

## RWANDA

### Executive Summary

The 1994 Rwandan genocide has been described as “the most intimate and effective in recent memory”. Between 800 000 and 1 000 000 people were killed in less than three months – the vast majority in face-to-face slaughter, with machetes and clubs. A further two million people were displaced internally and two million more became refugees, mostly in neighbouring countries.

With violence consuming the country, the threat of impunity prevailed, necessitating a complete overhaul of the criminal justice system. Most educated people and professional cadres were either dead or in exile, and the economy depleted. The physical and psychological needs of a traumatised population had to be met, and enemies, citizens of the same country, were compelled to find a way to co-exist.

Returning from decades of exile to defeat the genocidal forces, the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), wrested control of government from the Hutu-dominated *Mouvement Révolutionnaire National pour le Développement* (MRND), launching a government of national unity. Its priorities were to stem the violence, ensure national security and rebuild the infrastructure of the nation. Only two members of the Cabinet had had any direct experience of running a government. Many had never been in Rwanda.

The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda in Arusha, Tanzania, was established to bring to trial the major proponents of the genocide. Approximately 12 000 community-based *gacaca* courts were set up throughout the country to hear the cases of others allegedly involved in the genocide.

The main challenge facing Rwanda continues to be how to foster peaceful coexistence between former adversaries within the framework of basic stability

while opening up democratic space. The minority Tutsi fear that democracy will lead to Hutu domination. Some of the Hutu majority feel marginalised in post-conflict Rwandan society, dominated by a Tutsi-led government. Many of those responsible for the genocide are in exile, a fact which contributes to continuing tension on Rwanda's borders particularly with the DRC, and poses a threat to Rwanda's internal security.

### Abbreviations

ADF	Allied Democratic Forces
ADFL	Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo
BBTG	Broad Based Transitional Group
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
FAR	<i>Forces Armées Rwandaises</i>
FDD	<i>Front pour la Défense de la Démocratie</i>
FDLR	<i>Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Rwanda</i>
ICTR	International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda
IPEP	International Panel of Eminent Personalities
MONUC	United Nations Organisation Mission in the DRC
MRND	<i>Mouvement Révolutionnaire National pour le Développement</i>
NRA	National Resistance Army
NURC	National Unity and Reconciliation Commission
OAU	Organisation of African Unity
RCD	<i>Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie</i>
RCD-Goma	<i>Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie-Goma Faction</i>
RPF/A	Rwandan Patriotic Front/Army

## Introduction

The establishment in Rwanda of a Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF)-led government of national unity, following the overthrow of the *Mouvement Révolutionnaire National pour le Développement* (MRND) government in 1994, persuaded approximately 800 000 Tutsi refugees to return home, largely from Uganda, Tanzania and other neighbouring countries. Hundreds of thousands of Hutu refugees, in turn, fled to what is today known as the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and other countries in the face of the RPF advance. Seeking to pre-empt future attacks on Rwanda, the RPF carried out a military onslaught on refugee camps in the DRC's North and South Kivu Provinces, suspected of harbouring ex-FAR combatants and genocidal forces; thousands of Hutus were killed, and thousands more took shelter in neighbouring countries. The situation on Rwanda's borders impacted on initial attempts to promote a government of national unity. By 2000, the Speaker of Parliament, Joseph Sebarenzi, a Tutsi, was accused of abusing his office, supporting the return of the former King, and inciting soldiers to rebel against the government. Prime Minister Faustin Twagiramungu, a Hutu, in turn, resigned amid accusations of financial impropriety and corruption. A few days later, Assiel Kabera, a Tutsi and adviser to Rwandan President Pasteur Bizimungu, a Hutu, was murdered, and, President Bizimungu himself resigned shortly thereafter.

Hutu refugees argued that the RPF reprisals against civilians in DRC refugee camps constituted a "reciprocal genocide". The Rwandan government, in turn, accused former FAR troops and the *Interahamwe* in the DRC of threatening the security of the country. In 1997-98, a full-scale military operation led by ex-FAR officers and *Interahamwe* resulted in an organised insurgency in north-western Rwanda in which thousands of civilians were killed. Schools, health centres, bridges and municipal offices were targeted as a strategy to paralyse government, resulting in Rwandan forces establishing a temporary military presence in the DRC. Rwandan President Paul Kagame justified the need for a Rwandan presence in the DRC to curtail cross-border raids, although counter-accusations were that Rwanda was using its presence to expropriate Congolese minerals.

