved in some areas. For the most part, however, the FAR has been occupied in combat with the RPF. Abuses of human rights have occurred in the context of this conflict, including the indiscriminate shelling of areas containing civilians, but these are not the subject of this investigation.

A number of officers (all of course Hutu) are reported to be against the policy of massacres. There is evidence that some officers warned people they knew were targeted to flee their homes by asking intermediaries they trusted to relay the message. Other officers

helped to evacuate these people, sometimes for payment, and sometimes without asking for money.

It is probable that many of the extremist army officers were removed from the army, either to join the Presidential Guard, or to participate in training and organizing the interahamwe.

It is also probable that the role envisaged for the FAR when the genocide was planned was largely confined to combat with the RPF, rather than directly killing Tutsi civilians.

## **THE GENDARMERIE**

According to everyone in Rwanda that African Rights spoke with, as well as those who left the country after the killings began, the gendarmerie particularly the communal policemen who are controlled by the bourgmestre, were among the very worst killers. The national gendarmerie is controlled by Major-General Ndindilivamana, based in Kigali, but in many cases the gendarmes appear to have been mobilized by local government officials. It was generally considered that the interahamwe would not have had the force they did if it was not for the weapons and physical support they obtained from the communal policemen.

In some cases, gendarmes tried to stop the violence, sometimes sparking armed confrontations between different groups of gendarmes.

Under the terms of the Arusha accords, a new unified police force was to be established. In January 1994, UNAMIR began preparations for assisting in the establishment and training of this new force. The UNAMIR civilian police contingent included a Special Investigation Team that dealt with possible political crimes and human rights abuses, and civilian police monitors. If the UNAMIR mandate had been fully carried out, the gendarmerie would have lost much of its arbitrary power and impunity.

The interahamwe have worked closely with the army and the gendarmerie. A British journalist who was in Kigali shortly after the killings began commented on the close relationship between the gendarmerie and the militias.

While the militias have done most of the killing hand to hand, they act as the vanguard for the gendarmerie. The two work in cahoots with each other. This became clear to me when we went in the car with members of the gendarmerie and we got to the checkpoints. It was then that I understood their very close relationship. Since we were with the gendarmerie, we left alone. There was no hassle. We went to several gendarmerie posts, like police posts, and we saw the gendarmerie loading boxes of ammunition into cars which were taken into popular areas.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Interview in Nairobi, 27 April 1994.

## **LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS**

The intimate involvement of local government officials, that is some préfets, sous-préfets, bourgmestres and councillors, has proved central to the ability of the extremists to carry out their genocidal agenda. The refusal of some local government officials to participate in the 1990-92 massacres was an important reason why those killings remained relatively limited.

Some of the strongest evidence for the deliberate and pre-planned nature of the killings comes from the systematic replacement of local government officials who did not support the extremist agenda. In places such as Gahini, bourgmestres and councillors were replaced on 7 April by hardliners, who then immediately instigated mass killing. The speed at which the interahamwe were able to start massacres was closely related to the cooperation of government officers. Thus, for the first two weeks after the crisis erupted, the prefecture of Butare remained relatively calm, on account of the moderate Prefect, Jean-Baptiste Habyarimana. After he was replaced on 21 April with a Hutu extremist, Sylvain Ndikumana, Butare became the scene of widespread killing.

## **RADIO BROADCASTS**

Radio Television Libre Mille Collines (RTLM) has played a key role in the genocide. RTLM is a private radio station. It started broadcasting in September 1993 as the mouthpiece of Hutu extremism. The reason for a private radio was that the extremists were unable to use Radio Rwanda as they wished, after the role played by Radio Rwanda in inciting killings in March 1992 was exposed and condemned by opposition members of the government.

The President is Felicien Kabuga, a wealthy businessman with close connections to the MRND and extremist politicians. Technical assistance was provided by George Ruggiu, an Italian by birth but now a Belgian citizen. The international connections of RTLM warrant investigation--links with right-wing European Christian organizations have been reported. The Director is the extremist ideologue Ferdinand Nahimana and the editor in chief is Gaspar Gahigi.

Before April, RTLM played a key role in creating tension between the two communities. On several occasions it has invented stories to destabilize the political situation. For instance in the period after the killing of President Ndadaye of Burundi in October 1993, it broadcast a number of inaccurate and inflammatory stories with the clear intention of inciting inter-ethnic violence in both Rwanda and Burundi. Since 6 April, RTLM has not minced its words, broadcasting that "the Tutsis need to be killed", calling on the population to "hunt out the Tutsi" and telling them that "the RPF is coming to kill people; so defend yourselves."

On 17 April, the RPF targetted the RTLM headquarters with rocket fire and destroyed the building. However, it has continued to broadcast, reportedly from an armoured vehicle supplied, manned and protected by the Presidential Guard.

## ARMS SUPPLIES

The majority of the killing has been carried out with low-technology weaponry--machetes, knives, clubs, spears, and at most automatic rifles and grenades. Most of these weapons are readily available in Rwanda or can be manufactured locally. However this should not obscure the importance of arms transfers to the Rwandese government in recent years.

