

June 2: Failure to Protect

Session 3 – “Inside the UN Security Council, April – July 1994”

TOM BLANTON: Good morning everyone. Today’s focus is “inside the UN Security Council” April – July 1994. Materials from the Security Council informal sessions are in Volume 2 of the briefing book, from five different viewpoints. It’s a luxury for historians and analysts to be able to look at the same discussions from five different points of view, which are mostly congruent but have interesting divergences as well. Our challenge in this morning’s session is to connect those discussions [in New York] with the actual experiences of people on the ground who saw the genocide begin, who saw (in the field hospitals that they deployed) what was actually happening, who were reporting back in various ways as early as April 11, 1994, on the front pages of American newspapers by April 21, and using the word genocide by April 28 in reports from the Red Cross, *The Washington Post*, Médecins Sans Frontières and others. Our challenge is to merge those two perspectives: what is happening on the ground and what is happening in New York.

I am going to start us with two provocations: one from Michael Barnett, who was in New York, in the US Mission to the UN, who has written a great book about those deliberations and has some focus questions. And then David Scheffer who was first in Washington and New York, bridging the two parts of US policy in exactly this period. They are going to pose some core questions for this session. Then I will call on Ambassador Keating for the context of the UN discussions. Michael Barnett.

MICHAEL BARNETT: I have four general questions. The first one revolves around the notable absence of the UN Secretariat in April [1994] and the impact of that absence on the UN Security Council’s decision making. Two things are clear from the cable traffic: one is that the Secretariat in general, and especially Boutros Boutros-Ghali, is pretty much absent through much of the discussion. Boutros does not figure very prominently. What is also striking from the cable traffic is

that the Security Council keeps imploring the Secretariat's office to provide options. There is a huge gap here that needs to be explained. Why was the Secretariat unable to provide options in a timely manner? What was going on? There are many different possibilities. One is that the Secretariat was simply overwhelmed, that they were not getting good options from the field. The Secretariat's unwillingness to put options on the table may also have been designed to discourage any kind of intervention. I would like to hear from the Secretariat about that. I am also interested in the response from Ambassador Gambari who put forward a proposal on behalf of the non-aligned caucus on April 14.¹ The Secretary-General's office had the opportunity to support the Gambari proposal but was quite silent on it. I am curious as to what impact that had on the proposal.

The second issue has to do with the recommendations coming from UNAMIR, and particularly from General Dallaire. The textual record, drawn from the cables, Dallaire's book, and his interviews and other primary sources, indicates that Dallaire is sending fairly clear recommendations to the UN headquarters asking for reinforcements with the hope it would have a deterrent effect and calm the situation.² But there is no record of the Secretariat passing Dallaire's recommendations on to the UN Security Council, at least not with the degree of clarity that Dallaire was offering to Headquarters. Indeed Gharekhan keeps presenting the Force Commander as unable to offer options because of the chaotic nature of the situation on the ground. What explains the failure of the Secretariat to pass on Dallaire's concrete recommendations to the Security Council?

My third question has to do with the difficulty of the UN Security Council in seeing the genocide for what it was. In terms of the number of mentions in diplomatic cables, my back of the envelope count suggests that the Security Council was primarily concerned with the following. One, seeking a ceasefire. That was something that was continually going on. Second, try to re-start the Arusha peace process. Third, maybe have an arms embargo. Fourth, eventually think about a

¹ David Hannay, "[My Two IPTs: Rwanda](#)," UK Mission to the UN Telo 1342, April 14, 1994.

² Roméo Dallaire, "[Proposed Future Mandate and Force Structure of UNAMIR](#)," UNAMIR Kigali Outgoing Code Cable MIR-907, May 5, 1994.

UNAMIR II, even though it was never clearly stated what a UNAMIR II would actually do. Five, provide some kind of humanitarian relief. Yet this was a genocide. At the time it was fairly clear that none of the options would stop a genocide. Why was the Security Council so unimaginative with regards to what could be done? In retrospect, I want to pose the other option for stopping the genocide, which was to throw support behind the RPF. That was a plausible scenario. Why was that not given any kind of consideration? Let me stop there with those three broad sets of questions.

TOM BLANTON: Thank you Michael. David Scheffer.

DAVID SCHEFFER: I will follow up with several additional very short questions, one of which overlaps a little bit with Michael's. I am also going to indicate particular individuals who might want to focus on each question. I want to explore the realities of what transpired over a critical three day period: April 13, 14 and 15, 1994. In the cable traffic of those days, the Secretary-General's letter to the President of the Security Council [Ambassador Keating] dated April 13, plays a prominent role in how members of the Security Council assessed the situation in Rwanda and the fate of UNAMIR.³ On the one hand, the letter triggers a sharp and negative reaction within the Council. On the other hand, it seems to serve as a break on proposals to sustain or expand UNAMIR's presence in those critical days. I know that within the US government and particularly in Washington, the Secretary-General's letter was extremely influential in shaping the US government instructions to USUN on April 15 to seek full withdrawal of UNAMIR. Ambassador Kovanda, on April 13 you reported members' "negative reaction to the letter."⁴ Ambassador Keating, how do you assess the impact of the Secretary-General's letter on Council deliberations? Mr. Riza, [Senior Political Advisor to Boutros-Ghali, Alvaro] de Soto claims on April 14 that the Secretary-General had not intended a full

³ For text of Boutros-Ghali letter, see Colin Keating, "[Security Council: Rwanda.](#)" New Zealand Mission to the UN No. 2430, April 13 1994.

⁴ Karel Kovanda, [Czech Republic Mission to the UN cable 2498](#), April 13, 1994.

withdrawal, but rather to adapt UNAMIR to new conditions, with either a 2,000 or 200-man deployment.⁵ You do so yourself on April 15. Yet governments, particularly the United States Government, read it differently.

Ambassador Hannay, you report on April 14 that Ambassador Albright did not require full withdrawal on that day but rather said it would be difficult to keep UNAMIR in place and a middle option needed to be found.⁶ Yet we know from the cables that a couple of days earlier, US government thinking was being formulated to withdraw UNAMIR, in light of Belgian moves to withdraw.⁷ But there had been no decision yet. How surprising was it to all of you on April 15 when US Deputy Permanent Representative Ned Walker read out the instructions from Washington to withdraw UNAMIR?⁸ Then within hours on the same day [April 15], the United States came back essentially withdrawing that position and changing it, tilting towards the British, to find a minimal presence for UNAMIR in Rwanda as opposed to a complete withdrawal? My question is, did everyone recognize that the US was shifting within hours on April 15? Or was the impression that the US was seeking a full withdrawal persistent for days thereafter?

My second question: On April 21 there is no Secretary-General report presented to the Council, but the Council acts nonetheless. A compromise is reached to retain 270 troops in UNAMIR.⁹ Ambassadors Hannay, Keating and Kovanda: can you describe how desperate the situation was on that day to reach a decision with or without the Secretary-General's report on options delivered to the Council?

My third question (which overlaps Michael's): When did the issue of protecting civilians first gain prominence in Council discussions? We know that Ambassador Kovanda submitted his

⁵ David Hannay, "[Your Telno 548: Rwanda](#)," UK Mission to the UN Telno 1364, April 15, 1994.

⁶ David Hannay, "[Final Part of Two](#)," UK Mission to the UN Telno 1340, April 14, 1994.

⁷ Madeleine Albright, "[Future UNAMIR and French Roles in Rwanda](#)," US Mission to the UN cable 01503, April 12, 1994.

⁸ David Hannay, "[My Telno 1364 and Your Telno 557: Rwanda](#)," UK Mission to the UN Telno 1374, April 16, 1994.

⁹ [UN Security Council Resolution 912 \(1994\)](#), April 21, 1994.

draft resolution on April 28 focused on genocide.¹⁰ That generated a tremendous amount of very interesting discussion within the Council on April 28 where positions of governments on using the word “genocide” were all set out in the cable traffic that is in our conference documents.

Governments took different positions on it. Interestingly, the United States Government did not (at least in the cable traffic) oppose use of the word “genocide” at that point. I would like to ask the Ambassadors their reaction to the fate of Ambassador Kovanda’s proposal, which ultimately morphed into an April 30 Presidential Statement not using the word “genocide,” but using code words.¹¹

I have just two short further questions: How significant was the RPF position on the presence of foreign troops in Rwanda? We have three citations in our documents in early May where the RPF is saying, “Do not bring foreign forces into Rwanda.”¹² Did that influence Council discussions and thinking whatsoever?

Finally, on May 11 the US Government advocates a protection zone, “outside in” it is called, rather than expanding UNAMIR in Kigali, which is the “inside out” option.¹³ The US government sought much greater clarification of Secretariat force planning. A team was sent up to New York based on our PDD-25 exercise to get a lot of questions answered. This is when New Zealand clashed with the US Government.¹⁴ I would be very interested for Ambassadors Keating, Hannay, and Kovanda and others to walk us through the clash with the United States over how to structure an expanded UNAMIR in mid-May. Ambassador Keating, you write that the US essentially gutted the

¹⁰ Kofi Annan, [“Security Council consultations.”](#) United Nations Outgoing Code Cable UNAMIR 1351, April 28, 1994.

¹¹ Madeleine Albright, [“Security Council Adopts Presidential Statement on Rwanda, April 30.”](#) US Mission to the UN cable 01820, April 30, 1994.

¹² Claude Dusaidi and Gerald Gahima, [“Consultation on the Deployment of the Proposed Force in Rwanda.”](#) Rwandan Patriotic Front, May 12, 1994. See also Dusaidi and Gahima, [“Statement by the Political Bureau of the RPF on the Proposed Deployment of a UN Intervention Force in Rwanda.”](#) April 30, 1994.

¹³ Kofi Annan, [“Informal consultations on the ‘non-paper’.”](#) United Nations Outgoing Code Cable UNAMIR 1584, May 11, 1994.

¹⁴ Colin Keating, [“Security Council: Rwanda.”](#) New Zealand Mission to the UN C04428, May 6, 1994.

resolution after it was adopted on April 21.¹⁵ Eventually, the US Government came around to some expanded UNAMIR presence in Rwanda. I would like to know whether you think that signified a shift in the US position when they finally came around on April 21 to support the resolution for some kind of continued UNAMIR presence in Rwanda. Those are my questions.

TOM BLANTON: Thank you very much David. I just filled up a page of key questions. Let's try to get some of them answered. I know, Ambassador Keating, you wanted to perhaps address some of these questions, but also take us back to what you called some "fundamental weaknesses" in the original UN decision about UNAMIR.

COLIN KEATING: Thank you, Tom. I think the questions from Michael and David will occupy us very fully all morning. My request yesterday to go back to October 1993 was to illuminate what happened in April 1994. I do not think you can understand the answers to those questions without appreciating what was actually in the Resolution 872 adopted in October 1993 and the context behind that.¹⁶ There are two points that I want to put on the table. The first relates to what UNAMIR would do, what its mandate was. The language we have in the resolution contains some very vague words about "contributing to a weapons free zone in Kigali." Now those words were the end product of a very brutal negotiation. It started with a very modest provision in the resolution based on typical UN practice, simply to define the substantive content of the mandate by referring back to the recommendations in the Secretary-General's report.¹⁷ At that point in time it was very clear that both the United States and France had been engaged in a prior negotiation about this draft resolution. One of the things that the United States sought to re-open in the Security Council was

¹⁵ Colin Keating, "[Security Council: Rwanda.](#)" New Zealand Mission to the UN No. 2619, May 17, 1994.

¹⁶ [UN Security Council Resolution 872 \(1993\)](#), October 5, 1993.

¹⁷ Boutros Boutros-Ghali, "[Report of the Secretary-General on Rwanda.](#)" S/26488, September 24, 1993.

the clarity of the mandate. The lack of clarity was something that was generally troubling the State Department across all mandates.

The United States proposed that we should have more clarity. I took up this question. I was troubled by a lack of clarity in the Secretary-General's report which suggested that there were security risks within Kigali and that the mission should have responsibilities to ensure security. I said, "Well, what does that actually involve if security threats emerge? Will there be authority for the mission to use force?" I clearly remember David Hannay saying quite quickly, "That's a matter for the rules of engagement, the Security Council should keep out of the rules of engagement." I said, "I don't think we can keep out of...whether or not the peacekeeping force has to use military power to maintain security." The United States came up with some words to reflect greater clarity on this subject. What was fascinating was, the next morning, the United States came back again with new instructions which I was subsequently told originated in the Pentagon, saying that if you provide that kind of clarity, you will shift this operation to a Chapter VII operation. That would have triggered a United States veto. Ultimately we crafted that ambiguous language in the resolution about "contributing to a weapons free zone in Kigali."

It was very important to me in April 1994 that those words were there, since it gave us a basis to argue that General Dallaire had authority to use force to protect the civilians that the mission was protecting. It was a slim reed of protection, but it seemed to me enough to argue that Roméo was legitimately doing what he was doing. What I did not know in April, and I only found out a long time afterwards, was that he had actually proposed draft rules of engagement that would have carried forward exactly that slim reed in a very different way.¹⁸

Now, the second thing that is important about the resolution establishing UNAMIR was the fact that the United States had negotiated, I believe with France, that in return for Washington's

¹⁸ Roméo Dallaire, "[Operational Directive No. 02: Rules of Engagement \(Interim\)](#)," UNAMIR Kigali Rwanda, November 19, 1993.

unwilling support for this whole adventure UNAMIR would be kept on a very short time leash. Instead of the normal twelve-month mandate term, there would be a series of short sunset provisions. The mandate would automatically expire every few months. It had to be constantly rolled over. This was a procedurally significant situation. You will find, for instance in early 1994, the United States constantly reminding the Security Council that UNAMIR was on a short leash, that the mandate was going to expire unless the peace was kept. And it harped back to this unwillingness of the United States to live with a mission that was verging into a Chapter VII, as opposed to a Chapter VI, operation.

We knew as soon as the atrocities started in April 1994 that the United States would be taking a position opposing the use of force by UNAMIR and the United States would also be in a very strong position procedurally if we tried to force the expansion of UNAMIR. In order to close down UNAMIR, they did not need a decision with the required nine votes and no vetoes. The simple expiration of time would itself have resulted in the end of UNAMIR within a few weeks. For us, the challenge was to craft words that would enable the United States to agree with a change in UNAMIR operations. Negotiating against the automatic expiry of UNAMIR put us in a very difficult place. Simply by doing nothing the US could ensure, without any veto, the termination of the mission. We had to persuade them to agree to something. That meant that we were always in a very difficult position. It explains some of the apparent inconsistencies that have come out in the questions of both David and Michael. I thought it was important to have those two concepts on the table. When we started to deal with the issues in April 1994, the short-term nature of the mandate and the very clear signals from the United States about the unacceptability of what we would now call a robust mandate were very much in the back of our mind.¹⁹

¹⁹ Ambassador Keating later expressed his “disappointment” that, because of time constraints, the conference agenda did not permit a full discussion of UN Security Council decision-making in May-June 1994. Keating said that the focus on April 1994 left “key parts of the story” unexamined, and undermined an “understanding of what happened and why, and the legacy that remained.”

TOM BLANTON: Thank you very much. David Hannay. And then I have John Shattuck on the US side.

DAVID HANNAY: If I could first make a couple of comments in response to Colin and then try and answer the questions that have been posed. On Colin's points, I do not recall the remarks he attributed to me about not getting into the business of negotiating rules of engagement in the Security Council. But it is quite fundamental. There is no peacekeeping operation in which that has ever happened, nor could there be. The military will not negotiate rules of engagement in that way. It would have been a complete conversation stopper if we had tried to do so in the Council. This is really reading things backwards so one should be a bit careful. If we had tried to provide rules of engagement or the terms of a mandate, which were effectively Chapter VII terms, the whole of the Secretary-General's proposal in October 1993 would have been torn up.²⁰ They would have had to write a completely new proposal, with a completely different force structure and completely different equipment for the force.

Maybe, with the benefit of hindsight, that is what should have happened, but it is not what it looked like in October 1993. In October, this peacekeeping operation was presented as a classic, old style peacekeeping operation. One in which there had been an agreement, at Arusha, between the two parties. There had been a ceasefire. All that the UN was asked to do was to ensure that the terms of Arusha were implemented. That was what it was about. That is why the force was a very small force, and was configured the way it was. It would have meant a fundamental change and also, I am afraid, a knowledge of the future which none of us ever possess. It was a tragedy that an inadequate mandate was adopted and an inadequate force was dispatched, but it would have required a completely fundamental shift at that point.

²⁰ Boutros Boutros-Ghali, ["Report of the Secretary-General on Rwanda,"](#) S/26488, September 24, 1993.

Secondly, I do think, Colin, you have not quite rightly interpreted the renewals of the UNAMIR mandate for very short periods in the early part of 1994. This was more a US thing, but we [the UK] supported the policy. The goal was to bring pressure to bear on Habyarimana to implement Arusha. That was what the short renewals were designed to do. Habyarimana was holding up the implementation of Arusha. The RPF was also holding up Arusha to some extent, but more Habyarimana. The short renewals of the UNAMIR mandate were designed to say: if you don't implement Arusha, then this peacekeeping force will be withdrawn. And, of course, it had the desired result, which, alas, had some knock-on consequences that were quite terrible. The desired result was that Habyarimana got into an airplane and went to Arusha and agreed to implement the peace agreement. Coming back, he was killed. I do not think one should over-interpret the significance of the short mandates, because pretty well every peacekeeping operation the UN has ever undertaken is on a series of six-month rolling mandates. In theory, you can always terminate them by refusing to agree to the renewal.

COLIN KEATING: But this was six weeks...

DAVID HANNAY: I know. And I have explained, Colin, why it was. It was not in order to bring about the withdrawal of UNAMIR. It was in order to bring about the implementation of Arusha.

TOM BLANTON: Couldn't it be both?

DAVID HANNAY: No...

TOM BLANTON: Why not?

DAVID HANNAY: No, it could not. Because if Arusha was implemented, then the UN and the United States were obliged to go ahead with UNAMIR as agreed in October 1993. The alternative was that, if the Rwandans declined to implement Arusha, the troops would be withdrawn. That was what it was all about.

Now if I could just go through the questions that have been posed. I hope I will not be too long. I do honestly think, Michael Barnett that your first question about what the Secretariat was up to in April does not take full account of the fact that Boutros-Ghali was out of New York for most of the time. He was traveling.²¹

TOM BLANTON: I would quote from a David Hannay cable in which he writes to London, "We haven't heard from the Secretary-General, where ever he is."²²

DAVID HANNAY: Right. Boutros was traveling. Because he had this very centralized system, this meant (Iqbal Riza will be able to confirm this or not) that DPKO was inhibited from coming forward with anything. Boutros was trying, desperately, to recruit African troops for a reinforced peacekeeping operation. He was telling people back in New York, "Leave it to me, I am going to personally talk to heads of government, in Pretoria and elsewhere. I am desperate to get something." That is part of the story. The second part of the story is that he came to a very quick conclusion, in my view unwisely, that you needed a full enforcement Chapter VII operation. This is what he was canvassing. That was the reason that he got no positive responses. In the aftermath of Somalia, none of the African leaders he spoke to were prepared to sign on for something that

²¹ Boutros-Ghali was in Geneva on April 7, when he received the first report on the execution of the interim Prime Minister, Agathe Uwilingiyimana (Kofi Annan, "[Rwanda.](#)" United Nations Outgoing Code Cable 990, April 7, 1994). He met with Belgian Foreign Minister Willy Claes in Bonn on April 12 (Boutros Boutros-Ghali, [Letter to the President of the Security Council](#), April 13, 1994). He traveled to Africa in early May for the installation of Nelson Mandela as President of South Africa (Kofi Annan, "[Rwanda.](#)" United Nations Outgoing Code Cable 1516, May 9, 1994).

²² David Hannay, "[My Telno 1410: Rwanda.](#)" UK Mission to the UN Telno 1434, April 21, 1994.

looked like the mission creep which had overtaken the mission in Somalia. Of course that analogy is not correct but that is what it looked like. Boutros returned after his long travels in Africa with completely empty hands. He had no commitments of troops, either to reinforce UNAMIR or, even less, to proceed with the enforcement option. He canvassed the enforcement option for a couple of weeks, but was given no encouragement by anyone in the Security Council. No one thought that this was a feasible option.

Were the UNAMIR recommendations, General Dallaire's recommendations, passed onto the Security Council? To the best of my knowledge, they were not. I have read his book and have seen some of the cables. I am afraid they did not come through at all clearly. Why did the Security Council sit around agonizing about ceasefires, the implementation of Arusha, an arms embargo, and so on? Well, because they were not able to come up with any other options that looked good. We have already gone over at great length yesterday why people clung on to Arusha. I think it is clear. The answer was, if you did not cling onto Arusha, the only alternative is the one Barnett mentioned: to say let the RPF just take over by military means. The UN does not do that sort of thing.

I became personally increasingly uneasy about calls for a ceasefire. Although they made sense in the context of the implementation of Arusha, if Arusha was not being implemented, they did not make any sense at all. On at least one side of the ceasefire line, a lot of people were being murdered by government, or government-supported, forces. A ceasefire would have merely legitimized that situation. But, as always, you can look through Security Council resolutions littered with calls for ceasefires. I am afraid they went on being recycled long past the point at which they were useful.

The arms embargo had a reasonable rationale. The object was to deny the export of arms to either of the two parties who were fighting at the time, the government and the RPF. The imposition of an arms embargo on the government indicated a distinctly sharper attitude in the Council towards the actions of the Government of Rwanda after the death of President Habyarimana. The

Secretary-General's letter of April 13 upset everyone a lot because it pointed towards the enforcement option which he had been canvassing around the place.²³ Nobody thought that was practical...

[Turning to David Scheffer's questions] about the US instructions. I do not think that the first time that withdrawal was mentioned by Madeleine Albright's Deputy, anybody took it all that seriously. It was not put forward very forcefully. The next day, April 15, when Madeleine herself had come back from Washington, she told me she had these instructions. I simply said, "You can't do it. You simply cannot do that." General Dallaire was sitting there in Kigali, he was doing a fantastic job, and he was managing to save a limited number of people's lives. The idea that we should simply withdraw the troops and leave these people to be murdered was not right. So, I said to her, "It won't do." And she said, "Well that's what I think too." And she then went and got on the telephone to [NSC official Richard Clarke in] Washington and got her instructions changed. After April 14 and 15, the American position was much less negative. It had not yet become positive, but it was not negative any longer.

TOM BLANTON: A reduction from 2,400 troops to 270 troops is not a negative?

