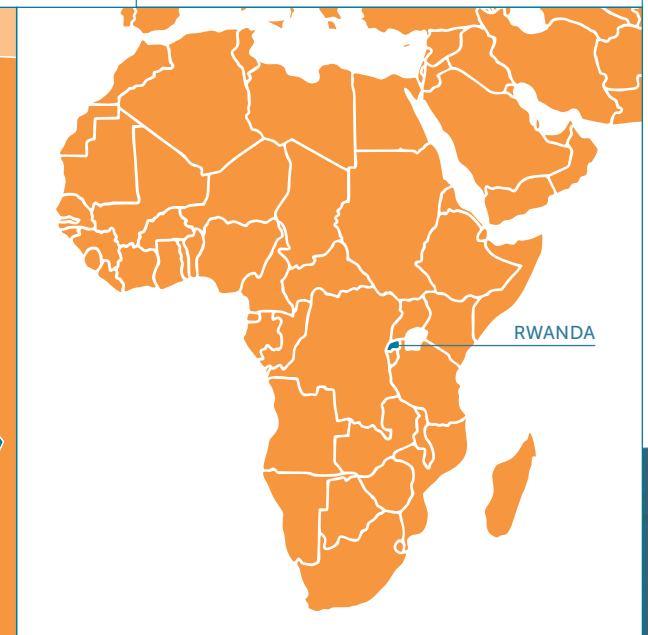
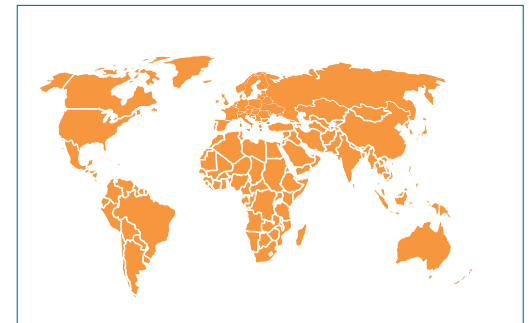


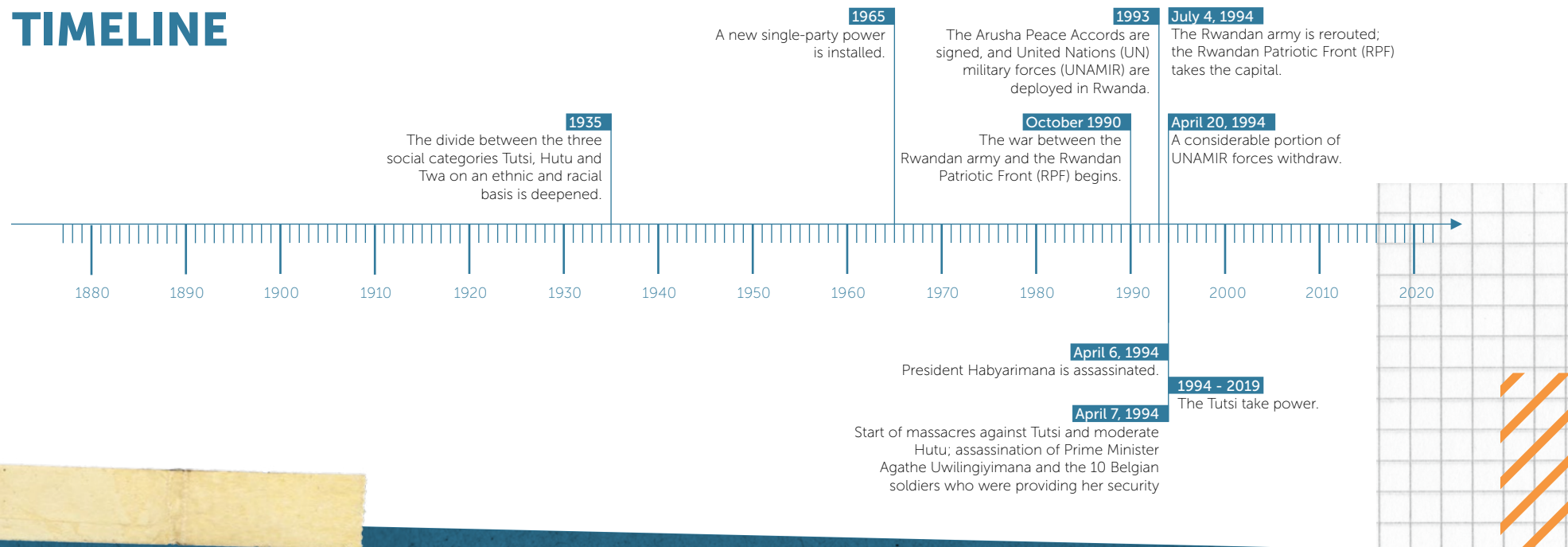
GENOCIDE OF THE TUTSI IN RWANDA

MAP OF RWANDA IN 1994



The administrative names have since changed.