Since the outbreak of war, and particularly during 1992-3, the Rwandese army rapidly increased the sophistication of its weaponry. This gave the army and the extremist politicians the confidence that they could seek a military solution to the problem of opposition. They knew that if there were widespread killings of Tutsi civilians, it was likely that the RPF would try to intervene militarily to stop them. Hence the importance of a well-equipped army, to hold off the RPF while the killing proceeded. This has, in the event, been the major role played by the regular army: it has engaged the RPF and slowed its advance, enabling the militias to carry out their genocide away from the battle lines. The only miscalculation of the generals and extremists was that they failed to defeat or contain the RPF, succeeding only in slowing its advance.

The major arms supplies to the Rwandese government have been well documented.<sup>4</sup> The major suppliers are France, Egypt and South Africa. More recently, there are also reports of weapons arriving from Eastern Europe, transiting through Zaire. Belgium is prohibited by law from providing lethal military supplies to a country at war, and hence since 1990, Belgian military assistance has been confined to non-lethal items. Before the war, however, Belgium was a major supplier.

France has played the key role in supporting the Rwandese government. Militarily, it has provided assistance in four main respects. One is the direct supply of arms. French government officials and diplomatic staff have refused to supply any details of arms shipments, but they are believed to have amounted to at least \$6 million worth in 1991-2, including mortars, light artillery, armoured cars and helicopters. Ironically, there is strong evidence that a French-supplied ground-to-air missile brought down the Presidential plane on 6 April--a plane supplied to Habyarimana as a gift by Jean-Christophe Mitterand, son of the French President. The French air crew died in the crash.<sup>5</sup> France has also supplied spare parts and technical assistance to maintain the vehicles of the FAR.

The second is in military training. The Presidential Guard was rapidly expanded and provided with sophisticated equipment after the outbreak of the war--with the assistance of the French. Many of the military officers who trained the interahamwe were themselves trained by the French.

The third element is the provision of troops. Until the arrival of UNAMIR troops at the end of 1993, France was providing ground troops to assist the Rwandese army. The ostensible reason for the presence of the soldiers was to protect French and other foreign

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<sup>4</sup> Human Rights Watch Arms Project, *Arming Rwanda: The Arms Trade and Human Rights Abuses in the Rwandan War*, New York, January 1994.

<sup>5</sup> *Africa Confidential*, 15 April 1994.

nationals in Kigali. However, observers noticed them manning checkpoints on main roads and inspecting the identity cards of travellers, and engaging in combat. During the February 1993 RPF offensive, France had 680 troops in Rwanda, including paratroopers, who were observed assisting the Rwandese army mortaring RPF positions. During the evacuation of foreign nationals in April 1994, there are also reports of French troops assisting the FAR in its combat with the RPF battalion in the capital.

The final element is that French finance is behind the supply of weapons from third parties. The supply of almost \$6 million worth of small arms from Egypt to Rwanda in 1991 was made possible by credit extended by the French bank *Crédit Lyonnais*.

French and Egyptian policies throughout Africa are close, and it is little surprise to find the two countries in such close cooperation in Rwanda. After France, Egypt is Rwanda's most important arms supplier and strategic friend. The shipment of arms mentioned above included 450 Kalashnikov assault rifles with more than three million rounds of ammunition, fifty mortars with 16,000 mortar shells, 2,000 rocket-propelled grenades, 2,000 anti-personnel land mines, and six long-range artillery guns with 3,000 shells.<sup>6</sup>

The third main supplier has been South Africa. This does not reflect any strategic alliance or historical link between the two countries, but rather commercial opportunism on the part of South African arms manufacturers. South Africa has supplied mortars, machine guns, ammunition and 10,000 fragmentation grenades. In the same week as South Africa was celebrating the advent of democracy, South African grenades were being used as an instrument of genocide in Rwanda.

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<sup>6</sup> Human Rights Watch Arms Project, p. 15.

## **V. CONCEALING THE CRIME**

One of the most remarkable and reprehensible aspects to the programme of genocide is the manner in which those responsible succeeded in sowing sufficient confusion in the international community that they prevented an effective international response to their crime. Their success was a mixture of a clever strategy of sowing confusion, relying on international friends and neutralizing potential critics. They were also aided by good fortune and the preference of the international media to attribute any political violence in Africa to age-old tribal enmities.

### **SOWING CONFUSION**

While the crime of genocide was being committed, the Hutu extremists succeeded in presenting Rwanda's crisis as two different problems, namely the war with the RPF, and spontaneous random "tribal" violence.

The official position of the interim government is that the killings were an outbreak of spontaneous violence by the populace, angered by the death of President Habyarimana, which they blamed on the RPF. Meanwhile, the offensive launched by the RPF on 7 April prevented the government from restoring order. This was expressed by Matthieu Ngururupatse, speaking in Nairobi on 27 April:

The fundamental problem is that this is a war. The essential point is that the armed forces had to go to war [against the RPF] and did not have the time to control the population.

The interim government also portrayed itself as victim--it had lost its President and members of government--and therefore in need of international sympathy.

Whether ploy or fortuitous accident, the death of their President enabled the hardliners to steal a march on the international community.

The RPF's violation of the cease-fire further enabled the government to portray itself as victim, and to call on the international community to broker or enforce a cease-fire, ostensibly so as to return to the Arusha accords. Understandably, diplomats who had vested much time and energy in negotiating the accords--which indeed were a model for a peace process--did not want to see them discarded, and directed their efforts to resuscitating them. The fact that the Arusha accords were irrelevant given that one party to them was trying, with some success, to eliminate all the other parties to them, was slow to dawn on foreign diplomats. In many cases, the reality that the Arusha accords are history has still not dawned.