DAVID HANNAY: That is the next point which I was asked about. This is one of the most misunderstood points about the whole thing. The reduction from 2,400 to the smaller number...

TOM BLANTON: 270.²⁴

²³ Colin Keating, "[Security Council: Rwanda.](#)" New Zealand Mission to the UN No. 2430, April 13, 1994.

²⁴ Kofi Annan, "[UNAMIR.](#)" United Nations Outgoing Code Cable 1194, April 19, 1994

DAVID HANNAY: ...was not decided by the Security Council, it was decided by the Belgian and Bangladeshi governments who withdrew their contingents. That settled it. [General Anyidoho requests to speak]. They were not there anymore. If they were there, they were not operating. As General Dallaire wrote in his book, the Bangladeshis were sitting in their barracks refusing to go out and the Belgians had withdrawn. So, all the Security Council did when it scaled down the numbers was not to withdraw or reduce UNAMIR, but to legitimize the numbers that were currently there and give them a new mandate. It was not a brilliant decision, but it is absolutely wrong to say that the Security Council withdrew these troops. The troops were withdrawn by the governments under whose instruction they came.

Protecting civilians. It was obviously clear that the only thing that the rather small number of troops the General had in Kigali could do was to try and reduce the number of people being murdered, at least in Kigali. The idea of giving them a role in protecting civilians was the response to that. That became quite prominent...It was a much narrower concept than the later Responsibility to Protect concept. It was the right thing to do, but it was much narrower.

[The G-word debate]. The hesitation about using the word "genocide" relates to the fact that everyone's instructions in New York tended to come from Foreign Ministry lawyers telling them that they are not allowed to use words like genocide until there's a great deal of evidence. You do not want to trigger the provisions of the Genocide Convention.²⁵ I do not think it was a very sensible way to proceed but I do not think it made any difference to what was actually done. But clearly there was an inhibition to use the G-word.

I do not think the RPF position on foreign troops had any influence whatsoever, not to my knowledge. The US option of a peacekeeping force outside Rwanda was treated as a joke by most

²⁵ [The Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide](#) was adopted by the UN General Assembly on December 9, 1948, and entered into force January 12, 1951. Article 1 of the Convention states that "the Contracting Parties confirm that genocide, whether committed in time of peace or in time of war, is a crime under international law which they must undertake to prevent and to punish."

people. It was absurd because the Rwandans who were outside Rwanda did not need protecting. The Tanzanian government was doing a very fine job of looking after them in refugee camps. The Burundian government was doing a pretty good job looking after the ones who went to Burundi and so on. There was no need for that. The people who were being killed were being killed in Rwanda. A peacekeeping operation outside Rwanda was going to be completely useless. So, it died the death quite quickly. It was subjected to a lot of criticism in the Security Council and it was not pursued. The Council gradually moved, by the middle of May, to the concept of a strengthened UNAMIR II, having already of course legitimized the reduction of the force and the change in its mandate to give it some capacity to protect...

TOM BLANTON: Thank you very much. Very substantive. Let me just ask General Anyidoho, and then General Dallaire, for your quick reactions because I saw both of you leaping to the microphone. General Anyidoho.

HENRY ANYIDOHO: Thank you very much. The point I raised my tag was [when Hannay talked about] the decision of the Belgians and Bangladeshis to leave, necessitating the force level being dropped to 270. But the Ghanaian battalion was at 800. We were also on the ground and did not show any indication of leaving Rwanda. We were still ready, doing our job, all over the country. So why 270? It was at that point that I raised my name tag.

TOM BLANTON: Terrific. General Dallaire?

ROMÉO DALLAIRE: Already a number of interesting points have been raised. One that has not been raised is why my request for reinforcements does not seem to have kicked off any discussion. That was thrown out so fast that it made my head swing. The second point is that the reduction options

came from New York, not because of the Secretariat but because of the indications we got that nobody wanted to keep forces in Rwanda. I was told to produce a series of options from 2,600 down to 1,200 and so on. Ultimately I stopped at 450 versus 270, which meant keeping a company of troops. The premise behind all these options was that I was holding the fort for reinforcements ultimately to come. That was in all the reports. I was staying because I wanted to be a base upon which to build, and not a base upon which to completely withdraw. The order for withdrawal came directly from the Secretary-General to me. I do not know what was going on in the Security Council.

On the ceasefire point. I kept pushing and pushing and pushing a ceasefire because it was the crux of the negotiations on the ground between the RPF and the Government Forces after the extremists took over from the moderates around April 12. The RPF said they did not want a ceasefire until the Government Forces stopped the slaughtering. And the Government Forces kept saying they could not stop the slaughtering because they were too busy fighting with the RPF. That impasse prevented anything from moving on the ground unless I was able to bring in a force to impose a ceasefire. That continued to prevent us from being more proactive, forcing the RPF to stop their advance and forcing the government to stop the killing. It needed that outside capability because both sides were deadlocked and the slaughter just kept on.

HENRY ANYIDOHO: I just wanted to emphasize that we on the ground felt it went against all logic that in an emergency situation, instead of being reinforced, our force was reduced. We simply could not understand what was happening in New York. It was as if the mission was being abandoned. The normal practice is that if you are in an emergency situation, and you come under pressure, you are reinforced. Similar things were going on in Bosnia at the time, but in our case the decision was to reduce the force all the way down to 270. Our initial proposal of 5,000 had been reduced to 2,000+, now we were to go to 270. We were totally confused. It was against all our military thinking, all the lessons that we were taught. We did not know what to do.

TOM BLANTON: Thank you. Let me call on Ambassador Gambari and then Ambassador Kovanda.

IBRAHIM GAMBARI: Thank you very much. First of all, the impression I see as you listen to David Scheffer and some others is that there were no Africans at all on the Security Council during this period. It was all Madeleine Albright, David Hannay taking the lead and so on. No NAM [Non-Aligned Movement] caucus. This goes back to the treatment of the NAM caucus draft resolution.²⁶ There had never been an interest on the part of the P5 [Permanent Five] or the P3 [United States, UK and France], or even to some extent the UN Secretariat, in taking very seriously the positions of the non-aligned movement or the Africans who, after all, are elected by the African constituencies to defend Africa's position. The Africans are closest to the events. In her book *Madame Secretary*, Madeleine Albright acknowledged [on page 150], "As I listened to the informal debate led by Nigerian Permanent Representative Ibrahim Gambari [on April 15], I became increasingly convinced that we were on the wrong side of the issue. I asked my Deputy to take my seat and went out to one of the phone booths in the hall. Even though the instruction came from the State Department, I thought I might be able to get faster action from the NSC."²⁷

So, this was the reality. David Hannay is right about the short renewal of UNAMIR and the point that we should not read too much into it. Colin Keating is not quite right about that. The mind-set may have been withdrawal, but David is right that the aim of the short mandate was to put pressure on the parties. In the case of UNAMID [African Union/United Nations Hybrid operation in Darfur], which I had the honor to lead [2010-2012], sometimes the extension was for one month, just four weeks, to put pressure. But Hannay is completely wrong to say that the Council did not decide to reduce to 270.

²⁶ David Hannay, "[My Two IPTs: Rwanda.](#)" UK Mission to the UN Telno 1342, April 14, 1994.

²⁷ Warren Christopher, "[Approach to UN Secretariat on UNAMIR.](#)" US Department of State cable 098085, April 14, 1994.

The Africans on the Council, Djibouti and Nigeria, supported of course by Brazil and the Czech Republic, argued forcefully that the idea of cutting and running was totally unacceptable. To abandon the people of Rwanda in their time of need would completely destroy the whole concept of collective security. That was totally unacceptable. I am glad that Madeleine Albright saw reason in this and decided to seek different instructions. But yes, there was a deliberate proposal to reduce and that was the option that was finally followed. General Anyidoho is quite correct. It is baffling that, at a time of crisis, by acts of omission or commission, the Council supported the reduction option.

People, including those sitting around this table, do not always give enough credit to what the Africans themselves do. The Ghanaian battalion was technically in violation of the UNSC decision on April 12 to reduce UNAMIR to a rump force of 270.²⁸ The Ghanaians kept their battalion. General Anyidoho is very modest about the contribution of the Ghanaian battalion but his country's troops, which remained, saved more than 5,000 lives. This goes to General Dallaire's point that if he had just 5,000 well-armed troops; he could have decreased the scale of the genocide. This must never be glossed over. The Council made a disastrous decision which had horrendous consequences. It is simply not true to claim that we just legitimized a situation that was caused by the withdrawal of the Belgian troops.

The Belgians should perhaps never have been a part of UNAMIR, for obvious reasons [because of Belgium's history as a colonial power]. They had the right to decide to withdraw, but they went beyond withdrawing from UNAMIR. They canvassed strongly to bring an end to UNAMIR entirely. I would like the Ambassador of Belgium to explain why it is that his country went beyond withdrawing their troops following the killing of eleven Belgians on April 7, which was legitimate, to canvass very strongly to bring an end to UNAMIR. This point is fundamental: why is Africa's role always downplayed? It is as if we were ghosts. David Scheffer never once mentioned the role of the

²⁸ [UN Security Council Resolution 912 \(1994\)](#), April 21, 1994.

non-aligned movement or the role of Nigeria. It is a mind-set that continues, I am sorry to say, in the Security Council even today. Booh-Booh is no good, the Africans are missing in action, the non-aligned movement is negative. If we reduce discussion in the Security Council to the preferences of the P5 or the P3, a lot of the issues that we are discussing here will continue. I feel very strongly and passionately about this because I have seen it elsewhere, beyond Rwanda. It is wrong and contrary to the spirit of the Charter.

TOM BLANTON: Let me give Johan Swinnen a chance to respond on the Belgian decision.

JOHAN SWINNEN: I do not think it is necessary to go into all the details of the motives for the withdrawal of Belgian troops. We know the story of the parachutists and also the assassination of a dozen Belgian civilians. We always speak about the parachutists in our public opinion, but I am concerned about the exclusive focus on these ten Belgian parachutists. It was not only Belgian soldiers who were murdered but also Belgian civilians.²⁹ While I was still in Kigali, the Mille Collines radio station constantly urged Rwandans to kill Belgians. They were calling for the assassinations of Belgians, not only soldiers but also civilians. For the Belgian government, it was very difficult, if not impossible, to justify keeping Belgian troops in Rwanda any longer. This explains the withdrawal of a company of 440 Belgians.³⁰ This was the backbone of the United Nations force so it was a very difficult, painful decision. But it was discussed in the Belgian Parliament.

We have talked about the reasons why Belgian Foreign Minister Willy Claes called for the full withdrawal of the UNAMIR. This step may have been poorly explained or poorly understood,

²⁹ Alan Blinken, ["Belgian Foreign Minister Reports Six Belgian Civilians Killed in Rwanda,"](#) US Embassy Brussels cable 04061, April 11, 1994.

³⁰ According to the UN Blue Book on Rwanda, on March 22, 1994, a total of 2,539 UN troops were deployed to Rwanda, including 81 military observers. This included 440 troops from Belgium. See UN Department of Public Information, "The United Nations and Rwanda 1993-1996," page 35.

but I want to come back to the letter of Willy Claes we spoke about yesterday.³¹ With a Chapter VI mandate, a weak Chapter VI mandate, we could not continue to monitor the situation in Rwanda. The Belgian Minister would not have called for withdrawal if we could have rapidly revised the mandate to produce a stronger mandate for UNAMIR.

I will take advantage of having the floor to seek a clarification from Ambassador Hannay. I do not understand your calculations very well. You say that the decision to reduce the UNAMIR force to 270 was not a decision of the Security Council but the logical result of the withdrawal of the Belgians. But UNAMIR had 2,600 troops in total. The Belgians did not account for the drop to 270 from 2,600.³² I continue to question the rationale for such an important reduction, even though the Belgian Foreign Ministry had made a demarche. Belgium was not a member of the Security Council, so it was a purely political demarche with no legal consequences for an actual decision. The responsibility for the decision rests with the Security Council. It was not just a matter of Belgium withdrawing their troops. The Security Council made its own decision to reach the figure of 270.

TOM BLANTON: But Johan, let me ask you, when the killers target the Belgians, the goal was to get the Belgians to pull out, to repeat Mogadishu, right? We have some sense (and some ICTR evidence) that this is why the Belgians were targeted. So, why does Belgium fall into the trap? Why was the response not: "You are killing our people, we are going to come take you out?" Were you not in fact doing exactly what the killers wanted you to do?

³¹ Lode Willems, "[Telex Nr 64, from Minafet to Delbelonu](#)," February 25, 1994.

³² According to the UN Blue Book on Rwanda, on March 22, 1994, a total of 2,539 UN troops were deployed to Rwanda, including 81 military observers. The largest troop contributing countries were Bangladesh (942), Ghana (843), Belgium (440), Tunisia (61), and Senegal (35). See UN Department of Public Information, "The United Nations and Rwanda 1993-1996," page 35.

IBRAHIM GAMBARI: It was even worse than that. Imagine a Foreign Minister [Willy Claes] who wrote a letter in February 1994, saying we want to strengthen UNAMIR.³³ Then, in April 1994, we have the killing of the Belgians. Not only do the Belgians withdraw (as I said, I respect the right of a troop contributing country to withdraw their troops from a peacekeeping operation) but they went beyond that and tried to bring down UNAMIR entirely...Yes, there was the intervening event of the deaths of eleven Belgian troops, but I do not understand how they went from the position of calling for a strengthening in UNAMIR's mandate in February 1994 to completely bringing down UNAMIR, when a horrendous situation of genocide was going on. ...Why did they lobby so hard to bring down UNAMIR? That is what I do not understand. I would like some explanation. I am not holding Ambassador Swinnen responsible. But I just wanted to ask why your government lobbied to pull UNAMIR out. But you are right that the fact that the Bangladeshi left, and the Belgians left, does not excuse the decision of the Security Council. When the NAM caucus and Nigeria were presented with this option on the Council, we said in our explanation of vote that none of these options were good.³⁴ We went along with the reduction option. The Council decision to reduce UNAMIR's strength to 270 technically made illegal the continuation of the Ghanaian battalion which, nonetheless, saved lives...

TOM BLANTON: John Shattuck.

JOHN SHATTUCK: I want to bring the US into this, not in a particularly pretty way. We need to look at the overall policy affecting US decision-making at this time. It was the policy we referred to yesterday known as Presidential Decision Directive 25.³⁵ It was a policy that began to evolve very

³³ Lode Willems, ["Telex Nr 64, from Minafet to Delbelonu,"](#) February 25, 1994.

³⁴ David Hannay, ["My Telno 1364 and Your Telno 557: Rwanda,"](#) UK Mission to the UN Telno 1374, April 16, 1994.

³⁵ United States Presidential Decision Directive/NSC-25, ["US Policy on Reforming Multilateral Peace Operations,"](#) May 3, 1994.

rapidly after the Somalia crisis that we have been discussing. It was a policy that came not just from the White House. It was a policy that was actually produced in large measure by pressures from the Congress, particularly after the loss of lives of the Rangers in Mogadishu. There was an outcry in the US Congress. There was also a great deal of press attention to what had happened in Somalia. There was, in addition, a hardening of views in the US Pentagon about peacekeeping operations. This is back in November/December 1993 evolving, as we said yesterday, through the early months of 1994, finally becoming a formal policy in May 1994. It was the de facto policy even before PDD-25 was formalized in May.

PDD-25 required a tremendous amount of scrutiny to be applied to virtually any multilateral peacekeeping operation, organized primarily of course by the UN. It effectively was a straightjacket for US decision-making vis a vis various kinds of peacekeeping operations, which came into play in April 1994 in the most dangerous way. In a sense PDD-25 was the US equivalent of the withdrawal of the Belgian forces after the killing of the peacekeepers, in the sense that it gave a “green light” to the genocide planners. It was very inadvertent. None of this was intentional, of course, but this is the tragedy of these policy developments. It effectively told the genocidaires, “The United States is not going to be engaging.” That was a green light that came almost as soon as the US had withdrawn from Somalia. Now I do not think the genocide planners were necessarily watching US policy in a very detailed way, but rather the atmosphere was such that the US, when it started operating in the UN Security Council, was deeply affected by this policy straightjacket.

It also made it extremely difficult inside the US government, which, like all governments, is a multifaceted entity. There are people with various different positions trying to push forward alternative policy decisions. And there was certainly a group of us, (Pru Bushnell was one of the leaders of this group), inside the State Department and also at the National Security Council, who would have liked to see a more robust response to the efforts by General Dallaire and others to get

a reinforcement for UNAMIR once the catastrophic events began to unfold in April 1994. But that was not to be.

The architect of the PDD-25 policy was Richard Clarke, who was a Senior Director at the National Security Council in the White House. Clarke undoubtedly felt he was doing his job in the sense that he felt that he was saving peacekeeping, at least US involvement with peacekeeping. By providing all of these tight restrictions, it would prevent further tragedies such as happened in Mogadishu. He also felt, I am sure, that he was effectively providing some protection for President Clinton who had many other things on his plate. I mentioned yesterday Clinton's preoccupation with Haiti and other foreign policy crises such as China, certainly Bosnia, but more important than that, his preoccupation with domestic politics. President Clinton, of course, did not have the full confidence of the military at that stage, partly because of Mogadishu, and because he himself had not served in the military in the United States. Clinton came into office with something of a skeptical cloud over him vis a vis the military and the Pentagon. All of these factors crystallized in Presidential Decision Directive 25 which was intended to give Clinton more credibility in the Pentagon and at the same time reflect Congressional and Defense Department concerns about US mission creep, as in Somalia.

I think it is very important to have this before us as we look at the broader perspective of what was going on in the Security Council which is being accurately depicted by our colleagues. The final comment I would make is that it was not until September 1994 that the straightjacket of policy that I have been describing was removed. It was removed because of other kinds of pressures that were building up in the US foreign policy world around Haiti. In September 1994, as Assistant Secretary of State, I met with President Clinton at his request to describe to him some of the events that were transpiring in Haiti, which looked similar to what had happened in Rwanda, just lacking in the same scale. There were photographs of people who were being attacked with machetes and other instruments by paramilitary forces in Haiti. It was at that point that President Clinton said,

“That looks like Rwanda. We are not going to let that happen again.” He then authorized the formation of a peacekeeping force for Haiti and got authority from the Security Council and the Organization of American States. There was then an effort to prevent the ongoing violence in Haiti. This is what should have happened in Rwanda had it not been for the straightjacket imposed on our policy as a result of Somalia and the development of this Presidential Decision Directive.

TOM BLANTON: General Dallaire?

ROMÉO DALLAIRE: I think we have to go back to September and August 1993. There was no money in the UN. The overriding factor was that people were not paying up. The reason why so many restrictions were imposed on me, and I faced the impossible scenario of reducing my troop level request even before I started to deploy, was that everybody said there was no money. It was not because people were “peacekeeping-ed out.” There was no money for any mission to be constituted. This was right from the starting point of the concept of operations that ultimately made its way to the Security Council.

[Former Belgian foreign minister] Willy Claes recently said that he pushed to get the Belgians out because the RPF were targeting the Belgians.³⁶ That is totally false. It was the RGF [Rwandan government forces] that were targeting the Belgians. I was under enormous pressure from the RGF to get all the Belgians out because they felt they were pro-RPF and, therefore, they had to get rid of them. Bangladesh had contributed 1,000 troops, the Belgians about 500. That is 1,500 out of 2,600 total force.³⁷ The Bangladeshis did not want to be there anyway. The Bangladesh Army Chief of Staff told me in February 1994 that he had only sent his troops to Rwanda for me to

³⁶ General Dallaire later clarified that he was referring to an interview by Willy Claes to the Canvas television channel of Belgium for the Terzake news program on April 8, 2014.

³⁷ According to the UN Blue Book on Rwanda, there were 942 peacekeepers from Bangladesh and 440 from Belgium. See UN Department of Public Information, “The United Nations and Rwanda 1993-1996,” page 35, *op cit.*

train them.³⁸ He did not want any of them to be in any operational scenario. He issued orders that the Bangladeshis were not to do anything. He was just looking for an excuse to pull his forces out.

Lastly (I look at my RPF colleagues from that time), do not underestimate the impact of Paul Kagame over me in regards to not wanting foreign forces to come into Rwanda after the start of the genocide. He did not want me to be reinforced because they were winning. They were moving. They did not want somebody to come in and stall the exercise. There were some pretty tight links, I think, between the RPF and the US. When you see the Pentagon's arguments against my concept of operations, and the bullshit we had to face from those irresponsible Pentagon officers, you have to wonder what the hell was behind it. Thank you.

TOM BLANTON: Thank you very much. Ambassador Kovanda.

KAREL KOVANDA: Thank you Tom. Let me just preface by saying that your Secretariat has been kind enough to duplicate a paper of mine which I wrote several years ago about our experience in Rwanda.³⁹

TOM BLANTON: We welcome any documents that anyone wants to bring.

KAREL KOVANDA: Let me react to some of the points that have been made and some of the questions that have been asked by Michael Barnett and David Scheffer. For the first week [after April 6, 1994] we did not know a thing that was happening in Rwanda, particularly those of us whose only experience with Rwanda was as a stamp collector. (That is my case). But on April 13, 14 and 15, things started changing, certainly for me. On April 14, there was an important article on the

³⁸ Roméo Dallaire, *Shake Hands with the Devil*. Cambridge: Da Capo Press, 2003, 204.

³⁹ Karel Kovanda, "[The Czech Republic on the UN Security Council: The Rwandan Genocide.](#)" *Genocide Studies and Prevention* 5, 2 (August 2010): 192-218.

op-ed page of the New York Times by Frank Smyth, concerning the French involvement with Habyarimana.⁴⁰ It explained the background of French arms exports to Rwanda in a way that suddenly made many things clear to me. There was the NAM draft presented on April 13.⁴¹ There was the Secretariat which presented its alternatives.⁴²

There was the Belgian call for the withdrawal of UNAMIR. Let me just illustrate the nature of the Belgian campaign. Willy Claes, the Foreign Minister, called my Minister [Jozef Zieleniec] on April 12, and found he was not in his office. He then asked to talk to a Deputy Minister, but none of them were available, and ended up talking to director Ivan Bušniak. For a Minister to talk to somebody two levels below him shows that he was really trying to get his message across. Like other people here, I never understood why the absolutely understandable issue of withdrawing Belgian troops became an intensive effort to scuttle UNAMIR as a whole. Unless (and here I have to put an uncharitable reading on it), there was an ex post facto realization that the Belgians should not have actually withdrawn, in which case a campaign to withdraw all of UNAMIR would camouflage the fact that they should not have left by themselves.