TIMELINE



HIGHLIGHTS

What?

- // After the independence, the Hutu reacted with acts of racism and murder to the privileges granted to the Tutsi elite during colonization.
- // Between April and July 1994, 1,074,017 Tutsi were killed.

When?

- // On April 6, 1994, the Rwandan president was assassinated.
- // Between April and July 1994, the Tutsi in Rwanda were victims of a genocide.

Where?

- // Rwanda, eastern Central Africa

Who?

- // The Hutu authorities (Hutu Power) and the radicalized Hutu population were the perpetrators.
- // The Tutsi, members of another Rwandan ethnic group, and some moderate Hutus were the victims.

EXCERPT FROM AN ACCOUNT

“We start to hear the radio saying that Rwanda has been attacked by the rebel[s]. So, immediately, what I remember, they start to have a newspaper spreading the word for hateful message[s]. Incitement, hatred for, against Tutsi. Then we are starting to be worried, [because] the propaganda is telling the people that those [who] are coming from north of the border, they are Tutsi, they are coming to kill Hutu. So they spread the word, the message. We start to be scared, wherever you’re walking on the streets, you start to see your neighbour[s]. They look at you like you’re dangerous. Those you grown up together, those who [are] your friends . . . they come to your house, they start to call you the name . . . ‘*Inyenzi*,’ which is cockroach. So, and they started [the] radio to motivate Hutu to tell them, you have to be careful of your neighbour. From that time, I do believe I lost weight within a week. So I started to feel like, you know, I[’d] better try to escape. So, what I remember during those times is about fear.”

INTERVIEW WITH BONAVENTURE KALISA,
RWANDAN SURVIVOR LIVING IN CANADA

Source: <https://humanrights.ca/story/what-led-genocide-against-tutsi-rwanda>



Rwandan refugees at Kitali refugee camp, Goma, 1994
Credit: U.S. National Archives and Records Administration

ISSUE

Between April and July 1994, there was a brutal massacre of the Rwandan population in eastern Central Africa. In just three months, 1074017 people¹ were brutalized and murdered. Men, women and children alike were murdered by hundreds of radicalized **Hutus**, whose ideas of hate, racism and genocide were spread mainly by local radio stations.² The victims were for the most part **Tutsis**, but moderate Hutus also succumbed.

All this took place despite the presence of United Nations (UN) military forces in the country since 1993. The United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (**UNAMIR**) was deployed as part of the Arusha Accords in order to ensure the safety of Kigali, the capital of Rwanda. In addition to the UNAMIR Blue Helmets, French soldiers were also deployed.

During the massacre of the Tutsi, these international forces did not intervene, despite all the information they possessed about the genocidal intentions and preparations of Hutu extremists. It is important to know that, as early as January 1994, before the genocide even began, UNAMIR Commander Roméo Dallaire warned his headquarters in New York about preparations for genocide.³



British soldiers from the 5th Airborne Brigade arriving at Kigali Airport to provide medical and logistical support. On the left is Commander Roméo Dallaire of the Canadian Armed Forces, who was in charge of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR), 1994.

Credit: U.S. National Archives and Records Administration

Hutu

At first, the term was used to designate farmers who were subordinates or customers of a more powerful person, and later, the mass of the ordinary people. During European colonization, it evolved to mean an ethnic group inferior to the Tutsi.

Tutsi

At first, the term was used to designate people who owned many cattle, or the Rwandan elite. With the European colonization, it took on an ethnic and racist connotation, and was used to designate those who were superior to the other two ethnic groups (the Hutu and the Twa).

UNAMIR

Military force deployed by the UN in Rwanda to keep the peace. It was established by resolution of the UN on October 5, 1993.