Finally, the international media, with depressing predictability, presented the situation as one of uncontrollable tribal violence. It is unfortunate that conflict in countries with social and political structures as radically different as Rwanda, Liberia, Sudan and Somalia should all be labelled as the scene of "tribal fighting" merely because they lie in the African continent. The ethnic element is certainly present in Rwanda, but--ironically--the first



few days of killing were the least ethnic and the most political as the Presidential Guard hunted down and assassinated Hutu opposition in Kigali. Nonetheless, as the extremists had no doubt correctly anticipated, the carnage was characterized as the spontaneous expression of age-old enmities, with the clear implication that there was nothing that could be done internationally to restrain it.

The fog of confusion has been slow to clear. Clarity has been impeded by the fact that the international assistance effort has concentrated on refugees in Tanzania. Most of these are Hutu, and many of them fled the RPF advance, fearing RPF violence. A considerable number of the refugees are members of the interahamwe, and abandoned spears, machetes and MRND and CDR cards can be seen lying nearby on the Rwandese side of the border. The militiamen have a clear vested interest in circulating lurid rumours of RPF atrocities. While some of the stories of RPF abuses are clear, the concern with perceived neutrality has meant that international organizations such as UNHCR have given more weight and credence to these stories than they warrant. Equalizing the human rights record of the RPF and the Hutu extremist forces is a grave error.

### **RELYING ON FRIENDS: FRANCE AND THE UNITED NATIONS**

The closest allies of the Rwandese government have included France, Egypt and Zaire. In Europe and north America, there is a division of international diplomatic labour, which has consigned Rwanda to the French and Belgian sphere of influence--other western nations usually wait for these countries to take a lead. The USA also usually follows the Egyptian lead in north-east Africa and adjoining areas, unless it has strong reasons to do otherwise.

The France-Egypt axis is also extraordinarily influential at the United Nations, because France is a permanent member of the Security Council, and the French candidate for Secretary General, the former Deputy Foreign Minister of Egypt and architect of Egyptian foreign policy in Africa and the Middle East, is Dr Boutros Boutros-Ghali. Both the Quay d'Orsay and Boutros-Ghali are known for their loyalty to old friends; their policies are often dictated by personal relationships.

The interim government of Rwanda was not failed by its allies. France conspicuously failed to condemn the Rwandese government, and largely adopted the government's view of the problem, specifically by insisting that establishing a cease-fire was the priority. France has given visas to a number of extremist Hutu politicians, including members of Habyarimana's family, and invited two prominent members of the interim government, Jerome Bicomumpaka (foreign minister) and Jean Barayagwiza (CDR ideologue) to talks at the Quai d'Orsay. Among those admitted to France were Protais Zigiranyirazo, named by the International Commission of Inquiry as a member of the "Zero Network" death squad, and Ferdinand Nahimana, extremist ideologue and editor in chief of RTLM.

French strategic and commercial interests in Rwanda are limited (despite the arms sales and military assistance). French policy appears to be concerned more with supporting old friends (who also happen to be friends of President Mobutu in Zaire, who does have strategic and military significance) and maintaining consistency in the eyes of other African allies.

If we fail to fulfil our promises, explains a diplomat, our credibility towards other African states with which we have similar accords (Central African Republic, Comoros, Djibouti, Gabon, Ivory Coast, Senegal and Togo) would be seriously damaged, and we would see those countries turning to other supporters.<sup>7</sup>

French loyalty has been a great encouragement to the Hutu extremists. A number of Western journalists, including French journalists, who were in Kigali during the evacuation of foreign nationals confirmed that on many occasions, the interahamwe clapped when they saw the French troops--and booed when they saw the Belgians.

French influence over the interim government was demonstrated when Bruno Delhaye, head of African affairs at the presidency, personally intervened to request the Chief of Staff of the Rwandese army to stop militiamen killing people who had taken refuge at the Hotel Mille Collines in Kigali. The intervention was effective--raising the prospect that more vigorous French action could have stopped the genocide.

Zaire has played the role of intermediary for France. Hutu extremists have been guests of President Mobutu, and have used Zairean airports to transit to France.

The United Nations has closely followed the French agenda. The Special Representative of the Secretary General of the United Nations, Jacques-Roger Booh-Booh has insisted that the priority is establishing a ceasefire, and refrained from criticism of the interim government. In a remarkable echo of the Rwandese government's own position, the Secretary-General himself, Dr Boutros Boutros-Ghali, reported to the Security Council on 20 April:<sup>8</sup>

Reliable reports strongly indicate that the killings were started by unruly members of the Presidential Guard, then spread quickly throughout the city. Despite the best efforts of UNAMIR, the Rwandese Patriotic Front security battalion quartered at the National Development Council complex broke out and started to engage government troops, including elements of the Presidential Guard. RPF units from the demilitarized zone<sup>9</sup> also moved towards Kigali and joined the fighting. Authority collapsed, the provisional Government disintegrated and some of its members were killed in the violence. An interim government was proclaimed on 8 April 1994, but could not establish authority...