The climate promised to change when Joseph Kabila eventually assumed power in the DRC after the assassination of his father, Laurent-Désiré Kabila. The DRC acknowledged Rwanda's security needs and Rwanda committed itself to respecting the sovereignty of the DRC, resulting in a formal withdrawal of Rwandan troops from Congolese territory in October 2003, within the internationally-brokered peace accords. It has been suggested that Rwandan generals "changed their fatigues for business suits". Others argue that the Rwandan government continued to provide logistical, practical and financial support to the Goma-based *Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie* (RCD), a Congolese rebel movement opposed to President Kabila. The *Forces Démocratiques de Libération du Rwanda* (FDLR, comprising former *Interahamwe* and FAR forces) at the same time pursued their military aggression against Rwandan government forces then stationed in the DRC. Civilian populations in the eastern part of the DRC have been victim to reciprocal attacks and harassment ever since and to date, United Nations sponsored efforts to repatriate Rwandan combatants and civilians have had a mitigated success.

In the interests of regional stability, regional and UN institutions took direct steps to disarm the ex-FAR and *Interahamwe* militia groups operating in eastern DRC. DRC President Joseph Kabila indicated his support for the disarmament and in January 2009 Rwanda sent troops into North Kivu province to help government forces disarm the Hutu militia.

Resentment at the failure of foreign governments and UN troops to prevent the genocide, when all the warnings were there, continues to influence Rwandan responses to the views of Western governments on its internal political matters. Nigeria's Permanent Representative to the UN, Ambassador Ibrahim Gambari, has noted that "without doubt it was the Security Council, especially its most powerful members, and the international community as a whole that failed the people of Rwanda in their gravest hour of need." The United States, having lost 18 soldiers in Somalia in 1993, used its veto power in the Security Council to block UN intervention in Rwanda on the eve of the genocide. France had, prior to the genocide, actively supported the campaign of the Habyarimana government against those whom it saw as Anglophone "interlopers" from Uganda. France is

accused in some circles of supporting the establishment of a corridor, ostensibly for people fleeing the genocide, which allowed *génocidaires* to escape into the DRC. Belgium withdrew its troops from UN command after attacks by FAR forces killed ten of its soldiers, and called for the total withdrawal of the UN forces from Rwanda.

The Constitution deliberately requires that not more than 50% of the executive arm of government be drawn from the same political party, and political parties are not permitted to be mono-ethnic. This resulted in the parliament banning the Hutu-dominated MRND in 2003. Although criticised by a number of observers, the banning was supported by several civil society organisations, including human rights and victims' support groups like *Pro-Femmes* and *Ibuka*. "It is not easy to balance the freedom of expression and the right to organise on the one hand with the need to counter ethnic ideology and genocide on the other," an *Ibuka* spokesperson stated.

Twice postponed, elections have been held in 2001 (local elections), 2002 (parliamentary elections) and in 2003 (presidential elections), with the polls showing overwhelming support for the ruling party and President Kagame. Opposition forces have disputed the outcomes, and many outside observers suggest that the election results may have been affected by political intimidation on the part of the ruling party. The tight control of political activity can be only partly justified by the claim that Rwanda remains a country at war, seeking to overcome the divisions of the past, and combating the resurgence the ideology that led to the 1994 genocide. Future options for peace are likely to be determined by how the conflicting priorities of justice and democracy are negotiated and addressed. In brief, the shadow of genocide continues to hang heavily over Rwandan politics.

### **The Historical Roots of Conflict**

The Rwandan conflict is historically entrenched, running through the pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial periods. It is embedded in myth, legend, contested histories and animosities both between Rwandans and between Rwanda and its neighbours.

The Rwandan people consist of two major groups – the majority Hutu comprising approximately 85% of the population and the Tutsi comprising 15%. The Twa (or pygmies) comprise approximately 1%. The Hutu are assumed to have settled Rwanda and Burundi from the south and west, while the Tutsi are regarded as a Nilotic people who arrived later from the north and east. The different groups organised themselves in small semi-autonomous communities, with established links through marriage, social engagement and trade. It is estimated that today close to half of Rwandans have both Hutu and Tutsi forebears. As a result, some scholars question the extent of differing ethnic origins, suggesting that the differences are more likely to be economically and socially based.