Commander Roméo Dallaire's request for assistance to stop the massacres was refused by UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali.⁴ Worse still, following the assassination of Rwandan Prime Minister Agathe Uwilingiyimana and the 10 Belgian soldiers protecting her, the UN decided, on April 20, 1994, to reduce the contingent of 2 500 soldiers deployed before the genocide to just 270. Belgium was the first to advocate this withdrawal of the military.⁵

What were the motivations of the perpetrators, the Hutu extremists? What can explain the passive and even complicit attitude of at least part of the international community?

Children, among the 1.2 million Rwandan refugees who fled to Zaire after a civil war erupted in their country, 1994

Credit: U.S. National Archives and Records Administration

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

The hatred entrenched in the Rwandan population that led to the genocide has a long history. During the precolonial period, three groups, the **Twa**, the Tutsi and the Hutu, occupied the same territory. The Twa were mostly potters (craftspeople) or servants, usually for the Tutsi. The Tutsi owned the cattle. The Hutu were mostly subordinate to powerful individuals. They represented the mass of the ordinary people and were for the most part farmers. All of these groups

shared the same language (Kinyarwanda), the same religious beliefs and practices, and an economy based on cattle rearing, farming and small businesses.⁶ The situations of conflict mostly involved the Tutsi and the Hutu.⁷ The colonial period began with the arrival of the Germans in the late 19th century, followed by the Belgians in 1916. During this period, the Tutsi elite was given privileged status by the colonial powers to the detriment of the Hutu.

Twa

The smallest component of the Rwandan population, originally hunter-gatherers. Later, some moved closer to the Hutu and worked for the Tutsi as potters or servants.



King Muzinga's children and Major R. Høier's daughter, in Rwanda, 1928

Credit: U.S. National Archives and Records Administration

In 1962, Rwanda won its independence, and the division of powers between the Hutu and the Tutsi began to shift to the advantage of the Hutu elite. This reversal of the situation in favour of the majority group, the Hutu, led to the development of an anti-Tutsi racist ideology in the Rwandan population. In addition to the conflicts between the two main groups, the Hutu and the Tutsi, a divide opened up between the Hutu in the north and the Hutu in the south. The Hutu in the north felt that they had been sidelined by those in the south.

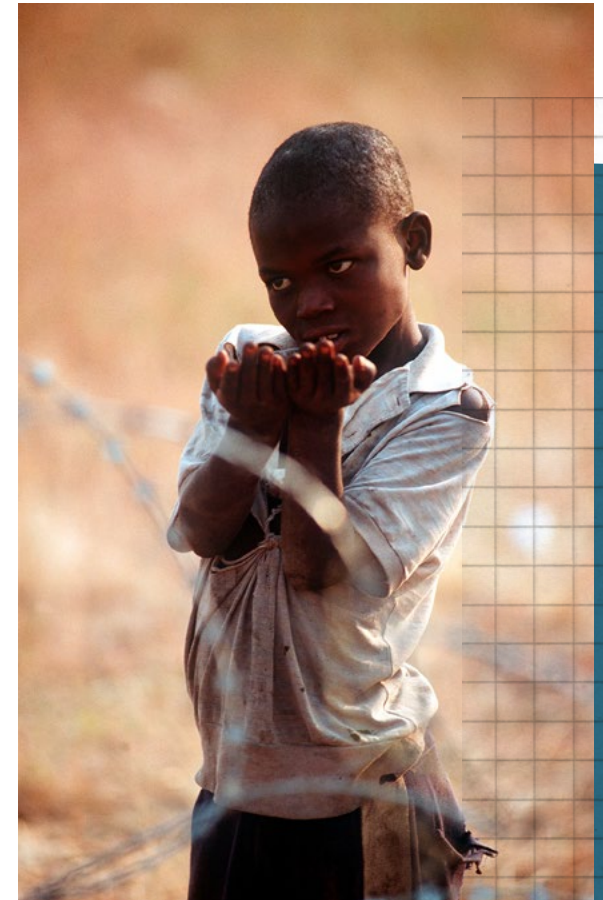
RPF

Rwandan Patriotic Front:
armed movement initially
made up of exiled Tutsis

In 1973, this division resulted in a coup d'état led by Juvénat Habyarimana (a Hutu from the north) against the first Rwandan president, Gregoire Kayibanda (a Hutu from the south).