The ceasefire was mulled over and over again because people for a very long time confused and conflated the two types of killings that were going on. Ibrahim Gambari and I stood up in the Council on April 25. I think it was Ibrahim who pointed out that on the one hand we have fighting among the military on the front line and on the other hand we have killing of civilians behind the front line which we eventually ended up describing as genocide.⁴³ But there were honest people on the Council. The guy who sticks in my mind is the Ambassador of Oman [Salim al-Khussaiby], a

⁴⁰ Frank Smyth, "[French Guns, Rwandan Blood](#)," *New York Times*, April 14, 1994. See also, Frank Smyth, "The Arms Trade and Human Rights Abuses in the Rwanda War," Human Rights Watch, January 1994.

⁴¹ David Hannay, "[My Two IPTs: Rwanda](#)," UK Mission to the UN Telno 1342, April 14, 1994.

⁴² Madeleine Albright, "[UN Recommendations to be Acted Upon 4/15](#)," US Mission to the UN cable 01581, April 15, 1994.

⁴³ Madeleine Albright, "[Next Steps on Rwanda – April 29](#)," US Mission to the UN cable 01817, April 30, 1994.

wonderful giant of a man who kept calling for a ceasefire as though that would have solved the whole problem of the killing of civilians.

The other thing is that people just did not understand the nature of the beast. A very good friend, the Ambassador of Argentina, called it a humanitarian catastrophe. In good faith. What was going on in Rwanda was so far outside the normal scope of a diplomat's experiences that it was hard to fathom. To put it simplistically, and certainly mathematically incorrectly, you have a bell curve of possible events that you are dealing with, and all the way at the tail end is something like genocide, you are not used to that. In the seventies, we had the genocide in Cambodia, but it was not an ethnic thing, it was a class thing. Who would have thought that a genocide was still possible? It was not that we were reluctant to describe what was happening. It was outside our general purview. This is why it took us so long to employ the word genocide, even though the NGOs had been employing it for quite a while already before we started using it ourselves.

A previous speaker, David Scheffer, mentioned the legal aspect. But the legal aspect has another implication. If you identify something as genocide, you have to do something about it. If you do not do anything about it, you are violating the Genocide Convention as well. The US was certainly not ready to intervene in Rwanda. I am sure the four Ambassadors present at this conference will recall the bazaar-like haggling going on among members of the UN Security Council over extensions to the UNAMIR mandate. Is it going to be three months? Is it going to be six months? Is it going to be something in between? Is there going to be a review period after four weeks or six weeks? It was a total, total bazaar.

The 270 people who ended up in the rump UNAMIR force was a consequence of one of the two alternatives that the Secretariat presented on April 14.⁴⁴ They said, either we can keep UNAMIR without the Belgian contingent, some 2,000+ strong, or we can leave a contingent of technical and

⁴⁴ Madeleine Albright, "[UN Recommendations to be Acted Upon 4/15.](#)" US Mission to the UN cable 01581, April 15, 1994.

political and security people surrounding the SRSG. That is what it boiled down to. I do not think it was the decision of the Bangladeshis and the Belgians that dictated this particular consequence. It was a consequence of one of the alternatives that the SRSG presented. The Secretariat told us on April 15 that the Secretary-General would prefer the first alternative, the 2,000+.⁴⁵ The US told us if we were to decide on this day, we will not get anything. So we decided not to decide on that day. We gave everybody another few days for discussions and negotiations.

ROMÉO DALLAIRE: I must intervene to say that the figure of 270 troops was imposed by the Secretary-General, who requested a variety of reduction options from me.⁴⁶ This is what we ended up with. What happened there is still unclear.

TOM BLANTON: Terrific. Prudence Bushnell.

PRUDENCE BUSHNELL: Thank you. In point of fact, I think UNAMIR was almost dead on arrival. During the summer of 1993, the Africa Bureau in the Department of State was trying desperately to keep any resources whatsoever. Secretary of State James Baker had proudly promised to open eighteen Embassies in the former Soviet Union without costing the US taxpayer a dime. Where would the money come from? It came, in large part, from the Africa Bureau. We were anxious to reduce our peacekeeping contribution, from 31 percent at the time to a lower rate. As you looked over the peacekeeping map, most peacekeeping operations (PKOs) were in Africa. We were trying to get PKOs out of Africa, not create peacekeeping operations in Africa. There was a feeling by the people around President Clinton that President Clinton was not interested in Africa. Early in the Clinton term, I was not able to get a new, democratically elected president in Africa, a former

⁴⁵ Madeleine Albright, [“Security Council at Impasse on UNAMIR’s Future.”](#) US Mission to the UN cable 01607, April 16, 1994.

⁴⁶ Kofi Annan, [“UNAMIR.”](#) United Nations Outgoing Code Cable 1194, April 19, 1994

human rights activist, to see the President because, I was told, "President Clinton would find him boring." That was how US policy was made. [Laughter] Now you can all tell me whether the poor man is boring or not, but I never knew we made policy that way. But now you do: Don't put somebody in front of our President who is not an interesting person, please.

The DOD [Department of Defense] did not want to spend money. I used to call them the "nowhere, no how, no way, and not with our toys boys." That was their position. The only reason we got into Rwanda was because the French twisted our arm on Somalia.⁴⁷ I have no idea what the negotiations were, but that was what was coming down. We in the Africa Bureau were thrilled that the French were more successful in our interagency process than the Department of State or USAID. We did not want to be in Rwanda. We found every excuse whatsoever to make the mandate as limited in time and in manpower as possible. Boy oh boy, did the shooting down of the plane on April 6 and the withdrawal of the Belgians give us the excuse we needed to pull the plug. It was an unfortunate period in my government's history. I regret it greatly as I think all of us do. Thank you.

TOM BLANTON: Extremely powerful. Let me get Ambassador Keating and then ask Iqbal Riza and then I want to go to the coffee break.

COLIN KEATING: Thank you very much Prudence for that brave statement. I think we have got to be honest about that figure 270. Numbers do not appear in a Security Council Resolution just per chance. It is as a result of a decision. Somebody put them there. As President of the Council, I had to have oversight of the words that went into the Resolution. Both of the Generals [Dallaire and Anyidoho] are absolutely right on the 270 figure. There was no compelling reason why UNAMIR had to be reduced to 270. It is very important to recall that almost never in history has the actual

⁴⁷ Madeleine Albright, "[Rwanda and Criteria for New UN PKO.](#)" US Mission to the UN cable 04735, September 28, 1993.

number of troops in a peacekeeping mission been equivalent to the authorized number of troops. We could have left it at 2,400, even though the Belgians had withdrawn and the Bangladeshis were withdrawing. From an operational point of view, I think David Hannay's analysis is not correct.

The only reason the authorized level went to 270 was because this was the one figure which the United States team in New York would accept. I know because I was the one who was negotiating with them. That was their bottom line. I reluctantly acquiesced in that because I knew from the back channels with General Dallaire that our good friends the Ghanaians were actually going to stay, and that the people in the stadium would be looked after as best as they possibly could. The slim reed of "a Chapter VI point something" mandate that I was talking about before was a legitimate basis for them to use force if necessary to do that. But it was a matter of absolute necessity if the United States was going to make that shift from total opposition to accepting something. The something was 270. It was not from the Secretariat. It was actually the product of the interaction with the United States' team.

I disagree very strongly with David's analysis of the significance of the short timeframe that was being imposed. Of course, he is absolutely right that it was done for a purpose of political leverage back in Kigali. But there are unintended consequences of well-intentioned decisions. Absolutely dreadful unintended consequences flowed from the short mandate extensions. They created the procedural situation that I described before: the United States had the ultimate negotiating leverage when it came to the size of the force, what the force would do, and its future. As the Americans said to me several times during those two weeks when the non-aligned resolution was on the table, "All we have to do is sit here for another two or three weeks and this operation will die of its own accord. We don't need to have this conversation. We can do nothing and it will die because we will not agree to its renewal."

We had to convert the United States to a different psychological space. It was something that was not going to happen overnight. Part of the process of changing the American thinking was

to give them a carrot that they could take back to Washington, “Ok, we’ve reduced the force.” But it was only a virtual reduction, because the actual force remaining was significantly larger than the authorized level. As General Dallaire said, it was a platform on which to build.

How you rebuild the force takes you to the next question: how do you change the moral equation by reaching over the top of the people with whom we negotiated in New York to the United States public. That was a communications exercise. Part of the communications exercise was associated with what Karel Kovanda was doing with his draft to recognize and name the event as genocide. That gave me the opportunity as President of the Security Council to change the narrative at the stakeout each day with the journalists. It is quite wrong to say that we did not have a vision for how to change the situation. A few of us did, but it was going to take several weeks to get there. What happened after the end of April is a very sad part of the story. The “inside out” argument versus the “outside in” argument actually took place in May rather than April.⁴⁸

TOM BLANTON: Thank you very much, Colin. Iqbal Riza.

IQBAL RIZA: Thank you. I trust that nobody will dispute my claim to being the oldest person in this room. That does not mean that I am the wisest. I think people like Edward Mortimer and Dr. Abiodun Williams will testify that I was not, during my days in the SG’s office, known for my razor sharp memory. This is twenty years later so please forgive me for any lapses that occur. Please indulge me if I make a few preliminary comments. The Security Council always has preambular paragraphs, so let me follow that tradition. [Laughter]. What happened in Rwanda incontestably was one of the cataclysmic horrors of the 20th century. The international community failed to stop this horror, which was made worse by the fact that it happened fifty years after the United Nations

⁴⁸ This refers to the discussion regarding whether UNAMIR would be reinforced from inside Rwanda, as Dallaire wanted, or outside Rwanda, as the United States wanted.

Charter and the Genocide Convention. We had one hero in this whole horrifying affair, General Dallaire. We had another hero in General Anyidoho. And one must have a chronicler, and our chronicler is Linda Melvern, who sits there very quietly except for last evening when she created a bit of a ripple. Her books, and the Carlsson report, an Independent Inquiry established by SG Kofi Annan in 1999, are the authoritative documents that we have until now.⁴⁹ We must recognize her contribution also.

I am not even going to attempt to respond to this barrage of questions from Professor Barnett and David Scheffer because my memory simply will not allow it. The memories and contributions of the four Ambassadors in the Security Council to my left speak for themselves. Ambassador Hannay was absolutely correct in saying that UNAMIR was presented after Arusha as an “old style” peacekeeping operation, which would be implemented very smoothly. We in DPKO took these agreements on good faith believing that the signatory parties were committed to implement them. That is the basis on which we started.

When the strength of the force was being discussed in the Security Council, if I recall correctly, the first figure that we received from the recce mission headed by General Dallaire was 8,000. I have to contrast that to another figure—I cannot identify the document but I think it is in one of these volumes—where an American official says that for an operation of that type, they would want 20,000. In DPKO we beat this down to about 5,000 or 5,500. As I have said, in the Security Council, it was reduced to 2,500.⁵⁰

Once the genocide started and the UNAMIR options question came up, the Secretary-General was on his travels. I mentioned that we in DPKO were in a very unhappy situation. We were never fully in the picture of what was going on between the SG’s office, Ambassador Gharekhan and the Council. We had heard that the SG was pressing for Chapter VII, that he was trying to get African

⁴⁹ Kofi Annan, [“Letter Dated 15 December 1999 from the Secretary-General Addressed to the President of the Security Council,”](#) S/1999/1257, December 1999.

⁵⁰ [UN Security Council Resolution 872 \(1993\)](#), October 5, 1993.

troops and so on. We had nothing specific, but we used to hear these things. When the killing started with the murder of Belgian soldiers, and Belgium decided to withdraw its troops, to us it was understandable.⁵¹ Of course we were dismayed by the Bangladeshi decision to withdraw their troops...When the question of how many would stay came up, I cannot rely totally on my memory, we of course asked for recommendations from General Dallaire.⁵² I remember the term used in the documents: a "minimum viable force." What was the other one?

ROMÉO DALLAIRE: "Full and effective force."

IQBAL RIZA: Yes. At one time we were asked to present options. This had happened in the case of Bosnia also, with the safe areas. This was the new approach that originated in the Council of a non-paper with usually three options: heavy, light and in between. Now I cannot recall how exactly the figure of 270 came about but certainly it is not my impression that it was produced as Ambassador Hannay has described. That is not my recollection at all. Pressure was exerted on the mission, on General Dallaire, to come down to the absolute minimum in order to retain a political presence in Kigali. The figure of 270, to the best of my recall, was simply as a protection force for such a political UN presence while a decision was considered by the Security Council on what was to be done now that most of the troops had left.

General Dallaire and General Anyidoho were guilty of insubordination because the authorized figure was 270, but they managed to keep about 500. Ghana was the mainstay, but the Tunisians also stayed... What dismayed us in DPKO, once options started being discussed after the killing started, was the insistence on keeping to Chapter VI. That was something which we did not

⁵¹ Paul Noterdaeme, "[Letter from the Permanent Representative of Belgium to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council.](#)" April 15, 1994.

⁵² Roméo Dallaire, "[Concept and Plan for Options for Retention of UNAMIR.](#)" UNAMIR Outgoing Code Cable, April 14, 1994.

understand especially when, much later in June, Operation Turquoise was authorized under Chapter VII. This was a very puzzling feature of our dealing with this situation. We were told that it still has to be Chapter VI while on the ground. There was this very small band of determined, brave men holding the fort...

TOM BLANTON: Let me go back to something Michael Barnett raised earlier on the absence of the Secretary-General. There were problems in the information flow between General Dallaire and others on the ground and the Security Council. What was DPKO's thinking on not entertaining other options between moving to a Chapter VII operation, which would be vetoed by the US, and vague phrases like "contribute to the security" in the original draft rules of engagement?

IQBAL RIZA: I have to confess that General Dallaire's draft rules of engagement did not receive due attention.⁵³ We were overwhelmed, including General Baril. If anybody was to give priority to that, it would have been General Baril, to whom they had been sent. But he was overwhelmed also by these seventeen operations that we had at that time. Obviously Rwanda later became our first priority, but that did not mean that we could completely turn our attention away from all the other missions. We had to deal with those other operations also.

TOM BLANTON: We are going to have a coffee break. We have a real challenge. Several people have been waiting patiently to ask questions and we have to bring in the evidence from the ground. What did people see, what did they know?

[BREAK]

⁵³ Roméo Dallaire, "[Operational Directive No. 02: Rules of Engagement \(Interim\)](#)," UNAMIR Kigali Rwanda, November 19, 1993.

TOM BLANTON: For this session, I am going to start with a series of the individuals who were present in Rwanda during this period focusing on what they saw, leading to a discussion of what the international community knew and when did they know it? What effect did it have? Let me start with Jean-Hervé Bradol who describes a contingency plan for dealing with mass casualties in February 1994.

JEAN-HERVÉ BRADOL: At the time of the genocide, I had worked for Médecins Sans Frontières since 1989. I still work for them. I was the desk officer of the French section for Rwanda and some other countries. I visited Rwanda in July 1993, November 1993, January 1994, April 1994, and also later in 1995 and 1996. The aid organizations and humanitarian organizations were looking after camps of refugees and displaced persons, where things were going very badly. The mortality rate was very high. To give an example: 250,000 Burundese refugees arrived in October 1993 (following the assassination of President Ndadaye). In the first three months, 10,000 died in a context of a lack of assistance. The losses had also been very important for the internally displaced persons in the north.

The mechanisms which contributed to [the high death toll] worked on three levels. First, the aid operations had been infiltrated by the Rwandan authorities, which took a part of the food intended for refugees and displaced persons through the Rwandan Red Cross. We already had information that some of this food was going to the militias. Food had become a way of financing the militias. The RPF was also present in the aid organizations but this had much less impact on the quality of the help. The second problem was malnutrition combined with infectious diseases, such as cholera, meningitis, and bloody diarrhea. The third mechanism, which was undermining the aid operations and leading to important losses, was the weakness of the aid organizations themselves,

including ours, and the lack of coordination between them. We had big health projects underway, but we felt under water. We were crying every night over our inability to bring down the death rate.

At the same time, we witnessed a deterioration in the political and military situation which blocked our assistance operations. Sometimes the police, the Gendarmerie and the army would just disappear from Kigali and the city was left to the militias for several days. This was accompanied by upsurges in violence and number of wounded. The aid organizations met to draw up an emergency plan to treat large numbers of wounded persons. I am talking about the Red Cross, the Rwandan Red Cross, the Belgian Red Cross, International Action Against Hunger, Médecins Sans Frontières, and also medical advisors from Belgium and France who were on bilateral cooperation missions. We had divided up the town of Kigali, finding places where we could pre-position supplies and help the wounded, what we called in technical jargon “triage centers” for the wounded. The first time we activated this plan was around February 20, 1994, when there were dozens of dead and about 150 wounded during one of these takeovers of the town by the militia. MSF was responsible for triage at the hospital center in Kigali, the CHK [*Centre Hospitaliere de Kigali*]. We had pre-positioned some supplies there. We activated our plan with our Rwandan colleagues from the Ministry of Health in order to take care of the wounded. So, this was the situation before April 6.⁵⁴

After April 6, the situation changed of course. We were all over the place: in Murambi, in Byumba prefecture, in Kibungo in the eastern prefecture, Bugesera in the southern, rural part of Kigali prefecture, in Butare, with branch offices in Gikondo prefecture for the Burundian refugees. Byumba, Kibungo and the Bugesera were all “cleansed” in the first three days of the genocide with the militias launching attacks, including attacks on our offices in which many people had taken refuge. Some people were killed in our offices, including some members of our own staff. We think we lost 200 employees of Médecins Sans Frontières during the first weeks of violence. The only

⁵⁴ For further details of MSF operations in Kigali, see 2014 report written by Jean-Hervé Bradol, [available here](#).

teams which managed to operate were in Kigali and Butare. In Kigali, on April 9, they went to the CHK hospital, and began admitting wounded people, who were murdered the following night. The CHK hospital was not only a hospital, it was a place of extermination. Our medical team, which was not a surgical team, became very discouraged and left on April 10.

The medical team in Butare stayed in place because the massacres had not yet become generalized. We sent in a new team with surgical capacities, led by me, in an overland Red Cross convoy from Bujumbura on April 13, and reached Kigali. We went to the CHK hospital in Kigali and reached the same conclusion as our colleagues. We could not work there because it was being used to kill people. We were able to talk to survivors so this was not just rumors or second hand information. We decided to join forces with the Red Cross. We agreed with Philippe Gaillard, the head of their delegation, to set up a field hospital on a piece of land near the Red Cross offices in Kigali, on *Avenue de Kyovu*. We took over a compound belonging to the Salesians of Don Bosco, a religious organization, and set up a field hospital there from April 14 onward. We had three types of teams. There was a political team led by Philippe Gaillard which negotiated the terms of the operation with the interim government and administrations. The interim government gave them authorizations, let some vehicles through. We had a liaison officer, a Rwandan army colonel, Colonel François Munyengango who helped negotiate with the Rwandan army and the militias. Philippe Gaillard had regular contacts with members of the interim government. We had a second team in the field hospital which was responsible for taking care of the wounded. Then there was the third team, to which I belonged, which worked with the Rwandan Red Cross. We went out every morning in their ambulances to bring the wounded to our field hospital.

We received a lot of information from religious organizations and other NGOs. They telephoned the Red Cross to tell them to come and visit them, saying they had wounded who needed help. There were barricades everywhere. The militias were saying, there is no point [looking after the wounded] because we are killing all the Tutsis, so your work will not amount to

much. On April 14, in the presence of the Rwandan armed forces, militiamen took six wounded people out of two Red Cross ambulances and killed them right there on the side of the road. In the second half of April, with great difficulty we were able to get some women and children past these barricades, but there was no hope whatsoever for male Tutsis. We did not even try. We visited these institutions where Tutsis had taken refuge, and saw them disappearing under our eyes. They were burned down with the Tutsis still inside. In other places, they managed to keep some of the wounded alive. I remember one man who had a slight wound in his chest who told me about my medical care, "Look, this is all very nice and good but tonight they will probably come and kill me, so the impact of your work is very limited." Luckily, the militias never took over our field hospital, killed or wounded our staff, right up until the moment of the RPF victory at the beginning of July. There were several alerts, but we managed to negotiate, thanks to this Colonel François who served as our liaison officer and a go-between with the militias. But the hospital and the ICRC were both damaged by RPF mortars.

There were other places in the country where the Red Cross was present, particularly Kabgayi, in Gitarama prefecture, and in Rusizi in Cyangugu prefecture. We knew through our colleagues in the Red Cross and a visit we made ourselves that some international assistance was reaching these locations where people were being killed every day. We had decided not to work in places that also served as execution places. The situation worsened in late April with large-scale massacres in Butare. Some of our team members in Butare, and all the wounded in our hospital, were massacred around April 24. Obviously this international team could stay there no longer. They left for Burundi. We had opened a surgical post in Kayanza, in northern Burundi, to treat wounded Tutsis who managed to cross the border and had supported a Rwandan refugee camp in Burundi. In late April and early May, we also started an intervention for Rwandan refugees in Tanzania, 250,000 people who were fleeing the advance of the RPF in the north-east and south-east and crossing over into Tanzania. Our national staff witnessed massacres carried out by the RPF during

their advance in Burundian refugee camps in the Bugesera (Nzangwa camp, commune of Gashora, May 13, 1994).

We also discovered a second troubling type of situation. The Hutu refugees who arrived in Tanzania were completely controlled by the authorities that had carried out the genocide in Byumba province and Murambi. Jean-Baptiste Gatete, one of the leaders of the genocide in the east of Rwanda, was one of these camp leaders. We saw how these genocidaires exploited the huge distribution of food aid to rebuild their strength. They manipulated the numbers of refugees, diverted a part of the food aid, and resold it to Tanzanian traders. There were about 250,000 persons arriving in the district of Ngara in Tanzania, which became a huge urban concentration, the second largest town in Tanzania within a few weeks. We were 2,000 kilometers from Dar es Salaam, in the far west, with about fifty Tanzanian policemen who were unable to control the security situation in the camps. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees turned the security of the camp over to the militias, who were able to recruit their own camp security force from former militia.

One last point. The genocide was continuing inside the refugee camp. Although a large majority of the Rwandans who fled to Tanzania were Hutu, there were also mixed families. Inside the camp, there were days when the militia turned on the so-called "impure ones." Dozens of people were massacred either because they were suspected of being Tutsis, or because they were against the militias, or because they wanted to return as soon as possible to Rwanda. Once these people were identified, they were simply executed. That was the situation in late April, early May.