Whatever their origins, the different groups lived on the same hills, sharing a social and political culture, with identities rooted in clans rather than ethnicity. This continued until the second half of the 19th century, when the administration of the Tutsi King Rwabugiri (1860-95) intervened in the autonomy of the Hutu and Tutsi, introducing a form of feudal labour that allowed the Hutu access to land in return for labour, while elevating the Tutsi to the status of cattle farmers. Historical evidence of the time shows a continuing blurring of the lines between Hutus and Tutsis, with labourers acquiring cattle through marriage, barter and trading that resulted in their upward social mobility – and the status of being a Tutsi. Some Tutsis, in turn, became Hutus as their economic standing declined.

### **Colonisation and independence**

Rwanda was ceded by Belgium to Germany at the Berlin Conference in 1885. Following the decision of the League of Nations, the colony was surrendered to Belgium after the First World War. The Belgians boosted the monarchy, favouring the Tutsi minority against the Hutu majority. The Belgians viewed them as having a natural aptitude to rule. They came to be seen as “Europeans under a black skin,” and were appointed in large numbers to leading positions in the colonial administration, while the Hutu were entrenched as a class of workers and subsistence farmers.

Social relations were thus pursued until after the Second World War, when the socially-privileged Tutsis began to see themselves not only as superior to the Hutus but as equal to the Belgians. Coinciding with political reforms in Belgium, colonial policy shifted in favour of the Hutus who, in turn, demanded political reforms aimed at enhancing their status. These demands were resisted by the Tutsis who perceived the Hutu to be undermining their privileges. Violence erupted, with a massacre and mass Tutsi exodus into neighbouring countries in 1959. The Hutus demanded the abolition of the Rwandan (Tutsi) monarchy, and they achieved this with the support of the Belgians. In October 1961 the Hutu Parmehutu Party was voted into power in the newly-formed parliament and its leader, Grégoire Kayibanda, elected President. In words that are today inscribed on the Genocide Memorial in Kigali, he described Rwanda as “two nations in a single state ... two nations between whom there is no intercourse and no sympathy, who are as ignorant of each other’s habits, thoughts and feelings as if they were dwellers of different zones, or inhabitants of different planets.” In July the following year Rwanda received independence. Identity cards that had served to guarantee privileges to the Tutsi during Belgian rule, now served to discriminate against them in both employment and education.

During the years that followed, Parmehutu leaders acted against thousands of Tutsis, a situation aggravated by developments in Burundi, where an army coup brought a Tutsi military officer, Michel Micombero, to power in 1966. The Burundian army and government were purged of their Hutu members. Faced with a Hutu uprising in 1972, Micombero killed approximately 200 000 Hutus and drove an equal number into exile in Rwanda and elsewhere. In Rwanda, Kayibanda responded with a new round of repression against Tutsis. He stated ominously: “Tutsi domination is the origin of all evil the Hutu have suffered since the beginning of time. It is comparable to a termite mould teeming with every cruelty known to man.” In an uncompromising campaign of “purification” he further restricted the involvement of Tutsis in the political and economic spheres, resulting in a new exodus of Tutsis from the country.

Although Tutsi privilege had existed prior to European colonisation, the entrenchment and politicisation of ethnic divisions was intensified during the

colonial period. The Kayibanda regime reinforced the colonial ideology, making a distinction between the Hutus, deemed “indigenous” and the Tutsis, deemed “alien”.

### **The Second Republic**

Ruling through a small clique of politicians drawn from the southern part of the country, Kayibanda lost the support of the north and in July 1973 was overthrown by General Juvénal Habyarimana, a northerner. Having seized power and established the Second Republic, he ruled with the support of his wife, Agathe Kanzinga, and her “little house” or *akazu* consisting of family members and senior military officers descended from a lineage of Hutu traditional leaders. In 1975 Habyarimana turned Rwanda into a single-party state under MRND rule. Tutsis were required to eschew politics, government and the military. Obsessed with political control, the new regime subjected dissenters and opponents to arbitrary arrest, torture and imprisonment without trial and Tutsis fled into exile in increasing numbers. Habyarimana took the process a step further by denationalising the Tutsis who went into exile. Many became part of the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) infrastructure and military forces based in neighbouring Uganda. By the late 1980s, the Rwandan exile community in Uganda had grown to approximately 600 000 people. Meanwhile facing an internal rebellion, the then Ugandan President Milton Obote initiated a programme to expel the Rwandan refugees from the country, arguing that they were supportive of Yoweri Museveni’s National Resistance Army or NRA.<sup>1</sup> The RPF argued that its goal was not merely to permit exiled Rwandans to return home, but to oust the Habyarimana government.