During the economic crisis in the 1980s, the Rwandan elite blamed the Tutsi and spread racist anti-Tutsi discourse and practices. This strategy drew the public's attention away from the government's responsibility for the crisis. The government rallied the Hutu around the idea that the Tutsi were evil incarnate (whether or not they were in the country). In this difficult context, during the first and second Hutu republics (1962-1973 and 1973-1990), many Tutsis fled to neighbouring countries. In 1987-1988, Tutsis in exile in Uganda created the Rwandan Patriotic Front (**RPF**). In the 1990s, after the armed branch of the incursion of the RPF into Rwanda, the Hutu elite began making decisions that would lead to the genocide of the Tutsi. The ensuing civil war culminated in the genocide that took place between April and July 1994.

Between 1990 and 1994, the Rwandan government, led by Juvénat Habyarimana, received military support from Belgium, Zaire and France. Media with close ties to the government spread messages of hate against Hutu opponents of the regime and the Tutsi in general. The assassination of President Habyarimana on April 6, 1994—whose perpetrators have still not been identified to this day—plunged Rwanda into horror. Hutu extremists took advantage of the event to implement their genocidal plan against the Tutsi and moderate Hutus. Hundreds of thousands of Tutsis were systematically slaughtered just a few hours after the assassination. The RPF put an end to the genocide in 1994 by defeating the civil and military authorities responsible for the killing campaigns.⁸



A small Rwandan refugee begging for food from United Nations personnel at the Kibumba Kibumba refugee camp, Zaire, 1994

Credit: U.S. National Archives and Records Administration

STAGES OF THE GENOCIDE

TO CLASSIFY

From the beginning of European colonization, an ethnic divide was established between the Tutsi and the Hutu, causing the latter to be viewed as inferior. The Belgian colonial administration gave legal form to the racial divisions in Rwandan society in the 1930s by issuing ethnic identification cards to all registered Rwandan citizens. Some 15 percent of the population declared themselves Tutsi, approximately 84 percent said they were Hutu, and the remaining 1 percent said they were Twa.



Refugee children carrying containers of water atop their heads, 1994

Credit: U.S. National Archives and Records Administration

This information was entered into records at the local government office and indicated on identity cards which adult Rwandans were then obliged to carry.⁹ This vision of Rwandan society ignored the existence of some twenty clans, which at the time were more important to Rwandans in terms of their identity.¹⁰ These clans were all made up of Hutus, Tutsis and Twas, and were led by a mwami, or king, who could be either Hutu or Tutsi, but was more likely to be Tutsi.

This practice of identification was applied by successive Hutu governments after 1962. The goal was to be able to identify Tutsis in order to reverse the power relationship based on ethnicity. In the colonial era, identification as a Tutsi conferred a certain amount of prestige but, when the Hutu came to power, it became a source of problems and affliction.

“The new republican government continued labeling all Rwandans as Hutu, Tutsi, or Twa, but the identity cards which had once served to guarantee privilege to [the] Tutsi now served as a means to discriminate against them, both in employment and in education. Just as the new leaders maintained population registration, so they perpetuated the distorted concepts that had underlain the practice. [The] Hutu used the ideas once prized by the Tutsi—ideas about Tutsi distinctiveness, foreign origins, and complete control over the Hutu—to justify the violence of the revolution and the discriminatory measures of the years after.”¹¹



Kibumba refugee camp. An estimated 1.2 million Rwandan refugees fled to Zaire in 1994.

Credit: U.S. National Archives and Records Administration

TO DEHUMANIZE

It was mainly through their discourse that Hutu leaders, propagandists and extremists dehumanized the Tutsi. They compared them to insects and animals. In March 1993, an issue of **Kangura** (the name means “wake up others”), a privately funded **Hutu Power** publication, reveals how this dehumanization of the Tutsi took place.

Kangura

Magazine spreading propaganda in order to heighten Hutus' awareness of their identity.

Hutu-Power

Ethnonationalist ideology propounded by Hutu extremists in political parties, the government, the army and civil society



“We began by saying that a cockroach cannot give birth to a butterfly. It is true. A cockroach gives birth to another cockroach. . . . Who could tell the difference between the *Inyenzi* [cockroaches] who attacked in October 1990 and those of the 1960s. They are all linked . . . their evilness is the same. The unspeakable crimes of the *Inyenzi* today . . . recall those of their elders: killing, pillaging, raping girls and women, etc.”¹²

Rwandan refugee family standing by a makeshift shelter, which, along with what they carry, constitute all their possessions. They are in the Kibuma refugee camp near Goma, Zaire, 1994.