TOM BLANTON: When did you use the word genocide to yourself? And when did Médecins Sans Frontières use the word genocide?

JEAN-HERVÉ BRADOL: The first person in Médecins Sans Frontières to use the word genocide in a Sitrep fax was our woman coordinator in Goma [in Zaire].⁵⁵ On April 13, she saw Tutsi refugees fleeing the massacres in Gisenyi [in northwestern Rwanda]. The massacres had started very early there. This coordinator sent her headquarters her personal analysis of events, using the word genocide based on the stories she heard from Rwandan Tutsis who had fled to Zaire. Officially, publicly, it was after the massacre of Butare on April 24 that our team members in Butare and the President of Médecins Sans Frontières in Belgium used the word genocide.⁵⁶ They said that it was not a crisis, it was a genocide and we needed an armed international intervention to put an end to it. So this was the first public, official position after April 24. The President of Médecins Sans Frontières in Belgium published an article in *Den Morgen* in which he developed his position.⁵⁷ This article also appeared in *Le Soir* in Belgium, and in Francophone media, on May 6.

TOM BLANTON: I'm going to go to Jean-Philippe Ceppi who was the first journalist to use the word genocide on April 11. We have the article he publishes on page 2-135 of your briefing book.⁵⁸ I am curious, who gave you that idea to use that word? What was the debate? What did you see?

MICHAEL DOBBS: Also, how did you use the word?

JEAN-PHILIPPE CEPPI: Thank you. First of all, I think we should note that journalists have a freedom of movement greater than diplomats and humanitarian workers. With hindsight, I also

⁵⁵ According to a [2014 report written by Bradol](#), the term genocide was used in an internal MSF report from Goma on April 13. The MSF team coordinator reported to her superiors that “the stories we are hearing from Rwanda can be called nothing less than genocide; the Hutus are clearly committing a systematic massacre of Tutsis.”

⁵⁶ Colin Keating, “[Security Council: Rwanda](#),” New Zealand Mission to the UN, Cable C04362, April 25, 1994.

⁵⁷ In an article for the Flemish language newspaper *Den Morgen* on April 28, the President of MSF Belgium, Dr. Eric Goemaere, stated that “the Rwanda crisis is no longer a crisis; it’s a genocide.”

⁵⁸ Jean-Philippe Ceppi, “[Kigali Livre a la Fureur des Tueurs Hutus](#),” *Libération*, April 11, 1994, 14-15.

recognize that we did many things that were not very prudent. To give you the context, there was a little group of foreign journalists in Nairobi. When we heard from Kenyan radio that the President's plane had been shot down, our goal was to get to Kigali as quickly as possible. We were a small group of journalists, mostly freelance. The Anglo-Saxon media, which had greater financial resources than the French media, tried to reach Kigali by plane. They went to Kampala and got sidetracked. This explains why the big Anglo-Saxon media, including Reuters, only arrived in Kigali later, on April 14 or 15.⁵⁹ There were two French language journalists representing big publications, one from *Le Monde*, Jean Hélène, who was killed in Côte d'Ivoire [in October 2003], and myself. I was working for the French newspaper, *Libération*, and also Swiss Public Radio. We managed to enter Rwanda via Butare by road from Burundi on the night of the April 8-9. A taxi brought us to Butare at midnight. On Saturday morning [April 9], we joined a convoy, with a Rwandan who had just been named Minister by the new transitional government. We reached Kigali very quickly and focused on the area of central Kigali around the Hotel Mille Collines and the Embassies. I decided to make what we call in journalism an "inquiry of proximity."

Quite surprisingly, it was possible to move within this perimeter between Hotel des Mille Collines, the headquarters of the Rwandan Army, the Chinese embassy and so on. We were immediately struck by the barricades and the number of corpses in the streets. The corpses were being eaten by dogs, a new image for me. At the same time, we began talking to people and calling them on the phone. I soon ended up at the Hotel Mille Collines where I met a mother with five daughters who told me that she had to take refuge in the hotel because she was threatened to death. Some of her neighbors had been killed. She had to give proof of her ethnicity, her son had to show a picture of the family with President Habyarimana, to prove that they were not Tutsi. I was also in contact early with [ICRC chief delegate] Philippe Gaillard who received us in his office. He

⁵⁹ Other journalists arrived in Kigali around the same time as Ceppi. See, Catherine Bond, ["Rebels advance as Kigali slaughter goes on,"](#) The Times (London), April 12, 1994.

had received the order from Geneva to speak very freely with the media, a new practice for the Red Cross. I think it was Philippe Gaillard who used for the first time this word, genocide, in a conversation with me on April 9. Philippe Gaillard was receiving information from his delegates all over Rwanda but we talked in particular about what was happening in Kigali. Philippe Gaillard suggested that Jean Hélène and I accompany one of his teams the following day, Sunday, to pick up bodies in the small church of Gikondo where about seventy people had been massacred.

In the meantime, on Saturday afternoon, we went to the central hospital where we saw a pile of 400 corpses. The morgue was completely full and the doors could not be closed. Four hundred corpses were in the middle of the square of this hospital. A mother came to look for a nurse, saying that her son was still alive under this pile of corpses. We saw a young boy with blood gushing out of his neck. The representatives of Médecins Sans Frontières told us that the Army went into the operating rooms and massacred patients with bayonets under the eyes of the doctors because they were Tutsis. I tried to keep notes. Twenty years later these notes turned out to be important and were handed over to the Rwandan war crimes tribunal.

Jean Hélène and I went to a Salesian center where a nun showed us a place where about one hundred Tutsis had taken refuge. We witnessed what I later described in my report as “a chase scene,” in which a young mother was chased from a street corner in a complete state of panic, and a traumatized young boy was pursued by three militia men with machetes who wanted to kill him. The nun, my colleague Jean Hélène, and I tried to intervene with these militiamen to stop them from catching the young man who was holding onto my back. Finally, the nun made a sign of the cross on the forehead of the militiaman, and said, “Calm down, my sons.” I do not know how she did it but the three boys left.

Another important point, I was staying at the French cooperation mission. When we got back at night, we continued to work because the telephone network in Kigali was still working. I

had some contacts so I called a Rwandan journalist who was trapped in his house. He told me, "I'm with my family, I'm going to die. All our neighbors are dead and I'm going to be killed too."

To be a journalist and have your own Rwandese colleague tell you he's going to die is an exceptional experience. Of course I said, "What can I do for you?" And the only thing he says is, "Write down what I am telling you." I asked this colleague, "Why are they targeting you?" And he replied, "Well, of course, because I'm a Tutsi."

The following day, the Sunday, we went with the Red Cross to the chapel in Gikondo where we journalists acted as humanitarian workers. Philippe Gaillard had told us not to make notes or make photos. We carried bodies. I remember carrying a young boy whose skull had been cracked open like a melon but was still alive. The bottom of his body was paralyzed and we had to practically force him into the ambulance. We also found people who were trapped in the chapel behind a metal door. The militiamen had thrown grenades hoping to kill them but some of them had survived. We had to go over the metal door to save them. At the exit of the church, there were looters, people carrying away bicycles, drunk people. There was a militia man who came into the square with a machete, reeking of alcohol. I asked him whether he was proud of what he was doing. He looked at me and said, "I'm tired. I cannot do any more. I'm exhausted."

You asked me the question (about using the word genocide). That Sunday night, I wrote a piece for Swiss Radio, I don't remember if I used the word genocide. Then I start writing my article for *Libération* which would appear on Monday. I had spoken to Philippe Gaillard again on Sunday after our visit [to Gikondo] and he spoke of 10,000 Tutsis killed in Kigali. This was Sunday, April 10. The massacres had started on the night of April 6/7. So there were an estimated 10,000 Tutsi dead in three days, according to Philippe Gaillard. This authorized me to end my article with the words: "By the time [the RPF] captures the town, if they do, the genocide of the Tutsi of Kigali will probably have been completed."

Sometime later, I was asked, "Who or what gave you the authority to use the term genocide?" It is true that as a journalist I was not concerned about the legal definition of the word genocide. I just witnessed genocide, as it is understood by public opinion. I address myself to public opinion, not to diplomats in the State Department in Washington. This is what authorized me to use the word genocide.

I used the word again a few days later after I left Kigali, I think around April 14, and went with the RPF to Kayonza [in eastern Rwanda, near Tanzania] and we found a mass grave with 800 bodies. Jean-Hervé Bradol spoke of Jean-Baptiste Gatete, who was involved in this massacre. Here again, the journalists became actors. I will not tell you that whole story, but here again, 800 people were massacred in a church with ten survivors who were told to throw the bodies into a former well. Once they had done that, the militiamen threw in grenades after ordering the people who had carried the corpses to jump into the mass grave. We arrived a few days later, and found some people who had survived on top of this pile of corpses. I should say that I worked for a daily paper, and a radio station. Forty-eight hours is almost a luxury for an investigation. You cannot wait three weeks to publish your article. In this case, since we arrived five or six days later, I took the precaution of asking our RPF escorts to step aside so I could make the first interview with the survivors who we had helped bring out of the grave. It was a first-hand testimony, and made it possible for me to use once again the word genocide. The people who had been massacred were killed because of their identity cards and their ethnicity in a systematic way.

TOM BLANTON: Thank you very much. Let me ask Joyce Leader, who was the DCM in the US Embassy in Kigali, or Johan Swinnen? The two of you were there on the ground and reporting back. I am specifically looking at a very prophetic [April 12, 1994] cable on page 2-142 of the briefing book where Joyce Leader writes back about her conversation on April 10 with Colonel Leonidas

Rusatira [director of the military training academy in Kigali].⁶⁰ It includes an extraordinary, prescient and incredibly descriptive appeal, "...the international community should come in, condemn the atrocities, the killing surpasses all imagination." Then he describes the people driving the genocide. Can you comment on that conversation with Rusatira? You were about to be evacuated just two days later.

JOYCE LEADER: I am having a great deal of difficulty listening to what has been said. I am not sure I can talk right now. I am thinking specifically of [human rights activist] Monique [Mujawamariya] who lived through that fear herself. Come back to me.

TOM BLANTON: I certainly will. Johan Swinnen?

JOHAN SWINNEN: You were speaking of Colonel [later General] Rusatira. I learned about the shoot down of the Habyarimana plane from Monique, who is with us here, and the Apostolic Nuncio. The first thing I did was to jump in the car and find two of my children who were at a restaurant. At the restaurant, I shouted out, "Go home," because something very serious had taken place. For the next five days until April 11, I was on the telephone all the time and also meeting with the people who had taken refuge in the [Belgian embassy] residence. Colonel Rusatira came to see me around 11:00 pm on April 6, a couple of hours after the attack, to tell me, "Ambassador, be careful, stay at home, do not circulate, you are in danger. You are high on the list of the extremists who also want to eliminate you." I was not surprised because I was detested by the extremists. I knew this. The whole night I had discussions with our delegation in Bucharest, where our Foreign Minister was on a visit. I was in communication with the Africa Director of the Belgian foreign ministry, Will Jaenen, who

⁶⁰ Aurelea Brazeal, "[Colonel Blames Right Wing Military for Kigali's Nightmare.](#)" US Embassy Nairobi cable 06551, April 12, 1994.

Jean-Marc [de La Sabliere] knows well, with Frans van Daele, the Political Director, who was with the Minister. I was naturally in contact also with the 1,500 Belgians in Rwanda. As a little aside, there were some prominent Rwandans who were disappointed not to be able to count on the help of the Belgian Embassy and UNAMIR. Some others did find refuge at the residence. I made many calls to many people, including General Dallaire and also Colonel Luc Marchal, the Commander of KIBAT, expressing also concerns about the security of my own countrymen. I initially refused the offer of the UN to protect the residence because I felt it would be perceived as a provocation. The extremists would say "the Belgians are asking UNAMIR to protect these people." They would then take revenge on my fellow countrymen. So there was a certain obsession for the security of my fellow countrymen.

That first night I also spoke with the Prime Minister, Agathe Uwilingiyimana, who told me she was going to call for calm over the radio as soon as transmissions resumed, at 5:00 or 6:00 am. I spoke with Lando Ndasingwa, who called me. He was the only Tutsi minister of the government, Minister of Social Affairs and co-leader of the Liberal Party. I think he was assassinated shortly after he called me. He told me, "They're approaching my house, I'm in danger, what can you do?" There were many such calls of distress. I relayed the information to UNAMIR, to General Dallaire and Luc Marchal, but I felt completely powerless. This is the feeling I retain from these days in Kigali. I also had feelings of insecurity for my fellow countrymen and for myself, but above all the feeling of powerlessness, the sense that there was nothing that could be done, and a huge fear of this catastrophe that was already unfolding.

I also remember a conversation with [prime minister designate] Twagiramungu, and an important conversation the second or third night with General Nindiliyimana, the chief of staff of the Gendarmerie. This conversation lasted two hours. He told me, "You are not going to evacuate, are you? The country is collapsing. An international presence is absolutely essential, not only of

UNAMIR but also of civilians, to remain here in order to witness and help diminish the catastrophe which is going to take place and will be even more tragic without any foreign presence.”

Eventually, we sheltered about thirty people in the residence including Habyarimana’s chef de cabinet, Enoch Ruhigira, and the human rights activist Alphonse-Marie Nkubito. Also, the widow of Minister Gatabazi who had been assassinated in February during the visit of Willy Claes, as well as some Belgians, who had taken refuge in the residence.

Two days after my return to Belgium, I was received by the Prime Minister, Jean-Luc Duhaene, and we talked about the withdrawal of the Belgian troops and the lobbying which Foreign Minister Claes was carrying out with the international community. Everybody agreed that it was an understandable decision, but I also took the liberty of telling my Prime Minister, “Be careful, we should preserve UNAMIR as a deterrent force.” I suggested that perhaps UNAMIR should be redeployed for a few days to a neighboring country. Perhaps I was being naive, I do not know if this was technically possible, but I felt that a temporary withdrawal of UNAMIR, close to Kigali, perhaps Nairobi, would make it possible to evaluate the situation in a calm and deep manner. This would permit the force to return to Kigali as soon as the Security Council and other decision makers could see things more clearly.

I remember the answer of the Prime Minister. He agreed with the position of Foreign Minister Claes. He said, “Yes, but be careful. There is no longer any agreement to be monitored. The peace agreement has collapsed. Chapter VI is for peacekeeping and there is no peace any more. We can only keep UNAMIR if we give it a new mandate, a stronger more committed Chapter VII mandate.” We should not exaggerate the influence of the Belgian Foreign Minister who lobbied in favor of a full withdrawal of UNAMIR. It is not as if Belgium had a decisive voice. The final decision was not taken by Belgium, which was not even a member of the Security Council. We should not use the actions of Willy Claes as an excuse. He had a certain prestige as Foreign Minister of Belgium, but let us not pretend that his lobbying was decisive in this situation.

MICHAEL DOBBS: Let us go back to the issue of what information was available when. We heard from Ambassador Kovanda that he did not know what was going on until about April 15. Is that a fair assessment from the point of view of the people who were in Kigali? Was the information available? When did it become clear to those of you who were in Kigali what was happening? When the US diplomats pulled out of Kigali, on April 10, were you aware of what was taking place in Rwanda? Did you feel you had a sense of it?

JOYCE LEADER: Thank you. I think we had a very good sense of what was taking place from early on the morning after the plane was shot down [April 7]. Like Ambassador Swinnen, people I knew started calling the night before, even before we found out exactly what the big explosion was that everybody had heard about 8:30 pm [on April 6]. By 9:30 pm everybody knew that Habyarimana's plane had been shot down. The calls were coming fast and very consistently. They were calls of distress. I was able to report this to Washington.⁶¹ I was on the phone most of the time for the next couple of days until I got to the Embassy. It was clear that a systematic killing of Tutsi was taking place in neighborhoods. It was arbitrary in the sense that it was against anybody who was a Tutsi in the neighborhood. But it was also targeted against senior politicians, including Lando Ndasigwa [leader of the Liberal Party and Minister of Labor], whose family was killed mid-morning [on April 7]. We knew that senior leaders of the parties that had stuck with the power-sharing plan, rather than join the Hutu Power faction, were being killed. People like [former foreign minister] Boniface Ngulinzira [murdered at the *École Technique Officielle* on April 11]. They were looking for other people like human rights campaigner Alphonse-Marie Nkubito. They were looking for him but he

⁶¹ Starting on April 7, 1994, the State Department set up a twenty-four hour monitoring group to keep track of the situation in Kigali. The Rwanda Monitoring Group maintained open telephone lines to Joyce Leader and other Americans in Kigali, who reported back on events on the ground. See "[Rwanda Monitoring Group](#)," April 7 - April 15, 1994.

had moved just before. Unfortunately, the people who moved into his old house were killed in his place.

JOHAN SWINNEN: He was at my residence...

JOYCE LEADER: Alfonse Nkubito was one of the people who called me on April 7 during my brush with the Presidential Guard when they came into my house looking for Prime Minister Agathe Uwilingiyimana, my neighbor.⁶² She was not there. We had aborted her coming over the wall when a shot was fired by the Presidential Guard. I convinced the Ghanaian peacekeeper that it was no longer safe for her to come to my house because that was where they would be coming to look for her, which in fact happened. Nkubito called me. I was told by the Presidential Guard that I had to put the phone down. I put it down open so he could hear what was going on.

While this was going on, the yard of Ambassador David Rawson's residence, which was on a totally different hill, was quickly filling with people seeking refuge. At one point, a shot was fired into his yard and a small child was killed. Both of us had close calls ourselves.

I had forgotten about this cable [reporting on the April 10 telephone conversation with Colonel Rusatira] until Michael Dobbs showed it to me, but not about the conversation.⁶³ The conversation was in the context of the planned US citizen evacuation. We had five overland convoys to Burundi since we did not have planes coming to get us. This was the final day of the evacuation. We were still trying to negotiate some gendarmes to make sure we could get out of Kigali safely. The road to the south was still open, but we had heard that there were guards at the bridge [across

⁶² See [ICTR Sketch Map of Kiyovu](#), ICTR Case No ICTR-98-41-T, Exhibit No P 135 tendered by the Prosecution on November 20, 1993.

⁶³ Aurelea Brazeal, "[Colonel Blames Right Wing Military for Kigali's Nightmare](#)," US Embassy Nairobi cable 06551, April 12, 1994.

the Nyaborango River in the valley just outside Kigali]. We were not quite sure if we would be able to make it across that bridge.

I was talking to Rusatira in this context. Just as you said, Ambassador Swinnen, that General Ndingilijimana was trying to convince you that the Belgians should not leave, Colonel Rusatira was trying to convince me that the Americans should not leave. He said our presence would help calm the situation and we should be there to try to calm the situation. I had to be very firm and say, "These are our orders, we are leaving, please help us get out safely." There was no way, of course, that we could predict what would, or would not, follow in terms of help from the outside. This cable reports the conversation that we had. He made the point that, if we did leave, we had better try to convince the international community that it must help because the situation was very, very serious. I think that throughout he did his best to try to calm the situation. Rusatira was mentioned as someone who helped many people who were at risk and tried to convince the genocidaires that they needed to stop the killing, end the chaos, and try to get Rwanda back on the right track.

TOM BLANTON: The State Department cables and logs of the taskforce group show that 80 percent of the discussion in the US government was about evacuation of US citizens from Rwanda. Perhaps 20 percent of the discussion was about, "Let's get back to a ceasefire or the Arusha agreement." President Clinton's only questions were about Rwandan human rights activist Monique Mujawamariya because he had met Monique in December 1993. My questions for you, Prudence Bushnell, is can you give us a sense of what happened when the American government swings into action after April 6? It was not action focused on what was happening on the ground in Rwanda. It was action to protect our civilians.

PRUDENCE BUSHNELL: I do not apologize for that. The first obligation of a government is to its citizens. We were terrified of what was going to happen to our citizenry and so indeed we went into

action. Things were happening so quickly. Our determination to go overland rather than wait for the Belgians and the French to evacuate their citizens by air meant that we had many people who were moving through the countryside, headed primarily for Burundi, but also Tanzania and Zaire.⁶⁴ We were trying to keep track of them without any communications. We only had one satellite radio which went dead when David Rawson left the Embassy on April 10. We had no concept that we would not be going back and not helping. I regret my government's actions with regards to the citizens of Rwanda. I do not regret my government's actions with regards to the citizens of the United States.

MICHAEL DOBBS: Can you talk about the preoccupation with Monique?

PRUDENCE BUSHNELL: Oh my god, all hell is breaking loose, and I am getting phone calls, "Where's Monique?" I am calling. We had one telephone line in the task force open to the Embassy in Kigali with a huge sign over it saying, "Don't hang up," because it was our only source of communication. We were communicating with Joyce Leader. The main interest of the White House at the time is, "Where is Monique?" As I go through the notebook that I kept, every other page includes the annotation, "Where is Monique?" I had not met Monique. She is a charming person, and I am so happy she is here, but frankly I was thinking, "How in the world are we going to get out to find Monique?" The greatest pressure from the White House during the entire Rwandan affair was finding Monique. [Addresses Monique in French] I am glad that you are with us.

ROMÉO DALLAIRE: One of the strongest pressures put on us [UNAMIR] was that, despite all those thousands of troops that had come from France and Belgium and Italy to pull out their citizens, we

⁶⁴ Warren Christopher, "[Situation Report as of 06:00 EDT. 04/09/94.](#)" US Department of State cable 094421, April 9, 1994.

still ended up evacuating over 700 expatriates with just a couple of APCs and a couple of unarmed soldiers. Most of the calls I got were, “Can you find so and so?” I was putting my people at risk every day pulling out people who had been forgotten by that big evacuation force.

TOM BLANTON: Joyce?

JOYCE LEADER: One of the people who called me in distress was Monique. We were in touch a few times. I recommended to her to call UNAMIR. Monique did this, but unfortunately the Bangladeshi who answered the phone could not speak French...

ROMÉO DALLAIRE: He could not speak English either. [Laughter]

JOYCE LEADER: So Monique was lost in terms of trying to get help. I hope I am not misrepresenting you. We lost touch. Monique realized that she had to use her own devices. We lost communication with other friends. I did not find out what happened to those people until much later, when somebody called me in Washington and asked if I wanted to see this list of names of people who had been evacuated from the Hotel Mille Collines. I found some of the names of friends and contacts on this list. It was very difficult.