Political tensions in Rwanda were aggravated by the severe 1989 drought and economic decline, due in part, to restrictive measures imposed by a World Bank restructuring plan, which left large sections of the Rwandan population without food. This, together with escalating corruption within the Habyarimana government, resulted in increasing demands for political reform. Habyarimana agreed to negotiate with his opponents and announced that a national commission would be

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<sup>1</sup> Museveni, leader of the Uganda Patriotic Movement and later President of Uganda, had been involved in the establishing of the National Resistance Movement (NRM) and its military wing, the National Resistance Army (NRA).

formed to examine the question of reform. With this process still unfolding, the RPF invaded Rwanda in October 1990, resulting in a new round of violence against Tutsis and other regime critics. A network of Hutu extremists, known as *le réseau zero*, was developed within the military, the government, the media and academia to promote Hutu Power. The “Hutu Ten Commandments” drove an ideological wedge between Hutus and Tutsis and *Radio-Télévision Libres des Mille Collines* prepared the Hutu faithful to act. Occasional military incursions by the RPF into Rwanda were responded to with a series of deadly pogroms by the government against Tutsi civilians. Habyarimana was forced to sign a ceasefire and form a coalition government in terms of the 1993 Arusha Accords that provided for the establishment of a Broad-Based Transitional Government (BBTG), the repatriation of refugees, the integration of all military forces into one national army and the holding of democratic elections in 1995. The parties were ultimately, however, unable to agree on the installation of a transitional government and the situation was further polarised, with Hutu extremists intensifying their opposition to the Habyarimana government.

As tensions escalated, the advice of Major General Romeo Dallaire, head of the UN peacekeeping presence, to expand the UN mandate, was ignored. He sent reports of increasing violence and warnings of impending disaster to the UN Secretariat, who questioned the validity of the information. The tipping point was the shooting down on 6 April 1994 of the aircraft that carried President Juvenal Habyarimana and Burundi’s new provisional President Cyprien Ntaryamira, as it came in to land at Kigali airport. Speculation is still rife as to whether the aircraft was shot down by Hutu extremists opposed to Habyarimana or the RPF. However, within an hour Hutu extremists implemented plans to kill the moderate Hutu Prime Minister and like-minded government officials, and unleash genocide against Tutsis and their Hutu sympathisers at the hands of the *Interahamwe* militia, FAR and armed civilians. *Radio Mille Collines* called on its listeners to “assist the armed forces to finish the work,” contending it was “everyone’s responsibility” to “eliminate the *inyenzi*” – in Kinyarwanda, “the cockroaches”. Undaunted, the RPF stepped up its military campaign. The events of the “100 days” are now well known. The international community looked on as generations of mistrust, exploitation and violence came to a head in the chaos that followed. The Tutsi population were not

the sole victims – moderate Hutus were also targeted. The death toll of the Rwandan genocide is commonly estimated at 800 000, though some estimates top one million. Invading from the north, the RPF captured the country and installed a new government.

About 1.2 million refugees fled to neighboring countries, partially due to fear of RPF retribution. Refugee camps set up by the humanitarian community in neighbouring DRC were used by the Hutu extremists as recruitment grounds and military bases to attempt to reconquer Rwanda, until the RPF/ADFL (Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo) attacks in 1996, in which thousands of Hutus were decimated.

### **Regional considerations**

The ramifications of the genocide became a decisive turning point in Rwandan and regional politics. The renewed ethnic conflict aggravated unresolved ethnic divisions, including in the eastern provinces of the Congo between the Congolese ethnic groups collectively referred to as the Banyarwanda (people of Rwanda). The Banyarwanda include three distinct communities. One consists of Hutus and Tutsis who settled in the Kivu region before the advent of colonial rule. This includes ethnic Tutsis who settled in the Mulenge region in South Kivu and known as the Banyamulenge. A second group comprises Hutu and Tutsi migrant workers brought to the Congo under Belgian colonial rule. A further group consists of Tutsi refugees who fled Rwanda in the wake of the 1959 Hutu revolution (the “fifty-niners”). These groups were augmented by the newly-arrived *génocidaires* and other Rwandan refugees in 1994.