The Secretary General went on to speak of "Hutus killing Tutsis and Tutsis killing Hutus." He has consistently called for a ceasefire, and lobbied for a UN force to have a mandate to enforce such a ceasefire.

One of the most bizarre aspects of the crisis has been that the Rwandese government has been represented on the UN Security Council throughout. No moves have been made to suspend or expel Rwanda. When Bicamumpaka, foreign minister of the interim government,

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<sup>7</sup> Quoted in *Liberation*, 18 May 1994.

<sup>8</sup> Special report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda, 20 April 1994, para. 3.

<sup>9</sup> This presumably should read: "from the RPF-controlled zone north of the demilitarized zone."

visited the UN on 18 May, he was permitted to give a racist, inflammatory and highly inaccurate speech to the Security Council. Only the representative of New Zealand made any public objection to his statements.

The failure of the UN to condemn the genocide, or to propose meaningful action to stop it, has deeply estranged the Rwandese opposition. The RPF sees its military advance as a form of humanitarian intervention--as it controls more territory, it stops the genocide. United Nations proposals to halt the advance by obtaining a ceasefire appear to amount to an attempt to recognize the government and enable the extremists to continue the killing. Hence the deepening suspicion and hostility towards the UN by the RPF is unsurprising.

## **NEUTRALIZING POTENTIAL CRITICS**

Since the outbreak of war in 1990, Belgium has gone a long way towards redeeming its credibility in Rwanda. Having cut off lethal military assistance as soon as hostilities started, the Belgian government maintained communication with both the Rwandese government and the RPF. It has been remarkably neutral during the crisis--for which it has been vehemently accused by the Hutu extremists of supporting the RPF.

Belgium provided the largest number of troops to UNAMIR. However, when ten Belgian soldiers were murdered in captivity by the Presidential Guard on 7 April, it immediately decided to withdraw. The Belgian government also lobbied for the entire UNAMIR mission to be scaled down. This was a tragic blunder. The reasons for this probably lie in a combination of confusion and fear, and also pride--the Belgian army has tried to create a role for itself as the policeman of central Africa, and if it admitted that others were able to operate in a situation where it itself could not, that role would be jeopardized.

The withdrawal of UNAMIR--especially the Belgian contingent--served the extremists well. The depleted UN force was restricted to defending itself and protecting a handful of sites where civilians under threat from the militias had gathered. It meant that UN observers were not present elsewhere in Kigali or in the countryside to deter the killers, or to develop a clearer understanding of the crime that was being committed. The Belgian contingent presented the greatest threat to the hardliners, given that the Belgians had a neutral stance and a deeper understanding of the situation than the other contingents present. It is possible that the ten Belgian soldiers were executed precisely in order to ensure that they withdrew.

The killing of the Belgians also had a traumatic effect on the United States. The U.S. government has been ready to criticise the interim government of Rwanda, but has been unwilling to support any potential UN military initiatives.

International confusion and inaction enabled the killers to proceed largely undisturbed by international censure or the threat of incisive international action. The debate has largely focused on issues that are marginal to the crime of genocide--notably obtaining a ceasefire--and which are probably unachievable anyway. Valuable time has been lost, and with it many, many lives. Meanwhile, the credibility of the international community, and in particular the United Nations, with the Rwandese people in general and the RPF in particular, has dived.

## **VI. IMPLICATIONS AND CONCERNS**

### **FOR RWANDA**

Rwanda is suffering a trauma of extraordinary magnitude. Repeatedly, in the weeks since the programme of genocide was launched on 6 April, observers have felt that the scale of the atrocity has reached the limits of the human imagination--but each time, it has then gone beyond. At the time of writing, the only apparent limits to the killing in Rwanda appear to be the military advance of the RPF, and the arithmetic of how many Tutsi there are left to kill. But the violence may yet take another turn: Hutu extremists may turn on other Hutu, or the killing may spread to neighbouring countries, or the RPF may be unable to prevent further mass killing, or even engage in mass killing itself. It must not be forgotten that there are many Tutsi and moderate Hutu remaining in areas controlled by the interim government, who are highly vulnerable.

The next challenges for Rwanda are numerous and immense--it strains the mind even to begin to list them. However, a provisional accounting can be made.

### **Halting the Killing**

The overwhelming priority is to halt the killing. The international focus on the potential role of the United Nations in stopping the killing obscures the fact that it is the Rwandese themselves who have the capacity to halt the killing to a far greater extent. Those who are doing the killing can be encouraged to stop, those who are trying to protect potential victims can be encouraged to do more, and the RPF--whose advance can be seen as a basic form of humanitarian intervention, albeit with mixed motives--can be encouraged to respect human rights.

Ordinary Rwandese are horrified and appalled by the violence that has overwhelmed their country. The great majority are opposed to it, though able to do little. The political opposition and the RPF are actively opposed to it. To date, the failure of the international community to give a direct and unequivocal condemnation of the killers has been deeply demoralizing to these Rwandese. They have felt betrayed and demeaned. Statements by politicians, diplomats and journalists that have characterised the situation as random ethnic violence or universal savagery, have put ordinary Rwandese, and the Rwandese opposition, in the same category as the killers. This has undermined their self-confidence and their courage, and has rendered them less likely to take initiatives to protect human rights.

