

Why Judge Mutsinzi is wrong on the ‘Mistral missiles file’ discovery

Linda Melvern

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Editor, I am writing to correct the impression, given in the columns of this newspaper, that a document from my latest research provides no “new evidence” to show that the ex-Far possessed Mistral surface-to-air missiles in April 1994. (Editorial, June 3; and a story, June 2).

The article quotes Rwanda’s Supreme Court judge Jean Mutsinzi who seems to believe my information, published in *Liberation* in Paris on June 1, “does not reveal anything new compared to what appeared in our (Rwandan) report”. (Report of the Investigation into the causes and circumstances of and responsibility for the attack of 6 April, 1994 against the Falcon 50 Rwandan Presidential Aeroplane, registration number 9XR-NN.)

I cannot agree with this assessment. The information about Mistral missiles in the report of the Mutsinzi Inquiry is entirely reliant on Human Rights Watch (HRW) whose information on this matter is neither sourced, referenced nor verifiable. The Mutsinzi report states: “In December 1994, Human Rights Watch published a report establishing that the FAR was, in April 1994, in possession of a rather efficient anti-aircraft arsenal which it had

brought to Zaire after its defeat”.

HRW had established no such thing. Whilst it claimed to have “obtained a detailed inventory of arms held by the former Rwandan government army” it failed to produce either a copy or other useful information. HRW claimed that this mysterious inventory included “15 AAM missiles”. The AAM missile is an air to air missile and not a surface-to-air missile. As the information produced by HRW cannot be verified I would suggest it cannot be used as serious evidence.

Another source used by Mutsinzi is a British army captain, Sean Moorhouse, an intelligence officer in UNAMIR II. The Moorhouse information on ex-FAR weapons stocks dates from September 1994, and was compiled from stores in a military camp near Goma, DRC. Moorhouse says that he recognised that his list contained some of the same items in the December 1994 although on his own list there is no mention of Mistral missiles.

The information released to newspaper *Liberation* and which Mutsinzi looked to dismiss so easily comes in the form of a document of some ten pages which is lodged in UN archives. On page 9 of this document – copied to six different UN departments – is a list

of weapons described as an equipment summary “as of 6 April 1994”. This list includes : “Mistral ADA missiles, 15”.

The list has been validated as genuine by Senator Romeo Dallaire, Lt. Gen (Rtd.), the Force Commander of the UN Assistance Mission to Rwanda (UNAMIR), and by his personal staff officer, Major Brent Beardsley. The implications of this new evidence are enormous for it is the first documentary proof to disprove the claims of the genocidaires and their network of deniers that the ex-Far had never possessed surface-to-air missiles.

The work of an investigative journalist demands a rigorous standard of proof. This new evidence comes not

from rumour, speculation or anonymous sources but from an official document. In the coming months more evidence is likely to emerge.

On another matter, the impression given in the media is that the document was found “almost by chance” as part of “historical” research. In fact the document was uncovered in the course of my on-going research for a book about a campaign of denial which has followed the 1994 Genocide of the Tutsi from the moment when it began.

Professor Linda Melvern is a British investigative journalist and lecturer in the Department of International Politics, University of Aberystwyth, Wales. UK