The exclusionary politics of President Mobutu had spawned growing sympathy for the cause of the RPF amongst the Banyarwanda, with Tutsi communities in the Congo and the RPF in Uganda mobilising around issues relating to their status in their countries of asylum. The situation was further complicated when Uganda and Rwanda provided overt support for Laurent-Désiré Kabila in his bid to overthrow Mobutu in May 1997. Once in power Kabila turned against his Rwandan advisors, dismissing their claims to a share of power in the DRC, and heightening anti-Tutsi

feelings in the country. The conflict escalated into what has been called an African World War, with Angola, Chad, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Namibia and Zimbabwe drawn into the fray on the side of the Kabila government, and Burundi, Uganda and Rwanda supporting the hastily-created *Rassemblement Congalais pour la Démocratie* (RCD) in order to protect recently-acquired mining interests. They also needed to deal with security threats posed respectively by the *Front pour la Défense de la Démocratie* (FDD) seeking to destabilise the Burundian government, the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) fighting against the Museveni government in Uganda, and the ex-FAR and *Interahamwe* seeking to destabilise the Kagame government in Rwanda.

The dynamics of exclusion are well captured by René Lemarchand speaking at the “Facing Ethnic Conflicts Conference” in December 2000:

Exclusion does not just suddenly materialise out of the primeval fissures of the plural society; its roots are traceable to the rapid mobilisation of ethnic identities ... built on the premise of inequality and on the profoundly discriminatory implications of public policies directed against specific ethnic communities. In all three states [Rwanda, Burundi and the DRC], refugee flows were the crucial factor behind the rapid polarisation of ethnic feelings.

An important question is whether Rwanda can extricate itself from politics of ethnic polarisation in a region beset with ethnic tensions.

### **Political Reconstruction**

Post-genocide efforts to bring about peace in Rwanda draw on initiatives established in the Arusha Peace Accords in August 1993. The former President of Tanzania, Julius Nyerere, was the facilitator of the process. Belgium, Germany, France and the United States also participated, as well as the UN High Commission for Refugees. In a series of negotiations several issues were agreed upon: the establishment of the rule of law and a culture of human rights, power-sharing in all public institutions, the transitional arrangements that would lead to

the elections, the repatriation of refugees, the resettlement of internally displaced persons and the integration of the Rwandan army.

This resulted in a commitment to establish the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), and approximately 120 000 alleged *génocidaires* were imprisoned in detention camps and prisons across the country. Progress in the establishment of the ICTR was slow, the judicial processing of prisoners was virtually non-existent and as indicated earlier, internal conflict in government had intensified. Questions were raised concerning the commitment of government to the implementation of the Accords. This was aggravated by the postponement of the general elections that were supposed to have taken place five years after the signing of the Arusha Accords. Thus delayed by the genocide and related matters, presidential elections were won by President Kagame in a disputed process in 2003.

From a government perspective a priority was first to deal with past atrocities through the ICTR, established in 1994, and the *Gacaca* courts, set up in 1996. The National Unity and Reconciliation Commission (NURC) was established in 1998 as a semi-autonomous national institution, provided for by the National Constitution, with the aim of promoting reconciliation amongst Rwandans.

#### *The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR)*

Based in Arusha, the goal of the ICTR, within the context of the principles of deterrence and reconciliation, is to prosecute those primarily responsible for the genocide. The official statistics on the arrests, completed judgments, sentences handed down and incomplete work are available on the official website of the Tribunal.

The Tribunal has faced exceptional legal and logistical challenges. Witnesses need to be traced in remote parts of Rwanda and in neighbouring countries. Many have been reluctant to reopen the wounds of past suffering, others have been too afraid to do so. The pre-trial and trial procedures need to be heard in Kinyarwanda, French and English through complex translation procedures, resulting in a slow and time-consuming progress. Jurisprudential challenges, the complexities

associated with the implementation of substantive and procedural aspects of International Criminal Law, an obligation to ensure adequate defence teams for the accused and related logistical problems, in turn, resulted in extended delays. The financial cost of the ICTR between its inception in 1994 and 2007 has been in excess of US\$1 billion and a further US\$ 267 million has been approved by the UN for the period 2008-9.