International preoccupation with a ceasefire and the protection of strategic installations in Kigali, such as the airport, will be taken by Rwandese as another attempt to distract attention from the main issue, and hence silent complicity with those responsible for the genocide. If there is a similar preoccupation with the safe delivery of humanitarian aid, again to the exclusion of the genocide, it will be taken in the same way. It must be stressed that international silence on the genocide issue is endangering the perceived neutrality of international organizations, in the eyes of the Rwandese opposition and ordinary Rwandese citizens. The dangers of not speaking out are greater than those of speaking out.

In the worst case, if international observers--notably the UN--insists on attributing the killing equally to the RPF and the government, it removes from the RPF an important incentive for refraining from killing indiscriminately. If they are to be blamed for massacres anyway, why refrain from carrying them out?

Another consequence of the failure to condemn the genocide is increasing distrust and even hostility from the opposition towards the international community. The RPF--which is in a position to prevent a constructive international intervention--may decide that it so distrusts the motives of the UN that it will not allow any intervention. This would be tragic.

It must be stressed that the single most important factor in containing and potentially ending the genocide is the military advance of the RPF. Whether or not the RPF has humanitarian motives is irrelevant--what is relevant is the consequences of their advance. Under these circumstances, a ceasefire would be highly undesirable. It would mean implicit recognition that a government that is engaging in genocide is a legitimate political player, and it would enable the militia to continue their genocidal killing.

The Sindikubwabo government is organizing the genocide. It follows that the massacres will stop only when that government is removed, and all the organizations that it has employed for its genocidal policy are dismantled, and the leaders rendered powerless.

In the meantime, there are specific concentrations of vulnerable people who could be protected by international troops. The presence of small numbers of UN troops at the Amahoro, stadium and the Hotel des Mille Collines, both in Kigali, has prevented large massacres at these places. In other towns there are similar groups of terrified people at the mercy of government forces who could be given similar protection.

### **Preventing Famine and Epidemic Disease**

There is a real danger of a humanitarian disaster of epidemics of disease and a disastrous food shortage in the coming months. Over a longer period (a year or more), this could claim tens of thousands of lives.

The overwhelming priority to pre-empt a major famine emergency is to encourage farmers to return to their homes. The crisis has so far been so rapid that the crops are still standing in the fields, and if the farmers return, they will be able to harvest. At the same time, dispersing the concentrations of displaced people and refugees will remove one of the main threats of epidemic disease, which is overcrowding and associated lack of sanitation and clean water.

There are distinct problems in the RPF-held areas and the interim government-held areas. In the RPF areas, security is relatively good, and the RPF is at present taking an open and positive attitude towards international agencies. The main obstacles to the return of displaced people and refugees are (1) lack of confidence in security and (2) the widespread looting that has occurred, leading to acute shortages of essential commodities.

Hundreds of thousands of displaced and refugee Hutu fear the RPF, and are reluctant to return to areas under RPF control without guarantees for security. Such guarantees would not be difficult to provide: the presence of international agencies and human rights monitors would go a long way towards alleviating these anxieties.

Emergency assistance inside the RPF areas is also essential, including food, clean water, medical services, and essential commodities such as soap and salt. People who have had their houses burned will also need shelter. At this stage, it would be a mistake to target assistance too much towards displaced communities; the overriding concern should be to re-establish rural production and ensure that the current growing season is not lost.

Up until now, there has been a regrettable reluctance for international organizations to operate inside the RPF zones. This has come about for two main reasons. One is a fear of being labelled pro-RPF, which might endanger staff members of these agencies who remain in government areas. The second is a lingering concern with neutrality, which agencies fear would be compromised by working in an area not controlled by a recognized government. This is extremely unfortunate. In countries such as Sudan and Angola, this problem has been overcome by special UN programmes, which essentially provide a neutral cover for the operations of non-governmental relief organizations.

In the government areas, the problems are very different. The level of insecurity is so high that any humanitarian operations are extremely hazardous. Some international agencies have appealed for UN military protection to be able to deliver relief supplies, however the experience of Somalia and Bosnia has suggested that the benefits of such protection will be meagre. It is possible that, over a period of some weeks or months, protected enclaves for the civilian population will be established, where civilians can be cared for by international organizations with UN military protection. However, this is an expensive, slow and very uncertain project. In almost all circumstances, "protecting" civilians by concentrating them in particular places is counter-productive--it exposes them to being besieged or held hostage by armed groups, and the very fact of population concentration often unleashes epidemic disease.

It would be particularly tragic if negotiations for safe access for humanitarian supplies and safe zones were undertaken in such a way that they gave legitimacy to the interim government, and extended its life or maintained its areas of control. The numbers of people who can be assisted by such interventions are inevitably small, while the numbers being killed on a daily basis by the organized forces of the government remain horrifyingly large.

Military intervention to guarantee humanitarian access is a real concern, but this agenda should not be allowed to displace the even more urgent and large scale priority of halting genocide.

## **The Next Government**

If halting genocide requires removal of the current government, the nature of the next government must be addressed. The most likely turn of events is that the RPF will put together a transitional government together with the surviving members of the civilian opposition, currently abroad or in RPF-held areas.