Credit: U.S. National Archives and Records Administration

By stripping the Tutsi of everything human, the perpetrators paved the way for the most horrible crimes (death by machete, club, sledgehammer or hoe) against the people around them, including spouses, sons, daughters, neighbours, friends and children. In the documentary *Rwanda, l'impossible pardon*¹³ a Hutu woman, imprisoned for her participation in the genocide, acknowledged that killing Tutsis goes against a mother's nature. The woman's son accused her of participating in the murder of his father, who was a Tutsi. Another prisoner declared:



“We were desensitized by being told that Tutsis were the enemy of Hutus and were trying to kill us. It made this hatred and anger penetrate our hearts, and we became like animals” [translation].¹⁴

Rwandan refugees in Goma, Zaire, after a civil war erupted in their country, 1994

Credit: U.S. National Archives and Records Administration

TO POLARIZE

The discourse of the Hutu leaders used words, slogans and ideas aimed at accentuating the difference between Hutus and Tutsis. This discourse, broadcast by media close to the government, aimed to separate them into two opposing camps. For this reason, moderate Hutus were also murdered during the genocide against the Tutsi. Isaac Nkubitwa, a district official of a Hutu extremist party, incarcerated in May 1997 for his participation in the mass slaughter, said that it was even necessary to eliminate Hutus who were reluctant to kill the Tutsis who lived among them.¹⁵ According to Ternon,¹⁶ official propaganda portrayed Tutsis as foreigners who, for centuries, had oppressed the Hutu people. The orders given by Hutu leaders and propagandists thus transformed the society into a place where the Rwandans had to be either executioners or victims. One of the main documents in which this desire to divide society into two clearly distinct classes was published in *Kangura* in December 1990, in an article entitled “Les dix commandements” [the ten commandments]. Several elements in the document highlighted the polarization between the Tutsi and the Hutu.

1

Every Hutu should know that a Tutsi woman, whoever she is, works for the interest of her Tutsi ethnic group. As a result, any Hutu who marries a Tutsi woman, employs a Tutsi woman as his concubine, employs a Tutsi woman as a secretary or takes her under his protection will be considered a traitor. . .

4

Every Hutu should know that every Tutsi is dishonest in business. His only aim is the supremacy of his ethnic group. . . .

7

The Rwandan armed forces should be exclusively Hutu. The experience of the October 1990 war has taught us a lesson. No member of the military shall marry a Tutsi.

8

The Hutu should stop having compassion for the Tutsi.

9

The Hutu, wherever they are, must be united and supportive of each other, and be concerned with the fate of their Hutu brothers. . . . The Hutu must be firm and vigilant against their common Tutsi enemy. . . .

10

The social revolution of 1959, the referendum of 1961, and the Hutu ideology must be taught to every Hutu at every level. Every Hutu must spread this ideology widely. [translation]¹⁷.

TO ORGANIZE

The Hutu leaders used various strategies to implement their plan to murder the Tutsi. They used administrative and political structures (prefects, mayors, political parties such as the Mouvement Révolutionnaire National pour le Développement [national revolutionary movement for development], the Mouvement démocratique républicain [democratic republican movement] and the Coalition pour la Défense de la République [coalition for the defence of the republic]). A number of militias (Interahamwe, Inkaku, Impuzamugambi) and soldiers were also used to reach all Hutus, urging them to participate in the slaughter of the Tutsi and Hutus thought to be opposed to Hutu Power, or forcing them to accept the massacre.¹⁸ Another strategy was to mobilize thousands of ordinary Hutus, which made possible the massacre of so many Tutsis across the country over a very short period of time.¹⁹

Interahamwe

Militia affiliated with the Mouvement Révolutionnaire National pour le Développement (MRND) led by Juvénal Habyarimana, which was heavily involved in the massacres of Tutsis. The name Interahamwe means “those who work together” in Kinyarwanda.