JOHAN SWINNEN: During the first night [April 6-7], the Ambassadors of the European Union, United States, Canada and Switzerland agreed to meet together with the Papal Nuncio and someone from UNAMIR the following morning at 9:00 am. We had agreed to meet at the American Ambassador’s place to discuss not only the security of our citizens but the situation in the country and what we could do to analyze and influence events. Because of the extremely dangerous

situation in the streets of Kigali we failed to organize any meeting. The only contact among diplomats that happened was made by telephone.

TOM BLANTON: André?

ANDRÉ GUICHAOUA: I was at the Mille Collines hotel when the American soldiers arrived [an evacuation convoy sent by the American Embassy]. For everyone there, it was the first drama, the greatest scandal, I believe that the first intervention took place on Thursday afternoon. There were a number of vehicles there, capable of evacuating about eighty people. This caused a riot. Naturally everybody wanted to get in a vehicle, people wanted to save themselves. The vehicles left. I was coordinating this inside the Mille Collines and we were informed that the American soldiers would come back at 4:00 am in the middle of the night [for a second attempt of evacuation].

[Other participants say there were no American soldiers in Kigali].

ANDRÉ GUICHAOUA: There were American vehicles, American soldiers.

[Inaudible interventions].

ANDRÉ GUICHAOUA: A convoy which arrived from Burundi and then they left again via Butare.

PRUDENCE BUSHNELL: [Partially in French] There were no American soldiers. They wanted to go but I was on the phone with my colleagues, saying "No, no, no, no, do not leave the airport in Burundi." The last thing I wanted was somebody in Burundi shooting down an American helicopter...

ANDRÉ GUICHAOUA: Well who escorted this convoy which left for Burundi?

PRUDENCE BUSHNELL: Just US civilians. There were no soldiers, no soldiers.

ANDRÉ GUICHAOUA: Ok, well in any case, we were told that they would return at 4:00 am. There were epic debates on how all of this should happen. We were told the Germans could join the evacuation convoy. The following morning when everyone woke up, we saw that the American and German citizens had been evacuated during the night. Panic broke out at the hotel. The hotel had been holding out thanks to the solidarity of those who were staying there. What touched me the most was the drama of the Indians and the Pakistanis who concluded that nobody would come and get them. The Belgians and French were confident of getting out, but the others were convinced that nobody would come and get them. There were terrible scenes. They had abandoned their shops which had been pillaged, they had left everything behind except for their money. They started negotiating with the Rwandan soldiers guarding the entrance to form a convoy to get out. When they left, they had absolutely nothing at all. They had given up their last dollar, their last Rwandan franc. That is how they arrived at the border with Burundi. Ok, I do not know what happened exactly, I would like to clarify this, but it was a two phase evacuation: first this departure in the middle of the night by the Americans and then the dramatic debates with the French embassy on how the evacuations would be carried out, and whether the Belgians were going to be evacuated together with the French.

TOM BLANTON: André, maybe you can take that up during the break to establish an agreed set of facts. General Dallaire needs to leave. If I could give Minister Murigande the floor briefly, and then General Dallaire.

CHARLES MURIGANDE: Thank you for giving me the floor. I wanted to speak before General Dallaire leaves because he raised an issue I wanted to address... First of all, I would like to join my brother, Professor Gambari, in praising the Ghanaian battalion which violated the Security Council Resolution and kept more troops than authorized, of course with the wise guidance of General Dallaire. They did a lot of good things. I praise the Ghanaian, Senegalese, and Tunisian units that remained in Rwanda, despite the orders for evacuation.

I wanted to address what General Dallaire said in one of his interventions, that the RPF opposed the introduction of new foreign forces and that the US was against an increase in the size of UNAMIR. He suggested that a link existed between the RPF and the US. I had the duty of managing the relationship between the RPF and the US from October 1, 1990 until the end of the genocide. I arranged every meeting between any US official and the RPF. Whenever we had a delegation coming to Washington, I was in every meeting. What I can tell you is that the US did not give us any support whatsoever. If anything, we were under tremendous pressure to agree to a ceasefire, even after the fall of Gitarama [the headquarters of the provisional government, which fell on June 3, 1994]. I remember we were summoned on June 2, I think, by Assistant Secretary for African Affairs, George Moose.⁶⁵ Prudence was there. We were given stern orders not to enter and capture Gitarama because it was the birthplace of the 1959 Hutu revolution. We were told that it would be unacceptable for the RPF to capture Gitarama. We were put under tremendous pressure to stop the fighting. I would also like to add that although I used to get appointments with officials of the State Department, after the genocide started, for the first two or three weeks, nobody wanted to see me. I was completely cut off. The first meeting I had was organized outside the State Department because they did not want to be seen dealing with the RPF. I wanted to address this

⁶⁵ For US pressure on the RPF to halt its military advance, see Peter Tarnoff, [“AF/C Presses GOR and RPF Repts.”](#) US Department of State cable 150411, June 6, 1994.

misconception that the RPF was supported by the US.⁶⁶ There was no support whatsoever that I know of. As I said, I was managing the relationship between the RPF and the US...

TOM BLANTON: Thank you very much. General Dallaire, a final word before lunch.

ROMÉO DALLAIRE: There is no final word on this genocide. If we are still debating elements of the Holocaust sixty years ago, imagine the complexity of trying to get information on this genocide. However, the gesture by the Holocaust Museum and the Hague Institute to try to bring together this group has got to be commended. However, what comes out of this has got to be rigorous. I hope that the analysis of what is going to be talked about will be rigorous. This brings me back to Ambassador Murigande's position. He is absolutely right, my understanding of the situation was based on the information I had regarding the Americans and the RPF, and the quite vehement position taken by General Kagame about me being reinforced, the size of the reinforcement and ultimately the mandate I was getting. As I am trying to get authorization for reinforcement from the Security Council, I am also getting a message from one of the two belligerents [the RPF] not wanting me to be reinforced. That created friction, to the extent that there were times when we did not even communicate.

However, there are so many elements to this. You are just getting into it. My leaving leaves me terribly torn. I am a Canadian Senator. I have legislation in front of the Senate tomorrow morning, so I have to fly out today. However, you have Henry Anyidoho here on one side and also Linda Melvern. Linda has all my classified material. What Linda says will be based on what I have provided her. I want to thank you for inviting Linda to this conference, and want her to be heard in my place while you continue this discussion.

⁶⁶ Warren Christopher, "[Department Tells RPF to Stop the Fighting Now,](#)" US Department of State cable 104015, April 20, 1994.

I would like you to acknowledge the role played by those UNAMIR troops who stayed in Rwanda, including the troops from Congo-Brazzaville who were the ones who saved the people at the Hotel Mille Collines – not the hotel manager, Paul Rusesabagina, who was written by Philip Gourevitch [in his book, *We wish to inform you that tomorrow we will be killed with our families*] and in “Hotel Rwanda,” a movie that is not worth looking at...Also the contribution of the UN political expert from Sierra Leone, [Abdul Hamid] Kabia, who was the only civilian at the time. Those who stayed in Rwanda did so voluntarily. We took a lot more casualties. This has been a most pertinent exchange but, if it is the only such exchange, we will do a disservice. Whatever comes out of this must be Phase One of a profound reexamination of the Rwandan genocide. Find the money for future events and we will try to find the time.

TOM BLANTON: We are working on it.

ROMÉO DALLAIRE: Thank you very much for all of your efforts. Thank you, particularly, Mr. Riza, for being courageous enough to be here from DPKO, which in my opinion, took a hell of a lot of heat from the international community when the heat should have been on UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, who has been sneaking away from all of this. He is the kingpin of this exercise through his direct communications, phone calls with us, and via his staff.

The international community abandoned us. Everyone abandoned us. My own country, Canada, kept the Hercules [transport planes] flying and sent twelve officers to reinforce me. But that was it. The rest of the world abandoned us. Although I got a new mandate on May 17, nobody came.⁶⁷ The Ethiopians arrived in August 1994 after the war was over. The genocide was stopped because the RPF won and stopped it, not because of the international community. That should not be forgotten by all of us sitting here.

⁶⁷ [UN Security Council Resolution 918 \(1994\)](#), May 17, 1994.

I applaud the courage of many of you who have spoken out and your candor...but I must stress that his thing is a lot more complicated than has ever been articulated. What happened in Rwanda was not due to tribalism, as many claimed in the first days. It did not stop after a couple weeks as many people thought it would. It kept on going.

This cannot be the only time we all meet. There are a lot of angles that have not yet been addressed. One that I would like to leave you with is this: at the end of January and into February 1994, the French tried twice to get me fired.⁶⁸ You have to wonder why the hell they wanted to do that. The political people in Booh-Booh's office made a deal with the RGF to get me killed...There is a lot of stuff that went on that requires a much more complete discussion.

I will end by noting that there was not a single American who came into Rwanda after April 6. All the evacuations were done by Italians, French, or Belgians. The people who escorted you guys out [referring to foreign diplomats in Rwanda] were unarmed people from my mission.

I wish you well and applaud you for the work you are doing. I will be really pissed off if this is the only time we get together. [Laughter]

⁶⁸ General Dallaire later clarified that he heard about the French attempts "to get me fired" from "at least two senior and very serious sources" outside the UN mission to Rwanda.

Session 4 – “Lessons from Rwanda”

TOM BLANTON: We intend in this afternoon session to try to move to a discussion of lessons learned. Not lessons learned totally on the basis of hindsight, but rather grounded in what you experienced at the time. But I want to start with our friend Monique Mujawamariya, whose name was cited so often this morning and had a very dramatic personal history. She met with officials from the highest levels of the United States government after she escaped from Rwanda on April 13. She wrote a letter to President Clinton on April 21 (in the briefing book) that is one of the clearest descriptions of the catastrophe that was happening in Rwanda.⁶⁹ What did you tell US officials? What did they hear? Did they do anything with the information? Monique.

MONIQUE MUJAWAMARIYA: Thank you... I want to give you some information about the start of the genocide. At the moment when the plane exploded on April 6, I had spent all day with Johan Swinnen. I was meant to go and spend the night in Butare [in southwest Rwanda], where my children were. But Swinnen prevented me from going, and I think that is what saved my life. When I arrived home in Kigali, around 8:00 pm or 8:30 pm, the maid told me, “Listen to the radio.” I turned on Radio Mille Collines, which was reporting that the Habyarimana plane had just been shot down. Since I often picked up friends at the airport, I had the telephone number of the control tower. I called the control tower and said, “What’s happening?” My friend said, “Look we have two planes up in the sky, one is on fire but we don’t know which, because neither is answering.”⁷⁰ Radio Mille Collines knew that it was the plane of Habyarimana but the control tower did not know. I find this a very troubling fact and I still have no answer for this.

I had told all the diplomats at all the meetings that there was only a detonator missing to blow up the powder keg that would destroy the country. This was it. I called Johan Swinnen and

⁶⁹ [Letter from Monique Mujawamariya to President Clinton](#), April 21, 1994.

⁷⁰ This reference is probably to a Belgian army transport plane, which was due to land at Kigali airport within a few minutes of the Habyarimana plane.

told him, “The plane of the President has just exploded.” My driver had dropped me off at home but had left with the car so I could not leave. I asked somebody to take me to a hotel so that I could survive. This person tried to come, but the street was blocked by soldiers. I said, well, “it doesn’t matter, I’ll call Joyce [Leader].” I said, “Joyce, come and pick me up,” and Joyce said, “Okay, I’m coming,” but she could not leave her home either. And then I understood that I was stuck and that I would have to leave by my own means.

I will not give you the whole story of calling Alison Des Forges and so on.⁷¹ I had collected documents with plans and names to give to General Dallaire because I was pushing him to act to prevent the arms from being distributed. We knew the militia men who were killing people by name. I told Dallaire, “Go and arrest these people.” I said, “Look, I’m bringing the plans to you.” The father of my children was in the Habyarimana army. I still had a good relationship with him. This is what allowed me to survive. Every time there was a meeting to kill me, somebody would tell me, don’t go there, don’t do this, don’t do that. That is how I managed to survive. Also I think, due to the actions of Joyce and Johan. Everybody knew what was happening because I was informing them all the time.

I had an appointment scheduled with General Dallaire on Friday, April 8, to give him all this information. But the plane exploded on Wednesday, April 6, so the meeting never took place. He never received the documents and I was not able to take them out of the country. However, I did manage to speak with General Dallaire around 10:30 pm on April 8. He lived about 700 meters from my house. I told him, “General, please take me from my house to a hotel, that’s all I request.” And he said, “No, Monique, calm down, don’t worry, nothing will happen, the situation is under control.” I was flabbergasted. I said, “General Dallaire, you cannot have the situation under control unless you have one million troops. You do not know these people, I know them, I know what’s going to

⁷¹ Alison Des Forges described her phone calls with Mujawamariya in an April 19, 1994 article for *The Washington Post*. Mujawamariya reported that she paid \$700 to a young soldier to give her safe passage. The article can be found in ICTR case evidence [here](#), ICTR-99-52-T, July 9, 2002.

happen. I wanted to bring you the proofs. Please, help me get out of here.” He would not do it.⁷²

However, later on when Prudence and Alison and the White House kept asking, “Where is Monique?” Dallaire found himself under pressure and announced that I was dead. He just sentenced me to death so that no one would come and look for me, because I was dead. But I was not dead, I was there.⁷³

So, I tried to survive as well I could, which is another long story. I finally arrived at the Hotel Mille Collines which looked like a public market. There was a television there, I was at the entrance door. Alison Des Forges was on CNN, crying, saying that “Monique has just died, we’re sure that she just died.” Ok, so she has died, but she is here? The people looked at the television, then they looked at me, then they looked at the TV. It was completely unreal. I did not stay long at the Mille Collines because I had access to a telephone so of course I alerted everyone. My friend Filip Reyntjens managed to put the Belgian machine in motion and they finally asked Johan to evacuate me. This is how I got out with the last plane of the Belgians which took me to Belgium and then to Canada, a whole adventure.⁷⁴

Once I arrived in Canada, I was pounced on by the media. I arrived at the airport, I was completely exhausted. When I arrived in Europe I just had a little piece of clothing around me, I had no shoes, I had wet underwear. When I came through immigration in Canada, there were dozens of

⁷² General Dallaire disputes Mujawamariya’s account of this incident. He says he did not speak to Mujawamariya by phone during this period. According to Dallaire, Mujawamariya spoke to his executive assistant, Major Brent Beardsley, who sent UNAMIR troops to pick up Mujawamariya from her house, but she did not answer the door. Dallaire adds that he was later instructed to organize a “rescue mission” for Mujawamariya at the Hotel Mille Collines by his superiors in New York, but declined because of the risks to hundreds of Tutsis who had sought refuge in the hotel. Dallaire’s version of events is reflected in a contemporaneous account of the incident, [“A request for rescue by Madam Monique,”](#) that appears to have been written on April 12, 1994. The document was released by the ICTR.

⁷³ Alison Des Forges of Human Rights Watch reported on April 8 that she believed that “Monique was killed at 6:30 this morning.” See Alison Des Forges, [“A Life Saved,”](#) Washington Post, April 19, 1994. The State Department also informed UN Under-Secretary-General Kofi Annan of “direct presidential concern” about the fate of Ms. Mujawamariya and highlighted the “importance of UN troops detailed to guard Ms. Mujawamariya having adequate rules of engagement to protect her.” See, for example, Madeleine Albright, [“Status of Monique Mujawamariya, Human Rights Activist,”](#) US Mission to the UN cable 01470, April 9, 1994.

⁷⁴ Arlene Render and Carol Rodley, [“Situation Report No. 37,”](#) US Department of State Operations Center, April 13, 1994.

TV crews waiting for me. I felt sickened, I felt I was being exploited like a product. I was no longer human so I just closed the door and went back and waited next to the luggage.

I arrived in the United States on April 21. It is the kind of memory that you can just never let go. The first thing I did, of course, was to go and see Alison Des Forges, my partner from Human Rights Watch. We then went to the State Department to meet Joyce Leader and Prudence Bushnell. There were four of us women in Pru's office. We all sat down, we knew what was going on, we looked at each other and we just all started crying.

Then we pulled ourselves together and we said, "We have to do something." We formed a plan of action: who to see, what to say. Nobody could claim that a genocide was not taking place in Rwanda because that would be a crime. But when did the genocide truly start? When I left my home on April 12, I learned that my colleague, a brilliant young man by the name of Dominic, a Hutu, had been killed that same day. By contrast, my secretary who was a Tutsi had just been saved. Somebody took her to the Mille Collines. She survived, she was a Tutsi, and is now living in Canada. I think that they were trying to eliminate all obstacles. They started with the Hutus who could prevent the killing machine from working. The Hutu intellectuals who were not known and recognized as members of the CDR or MRND did not survive, even when they did not belong to opposition parties. I think we must remember this because there is an injustice here. The Hutu intellectuals in Kigali, who were not known as members of the CDR or MRND, suffered the same fate as the Tutsi. Of course, the Hutus who managed to leave the town of Kigali with their identity cards were saved, but they could only be saved outside of Kigali. The Tutsis did not have that option. The Hutu intellectuals who stayed in Kigali were exterminated, unless they had enough money to buy their life, as was the case with some Tutsis.

Then I arrived in the United States and started trying to explain what was going on. I heard all these theories about what great powers should do in the event of a genocide, but it was a genocide, and everyone knew that. We went through all the offices of the UN to try to convince

them. I had a wonderful opportunity to speak with Mr. Riza, which left me sad. I went to see him in his office. He looked at me as if I was a little insect and said, “Yes, yes, we know what’s happening, we are working on it.” He did not even let me sit down in his office. I left immediately. It made me feel extremely sad because I thought it was clear that my distress was visible. I thought it should be clear to everyone that I had arrived from a country where genocide was taking place and that everybody had the duty to help me.

Anyway, I carried on. I thought maybe I would have better luck with a woman. So I tried to see Madeleine Albright. At least Mr. Riza did meet with me, but she would not meet me. I ran after her in a hallway.⁷⁵ I was with Janet Fleishman [a researcher from Human Rights Watch]. I tried to insist, “Madeleine, Madeleine, the United States must recognize that a genocide is taking place in Rwanda. We need help.” She looked at me and said, “Monique, that’s not my struggle, that’s your struggle. I have to do everything I can so that the decisions that are taken are to my country’s advantage.” A complete lack of humanity on the part of a woman. I thought all the testosterone at the United Nations was blocking things, but it turns out that when the women arrive, they lose their femininity and sense of delicacy as well. [Laughter] I did what I could at the UN, but after Albright, I told Janet, “Look, the United Nations is hopeless, let’s try the State Department. The greatest blockage was from the United States, so maybe we should go to the State Department.”

In Washington, it was good to meet John Shattuck [Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights] and Anthony Lake [National Security Advisor to President Clinton].⁷⁶ I think it was Lake who told me, “Monique, we do not have free reins to take decisions. You must work on the level of

⁷⁵ Mujawamariya’s recollection of her meeting with Madeleine Albright differs sharply from Albright’s. In her autobiography, *Madam Secretary*, Albright writes that she “learned much from a meeting with Monique Mujawamariya, a Rwandan human rights activist, who argued forcefully that the goal of the Hutu extremists was to wipe out the Tutsis forever.” An April 22, 1994 cable from Albright to the State Department, USUN 01696, [“Rwandan Human Rights Defender Monique Mujawamariya Meets with Albright,”](#) states that Alison Des Forges and Human Rights Watch executive director Kenneth Roth also participated in the meeting, which took place on the morning of April 21.

⁷⁶ Strobe Talbott, [“Meeting with Rwandan Human Rights Activist,”](#) US Department of State cable 110049, April 26, 1994.

Congress.” We drew up a plan with Janet Fleischman, we invaded the US Congress, we were well received there. I met a senator, Nancy Kassebaum, who had invited the Democrat, Ted Kennedy. I had attended a briefing at the US Committee for Refugees on the afternoon of April 21 where I had been threatened by the wife of the Rwandan Ambassador. She accused me of lying to “the whites” and said my children (who were staying with my parents in southern Rwanda) would pay the price. I was crushed because I knew that my children were vulnerable. I started speaking like a robot. Nancy Kassebaum saw me on the television, and said, “What’s happening to her? She looks like she’s dying.” Alison Des Forges told her, “They have just threatened her children.” While I was speaking, Ted Kennedy was lying back as if he was asleep. I thought, “My God, I’m boring him, I better say something to wake him up.” However, he was listening. Then he got up and left. I thought, “Gosh, I’ve now ruined the first meeting at Congress, what will I do.” However, Ted Kennedy went to his office, called the Rwandan Embassy and told the Ambassador, “I just heard that your wife threatened the children of Monique Mujawamariya. If anything happens to those children you will not have to deal with this woman in front of the American courts, you will have to deal with Senator Kennedy.” I can assure you that was an iron-clad guarantee for my children. Ted Kennedy saved my children. I never had the opportunity to thank him for this.⁷⁷

After this, Nancy Kassebaum advised me to go see Senator Paul Simon. She told me that he is soft spoken but can get things done. So I went to see this Paul Simon, we spoke at length, he was very interested and he gave us a small team so that we could pass on information. This led to the Congressional African caucus holding a hearing. This was all very interesting. They listened to me, I asked for their help, I asked for an intervention, I asked for the word genocide to be accepted. The chairman of the group, who had an extraordinary humanity, told me, “I listen to you and I am in

⁷⁷ Warren Christopher, “[Department Condemns Rwandan Threats Against Human Rights Activist Monique Mujawamariya](#),” US Department of State cable 108057, April 23, 1994. This cable confirms that Kennedy called Rwandan ambassador to Washington, Aloys Uwimana, on the afternoon of April 21 to express his outrage at the threat to Mujawamariya’s children. The State Department protested to the US Embassy on April 22.

despair because I know that you will not succeed. The American position will not change because the Americans do not have friends, Americans have interests, and there are no interests in Rwanda that could justify coffins full of Marines as we saw in Somalia.” I appreciated his sincerity but I was crushed by the conclusion. I thought there’s nothing left to do in Washington, so I went back to Canada.

TOM BLANTON: Tony Lake just said, “Go to Congress”?

MONIQUE MUJAWAMARIYA: Yes, Tony Lake. He advised me to go to Congress because the White House had no power to take a decision. He said if you go to Congress, the Congress could force us to decide, but that did not work.