It would be easy for both the international community, and such a transitional government, to adopt ready-to-hand commitments such as a timetable for multi-party elections or a return to the Arusha accords. These quick political fixes should be resisted. The trauma of the last months has arisen in part because of the destabilizing effect of the democratic transition and the peace agreement. Democracy and peace are certainly the aims a future government should aspire to, but time should be taken to explore new formulae that may promise greater stability, and time for reconciliation and reconstruction.

A new government will face some fundamental challenges. One will be the status of those who participated in the genocide. African Rights advocates that those who are primarily responsible for gross abuses of human rights should be charged and brought to trial before an independent court that affords them due process of law. This could be either a Rwandese court (probably a special prosecutor operating with international assistance, along the model of the Special Prosecutor in Ethiopia) or an international tribunal for crimes against humanity. Those who are guilty of lesser abuses should be debarred from holding a position in government or the security forces. Any organizations that have been widely implicated in gross abuses--such as the militias, the Presidential Guard and the gendarmerie--should be dismantled (though this does not prevent individuals who are not guilty of abuses joining successor institutions).

A second challenge will be democratization. In a situation of actual or potential communal violence, a multi-party system may become merely a means of mobilizing communities for violence. Thus there is a strong case--as in Uganda in 1986--for severely restricting party political activity, at least for a while. The challenge is to do this without going to the opposite extreme of forming an authoritarian single party state with minimal accountability.

## **Communal Reconciliation**

For 35 years, Rwanda has been locked into a spiral of communal violence. Communal reconciliation is a priority.

An appropriate set of symbols of national reconciliation will need to be constructed, which will help individuals come to terms with their personal trauma and grief, and also assist in the recreation of a sense of Rwandese nationhood. In the midst of life-threatening emergencies, it is easy to neglect the importance of such symbolic action, but this would be a mistake.

Reading many anthropologists and historians of Rwanda, it would appear that the differences between Hutu and Tutsi are largely illusory--a product of colonial imagination and politicians' machinations. Historically this may hold much truth. However, the reality is that Hutu and Tutsi have become ethnic labels of paramount importance. There are actions that can and must be taken to begin to downplay the importance of ethnicity, such as abolition of the ID cards, and the formation of ethnically integrated political and security organizations.

Much depends on the actions of the RPF, especially if it takes a leading role in a future government. Any indication of vengeance by Tutsi soldiers and politicians runs the risk of fuelling yet another round of communal violence, and any hint of a return to Tutsi supremacy will incite Hutu extremists to return to violence.

A particular challenge will be giving a place to Hutu refugees in neighbouring countries. The roots of the RPF invasion lie in an unresolved refugee problem, and there is a danger that if large numbers of those who have fled the country in recent weeks remain in exile for a long period, a comparable set of grievances will accumulate. It would be easy to ignore these political dimensions of the refugee problem, especially as the international community will provide assistance to the refugees, but this would be a mistake.

In rural areas, economic prosperity and the level of competition for resources such as land is central to the level of communal harmony. It would be dangerous for Rwanda's western donors and creditors to insist on maintaining economic austerity plans at this moment. A feeling of economic security is essential to a return to any form of political stability.

### **Reconstructing Civil Society**

Rwandese civil society has been shattered. Many of its civic leaders have been killed--and killed precisely because of their courage in dissenting from an extremist political agenda. It will take a generation or more for Rwandese civil society to recover--if it ever does--simply because of the people who have lost their lives.

The eradication of the dissidents will have a sobering effect on many people who would otherwise have considered becoming human rights activists, independent journalists, lawyers, etc. It will also take many years for confidence to return. Rwandese civil society will need careful nurturing and protection. Constitutional guarantees are only a start. An international presence of human rights monitors in the country will also assist. However, ultimately the confidence to reconstruct a vibrant civil society can only come from within the Rwandese nation itself

The international community can help in various ways. The most immediate, and perhaps the most important way, is expressing solidarity with the victims of the massacres in their hour of greatest need--by condemning those responsible for the genocide. A second component of such assistance will be tangible help in constructing a fair judicial system. This requires not only assistance with framing legislation for a special prosecutor or similar mechanism, and ensuring the independence of the judiciary, but material help with the training of lawyers and judges, and human rights education in schools.



There are other professions that have also severely suffered, including health workers and academics, and it will also be necessary to begin to restore the confidence of such people that their professions are valued and retain integrity. Again, international solidarity will help.

There is a real danger of "killing with kindness." Rwandese society is at its weakest and most vulnerable at present. The reconstruction needs of the country are immense. It is important that international donors that visit the country and make plans for economic, political and civil rehabilitation do not overwhelm the remaining fragments of Rwandese civil society, and impose foreign models of political organization and economic reform. Such models are likely to be inappropriate in themselves, and if seen to be imposed, will deepen the demoralization of the people who should be leading Rwanda towards a better future.

### **FOR EAST AND CENTRAL AFRICA**

There is a real danger of violence spreading to neighbouring countries, especially Burundi and the Kivu region of Zaire. These areas are unstable and have seen large-scale communal violence in recent years.

The violence could spread in any one of a number of ways. For example, a confrontation between the (Tutsi-dominated) Burundi army and the interahamwe on the Rwanda-Burundi border could easily lead to violence in Burundi. Another possibility is that hardliners--of all political and ethnic shades--in Burundi or Zaire could seize the moment to launch their own campaigns of mass killing, seeing an ideal cover in the excuse the claim that uncontrollable ethnic conflict has spilled over from Rwanda.