Kibumba refugee camp, Zaire, 1994

Credit: U.S. National Archives and Records Administration

Material, financial and ideological resources were also mobilized to perpetrate the genocide. Businessmen, clergymen and journalists all contributed to the propaganda and supplied money or arms. Before and during the genocide, firearms and machetes were distributed en masse to the Hutu population. Militiamen affiliated with Hutu political parties were given military training. According to a report by Marc Bettinelli in *Le Monde*,²⁰ on March 15, 2019, funding for the resources mobilized to prepare for and execute the genocide was the result of the convergence of three factors: parallel funding from the Rwandan State, the complicity of French banks and the wilful blindness of international institutions.

In the first case, an embezzlement scheme was established with the participation of public and parapublic enterprises. It was run by businessmen and senior government officials. For example, match box factory Sorwal initiated fraudulent practices for the purposes of the genocide. It supported military training for the militia.

It also contributed to the creation of radio station “Radio-télévision libre des milles collines,” one of the main tools for spreading anti-Tutsi and genocidal propaganda. In the second case, the French bank BNP promoted operations enabling the sale of weapons to the Rwandan government, despite the arms embargo imposed by the United Nations.

Several international institutions either failed or refused to see what was going on in Rwanda. For example, the Rwandan government misappropriated funds from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank that had been allocated to development. It used the money to fuel the war machine in Rwanda by procuring massive numbers of machetes. Because they did not speak out, these financial institutions were suspected of complicity in the organization of the genocide.

The genocide was also based on propaganda. Hatred against the Tutsis and messages demonizing them circulated directly from the government to the population in meetings, or indirectly through structures such as radio stations, or through the local authorities.



ADuring meetings organized at various levels of government, the authorities promoted two ideas. The first was to portray the Hutu as a people unjustly abused and threatened with destruction. The second idea was to blame all Tutsis for the war and the misfortunes suffered by Hutus. These ideas generated resentment, exacerbated hatred, and sought to justify the commitment to kill without qualms. Following a meeting held on April 11, 1994, for the prefects and district officials, interim Prime Minister Jean Kambandaz urged the participants to play a more active role in the massacre of the Tutsi.²¹



The portrayal of Tutsis in the official media or media with close ties to the regime made it seem that evil was inherent in this group and immutable. An excerpt from *Kangura* provides a good illustration.

“The malice, the evil are just as we knew them in the history of our country. . . . A Tutsi is someone who seduces with words but whose malice is without bounds. A Tutsi is someone who has a desire for vengeance that will never be extinguished, someone whose thoughts you can never divine, who laughs even when subjected to atrocious suffering. . . . The following proverbs attest to the inherently evil nature of Tutsis: Protect the sex of a Tutsi, and he will take your wife. Host a Tutsi and when night falls, he will chase you from your bed . . .” [translation].²²

Refugees receiving water at one of the many water distribution centres as they make their journey back to Rwanda, 1994

Credit: U.S. National Archives and Records Administration

TO PERSECUTE AND TO MURDER

Various strategies were adopted to massacre Tutsis: they were actively sought out, tracked to their hiding places, spied on and denounced. Two strategies in particular proved to be cruelly effective in the persecution and slaughter of Tutsis. First, a communication strategy that consisted of directing killers to the locations of targeted individuals. Second, rape served as a powerful weapon used to ensure the slow eradication of Tutsi women. One of the mobilizing slogans, which reflects the state of mind of the perpetrators, was as follows:

**“Yeee, tubatsembatsembe,
Yeee, tubagandagure”**

Can be translated as “Let’s exterminate them, eradicate them. Let’s crush them in fury and brutality.”²³

The Hutu authorities had made the decision to barricade points of entry to and exits from towns in order to prevent Tutsis from leaving the killing areas and to execute them during identity checks.²⁴ This decision was broadcast by the media and implemented by the military, the militias and other Hutus a few minutes after the assassination of President Juvénal Habyarimana on April 6, 1994.²⁵



After the events of 1994, many women gave birth to children conceived by rape. Foundation Rwanda introduced programs to support these families, who are dealing with severe trauma. “The children born of rape in conflict areas [live with] complex and deep trauma ... for generations. The ... testimonies embody stories of hope, forgiveness, fragility, and a strong undertone of the lingering struggles associated with severe trauma and effects of genocide. All testimonies, given in 2019, were translated from Kinyarwanda to English by Samuel Munderere and have been edited for brevity and clarity.” (Foundation Rwanda)

[http://](#)

Crédit : Jonathan Torgovnik

[http://](#)



In an effort to control the movement of Tutsis (from one area to another) and to identify and monitor them, the Hutu authorities carried out an almost systematic registration of Tutsis both in their place of residence and their place of birth. Tutsis fleeing the killing areas were described as “infiltrators” by the authorities and radio announcers. Those who controlled the barricades had lists of names.²⁶ The names were also broadcast over the radio.