If you will allow one minute, I would like to say that I no longer believe in the international community. It is like a mythical dragon which everyone fears but which does not actually exist. No one knows what it does. However, I do believe in great powers. They certainly exist. I believe it was the great powers who abandoned Rwanda. Why did the great powers abandon Rwanda? Because the officials who could have done something to make sure that great powers would be involved did not do anything. There is a kind of professionalism without soul, without sensibility. People sitting in offices cease to be human. These officials did not transmit the information to all those important offices in the United Nations, and therefore the information did not circulate. Because the information did not circulate, no decision could be taken. Everybody thought that each person in his own corner had the power to draw conclusions without consulting others. I think that this is what sentenced Rwanda.

I have heard that things have changed now. I sincerely hope that this is a fact because the errors made in Rwanda were based on this “individual power” of certain people. I mean what do you base your decision on when people are dying?

On another subject, I would like to ask my friend Gambari, why you kept hanging onto the Arusha Accords, even after April 6? This has always flabbergasted me because I do not understand how brilliant people, analysts, continued to support a tool that had become entirely useless. The Arusha Accords were like a tricycle. There was the MRND and the Rwandan army, there was the Rwandan Patriotic Front, and there was the internal opposition. But the MRND was gone, there was no Rwandan army. It was not a tricycle, it was not even a bicycle. If you do not take time to readjust your vehicle and make it functional, you cannot cycle with it. This never happened, meaning that Rwanda was never able to get out of the torture, the drama. The process of adjustment did not occur, and we could not go forward. How could you miss this? Thank you.

TOM BLANTON: Ambassador Gambari.

IBRAHIM GAMBARI: Thank you very much, Monique, for that question. I will seize the opportunity to also react to Michael Barnett's question about the NAM caucus, and then sadly I have to leave. First of all Monique, you are right. It is one of the most inexplicable things that we kept hanging onto this straw – a ceasefire, the Arusha Accords – when the facts on the ground no longer supported it. Part of the reason was that UNAMIR was based on Chapter VI of the UN Charter.⁷⁸ The presumption was that there was a peace to be kept and an agreement to implement. The *raison d'être* behind UNAMIR was that there was a peace accord, the Arusha agreement. We kept hoping against hope that the accord would work. The ceasefire worked initially, there is no doubt about that, but it definitely broke down in April. If you look at page 5-139 of your briefing book [April 30 cable from US Mission to the UN], you will see the following: "Gambari stressed that there were two different levels of fighting in Rwanda. One was the military hostilities between the RGF and the RPF

⁷⁸ Chapter VI of the UN Charter, Pacific Settlement of Disputes, can be found [here](#).

which could be addressed through an eventual ceasefire.”⁷⁹ I drew a distinction between that, and the other type of fighting, which was “the slaughter of innocent civilians, which would not be affected by a ceasefire.” I said that, “the second level of violence also needed Council attention.” So by that time, at least in my mind, and in the minds of quite a number of people in the Security Council, we were no longer concentrating purely on the ceasefire. But we had not abandoned Arusha, which still provided the framework for justifying any kind of peacekeeping operation under Chapter VI.

To go back to the issue of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) caucus. The NAM caucus was unusually strong in 1993, 1994 and 1995. There were about six countries represented on the Security Council. With six countries plus China, we did not constitute a veto, but the big powers needed us in order to get the nine out of fifteen votes required to pass any resolution.

NAM members agreed with the French on occasions, but we sharply parted company on the question of Operation Turquoise authorized by the UN Security Council on June 22 in Resolution 929.⁸⁰ Nigeria said it would not support Operation Turquoise because we felt it was a diversion. UNAMIR was not getting the Chapter VII mandate it needed but Operation Turquoise was going to get it. You also had parallel command structures, which we did not support. Nigeria did not have a veto, but our delegation abstained, along with four other countries: New Zealand, Brazil, Pakistan and China.⁸¹ We were beginning to understand what needed to be done and when it needed to be done. The NAM caucus was strong, we were cohesive, and we met regularly. US Ambassador Madeleine Albright met with us almost every month to explain the positions of the US and ask for support.

The questions remained, however, what did we know, when did we know it, and what did we do about it? Like other members of the Council, particularly those of us without an embassy in

⁷⁹ Madeleine Albright, [“Next Steps on Rwanda – April 29,”](#) US Mission to the UN cable 01817, April 30, 1994.

⁸⁰ [UN Security Council Resolution 929 \(1994\)](#), June 22, 1994.

⁸¹ Colin Keating, [“Security Council: Rwanda,”](#) New Zealand Mission to the UN, C04656, June 22, 1994.

Kigali, we were certainly slow to grasp the gravity of what was happening immediately after April 6. But our opinions began to shift. That is why I submitted a draft resolution on behalf of the NAM caucus on April 13.⁸² The operative paragraph was paragraph five. “We propose that the Security Council should decide, in the light of the current security situation in Rwanda, to increase the strength of UNAMIR and to revise its mandate to enable it to contribute to the restoration of law and order.” As early as April 13, we recognized that the situation was grave and that something serious needed to be done.

I want to refer you to page 5-137 of the briefing book [a USUN cable from April 30].⁸³ Referencing the informal Security Council session of April 28, Madeleine Albright reported, “Nigerian Ambassador Gambari relayed that the regional African group at the UN which included more than fifty members held a meeting that morning, and supported several steps that could be taken on Rwanda. They will recommend to the OAU deployment of a mixed contingent of police and troops. Nigeria pointed out that any such OAU deployment would require outside support, since the OAU has few resources.”

We recognized the situation was grave and that we needed to strengthen UNAMIR. We [Africans] began the process of encouraging UNSC members to contribute troops to a possible expansion of UNAMIR. Of course, we failed spectacularly in urging forceful action to end the massacres.

I took over from Colin Keating as President of the Security Council in May. We helped to get the mandate of UNAMIR strengthened in Resolution 918 of May 17.⁸⁴ We authorized an increase in the force level from 270 troops to 5,500 troops. At that time, of course, we did not know that the RPF would take over and the genocide would stop. In the end, the May 17 resolution was a sad

⁸² David Hannay, [“My Two IPTs: Rwanda.”](#) UK Mission to the UN Telno 1342, April 14, 1994.

⁸³ Madeleine Albright, [“Next Steps on Rwanda – April 29.”](#) US Mission to the UN cable 01817, April 30, 1994.

⁸⁴ [UN Security Council Resolution 918 \(1994\)](#), May 17, 1994.

palliative. The first troops did not arrive until much later, when it was all over, as General Dallaire said.

TOM BLANTON: Not until August.

IBRAHIM GAMBARI: If there was one person we managed to convince, it was Boutros-Ghali. If you look at pages 5-151 and 5-153 of the briefing book, you will find his letter to the President of the Security Council, Colin Keating, dated April 29, in which he says: "In these circumstances, I urge the Security Council to re-examine the decisions which it took in Resolution 912 and to consider again what action, including forceful action, it could take, or could authorize Member States to take, to restore law and order and end the massacres."⁸⁵ Even the Secretary-General did not use the word genocide.

TOM BLANTON: But Ambassador, this is already April 29 and 30? This was a point when Ambassador Kovanda has drafted a Presidential Statement that contained the word genocide...⁸⁶

IBRAHIM GAMBARI: The Secretary-General knew that if you use the word genocide, then there was an obligation to do something under the International Convention Against Genocide. The big boys were not prepared to do anything under the International Convention. Boutros-Ghali did not use the word genocide, but he got the message.

TOM BLANTON: They were blocked by the great powers from using the genocide word is what you are saying.

⁸⁵ Colin Keating, "[Security Council: Rwanda.](#)" April 30, 1994.

⁸⁶ Kofi Annan, "[Security Council consultations.](#)" United Nations Outgoing Code Cable UNAMIR 1351, April 28, 1994.

IBRAHIM GAMBARI: The NAM resolution of April 13 was never voted upon... This was part of the failure of the UN Secretariat. Often, the Secretariat would tell member states, particularly the powerful states, what they wanted to hear, not what they needed to know. That is why the 2000 Brahimi report, which was commissioned by the UN, made the point that the Secretariat should not tell Member States what they want to hear but what they need to know.⁸⁷ If that was not a problem, they would not have set up an entire commission under former Algerian Foreign Minister Lakhdar Brahimi to look into the failures of peacekeeping.

Now let me just end by looking at the lessons from Rwanda. One is that it is very clear that the first obligation of foreign governments is to withdraw their people from danger in the case of tragic events. That is legitimate, but it shows that the ultimate responsibility is ours [Africans]. They will do exactly the same in the future if, God forbid, there is another Rwanda. They will evacuate their citizens. No apologies are needed, Prudence Bushnell. But this shows that they do not feel a primary obligation for the deaths of hundreds of thousands of people.

The second point, the lesson here, is guess who stayed behind after UNAMIR was drawn down? It was the Ghanaians and the Tunisians who stayed and saved lives. We must not forget that. They are the ones who stayed, and they did a lot of good.

TOM BLANTON: And some Canadians?

IBRAHIM GAMBARI: Yes, but how many? I am talking about troops to save lives. Finally, the African Union drew lessons from Rwanda. Its predecessor organization, the Organization for African Unity, the OAU, which disbanded in 2002, was founded on the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of member states. But after Rwanda, African states decided that they will no longer be indifferent in the case of massive violations of human rights in any country in the continent, they

⁸⁷ [Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations](#), A/55/305-S/2000/809, August 21, 2000.

will intervene and they will set aside the principle of non-interference in the affairs of Member States, particularly when it comes to genocide. The African Union gradually developed a capacity to intervene...The African Union now has a Peace and Security Council, which we did not have before. They have agreed to establish an African Standby Force of five brigades, one in each of the five regions. They are developing a rapid deployment capability for the Standby Force. In fact, the South Africans came only last January with something called ACIRC, African Capacity for Immediate Response to Crisis. All this results from the fact that Africans have realized that they have to do the heavy lifting themselves, at least in the first instance before the UN and the international community steps in or takes over the peacekeeping.

Ultimately, when push comes to shove, Africans have to rely primarily on themselves in responding to massive violations of human rights and genocide. There is the international community, of course. The major powers still have a role, and must be held accountable for their responsibility under the UN Charter. The Security Council operates on the principle of collective security. A threat to peace anywhere should be seen as a threat to peace everywhere, requiring a collective response. The Charter of the United Nations does not say that the Security Council has primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security except when it comes to Africa.

TOM BLANTON: Thank you very much. Jean-Hervé.

JEAN-HERVÉ BRADOL: I would like to come back to what Monique was talking about, people were coming out of Rwanda during the genocide and trying to get the international community to react. I returned to Paris in early May 1994. It was clear that our friends in UNAMIR were not able to do anything. Many peacekeepers had left. The few who remained were not very effective. The field hospital was not being attacked. As I said before, we had a Rwandan army colonel functioning as a

liaison officer and we had authorization to circulate. Of course it was also very dangerous but that showed there was some room for negotiating with the interim government. Although we had little hope from the UN, we still had some hope that the French government would intervene with its friends to reduce the massacres and create sanctuaries for those who were being pursued. At this point, the French government had not condemned the genocide in Rwanda a single time. In order to get them involved, we started an aggressive media campaign on the theme of the responsibility of France, both on local TV and radio stations, and the first channel of French TV, which has several million viewers a night.⁸⁸

After this media campaign, the African cell of the Élysée called us. The President of Médecins Sans Frontières, Philippe Biberson, and I had a meeting with Bruno Delaye and Dominique Pin. We asked them to persuade their friends in Kigali and elsewhere in Rwanda to help the victims of the genocide.⁸⁹ Bruno Delaye gave us the usual runaround about Arusha, explaining the diplomacy that France was conducting. Philippe stressed the need to do something to help the victims in Rwanda. Bruno Delaye told us that he was unable to reach his Rwandan correspondents on the telephone. Since he saw that we were highly annoyed with this type of answer, he said, “Don’t get excited, and don’t go to the media. If Médecins Sans Frontières still has problems, you should speak directly to the French President, François Mitterrand.” At this point, Philippe Biberson said, “No, we do not want to meet the President just to hear more talk about the Arusha Accords and the same French policies.” He refused the invitation. A few days later, Philippe and our director of operations, Brigitte Vasset, went to see the Foreign Minister, Alain Juppé. Alain Juppé recognized that a genocide was underway in Rwanda. I think he was the first French official who spoke in such terms.

⁸⁸ See Jean-Hervé Bradol’s [interview to TF1](#), May 16, 1994.

⁸⁹ Mitterrand’s African advisor, Bruno Delaye, met with MSF France officials on May 19, 1994. He described the meeting in a memo to Mitterrand, available [here](#). The memo includes an annotation from Élysée spokesman Hubert Védrine advising Mitterrand that “no response was necessary on your part.”

Later he became a bit more ambiguous, he spoke about “several genocides,” so it all became a bit more confused. Here again we did not get a clear line about what could be done in Rwanda. Juppé told us that he did not really know exactly what was going on in the African cell of the Élysée.⁹⁰ He says, “I don’t know everything, I don’t know.” Finally, at the beginning of June, we were invited for a meeting with François Mitterrand. We were told that there had been a change in the French position. There were three of us who were received at the Élysée by Mitterrand on June 14: Philippe Biberson, our president, Bernard Pécoul, our general director, and me. The first question that Philippe asked the President was, “Mr. President, how would you characterize the interim government?” Mitterrand replied, “As a gang of assassins.” He added that they had received Agathe Habyarimana and that if they had let her do what she wanted, she would have called for genocide on French radio stations.⁹¹ This was the first significant change we had observed on the part of the French government since the beginning of the events. We saw a change in the rhetoric of French officials. Mitterrand also told us that they were going to carry out Operation Turquoise.

Our colleagues from the Belgian branch of Médecins Sans Frontières had already gone to the UN Security Council and met with Ambassador Keating.⁹² I met with Donald Steinberg, the head of the Africa desk at the National Security Council, on a very practical question. I had no hope of getting anything from the UN or the US, but we wanted to persuade the Americans to give some of their APCs from Somalia to UNAMIR, to make it possible to evacuate the wounded across the front lines, which was very risky. We needed this type of equipment for the evacuations. Donald Steinberg explained to me very rapidly that to his great regret the US administration refused to use the word genocide, that he disagreed with that, and that it would be impossible to transfer the APCs

⁹⁰ Juppé was a member of the right-wing government, which was running France “in cohabitation” with the Socialist-controlled presidency.

⁹¹ MSF officials met with Mitterrand on June 14, 1994 according to Bradol’s testimony to the French parliamentary commission.

⁹² The Secretary-General of MSF [met with Keating on April 25, 1994](#) to brief him on the massacre of Tutsis in Butare. As a result of this meeting, Keating began using the term “genocide” to describe events in Rwanda.

for administrative and financial reasons.⁹³ There was a huge amount of US military equipment in East Africa because of the operations in Somalia. So those were the actions that we took and the rather meager results that we obtained.

TOM BLANTON: Filip do you have a question?

FILIP REYNTJENS: It is not a question, but we are talking about lessons learned. We have seen yesterday and today that this debate is very often about facts, how you know the facts, how you interpret the facts, and how you relay the facts to people who make decisions. Sorry to complicate things, because I am going to complicate them, but there is one blind spot that has struck me for the last one and a half days. That is role played by the RPF. They have been completely under the radar screen during these two days but they were obviously a party to the conflict. There seems to be an assumption that, first of all, they were the good guys and that they were serious about implementing the Arusha Peace Accord. Michael Barnett even went so far as suggesting we should have helped them after the genocide began on April 7, that we should have thrown our weight behind the RPF because we could not end the genocide ourselves. I think this is a dangerous assumption.

Relevant here is the book, *Rwanda: De la Guerre au Genocide* that André Guichaoua has written, based on documents, unfortunately for the moment just in French.⁹⁴ I think an English version is going to come out. It shows that the RPF pursued a strategy of tension during the years preceding the genocide. I would not say that they were forcing the Hutu extremists towards genocide. That would be too strong, but certainly they were creating conditions that helped in that

⁹³ Bradol also met with USUN official Rick Inderfurth on June 17, 1994. Inderfurth assured Bradol that APCs would be provided. See Madeleine Albright, "[Rwanda – Meeting between Dr. Jean-Herve Bradol, Director of the Rwanda Operation for Medecins Sans Frontieres and Amb. Inderfurth,](#)" US Mission to the UN cable 02550, June 20, 1994. In the end, the APCs did not arrive in time to be useful.

⁹⁴ More information can be found on the website for Guichaoua's book [here](#).

direction. Part of the strategy of tension would be grenade and mine incidents prior to April 1994, the killing of the so-called Hutu moderates like senior MDR official Emmanuel Gapyisi in May 1993 and the Minister of Public Works Felicien Gatabazi in February 1994.⁹⁵

There were also obvious crimes against humanity and war crimes committed by the RPF during the genocide. I am not talking here about what happened in the Congo in 1996 and 1997, but during the genocide from early April 1994 onwards. There is overwhelming evidence of the RPF itself committing crimes against humanity and war crimes – not, I think, genocide. General Dallaire is not here now, but you can read in his book, *Shake Hands with the Devil*, that the RPF felt they had a war to win and were not that interested in saving Tutsi. That is a quote from the Dallaire book. Dallaire goes and sees Kagame on May 7 to say that there are hundreds of Tutsis stranded at the Hotel Mille Collines in Kigali who are threatened with death by the RGF unless the RPF stops shelling government positions. Kagame says that he has a war to win, and uses the term “sacrifice.”⁹⁶

[Refers to a statement put out by the RPF Political Bureau on April 30, 1994, signed by Claude Dusaidi and Gerald Gahima, opposing UN intervention in Rwanda]. The RPF said, “It is too late now, the genocide is over, all Tutsi are dead.”⁹⁷ That was April 30, 1994, but we know that several hundreds of thousands of Tutsi were still alive at that point. I am surprised to see that the RPF has remained under the radar even today. I can understand that was the case in April through July of 1994. The RPF was fairly efficient in cordoning off the scene of atrocities and controlling...access to the conflict theater. We did not need the reports from UN human rights

⁹⁵ Warren Christopher, “[Official – Informal](#),” US Department of State cable 044970, February 22, 1994.

⁹⁶ The actual quote, attributed to Kagame in Dallaire, *Shake Hands with the Devil*, page 358, reads as follows: “They [Hutu extremists] are practicing their age-old blackmail methods and it will not work anymore. There will be sacrifices in this war. If the refugees have to be killed for the cause, they will be considered as having been part of the sacrifice.”

⁹⁷ The actual language in the RPF letter was as follows: “The time for UN intervention is long past. The genocide is almost completed. Most of the potential victims of the regime have either been killed or have long since fled.” Claude Dusaidi and Gerald Gahima, “[Statement by the Political Bureau of the RPF on the Proposed Deployment of a UN Intervention Force in Rwanda](#),” April 30, 1994.

official Bob Gersony, in September of 1994, to know that the RPF was massively killing civilian Hutu. [Mentions situation reports from Refugees International in Tanzania].

The reason I said I am complicating things is that what we have heard up until now is the conventional wisdom, the politically correct story of good guys and bad guys. I think it is a major mistake to see conflicts in terms of good guys and bad guys. This is a story of bad guys, period. The consequences of seeing conflicts in good-guy, bad-guy terms have been two terribly devastating regional wars in the Democratic Republic of Congo, a Great African War involving a number of countries, not millions of people killed directly but certainly hundreds of thousands of people killed, in addition to those killed in Rwanda. I am going to make this a bit difficult, and certainly in the presence of our friends from the RPF, but I think this needs to be said.

TOM BLANTON: Thank you Filip. On this point, Michael?

MICHAEL BARNETT: My point was not that supplying the RPF should have been the option chosen. My point concerned the narrowness of the conversation about the options, and that there needed to be a full discussion. To reply to Filip's provocative statement, I should also say that one of the problems in getting a response to crimes against humanity and genocide is often the portrayal of moral equivalence...the notion which crops up in American rhetoric that they are all bad guys. They are all bad guys in Syria, they are all bad guys in Bosnia, and they are all bad guys in Rwanda. As a consequence, since they are all bad guys, we do not have to do anything. What I hear you saying is that one of the lessons we should learn is that there are bad guys wherever you look and, as a consequence, there is moral equivalence and the international community, or the United States, is off the hook. That is the kind of argument that people have to confront in the United States when you try to talk about any kind of response to genocide or mass atrocity. I appreciate the attempt to

set the record straight, but it does play into a broader conversation that makes it difficult for genocide prevention.

TOM BLANTON: Thank you. David Hannay.

DAVID HANNAY: I will apologize in advance to our Rwandan friends around the table if I do not concentrate on “Rwandan lessons learned” but lessons learned from what happened in Rwanda, because I think that is more useful in terms of the way the international community handles things. The first point is that I do think we need to be careful not to overlook the fact that there have been some quite substantial lessons learned from Rwanda. Ibrahim Gambari referred to that quite rightly. For example, much closer cooperation now exists between the United Nations and the African Union, a completely different institution from the Organization for African Unity, with much greater peacemaking and peacekeeping capabilities. There have been huge steps forward between 1994 and today. One of the lessons that needed to be learned as illustrated by what we heard was about the difficulties of the United Nations putting into effect an Arusha agreement that they had had no part in negotiating. I think we need to recognize that the AU-UN framework is working better now, but there is still a long way to go.

The other big lesson, of course, is the Responsibility to Protect. The Responsibility to Protect is an emerging norm of the United Nations, as Kofi Annan calls it. It was endorsed by all Member States at the World Summit of 2005. It is a hugely important breakthrough. As Ibrahim said, it has displaced the original UN Charter provision that you did not interfere in the internal affairs of Member States. It is very contentious. There has been a very vigorous debate about one or two of the ways in which R2P has been used, as in Libya, and there has been some buyer’s remorse about what was signed up to in 2005. I was on the panel that produced R2P following the report by

former Canadian foreign minister Lloyd Axworthy, and am a strong supporter. I still think that it is a huge breakthrough and we need to work on it.

There is a very good Special Advisor to the Secretary-General now, Jennifer Welsh, a Canadian, who took over from Ed Luck. They are trying to work away from the belief that R2P is simply about military intervention. It is about prevention by any number of different means—and, Heaven knows, Rwanda is a lesson in how prevention would have been better than intervention. The French government has recently proposed that the five permanent members should not veto a Security Council resolution designed to avoid an impending genocide. This may not succeed (I think Russia and China will probably block it), but it deserves to succeed. It is very important.

The big problem about R2P is that the developing countries--the African countries, Asian countries, the Latin Americans--are very suspicious of it. If it is to become a part of the international picture, those suspicions have got to be overcome. Advocates of R2P need to explain it better, make it more “user friendly,” less of a kind of recipe for military intervention, more an instrument of prevention.

