

Rwanda Timeline

1885 Germany gains control of Rwanda in the Scramble for Africa.

1918 Under the Treaty of Versailles the former German colony of Rwanda is given to Belgium. Both Germany and Belgium turned the traditional Hutu-Tutsi relationship into a class system. The minority Tutsi (10%) are favored over the Hutus (90%) and given privileges and western-style education. The Belgians used the Tutsi minority to enforce their rule.

1926 Belgians introduce a system of ethnic identity cards differentiating Hutus from Tutsis.

1959 Hutus rebel against the Belgian colonial power and the Tutsi.

1960 Hutus win municipal elections organized by Belgian colonial rulers.

1961-62 Belgians withdraw. A Hutu revolution in Rwanda installs a new Hutus president, Gregoire Kayibanda; fighting continues and thousands of Tutsis are forced to flee.

1967 Renewed massacres of Tutsis.

1973 Purge of Tutsis from universities. Fresh outbreak of killings, again directed at Tutsi community. The General Juvenal Habyarimana, seizes power, pledging to restore order. A policy of ethnic quotas is entrenched in all public service employment. Tutsis are restricted to nine percent of available jobs.

1975 Hutus from the president's home area of northern Rwanda are given overwhelming preference in public service and military jobs. The Tutsis continues to be treated poorly throughout the '70s and '80s.

1986 In Uganda, Rwandan exiles form the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), a Tutsi-dominated organization.

1989 Coffee prices collapse, causing severe economic hardship in Rwanda. People are impoverished, and hungry and the unemployment rate is high.

November 1992 Prominent Hutu activist Dr. Leon Mugusera appeals to Hutus to send the Tutsis "back to Ethiopia" via the rivers.

February 1993 RPF (Tutsi) launches a fresh offensive and reach the outskirts of Kigali. Fighting between Hutus and Tutsi armies continues for several months.

August 1993 Following months of negotiations, Habyarimana and the RPF sign a peace

agreement, the Arusha Accord. 2,500 U.N., troops, under General Romeo Delleaire, are deployed in Kigali to oversee the implementation of the accord.

Sept.1993-Mar.1994 President Habyarimana stalls on setting up of the Hutus- Tutsi government. Training of militias intensifies. Extremist radio station, Radio Mille Collines, begins broadcasting attacks on the Tutsis. They refer to the Tutsi as "Cockroaches". Human rights groups warn the international community of impending calamity.

April 6, 1994 President Habyarimana and the president of Burundi, Cyprien Ntaryamira, are killed when Habyarimana's plane is shot down near Kigali Airport. The Hutus begin to blame the Tutsi for the killing of the President. That night the 100 days of killing of Tutsi begins.

April 7, 1994 The Hutus set up roadblocks and go from house to house killing Tutsis and Hutus who are not actively killing Tutsi or are seen as friends of the Tutsi. Thousands die on the first day. U.N. forces stand by while the slaughter goes on. They are forbidden to intervene, as this would breach their "monitoring" mandate. U.N officials carry guns but can only shoot if they are being shot at.

April 21, 1994 The U.N. cuts its forces from 2,500 to 250 following the murder of ten Belgian soldiers assigned to guard the moderate Hutu prime minister, Agathe Uwiliyingimana. The prime minister is killed and the Belgians are disarmed, tortured, and shot and hacked to death.

April 30, 1994 The U.N. Security Council spends eight hours discussing the Rwandan crisis. The resolution condemning the killing omits the word "genocide." Had the term been used, the U.N. would have been legally obliged to act to "prevent and punish" the perpetrators. Meanwhile, tens of thousands of refugees flee into Tanzania, Burundi and Zaire.

May 17, 1994 As the slaughter of the Tutsis continues the U.N. agrees to send 6,800 troops and policemen to Rwanda with powers to defend civilians.

July 1994 The RPF captures Kigali. The Hutu government flees to Zaire, followed by a tide of refugees. The French end their mission and are replaced by Ethiopian U.N. troops. The RPF sets up an interim government of national unity in Kigali.

November 1994 U.N. Security Council establishes an international tribunal that will oversee prosecution of suspects involved in the Genocide.

Feb. 19, 1995 Western governments, including the U.S. (\$60 million), pledge \$600 million in aid to Rwanda.

December 1996 Trials begin for Hutus involved in 1994 genocide.