RTLM

“Radio-télévision libre des milles collines” was a radio station that played a key role in the dissemination of racist and hate messages urging the Hutu to take part in the slaughter of Tutsis and moderate Hutus.

RTLM involved the general public in hunting down named individuals, directed killers where to find them and then announced their murders. One person recalls that he and others at risk listened to RTML because it “indicated the victims and we wanted to know if we were on the list of people selected to be hunted.” On April 8, announcer Valérie Bemerké told listeners that Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) members hiding at the home of Tutsi businessperson Antoine Sebera had been attacked. She added: “Now they are being grilled right here . . . now they are burning.” In fact, Sebera’s house had not yet been attacked, but the report set it up as a target and it was besieged and burned soon after. Several days later, Noël Hitimana announced that the home of Joseph Kabahaye in Kivugiza was an RPF bastion, with many agents hidden in the ceiling. Militiamen attacked the area within hours and killed Kabahaye. Charles Kalinjabo, too, was murdered after having been denounced on RTLM. On April 10, Valérie Bemerké read a list of 13 important RPF agents, their addresses, places of work and where they spent their leisure time. This information had supposedly come from a document found in the possession of an RPF agent. Asserting that these people were preparing to kill Hutus, Bemerké urged all people who “wanted security to ‘rise up’ against these ‘spies.’”²⁷



Machetes and clubs used to slaughter Tutsis during the Rwandan genocide

Credit: Dave Proffer, Wikimedia Commons

Rape was used as a weapon against almost 250000 Tutsi women. It was a means of humiliating them and sowing fear.²⁸ Some of them were then murdered. The Hutus wanted to humiliate Tutsi women, calling them pretentious because of their beauty, but whores as well. According to the testimony of a woman interviewed after the genocide, the mayor of Taba cheerfully encouraged militiamen to rape her, saying to them, while laughing, “don’t ever ask me again what a Tutsi woman tastes like.” In Butare, on April 25, 1994, family affairs and women’s development minister Pauline Nyiramasuhuko encouraged militiamen to rape the women before killing them. According to an account by one of them, Foster Mivumbi, the minister said:

“You must rape the women before you kill them”
*[translation].*²⁹

Survivors of the rapes were traumatized in one or more ways: they were humiliated by the rape itself and some had to deal with venereal disease, becoming pregnant from the rape, or bearing a child who was also diseased. In fact, according to some accounts, several women were raped by AIDS patients given special leave from hospital by the Hutu leaders to deliberately infect Tutsi women with HIV-AIDS.³⁰



Photographs from the Disclosure project (Foundation Rwanda)

Credit: Jonathan Torgovnik

TO DENY

After the genocide, this process of denial was couched in a conspiratorial discourse among the authorities, which involved suggesting that the massacred Tutsis deserved their fate, describing them as invaders and people who wanted to exterminate the Hutu—essentially drawing on the propaganda used prior to the genocide. Tutsis were thus described as enemies with the intent to murder Hutus. The account of Jeanne Uwimbabazi, a young woman who survived the genocide, conveys her perceptions of the perpetrators:



“What is striking is that they show no sign of remorse. On the contrary, they look you right in the eye, and if they could, they would smile. . . . They do not understand that killing a Tutsi is not a trivial matter. Yes, I think it could start up again. The politics of reconciliation may be helpful because one cannot live in hatred, but things have to be done in order. . . . The survivors want to move on, that’s for sure. But many wounds are not healed because a step is missing. The perpetrators need to ask for forgiveness and acknowledge their crimes. For a survivor, there is nothing worse than to see that a perpetrator is acting as if nothing happened” [translation].³¹

Major Vera Alexandro, an officer in the Malagasy army, examining a wall commemorating child victims of the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi during a visit to the Kigali Genocide Memorial

Credit: U.S. National Archives and Records Administration

Part of the international community also denied the genocidal character of the slaughter of Tutsis, even while it was taking place. It explained its inaction by saying that it was a war between two ethnic groups that was part of “the genetic heritage of the country” [translation].³² Jean-Pierre Chrétien³³ reported on the cultural vision behind this attitude adopted by the international community, stating that:

“Very quickly, massacres of Tutsis were presented as part of a civil war, and a balance was struck between the victims of two ethnic ‘camps.’ The fact that Rwanda is in Africa is not a coincidence in the success of this relativism. Many observers more or less shared the conviction that the killings were part of the order of things on this continent, and that barbarism comes naturally to its populations” [translation].