The simplest measure to try to minimize this danger is for the international community to make it clear that it has an accurate understanding of the situation in Rwanda, and condemns it outright. The October 1993 coup in Burundi was aborted after international condemnation, which in turn helped to stabilize the situation in Rwanda at that moment. Failure to condemn the genocide in Rwanda in comparable terms is proving destabilizing in Burundi.

A second main danger is unrest stemming from the economic burden imposed by refugees. Kivu in Zaire is a major food producing region that supplies Kinshasa with much of its consumption, so the burden of refugees there could have direct economic implications for the capital of Zaire. A large refugee burden in Burundi would upset a delicate political balance in that country, and food shortages in Bujumbura could provide a spark for violence. In Tanzania, the dangers are less acute, but the danger of localized violence should not be neglected.

The genocide in Rwanda has one potential positive aspect in the region. It may force leaders and ordinary people to stare into the abyss, and to realize that their countries are not too distant from that same abyss--in some cases, frighteningly close to it. The deep shock and horror that has resulted from the Rwandese tragedy could help persuade politicians who are following extremist agendas and using divisive and militaristic strategies to rethink.

## **FOR THE UNITED NATIONS**

Since the crisis erupted on 6 April, the United Nations has been a sideshow in Rwanda. The UNAMIR forces had the opportunity to play a positive role--their very presence in key areas of the country could have restrained the killers--but it chose not to.

The decision to withdraw all but a token force was disastrous. The credibility of the organization was severely battered, not just in Rwanda but throughout Africa. The withdrawal was decided on 21 April--the same day that the UN resolved on military intervention in Gorazde, Bosnia. Combined with the way in which the role of the foreign troops was restricted to evacuating foreign nationals, it appeared that the organization was simply racist in its evaluation of human life--the UN would protect white people, but not black. The response of western nations that Rwanda was an "African problem" was rejected as an insult by the Organization of African Unity.

Only eight days later, the UN Security Council voted to send troops to Rwanda. Unfortunately, not only was this too late, but the debate at the LTN has focussed largely on the wrong issues. The UN chiefly concerned itself with (1) how many troops it should send, (2) where those troops should come from (i.e. whether it should be an African force), (3) securing a ceasefire and (4) protecting humanitarian relief. Only belatedly did it turn to the question of protecting civilians from genocide.

At the time of writing, the most likely scenario is that the war will have been fought to its military conclusion, and the genocide reached its limit, before the UN troops return.

The chief task for UN troops should be to protect civilians. There are large numbers of vulnerable civilians whose lives can be saved by the presence of UN troops. Some of these are in identified locations, such as football stadiums, who can be identified and reached relatively easily. Others are hiding in the hills, and cannot be located--they will only be protected when the killers are defeated and disarmed.

The chief danger of sending UN troops is that they will undertake damaging or irrelevant tasks, and give solace, legitimacy or de facto support to the interim government.

At the time of writing, the UN agenda is not marked by clarity. A debate is still continuing over whether the option followed should be (1) sending troops to Kigali to secure the airport and other strategic installations to enable international aid agencies to obtain access or (2) setting up "safe zones" along Rwanda's borders where civilians in fear of their lives can seek sanctuary. Some senior UN officials, including the Secretary General, still appear to believe in a third option, that the troops should try to enforce a ceasefire.

As the military situation unfolds, option (1) is increasingly irrelevant. If the RPF controls Kigali, UN troops will not be needed to secure key points in the city. If fighting continues in Kigali, the troops will find themselves fully occupied protecting themselves, and the chief international issue of concern will be the safety of these troops, and pressuring the

Rwandese combatants who are endangering them. This would be absurd and somewhat pathetic.

Option (2) has the virtues of being more modest and thus potentially realizable. But it will not reach most of the people at risk. The militia will do their utmost to prevent Tutsi from reaching the safe zones--and may use the zones as places of refuge themselves.

If option (3)--using Chapter VII of the UN Charter to send troops to enforce a cease-fire--is followed, the results would be disastrous. The RPF will not accept a ceasefire while Tutsi are being killed in government areas, and while the perpetrators of the genocide remain at large. It would amount to military intervention on behalf of the Sindikubwabo government, which would be, literally, criminal.

The preferred option should be to send troops to protect civilians in identified locations, where they are under threat of massacre.

The UN has of course been hamstrung by its own rules. The sight of the Rwandese foreign minister addressing the UN Security Council and blaming the Tutsis for the genocide was frankly obscene. Rwandese will have great difficulty in accepting the UN's explanation for this, presumably based upon the difficulties of changing established procedures. The UN will take a long time to rebuild its credibility among Rwandese.

The debacle of Rwanda raises profound questions about UN rules and procedures. These cannot be answered in this report. It is essential that the UN institute an independent and public inquiry into why it blundered so badly.

In the meantime, some lessons can be drawn in a preliminary manner. These include:

- (1) The danger of giving one or two western countries, with vested interests, the diplomatic "lead" in dealing with a small poor nation;
- (2) The damage to the credibility of the UN by the continued recognition given to a genocidal government;
- (3) The reluctance to provide assistance to areas controlled by a rebel organization, even when security can be guaranteed;
- (4) The lack of accurate intelligence about the nature and dimensions of the crisis.