Resolutions 1503 (2003) and 1534 (2004) of the UN Security Council required the Court to complete investigations by 2004, with trials being concluded by 2008, and the conclusion of appeals by 2010. As part of this process the ICTR will, in terms of the UN-approved completion strategy, transfer incomplete cases to national jurisdictions for trial. This creates its own set of challenges, involving the assurance that the accused receive a fair trial and that they do not face a death penalty in the country of referral – something that has resulted in tensions between the Rwandan government and the ICTR. Under considerable international pressure, and faced with the refusal by European countries to extradite genocide suspects because of the threat of their execution, Rwanda abolished capital punishment as of July 25<sup>th</sup> 2007. Some 600 death sentences were subsequently commuted to life imprisonment.

### Gacaca courts

The extent of the challenge facing the ICTR makes the parallel initiative to deal with Rwanda's past through traditional-type community based *gacaca* courts of huge significance. Unlike traditional *gacaca* courts, the contemporary courts rely on written law encapsulated in Organic Law no. 8/96 of 30 August 1996, empowering the present courts to deal with all offenders other than "category one" offenders – namely genocide planners, organisers, supervisors and those who oversaw the carrying out of these crimes or used their authority to incite the crimes, as well as notorious killers and individuals who committed acts of sexual torture and rape. The *Gacaca* courts are empowered to deal with all offenders who are suspected of being authors of voluntary homicides, serious attacks that resulted in the death of victims, and authors of injuries or serious acts of violence committed with the intention of killing their victims, as well as those suspected of causing serious harm but without intending to cause the death of victims. People

suspected of damaging property also fall under the jurisdiction of the *gacaca* courts.

Responses to the *Gacaca* courts are varied. Critics of the process, often made up of Western legal commentators and human rights critics, tend to see the courts as lacking in due process and being susceptible to community bias. Others see the courts as making an important contribution to truth recovery, reconciliation and national healing. The *gacaca* process is a complex one, often involving perpetrators and survivors from the same community, clan or family.

Ultimately a balanced assessment of the *gacaca* process needs to be made within the context of the stated two-fold aims of the Organic Law which are: the reduction of over-crowded prisons on the one hand, and the need to avoid impunity on the other. There are numerous unanswered questions about the *gacaca* courts, not least of which is whether minimal trial requirements are being met in all cases. It is equally important to ask whether the *gacaca* discursive approach to justice is not preferable to both alternatives which involve the perpetuation of imprisonment or impunity.

#### *National Unity and Reconciliation Commission (NURC)*

The work of the NURC provides a crucial ingredient in the process of justice and reconciliation in Rwanda, working to reintegrate people from a hitherto deeply divided society into a nation seeking to overcome past hostilities. Its activities include *Ingando* civic education activities for ex-combatants, released prisoners, people appearing before *Gacaca* courts, students and other categories of the population. It also trains community counsellors to assist former prisoners in adjusting to their new-found freedom, and help communities to make the necessary adjustments for this to happen.

“The jury is still out on Rwanda,” a member of a leading international human rights organisation observes. “My organisation is against any initiative that minimises the prosecution of human rights’ offenders. We quickly call it impunity. It may, however, be that the efficient working of the *gacaca* courts and *Ingando* is the best possible option for countries like Rwanda that struggle with a terrible past....

Prisoners, not least those who are not the masterminds behind the genocide, cannot be left in prison forever .... Rwanda is not a textbook case in terms of international law and reconstruction. This leaves some human rights purists uncomfortable.”

The post-genocide period has seen progress in social reconstruction. Economic development, education initiatives and a commitment to security are evident, although the lack of political inclusion, thoroughgoing democratisation and poverty relief for the social under-classes remain concerns that need to be addressed for peace to be sustainable in Rwanda. Extensive poverty, the demand for land and the need to bridge the divide between the political and economic elite on the one hand and the marginalised majority (still significantly divided along ethnic lines) on the other, continue to threaten the future of that nation.