A Rwandan refugee mother giving her child water inside a tent at the Kitali refugee camp. She and her son were among the 1.2 million refugees who fled after civil war erupted in their country, 1994.

Credit: U.S. National Archives and Records Administration



JUSTICE

Recognition of the genocide

In the spring of 1994, it took more than two months for the massacre of the Rwandan Tutsi to be called a “genocide.”³⁴ Throughout the month of April, most Western observers and leaders used the term “massacres” of civilians. On April 29, UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali placed the blame on “uncontrolled military” and “armed civil groups” with “deep-seated ethnic enmities.” The UN even asked General Dallaire, Commander of UNAMIR, not to use the term genocide.³⁵

On April 27, Pope John Paul II used the word in a public statement. The expression “acts of genocide” was used in a United Nations Security Council resolution of June 8, 1994.

On November 9, 1994, the Security Council established the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) in order to put on trial individuals considered responsible for acts of genocide or other serious violations of international humanitarian law committed in Rwanda and in neighbouring countries in 1994.³⁶ The Appeals Chamber was located in The Hague, Netherlands. A total of 93 people (high-ranking military and government officials, politicians and businessmen, as well as religious, militia and media leaders) were indicted. The ICTR was the first international tribunal to recognize rape as a means of perpetrating genocide.

The ICTR wrapped up its operations in December 2015. In all, 62 defendants were sentenced and incarcerated, 2 died before a judgment could be brought down, 14 were acquitted, 3 fugitives were referred to Mechanism for International Criminal Tribunals (MICT), and 2 indictments were withdrawn. Ten cases were referred to national courts. On December 22, 2010, the Security Council created the MICT, which continues to perform certain functions previously carried out by the ICTR. For example, it is tasked with tracking down and arresting the 3 accused who remain fugitives from justice [at time of writing]. Once they have been apprehended, the IRMCT will conduct their trials and supervise any sentence imposed along with all of the sentences previously imposed by the ICTR.



The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR)

Credit: Tomsudani, Wikimedia Commons

Establishment of a Gacaca court system in Rwanda

In November 1994, more than 120,000 people suspected of having participated in the genocide were detained in various Rwandan prisons awaiting trial. Despite the efforts made by the Rwandan justice system and the creation of the ICTR, there were too many accused to process. As a result, the Rwandan government decided in 2001 to establish a Gacaca court system. This mode of justice, inspired by tradition, was based on the use of non-professional judges elected by the population. All citizens were called on to participate as a witness, judge or simple member of the local population. The Gacaca courts tried 2 million individuals in ten years and were officially closed on June 18, 2012. At present, victims of the genocide can still appeal to the national courts for reparation.

Convictions handed down by national courts

In 2009, Désiré Munyaneza was convicted in a Canadian court of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. It was the first time that a person was convicted in Canada under the *Crimes Against Humanity and War Crimes Act*. The act gives Canadian courts the authority to try criminals in Canada even if the crimes they committed took place outside the



A convoy of United Nations trucks escorted by a high-mobility multipurpose wheeled vehicle (HMMWV) making the 20-km uphill trek, past hiking Rwandans, to take purified water to Kibumba, the nearest refugee camp, 1994

Credit: U.S. National Archives and Records Administration

country. In 2016, Canada extradited to Rwanda former second lieutenant Jean-Claude Seyoboka, who was accused of genocide.

Similarly, in Switzerland, Finland, the United States, Germany and elsewhere around the world, Rwandan nationals were sentenced and continue to be sentenced for the crimes they committed during the genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda.

At present, victims of genocide can still appeal for reparation. In spring 2021, French President Emmanuel Macron made a speech in Kigali, in which he acknowledged his country's responsibility in the Rwandan genocide and apologized to the victims.³⁷

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