#### **FOR THE WORLD COMMUNITY**

Rwanda is a small and poor country with no strategic significance outside central Africa. However, the events of April-May 1994 present a profound challenge to the rest of the world, which will be ignored at our peril.

The rulers of Rwanda attempted the most extreme form of political violence imaginable. They did so without concerted international condemnation or effective

international sanctions against them, at least for a critical period of time. Were it not for the military successes of the RPF, they might have remained in power.

This is an appalling advertisement for the success of genocide as a political strategy. The shock felt by rulers around the world at the savagery of Rwanda is tempered--in some cases--by admiration for the sheer audacity of what the Hutu extremists attempted to do. Dictators will be watching carefully to see how the world responds. If they perceive that the extremists succeeded, or would have succeeded except for the efforts of the RPF, they will draw the lesson that the same thing can be attempted elsewhere.

It follows that it is imperative to condemn the perpetrators of the genocide while they still hold power, rather than waiting for them to be defeated before expressing condemnation. The latter will be seen as a strategy of cynically watching to see what happens, and then backing the winner.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. It is imperative that the genocide in Rwanda be condemned in the strongest terms possible by foreign governments and civil organizations, and the United Nations.

If the interim government still exists when this report is released, all its ambassadors should be expelled from their embassies around the world. Rwanda should be expelled from the Security Council of the United Nations. No representatives of the government should be allowed to visit abroad on official or personal business: they should be made international pariahs.

The value of expressions of solidarity with the victims of the violence, and the ordinary people of Rwanda who are appalled at the killing, can hardly be overstated. The importance of condemning the unacceptability of genocide as a political strategy cannot be overstated.

2. United Nations troops should have a mandate to protect civilians from government forces.

It is too late for the United Nations to have a major positive impact in terms of saving lives in Rwanda. The UNAMIR troops can, however, protect civilians in certain specified locations. They have already been doing this in the Amahoro Stadium and the Hotel-des Mille Collines, and could potentially do so for similar concentrations of civilians in the southern and western towns.

3. International organizations should station human rights monitors throughout Rwanda.

These monitors will be a tangible expression of international commitment to Rwanda. They will compile evidence about past and ongoing human rights abuses, and should help to prevent further abuses. In RPF held areas, they will ensure that the RPF does not slide away its commitments to human rights. Their presence will help to generate confidence among refugees and displaced people that they can return home. It is unlikely that they will be able to operate widely in areas held by the current Sindikubwabo government, but the restrictions on their activities will in itself represent powerful evidence about the level of abuses and the responsibility for them.

Given that the United Nations will be very slow to recruit and send human rights monitors, church organizations such as the World Council of Churches should consider taking the lead on this.

4. An investigation should be mounted into the crime of genocide with the intention of bringing those responsible to trial before a court of law.

The preferred option is for a Rwandese special prosecutor to compile the evidence and to bring the alleged criminals before a Rwandese court. International assistance to the special prosecutor would facilitate the task and help to guarantee the safety of the prosecutor and his or her staff, and the fairness of the trial. Should this prove impractical, an international court mandated to deal with crimes against humanity could be set up.

Those primarily responsible for gross abuses of human rights should be charged and tried. Others with lesser responsibility may be given an amnesty, but should be prohibited from serving in any future security service, or any position of governmental responsibility. They should be denied political asylum abroad.

The UN Human Rights Commission should convene a special session to consider the genocide in Rwanda.

5. Organizations responsible for the genocide should be dismantled, and a new set of security institutions created.

The Presidential Guard, interahamwe and gendarmerie must be dismantled and their members screened. A unified national army should be created, consisting of those who are not implicated in gross abuses of human rights. A new police force should likewise be created.

6. Refugees should be encouraged to return home as quickly as is feasible.

The return of refugees and displaced people is the single most important measure to pre-empt famine and epidemic disease. The returnees will of course require assistance. The return will also prevent the problems of long-term exiles, and reduce the destabilizing effects throughout the region.

7. Rwanda needs emergency assistance to prevent famine and epidemics.

All parts of the country require emergency humanitarian aid. This should be targeted to rural areas to encourage people to return. Considerations of sovereignty should not impede humanitarian programmes in areas not controlled by the government. However, the urgency of humanitarian needs should not imply negotiating with those responsible for the genocide, in such a way that they are given legitimacy or any strategic advantage.

The UN should set up a special assistance programme to provide a cover for relief agencies to operate in all parts of the country without threat to their neutral status. This can be done immediately--the programme need only be an office to register international organizations and convene coordination meetings.

8. Rwanda will need long-term assistance for economic, political and civil reconstruction.

The requirements for rehabilitating Rwanda are immense, including establishing the institutions of a functioning state, rebuilding civil society, reconstructing the economy, and reconciling the population. International assistance will be essential.

However, it is important that Rwandese themselves are given the opportunity to discuss their priorities among themselves, and external priorities and strategies should not be imposed on them.

9. The United Nations needs to subject itself to scrutiny.

The United Nations missed its chance to contribute constructively to the solution of the Rwandese crisis.

The United Nations needs to learn from its debacle in Rwanda. It can do this only by launching an independent, public commission of inquiry into its actions and inactions over Rwanda. All documents must be made available and all employees required to testify. The commission should have wide-ranging powers to recommend institutional reform at the UN, and especially to insist on full accountability.