This lesson has already been learned. There is no point in rewinding to 1994 and starting all over again. Good things have happened under R2P like the work that was done after the disputed elections in Kenya in 2007, like what is being done by France now in Mali and the Central African Republic, what was done in the Côte d'Ivoire after the disputed election of 2010. I would argue that the western military intervention in Libya in 2011 saved a huge number of lives, although the situation that has emerged is a very chaotic one. And there are terrible failures like Syria. If there ever was a case of responsibility to protect that is not being fulfilled by the international community, it is Syria.

On more technical lessons to be learned, it does strike me that if a regional organization or group of neighbors starts putting together a peace agreement they want the United Nations or the African Union to implement (as Tanzania did, in the case of Arusha), then they must build an active

UN component (not just observers) into the process of negotiation from the beginning. When the handover takes place, both the regional grouping and the UN should know what they are letting themselves in for. That was a pretty obvious lesson from Arusha.

The Security Council also needs to become a bit more flexible. We discussed the endless reiteration of ceasefire calls, the calls to return to the Arusha agreement, failing to take account of the changing nature of the problem as events unfolded. There was a lack of flexibility there that is pretty frightening.

One thing that came out to me from all of these discussions is the crucial importance of the personalities of the two key players in any peacekeeping operation, the Force Commander and the SRSG, the Special Representative for the Secretary-General. There is pretty overwhelming evidence that the SRSG in Rwanda [Booh-Booh] was a liability and made practically no contribution at all. I think the Force Commander [Dallaire] was very good. It is hard to fault him in the appalling circumstances he faced. But I know another operation, in Angola, where the qualities were exactly reversed. There was an SRSG, Margaret Anstee, who was extremely tough and strong and wanted to stick with the peace process [1992-1993] and there was a Force Commander who refused to lift a finger. As Angola slid back into civil war, an awful lot of people got killed. Although it was not a genocide, the same failings appeared.

It strikes me that the UN has still not mastered the art of choosing a good team who work together, a Special Representative and a Force Commander. They need some more structured system for choosing these people. They have to give the Secretary-General the right to choose. He is the person who has to take the decision, supported by the Security Council. But there should be a panel of people who understand these issues and can interview the various candidates for these posts and decide whether they are likely to be able to cope with the situation they are going to face. There is not enough "system" to the process: it is too hit or miss.

Those are a few lessons that occurred to me on the basis of these really extraordinary discussions, which have advanced not so much our knowledge (much of this is in the public domain), but perhaps our understanding.

TOM BLANTON: Thank you. Let me call on General Anyidoho.

HENRY ANYIDOH: Thank you very much Tom. I just want to clarify one point. We talked about Ghana and Tunisia staying on in Rwanda after the withdrawal of other UNAMIR contingents. In UN missions, you have unarmed military observers and armed contingents, which we call the “formed troops.” We had formed troops from Ghana and Tunisia, but we also had observers from other African countries who were extremely useful. They were deployed ahead of the UNAMIR as AU observers. We absorbed them. The information about the attempt on General Dallaire’s life came from one of those observers, Captain Sherif from Senegal, who told us one evening, “General Dallaire, you will be killed if you go out again, because the Hutu extremists are looking for you.” From that time on, we decided that General Dallaire would not cross the bridge to the RGF-controlled side of Kigali. Even though I spoke no French, I had to go with a French interpreter to meet the provisional defense minister, General Augustin Bizimungu, on June 26 so that we would not get our Force Commander killed. So, the observers did a lot of useful work.

Many people ask me, “What was going through your mind when other people moved out and you decided to stay?” My simple answer has always been that there was no alternative. We had to stay. We saw people being killed. As professional military officers, we simply could not abandon the people of Rwanda. That was what was going through my mind. Leaving was morally wrong, professionally wrong, and therefore we were going to stay. Fortunately, my country endorsed this position. We stayed on and did what little we could to save countless Rwandese who otherwise would also have been slaughtered.

The departure of the diplomatic community from Kigali affected us very badly. They left too early. Once the killers knew there was no referee, they had a free hand to do whatever they wanted. We were overwhelmed by the effort of saving lives. The presence of the diplomats had offered us some protection, but they all left through Bujumbura where US Marines had deployed.⁹⁸ As Dallaire said, we felt abandoned. Most of the intelligence we were getting came through the embassies. Now that they were gone, we lost that capacity also. Nobody can force another country to stay in a situation like Rwanda if they do not want to stay. However, diplomats do play a very important role in conflict situations. So that is another lesson.

Another lesson is related to what Ambassador Hannay just spoke about, regarding the selection and appointment of Special Representatives of the Secretary-General. When I helped establish the peacekeeping mission in Darfur (UNAMID) in 2007, I discovered that it could be a mistake to appoint a pure diplomat, someone not used to perilous situations, as Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of Mission in certain cases. He or she may simply not be able to withstand the challenges. Our Head of Mission, Rudolphe Adada, was not prepared to stay in Darfur. When the Security Council adopted Resolution 1769, on July 31, 2007, setting up the hybrid AU-UN Mission, it was categorically stated that he will be located in Darfur.⁹⁹

Even today, we have a situation in Central African Republic developing into something close to a genocide. Are we waiting for a genocide to happen before we say never again? As somebody who was abandoned once before, along with my troops and General Dallaire, I wish that something could be done about the situation in the Central African Republic. But who would do it? Thank you.

TOM BLANTON: Thank you very much. Jean-Marc de La Sabliere.

⁹⁸ Arlene Render and Mark Kennon, "[Situation Report No.12.](#)" US Department of State Operations Center, April 9, 1994.

⁹⁹ [UN Security Council Resolution 1769 \(2007\)](#), July 31, 2007.

JEAN-MARC ROCHEREAU DE LA SABLIERE: I want to tell you how we analyzed things in the weeks that followed the assassination of President Habyarimana, at least at the Foreign Ministry. I was director of African Affairs at this time. There was a fairly long period in which we continued to pursue a ceasefire, to get back to the Arusha accords. The question is why we stuck with this line for so long. The answer is mixed. President Museveni of Uganda came to Paris in the month of May. The communiqué at the end of his visit still talked about a ceasefire, Arusha. The idea, perhaps mistaken, was that only the ceasefire would stop the massacres, allow us to bring in humanitarian aid, and re-launch political discussions. This idea was widely shared, it was not just a mantra we were repeating. Now it seems extraordinary that we kept on saying that for such a long time.

I was just re-reading the report of the French parliamentary commission of inquiry, where I say that it took us several weeks to understand the magnitude of the tragedy. Of course, we saw massacres, we saw chaos, but the magnitude only became apparent fairly late. I think the fact that the diplomats left at the beginning probably contributed to slowing down the realization of the magnitude of the tragedy. Of course, we were getting information from Missionaries, from journalists, from NGOs, but it took a certain time, a few weeks.

A third point. Foreign minister Alain Juppé could not tolerate on a human level what was happening in Rwanda. I think he was the first western minister to use publicly the term genocide. He used it in the middle of May at a meeting of the Human Rights Commission. I was there when he decided to use the expression. It was not a legal decision, it was a decision that came from his heart. He said, "Why don't we say it's a genocide? I'm going to say it." Around the same period, in the middle of May, my colleagues were shaken by what was happening, and frustrated by the fact that we could not even get Chapter VII authorization for Resolution 918 in the Security Council.¹⁰⁰ Chapter VII was reserved for paragraph C on arms sales. This was a huge frustration. We also became frustrated by the non-application of this Resolution. I remember the multiplication of

¹⁰⁰ [UN Security Council Resolution 918 \(1994\)](#), May 17, 1994.

appeals, telegrams, of attempts to persuade countries to implement their promises to transport troops and to supply troops. We were ready to help the Senegalese to go there. There was this huge frustration over the non-application of this Resolution which led to the decision on Operation Turquoise.

On the lessons, I share the views of David Hannay. I think that the recent Security Council resolution on the use of force in Kivu was a good resolution. It gives UN forces the possibility of using force, and it was used to get [the Rwanda-backed guerrilla group] M23 out of Goma. I think the Secretariat is working better. We learned some useful lessons from the 2000 Brahimi report. There is one thing that the UN is not good at—and I see no progress on this point-- is the question of rapid deployment. The United Nations system is not equipped to respond to an emergency. This is why France intervened in the Central African Republic, with the idea of passing the baby on to the United Nations. We have a military capacity in certain African countries with pre-deployed forces, so this allowed us to act. It is very difficult for the United Nations to deploy troops rapidly because they need agreement from governments. Governments are not willing to give *a priori* agreement. They give agreement in specific situations. Even if they accept the idea that the troops be prepared in advance, you still need an agreement. In order to make progress, we need to have the ability to react rapidly. The Responsibility to Protect concept was a great advance. I was Ambassador at the 2005 summit so I know very well how it was negotiated and got it adopted. It was very difficult and, in the end, it did not have the support of everybody. After what happened in Libya, we are seeing a bit of brake on the application of this principle. I am more concerned by the future than the past. I think that the international community must work to see that events like the Rwandan genocide do not happen again. The entire international community should endorse the Responsibility to Protect principle, which is not yet the case.

TOM BLANTON: Thank you. Jean-Hervé, just a quick intervention and then I want to go to the coffee break.

JEAN-HERVÉ BRADOL: Monsieur de La Sabliere, my question is what actions your administration undertook between early April and mid-June to stop your Rwandan allies from carrying out massacres?

JEAN-MARC ROCHEREAU DE LA SABLIERE: They were not our allies...

JEAN-HERVÉ BRADOL: Fine. We have been hearing the same answer for twenty years, which is why you find yourself in the situation you are in.

TOM BLANTON: Let's take a coffee break. We will be back here in fifteen minutes.

[BREAK]

TOM BLANTON: Thank you all very much. We are in the last hour of this extraordinary discussion. There is a story in today's *New York Times* based on the UN Security Council informal session documents, which includes some interesting points and may raise the profile of our work.¹⁰¹ Let me just say, in this last hour, I would appreciate if people could make quick points, as the Spanish say, *punto, punto, punto*. What are the lessons? What are your takeaways based on your experience, what you saw, what you heard? Let me call on Patrick Mazimhaka, and then Charles Murigande, to start off.

¹⁰¹ Mark Landler, "Declassified UN Cables reveal turning point in Rwanda crisis of 1994," *New York Times*, June 3, 2014. <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/06/04/world/africa/un-cables-reveal-a-turning-point-in-rwanda-crisis.html>

PATRICK MAZIMHAKA: I do not need to add anything to the discussion we had today about the United Nations Security Council. I was in New York trying to lobby the Council to recognize the genocide, and get something moving. It was complicated because of the structure of the United Nations itself and the procedures that they have.

David Hannay said we should have involved the United Nations in the Arusha negotiations. I must say that we tried to involve the United Nations in these negotiations, but there was absolutely no response. They ended up sending us someone from the UNDP office in Dar es Salaam. When we got to the planning period for implementation, including the dispatch of an international force, then they sent a military planner, Colonel Isoa Tikoka from Fiji, who worked with us on every detail of the program that some have called unrealistic. We worked on it with UN peacekeeping (DPKO) representatives in Arusha. That was not the problem.

The Responsibility to Protect concept entrusted to the UN has run into problems because of the slow, heavy, nature of UN decision-making. My takeaway is that we have to strengthen the regional mechanisms for peacekeeping, together with the United Nations. The UN and the AU negotiated the first hybrid force in Darfur in 2007. Africans can provide large numbers of troops very rapidly and the UN uses these troops to mobilize the necessary resources. African Union Member States are also members of the UN...Africans account for about one third of the UN member states, so we are pooling our resources together. Had Rwanda been able to benefit from such a UN-AU arrangement, we could have got the force we needed in time. Today there are such forces doing good things. Most interesting for me is Central African Republic where the French Army and the Rwandese Army are working closely together to try to save the situation in Bangui. So nothing is taboo. We can do things together if we have the interest of the people at heart.

TOM BLANTON: Thank you, Patrick, very much. Minister Murigande?

CHARLES MURIGANDE: I wanted to comment on an issue raised by Professor Filip Reyntjens, concerning the letter that Gahima and Dusaidi sent to the UN Security Council on April 30, when the Security Council discussed the possibility of reinforcing UNAMIR.¹⁰² I want to explain why we wrote that letter. When the genocide started, instead of reinforcing UNAMIR, the international community decided to withdraw almost all of UNAMIR. We felt abandoned. Almost a whole month goes by, people are dying daily by the thousands, and then we see a proposal for the reinforcement of UNAMIR. We interpreted this proposal as a desire to do everything possible to save a government that had just committed genocide. That is why we wrote this letter. People were being killed by the thousands and nothing was done. When the government responsible for the genocide started having difficulties, they wanted to deploy to save that government. We issued that letter knowing very well that if the UN wanted to deploy, they will deploy anyway. They voted, in any case, for Resolution 918 on May 17, authorizing an increase in UNAMIR to 5,500 troops, despite our letter.¹⁰³ But we wanted to tell the international community what we felt.

TOM BLANTON: Will you go to your lessons?

CHARLES MURIGANDE: I would start by agreeing with my sister Monique on the issue of the international community. Throughout this experience, we felt that the concept of the “international community” was empty and hollow, used by the powerful countries to promote their interests. They cover themselves in a cloak called the “international community” to achieve their interests. That does not mean that we should stop trying to build a real international community but this is the reality so far. That is one lesson for us Rwandans.

¹⁰² Claude Dusaidi and Gerald Gahima, ["Statement by the Political Bureau of the RPF on the Proposed Deployment of a UN Intervention Force in Rwanda,"](#) April 30, 1994.

¹⁰³ [UN Security Council Resolution 918 \(1994\)](#), May 17, 1994.

Another lesson we have drawn from this tragedy, and the experience of being abandoned in our time of need, is that we should never be bystanders when civilian populations are threatened. It is this commitment never to be bystanders that has led to our participation in UN peacekeeping operations. We are a small country but Rwanda is now the sixth largest troop contributor to UN peacekeeping operations. When we deploy our troops abroad, we always give them clear instructions. Usually the President talks to the peacekeepers or, if he is away, the Chief of Staff talks to them. He tells them, "You have a mandate either from the African Union or the UN, which you should respect as much as possible. But you have a higher mandate, the mandate of saving people. You should always save people even if it means you have to violate your instructions from the UN. If necessary, face a UN court martial. If you fail to save people, you will end up facing a court martial back home. This is another lesson we drew from our abandonment in 1994. Thank you.

TOM BLANTON: Thank you very much. David Scheffer.

DAVID SCHEFFER: I have three very quick points. First, there were two documents that had an influence on our internal discussions in Washington. One was the Secretary-General's letter of April 13, following his discussion with the Belgian Foreign Minister, which gave our friends at the Pentagon a basis for examining the scope of the peacekeeping operation.¹⁰⁴ Even though its expressed intent to completely withdraw UNAMIR was denied shortly thereafter by a UN official, the damage had been done in Washington.¹⁰⁵ The April 13 letter provided a foundation for a very skeptical view of UNAMIR expansion by the Pentagon, not the State Department, but the Pentagon.

The letter that Charles Murigande just noted from President Kagame in early May was also very influential in our internal discussions because it provided a basis for being cynical about

¹⁰⁴ Colin Keating, "[Security Council: Rwanda.](#)" New Zealand Mission to the UN No. 2430, April 13, 1994.

¹⁰⁵ United Nations Security Council, "[Report of the Independent Inquiry into the Actions of the United Nations during the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda.](#)" UN S/1999/1257, December 16, 1999, page 20.

actually proceeding with a new UNAMIR mission.¹⁰⁶ It provided the basis for cynical remarks at the policy table which do not always come through in the published documents. Our Defense Department colleagues would wave this document in front of you and say, "This is why we are proposing protective zones in Burundi, and not in Rwanda." That view, of course, was seen to be absurd when it hit the Security Council. Nevertheless, this kind of document, which led to the RPF's intentions being interpreted in Washington in certain ways, did influence policy discussions.

The second point I want to make concerns the use of the word "genocide." A lot has been written about this of course. I have tried to stress the need for de-emphasizing the importance of the word "genocide" which can delay effective responses. Why? Because of the legal analysis it invites, which delays and obfuscates what actually needs to be done by policy makers. I introduced the term "atrocities crimes" as a means of saying to policy makers that we do not know yet if this is technically a crime against humanity or genocide – all of that may come out in a court room ten years from now – but we need to respond very effectively to what we know are crimes of high magnitude. Let us call them "atrocities crimes." They might be crimes against humanity, they might be genocide, they might be massive war crimes, but we need a policy decision to respond to what begins as a crime against humanity but which may ultimately be determined to be a genocide. Who knows? But we have to have a response. That is the lesson learned from Rwanda that certainly pervaded my time in government during the 1990s.

The third and final point concerns Presidential Decision Directive 25, which my colleague John Shattuck commented on earlier today.¹⁰⁷ I was the USUN drafter of PDD-25. I think it is important to understand that the drafting process began very diligently in February 1993. We were drafting that document long before the October 1993 events in Mogadishu. I remember, in the

¹⁰⁶ Claude Dusaidi and Gerald Gahima, "[Statement by the Political Bureau of the RPF on the Proposed Deployment of a UN Intervention Force in Rwanda](#)," April 30, 1994.

¹⁰⁷ United States Presidential Decision Directive/NSC-25, "[US Policy on Reforming Multilateral Peace Operations](#)," May 3, 1994.

summer of 1993, the intensive finalization of that draft document. Mogadishu simply delayed the release of it because we had to go back to Congress for more consultations. The intention was to impose a discipline on the decision-making of peacekeeping. Ultimately, in May and June of 1994, and I think Ambassador Keating could confirm this, there was a response from the UN and the Security Council proposing a greater discipline in the creation and conduct of peacekeeping operations.

It is very important for the historical record to understand that a deal was struck in Washington on PDD-25. It was between the State Department and the Pentagon. It was an exchange of a check for a checklist. The State Department was desperate to get peacekeeping out of the State Department budget because it was swamping the State Department budget. The deal struck with the Pentagon was that if there was a Chapter VI operation involving US combat forces, the Pentagon would pay for it. If it was any kind of Chapter VII operation, the Pentagon would pay for it. If it was a traditional Chapter VI operation with no US combat forces involved, the State Department would pay for it. That took months to negotiate in 1993. In exchange for that, the Pentagon got to impose a very disciplined checklist on what had to be confirmed before the US Representative to the UN could vote for Chapter VI or Chapter VII resolutions for peacekeeping or peace enforcement. We then developed a very long document with that checklist, but that was the deal struck.

There was one aspect of that document that has never received sufficient attention. Within weeks after the launch of the Rwandan genocide, we drafted in a provision that said one has to take into account the consequences for the United States and for the international community of “inaction,” of not responding, of not sending in UN peacekeepers. What will be the consequence of inaction? The Rwandan genocide prompted the “inaction clause.”¹⁰⁸ We capitalized upon the

¹⁰⁸ See Annex I, paragraph G of United States Presidential Decision Directive/NSC-25, [“US Policy on Reforming Multilateral Peace Operations.”](#) May 3, 1994, which reads, “The political, economic and humanitarian consequences of inaction by the international community have been weighed and are considered unacceptable.”

“inaction clause” in later years and rammed it in one policy discussion after another with the Pentagon, saying “we are going to focus on this.” When we intervened in Haiti in September 1994, with “Operation Uphold Democracy,” when we intervened in Kosovo in March 1999 that was the criterion that liberated us to be more proactive than we were in Rwanda. I certainly share Prudence Bushnell’s mortification of where we came out in Rwanda. We made some terrible mistakes, but we did take lessons away that we applied years later.

TOM BLANTON: Thank you David. Let me turn to Prudence Bushnell.

PRUDENCE BUSHNELL: What kind of a legacy are we leaving the people who come after us? A lot of us are getting older and there are going to be new people in our place. What is the “so what” of Rwanda? Number one, I think members of the United Nations Security Council need to be held accountable for their actions. They have not been. How do we hold them accountable for their actions? We can ask, “What is your leadership responsibility?” Leadership means doing the right thing. We can ask, “What are your management intentions?” Management means doing things right. There is a difference. The lesson of Rwanda is that the Security Council needs to begin intentionally focusing on both. If there is a peacekeeping operation of any sort, where is the after action analysis? And where are the consequences of the lessons of the after action on current and future peacekeeping operations?

Finally, what are we in this room going to do? We have our representatives in the United Nations Security Council right now. I believe that individual human beings can make a difference. The greatest lesson that I learned is that we are not going to make a difference unless we speak up. The lesson I learn from this discussion is that we need to get in touch with our Perm Reps and say, “I just spent thirty-six hours re-visiting one of the most horrible periods of the 20th century. Here is what we learned, and here is what I want you to do about it. And, by the way, you will be held

accountable by history, by name, because transparency, tweets, and e-mail are now a part of the world." The non-transparent way in which we did business as governments, and in the Security Council, is behind us. Thank you.

TOM BLANTON: Thank you, Pru. Joyce?

JOYCE LEADER: I would like to mention a couple of lessons that I am thinking I can take away from Rwanda, from the perspective of a diplomat on the ground. What should we be learning about the process of diplomacy from what happened in Rwanda? I was very happy to hear that the new R2P advisor at the UN is thinking about putting emphasis more on the prevention aspects. It is very nice to talk about prevention, but how do you make genocide prevention a reality? What has to happen to make prevention a priority, to make it our way of operating, to prioritize prevention rather than react to crises, which is the way we do business now?

It starts by making sure that our decision makers are aware of conflicts that are building and that are likely to escalate into mass violence or atrocities. The essence of that is triage. How do you determine which of all these conflicts around the world need to be put on those watch lists? If there had been watch lists being made back in 1990-94, would Rwanda have gotten on the list? I doubt it, as long as the criterion is national security interest. You have to go beyond national security to look at the human rights issues, human security. These need to be taken into consideration in the calculations of whether to make a crisis of interest to the senior policy makers.

It seems to me that if we were trying to put Rwanda onto the agenda of the American Atrocities Prevention Board, it probably would not get moved forward even today if we stuck to the traditional national security interests criteria. In addition to creating a watch list for policy makers, you have to be able to do something about the countries on the list. This means a serious commitment of personnel, which we do not have. The resources and personnel go to crises,

incidents that are already underway. We have to think about much earlier interventions on issues like human rights, reconciliation, hate media, the rule of law, ending impunity for people that are creating problems, early warning, and protection for change agents.