### **Economic Transformation**

Rwanda and neighbouring Burundi are two of the most densely populated countries in Africa given their advantageous geographic and climatic conditions.

As already suggested, economic developments in the pre-colonial period were already shaping social relations between Hutus and Tutsis. The social elevation of Tutsis in the colonial period intensified divisions, reinforcing tensions between Hutus and Tutsis that could be exploited at different times by political elites to entrench or challenge the hegemony of one group over the other.

During the 1989 drought, the 1994 genocide and the RPF overthrow of the Hutu-led government, the struggle for land and clamour for resources intensified, leading to violent community and family conflicts. The situation is well summed up in the Human Rights Watch publication, *Leave None to Tell the Story: Genocide in Rwanda*:

This genocide was not an uncontrollable outburst of rage by a people consumed by ‘ancient tribal hatreds’ ... This genocide resulted from the deliberate choice of a modern elite to foster hatred and fear to keep itself in power. This small, privileged group first set the majority against the minority

to counter a growing political opposition within Rwanda. Then, faced with RPF success on the battlefield and at the negotiating table, these few power-holders transformed the strategy of ethnic division into genocide. They believed that the extermination campaign would restore the solidarity of the Hutu under their leadership and help them win the war.

In brief, the political identities imposed in the colonial era entrenched the boundaries between “Hutu” and “Tutsi”. These identities were perpetuated in the 1959 social revolution when the Hutu, trapped in a colonial victim mentality, traded places with their colonial masters and gave expression to their hegemonic aspirations by dominating the Tutsi. The Rwandan Patriotic Front/Army (RPF/RPA) defeated the Habyarimana regime in 1994. It remains to be seen whether the new regime has succeeded in creating a new sense of political inclusivity in Rwanda.

Identity is an aspect of power politics that cannot be overcome in isolation from economic reconstruction and development. This suggests that for Rwanda to overcome its past, it needs to address issues of political inclusion, promote a comprehensive understanding of human rights and ensure broad-based development for all its citizens. Scholarship on poverty and war shows that a successful transitional justice mechanism must give maximum attention to the need for redressing socio-economic inequality between groups. Realistically this is possible only where political inclusion is maximised to the point where the marginalised and alienated have the opportunity to realise their social and material needs through democratic means rather than through resorting to violence. This constitutes the biggest challenge facing Rwanda today. In the words of Mamdani: “If the violence from below could not have spread without cultivation and direction from above, it is equally true that the conspiracy of the tiny fragment of *génocidaires* could not have succeeded had it not found resonance from below. The response and initiative from below involved multitudes and presents the true dilemma of the Rwandan genocide. If this were the case in the pre-1994 genocide period, it is equally true in the post-genocide situation”.

## Rwanda Fact Sheet<sup>2</sup>

<b>Basics</b>	
Capital	Kigali
Total population (millions), 2011	11.37
Population distribution, 2010	
Urban	19
Rural	81
Population annual growth rate (%), 2011	2.8
HDI (ranking out of 179 countries), 2010	152
Adult literacy rate (% aged 15 and older), 1995-2005	70.4
Health	
Life expectancy at birth (years), 2011	58
Infant mortality rate (per 1000 live births), 2011	64
HIV prevalence (% aged 15-49), 2009	2.9

<b>Demographics</b>			
<i>Ethnicity</i>		<i>Religion</i>	
Hutu (Bantu)	84%	Roman Catholic	56.5%
Tutsi (Hamitic)	15%	Protestant	26%
Twa (Pygmy)	1%	Adventist	11.1%
		Muslim	4.6%
		Indigenous beliefs	0.1%

<b>Economy</b>	
GDP (US\$ billions), 2010	11.84
GDP per capita (US\$), 2010	1100
Inequality measures (Gini Coefficient Index)	46.8
GDP- Composition by sector (%), 2010	
Agriculture	42.1
Industry	14.3
Services	43.6
Imports of goods and services (US\$ Billion), 2010	1.047
Exports of goods and services (as % of GDP), 2010	226
Government Expenditure (as % of GDP)	

<sup>2</sup> Information taken from the Central Intelligence Agency, Government of the United States of America, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/rw.html>

Education, 2008	4.1
Health, 2004	4.3
Military, 2006	2.9
Total debt service (as % of GDP), 2005	1.1