This leads to my second lesson. We had policies in place to support democratization and peace, but we did not realize (at least many of us did not realize) the extent to which these changes create very profound disruptions in societies because of the changes of power relationships that they entail. We were promoting these changes prior to 1994 in Arusha. When violence erupted with each advance towards democratization or peace, our reaction was to push for faster implementation so that there would be a framework for containing the violence.¹⁰⁹ But I have come to the conclusion that we need to acknowledge the link between violence and promotion of change, or democracy and peace in the case of Rwanda. We should acknowledge the negative consequences that result in some cases from the promotion of democratization.

We need strategies and policies, money and personnel to implement these policies, that will allow us to address the kind of interethnic violence that seemed to come to the fore every time there was some success in democratization or peace, such as massacres, threats to human rights activists, and torture of journalists. How do we protect human rights activists, or minorities, or even majorities that feel threatened? How do we go beyond the demarches on hate speech or other human rights violations that we made so many times? What do we do when we are confronted with political party youth groups being converted into militia? These are all questions that are critical for prevention. This is what I call the “Darth Vader effect.” We have to take the negatives of well-intentioned policies into consideration, and think about the unintended consequences of our actions. Thank you.

¹⁰⁹ Joyce Leader, [“Internal Insecurity: An Ongoing Problem.”](#) US Embassy Kigali cable 03478, August 21, 1992. Leader noted in the cable that, throughout 1992, “internal insecurity has increased in parallel with each significant step forward in the democratization and peace processes.”

TOM BLANTON: Thank you, Joyce. Johan?

JOHAN SWINNEN: Thank you. It would be good if, after our discussions, we drew the humble and modest conclusion that a lot of questions still remain. We are still very far from the truth. We still need a lot of effort to approach the truth, to serve the Rwandan people, the people of the region, and humanity. The question that has been haunting me since 1990: why did so many people, so many Rwandans, fall into the trap of radicalization and extremism? It is this process that we witnessed and tried to stop and to correct. But the question remains: who wanted this destabilization, this radicalization, this polarization? I believe that this is a crucial question which should inspire our analysis of conflicts and crises to come. For example, one element of radicalization could be found in the Arusha Accords. I remember it was very difficult to explain to Rwandans that compromise was necessary and that there was no alternative. The compromise was meant to lead to transitional institutions, which would lead to elections, because this compromise spoke about transitional institutions that this transition should lead to elections. However, not all the actors in Arusha were convinced of the need for moving to this second stage of democracy via general elections after twenty-two months.

Over the last two days, we have talked about power sharing, but we have not spoken about the military power. It is very difficult to explain why the military power of the integrated Army should have been based on a division of 50/50 for the officers and 60/40 for the army as a whole.

Another unanswered question concerns the attack on Habyarimana's plane. There have been all these inquiries, two French inquiries and the Rwandan inquiry. I think we should be indignant about the fact that the international community, twenty years later, has still not commissioned an official international inquiry to answer to the question: who was responsible for this attack? I do not say that the answer to this question would answer all the other questions, but it is an important question that would help unravel some mysteries.

Why did the genocide last three months? I am not the only person to ask this question, which I put to the RPF. I am not accusing, I am simply asking in all sincerity and honesty, did the RPF not have the military means to stop the genocide. Its goal, of course, was a military victory, but did it not have the means to achieve victory earlier, and stop the genocide earlier?

Final question. We talked a lot about the “odd couple” of Kigali, Dallaire and Booh-Booh. I found it a little bit uncomfortable that we put one of the protagonists on trial in the presence of his antagonist. I do not accuse, I do not judge, but we need to improve the communications that were in place. I would have liked to ask General Dallaire whether he did not realize from the very beginning that there was a certain rivalry or incompetence. Even in New York, there was miscommunication. Did you not understand that from the very beginning that there was a rivalry or a certain incompetence, but even in New York there was no communication between DPKO and the 38th floor. This is a serious matter, one that was mentioned by Ambassador Hannay.

In conclusion, we should think about the values that we share, democracy and human rights. Democracy is a relative concept, it is an important value, but every country understands democracy in its own manner. I think that we Westerners need to stop giving Africans the idea that they make us “happy” by organizing elections. This is a bit of a caricature but I think we should emphasize the relative value of democracy. In contrast, on human rights, there should be no abdication. There is a certain tendency to relativize the importance of defending human rights. Human rights have a universal, fundamental value that the entire international community must continue to promote. No concession, no relativism is acceptable here. Above all, Rwanda has taught us that the struggle for human rights must be the first universal priority without distinction of ideology, national interests, or geopolitical considerations. They are universally applicable. Thank you.

TOM BLANTON: Ambassador Abdallah.

AHMEDOU OULD ABDALLAH: UN personnel who are to be deployed in the field, especially top-level staff like the SRSGs and Force Commanders, should be seriously briefed before joining their mission. They should also be briefed by concerned Permanent Members of the Security Council. There has been some progress, compared to the 1990s, but this needs to be a top priority. More attention must also be given to the selection of Force Commanders and SRSGs by the Secretary-General and the Security Council. There is a flaw in the system, which is based on gender balance, geographic distribution, and so on. It is very important that the selection of UN top leaders in the field should be tough and serious while at the same time taking these considerations into account (gender, geographical distribution, etc).

Second, before being deployed, the Special Representatives and Force Commanders should be familiarized with their mission, what is expected from them, particularly if they are new to the UN system. More important, they should have the assurance that, without making themselves a pro-consul or a governor-general, they have the backing of the UN system and in particular the backing of the SG himself. No official would like to be expelled or declared *persona non grata*. However, if these UN officials cave in to local governments on principles, especially to weak governments or dictators, they will not be able to assume any difficult responsibility during the rest of their tenure. Mission leaders should be given protection by the UN. They should be told, "You should not be arrogant or too intrusive, but if you do your work as required, we will back you."

[Cites the example of the Secretary-General's Special Representative in Mali, Bert Koenders of the Netherlands, as an "able person".] At one point in 2013, the government of Mali tried to throw him out. To support him, and through him the UN mission, a number of people tried to explain to the Malian government that they have taken a wrong way. The SRSGs should be given political protection to help them not to be blackmailed with the threat of being declared *persona non grata* by local governments.

Third, the Security Council should be ready for a quick deployment of peacekeepers to prevent belligerents from taking initiatives that would strengthen their military and political positions. For instance, the UN Security Council voted in April 2014 to send a peacekeeping mission to the Central African Republic. It added that the mission should be deployed there at the earliest in September. The long delay associated with that decision gave the belligerents time to prepare themselves for future fights, including against the UN, and also time to delay the deployment of UN troops. At the UN in New York, a few still think that Africa is far away, and backward, not connected by internet, mobile phone or Twitter to the rest of the world. But Africans, especially the youth, those most ready to fight, are more connected than they were ten, fifteen years ago. Every decision taken by the Security Council is known instantly thanks to this easy connectivity.

Another point to be made here is how to help strengthen the messages of the UN Security Council to the belligerents. The inflationary use of individual sanctions taken by the Security Council against some extremists and terrorists can sometimes be counterproductive. If these sanctions are not well thought about, they may end up giving local prestige and credibility to the targeted individuals. The leader of the Nigerian terror group, Boko Haram, was put on a terrorist list by the United States and the UN with his bank accounts frozen. He could not care less. He has no bank account, never had a passport and has no intention of traveling. Not even to Abuja, Nigeria's capital. This merely undermines the prestige of the UN and the permanent members of the Council like the UK, France and the US. The point I want to make is that sanctions must be credible and therefore feared by the targeted individuals, their followers. More importantly, the victims of violence should also believe that sanctions will work against the perpetrators.

TOM BLANTON: Thank you very much. Venuste?

VENUSTE NSHIMIYIMANA: Thank you very much. On April 13, 1994, together with Monique Mujawamariya and Ambassador Johan Swinnen, I flew out of Kigali on the last plane for Nairobi. I was at the *Ecole Technique Officielle* [the Official Technical School] in the Kigali suburb of Kicukiro where more than 2,000 people were abandoned by UNAMIR.¹¹⁰ I was very close to the people in that school. I knew them very well. They asked us if we could escort them three kilometers from that place, to Remera National Stadium, before leaving. We could have done that because it was on the road to Kanombe airport. We failed to help and the Hutu militiamen did the work for us. Instead of escorting the refugees to the Stadium, they escorted them to a hill nearby in Nyanza, where they massacred all of them.

Did the international community know that the militia were going to massacre the refugees? Yes, we knew. The Belgian officer, Lieutenant Luc Lemaire, who commanded the UNAMIR troops at ETO, knew, as did Colonel Rusatira, who was mentioned earlier and visited the camp on several occasions. The commander of Belgian troops, Colonel Luc Marchal, had not wanted to abandon the refugees. He did not want to leave the country. He wanted to help. So we all knew. I remember that after General Dallaire got no answer to the fax that he sent on January 11. Around a month later, on February 11, he asked me to show him on a map of Rwanda various places that were inhabited mainly by Tutsi. General Anyidoho knows this, and Dallaire has authorized me to mention it. When I asked Dallaire why we were working on that kind of mapping, he said, "To protect them if it becomes necessary." This shows that General Dallaire was preparing to do what he could to protect Tutsis after receiving no reply from the United Nations.

What lessons can we draw from the Rwandan tragedy? For twenty years, I have been saying that the Human Rights Convention provides for assistance to persons in danger. The international

¹¹⁰ Some 2,000 Rwandans, mainly Tutsi, including former foreign minister Boniface Ngulinzira, sought refuge in the *Ecole Technique*, which was run by Salesian Fathers, after the genocide began on April 7. They were initially protected by 90 Belgian soldiers, who withdrew at 1:45 pm on April 11. Following the withdrawal of the UNAMIR troops, Hutu militiamen massacred the refugees. For Nshimiyimana's detailed account of this incident, see his testimony on the massacre at Kicukiro [here](#).

community—the dragon that Monique spoke about—was not able to prevent the genocide in Rwanda. They were not even able to support the victims of the genocide after the fact. Thousands of Rwandans were sacrificed on the altar of bureaucracy. I will not return to the rivalry between my two bosses, Jacques-Roger Booh-Booh and General Roméo Dallaire, these two UN officials who did not speak with each other and work as a team for a common goal. The result is there: they failed their mission to help Rwandans achieve peace and to protect those who were in danger. They both recognize this. The final lesson is that human life must be placed above all economic or political interests.

TOM BLANTON: Thank you Venuste. Let me call on Bacre Ndiaye.

BACRE NDIAYE: Thank you very much. I will leave here with a lot of frustration. We have touched on a number of subjects without having the possibility to dig in and draw lessons from them. The most important lesson is that we are all equal, and all human beings. In my report on Rwanda in August 1993, I wrote that there was no reason why Rwandans citizens, whatever their ethnic group or political affiliation or social origin, should not have the same fundamental rights as all other citizens of the world.¹¹¹ There is no reason why their lives should not be as precious, and well-protected, as the lives of citizens of the Netherlands.

Not everybody subscribes to this idea. We need to work collectively to make sure that, when this kind of tragedy unfolds and we have the information, we remember that the people involved are like us. People think that there were ethnic massacres in Rwanda in 1959, 1963, 1966, 1973, 1990, 1991, and 1992, so maybe there will be another one? I am sorry, but these are human beings.

¹¹¹ Bacre Ndiaye, Special Rapporteur for the UN Commission on Human Rights, visited Rwanda between April 8 and April 17, 1993, to investigate human rights violations and “arbitrary executions.” His [report](#) was published on August 11, 1993, but attracted little attention, even though it alluded to the possibility of genocide taking place in Rwanda.

In a globalized world, where information is everywhere, how are we going to build this sense of a common humanity? This is an important lesson that we have not completely learned from Rwanda. We are seeing similar events today in South Sudan, the Central African Republic, and even in Sri Lanka. ...

What we call the “standards of human rights and international humanitarian law” need to be universally applied. In January 2004, on the tenth anniversary of the Rwandan genocide, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan made a speech in Stockholm calling for the establishment of a Committee on the Prevention of Genocide to monitor implementation of the Genocide Convention. This body was never set up. He also recommended a Special Rapporteur on Genocide to report directly to the Human Rights Council and the Security Council without going through the Secretary-General. This recommendation has also not been implemented. We have, instead, a Special Advisor on the Prevention of Genocide who reports to the UN through the Secretary-General, which is not exactly the same thing. These recommendations are still valid.

The other lesson concerns the question of transitional justice. The judicial response to Rwanda was inadequate. The International Tribunal in Arusha only tried a few people. The Gacaca courts established in Rwanda were mass trials, but they were not really trials. The sentences were so lenient for people who were perpetrators of genocide. We have tools to render justice, but I am not sure they are adequate.

Some progress has been made. The Human Rights Council has become more nimble in responding to crises, establishing commissions of inquiry, appointing a Rapporteur for Mali, etc. We also have human rights screening of senior UN appointees. Force commanders and SRSGs have to go the human rights office to make sure they have not been involved in human rights violations. We also have the Rights Up Front Initiative designed to make every single member of the United Nations accountable for upholding human rights.¹¹²

¹¹² More information on the UN Rights Up Front Initiative can be found [here](#).

[Mentions need to strengthen cooperation at the regional level through organizations like the African Union.] The AU has a human rights monitoring mission in Mali and also a commission of inquiry on South Sudan. Finally, we have to take into account the specific vulnerability of women and children. I mentioned the endemic rape of Tutsi women in my report in 1993. We saw what happened afterwards. Thank you.

TOM BLANTON: Thank you very much. Michael Barnett?

MICHAEL BARNETT: I want to follow up on what Prudence said in terms of accountability, but I want to speak as a researcher. If we want accountability, then information has to be made available. One of the real tragedies of Rwanda was that, for five years, no one would speak. There was a conspiracy of silence. It was the same with Srebrenica. To end “bystander-ness,” we should be concerned not only with the perpetrators but also with those who have a professional responsibility to do something, but did not. The only way to keep them honest is to make sure that there is a record so that it becomes apparent what did and did not happen. That requires accountability and transparency. France, Canada, the United States and others who have not quite come clean need to do a better job.

TOM BLANTON: Thank you, Michael. Ambassador Ndagijimana?

JEAN-MARIE VIANNEY NDAGIJIMANA: Certain Rwandan political parties were opposed to ending the war, and stopping the massacres. I am referring to Hutu extremists who wanted enough time to exterminate the Tutsis, and also the RPF, which needed time to win the war. I know this from my own experience because I was in contact with both parties.

I am very pleased that we have been able to have a meeting like this. For the last twenty years, it has been impossible to come to such a meeting, and say what you think. If I had said what I had said in a meeting of Hutu refugees, it would be received badly. If I had been in the presence of people close to the RPF, it would have gone down badly as well.

We blame the international community for failing to intervene to save Rwandan lives. It is true that we were abandoned. But we abandoned our own people, and massacred our own people. Primary responsibility for the genocide, and the crimes that accompanied it, must be borne by us, Rwandans. We must accept that fact before we make accusations against the international community.

I hope that the massacres we witnessed in Rwanda will not be repeated, but the first lesson is that we must avoid complacency. If we are talking about lessons, I would say we have to avoid complacency.

During the Rwandan conflict prior to 1994, nobody listened to the dissidents who went to the embassies complaining about Habyarimana. Today also, we only listen to the people in power, not to the people in opposition. There is still the idea that if you are not in power, you are not a strong man, and you have nothing to say to the international community. We must accept that a serious and credible opposition movement must have the right to express itself about events in the country. I agree completely with what Joyce Leader said about human rights, democratization, and reconciliation. Today, you get the impression that the only political opposition that gets a hearing is the armed opposition to the current regime. Naturally, this encourages people to move to the phase of armed opposition, since you do not get a hearing as a political opponent.

I think that a conference like this should support all the initiatives in favor of national reconciliation. We all remember that an international tribunal for Rwanda was established in 1994 with the goal of prosecuting everyone who committed serious war crimes or crimes against humanity. What happened? At a certain point, they got tired and said they would only focus on the

genocide against the Tutsis. They only did half the work. This has created a lot of frustration amongst the victims of the RPF. The international community has facilitated this impunity.

Finally, I wanted to mention the obsession we have with this notion of genocide. I used this expression in an interview that I gave to *Radio France International* on April 10, 1994. A lot of other people used it later. But this has created the idea that there will be no action until genocide is legally proven. As Mr. Scheffer, pointed out, we have to be willing to intervene to stop massacres and war crimes, whether or not the legal experts decide to call what is happening genocide. So let us not be too obsessed by this word genocide. Let us be concerned with all mass killings.

TOM BLANTON: Iqbal Riza.

IQBAL RIZA: The genocide started on April 7 under the gaze of the Security Council. In late April, Ambassadors Keating and Kovanda wrestled their fellow members to label it as a genocide. This eventually came only in a President's Statement on April 30 after Ambassador Keating very audaciously brandished an April 28 draft resolution that contained the term.¹¹³ During the debate on Resolution 918, adopted on May 17, there was no mention of genocide, even in the explanations of vote.¹¹⁴ It was only on June 8, two months after the genocide started, that Security Council Resolution 925 referred to "acts of genocide having occurred in Rwanda."¹¹⁵ From the Secretariat, General Baril and I went on a mission to Rwanda [May 22-27, 1994]. In that report that I drafted for the Secretary-General, I wrote, "The magnitude of the calamity might be unimaginable, but for its

¹¹³ Unlike the [original April 28 Czech draft](#), the [actual Presidential Statement](#) did not, in fact, use the term "genocide." At the insistence of the NAM group, including Rwanda, the [word was dropped](#) from the final presidential statement adopted by the Security Council on April 30. Instead, the Presidential Statement alluded to [Article II of the 1948 Genocide Convention](#), recalling that, "the killing of members of an ethnic group with the intention of destroying such a group in whole or in part constitutes a crime punishable under international law." The original Czech draft had stated such killings constituted "an act of genocide as defined by relevant provisions of international law."

¹¹⁴ Madeleine Albright, "[Security Council Approves Phased UNAMIR Expansion.](#)" US Mission to the UN cable 02093, May 18, 1994.

¹¹⁵ [UN Security Council Resolution 925 \(1994\)](#), June 8, 1994.

having transpired.” When I was drafting the conclusions, I spoke to the Secretary-General, and said that it is time you used the term “genocide” in an official document (he had used it verbally). He agreed, and so the last paragraph included the phrase, “The delayed reaction by the international community to the genocide in Rwanda has demonstrated graphically its extreme inadequacy to respond urgently to humanitarian crises entwined with armed conflict.”¹¹⁶

The essential questions that arise are: if one perceived that acts of genocide or genocide are about to occur, how to prevent them? If genocide has not been prevented, but is already occurring, how do we stop it? In the case of Rwanda, who should have taken the first step? Should it have been the Arusha negotiators? Should they have perceived that the agreement had broken down and we had better warn the Security Council? Should it have been governments who were on the ground who had intelligence capability in Rwanda? Should they have perceived that genocide was being prepared? Should it have been UNAMIR, completely new, without any intelligence capability, without any experience in the region? Were they responsible? Should it have been DPKO because they received a fax saying that mass killings were about to occur? Should we have said, “This is going to be genocide, let us try and prevent it?” Should it have been the Human Rights Council who was aware of what was happening in Rwanda? Should it have been the Secretary-General personally, who eventually labeled the killings as genocide in his report on May 31?¹¹⁷ Or should it have been the Security Council? These are rhetorical questions, but I leave them there.

TOM BLANTON: Senator Bizimana?

¹¹⁶ See paragraph 43 of May 31, 1994 report of the Secretary-General on the Situation in Rwanda. ([S/1994/640](#)). The [original draft](#) does not include this term.

¹¹⁷ Boutros Boutros-Ghali, [Report of the Secretary-General on the Situation in Rwanda](#), S/1994/640, May 31, 1994.

JEAN-DAMASCÈNE BIZIMANA: Thank you. We have indeed spoken a lot about the lack of adequate decisions taken in 1994 when the genocide started. We also have to say that UNAMIR, responsible persons, did not sufficiently interpret their mandate. They also had the mandate to contribute to the security in Kigali and to supervise the general security conditions in the country. This is Resolution 872. According to this mandate they should have saved civilians. I have the feeling they were waiting for New York to take all the decisions, even the most microscopic decisions. I think we should also say what was not done by the persons responsible for UNAMIR in Rwanda. They had to protect the civilians in Resolution 872. You cannot contribute to the security of the city or the country if you do not interpose yourself when militia men attack civilians.

The second point is you still have to congratulate the Security Council. The Council failed to stop the genocide but did move very rapidly to judge the major responsible parties for the genocide, even if there are shortcomings there too. The establishment of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda was a good thing. If the genocidaires had not been sentenced, they would have been here or elsewhere as legitimate opposition.

The consequences of this genocide are not sufficiently discussed. We try to balance things by speaking about the other party and make them just as responsible, but this is like blaming the victim. I think this is not a good thing. It just contributes to denying the crimes that occurred. We see in Rwanda that the genocidal forces have reconstituted themselves as a supposed political force. Certain people at the United Nations have condemned this opposition as criminal elements.

TOM BLANTON: We have passed our time. I know there were other people who still wanted to weigh in. My sincere thanks to all of you for being willing to join so generously in this extremely difficult and heart wrenching discussion. Let me just give a last word to our host, Abi Williams. And maybe Mike Abramowitz would like to say a word.

MICHAEL ABRAMOWITZ: I just wanted to thank Tom for a great moderation. It is a very difficult job. He did it fairly and got all views. [Applause]. Also my sincere thanks to Abi Williams and The Hague Institute for a great job of hosting us.

ABIODUN WILLIAMS: On behalf of the Hague Institute, I would like to express my thanks to the US Holocaust Memorial Museum and to you, in particular, Mike, for working with us, and of course to Tom. During the past two days, a golden thread that has run through this critical oral history discussion has been the importance of prevention. When prevention works, it is by far the most effective form of protection. It seems to me that the choice is not limited to either sending in the military or standing by and doing nothing in the face of genocide or mass atrocities. We have a range of relevant preventive tools. The challenge remains how to select the most effective combination of preventive measures when faced with complex and uncertain situations.

We now have the Responsibility to Protect doctrine, which is an important advance since 1994. But in order to get the support of the American people, any US President still has to make the case for why preventing mass atrocities is both a core moral responsibility of the United States and a core national security interest.

At the request of the Rwandan Ambassador, it is appropriate that we now observe a moment of silence in memory of the victims of the genocide in Rwanda.

[Pause for minute of silence.]

Thank you very much indeed.

END OF OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT.