THE RWANDAN GENOCIDE
THEN AND NOW

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WHERE IS RWANDA?
Rwanda is a Central/East African country that shares a border with the DRC, Uganda, Burundi, and Tanzania.
- Population is 10 million people
- Africa’s most densely populated country
- Famous for its endangered mountain gorilla population

Rwanda is approximately the size of Maryland
- Tutsi population currently is about 14% of the country
- Hutu population currently comprises about 85% of the country
A RWANDA HISTORY PRIMER
Rwanda’s Colonial History

- Rwanda and Burundi were awarded to Germany in 1890 in exchange for Germany renouncing its claims to Uganda.
- In 1897 German colonists and missionaries arrived in Rwanda.
- The Germans believed that the Tutsi ruling class was superior to the Hutus because:
  - Tutsis were more viewed as more European;
  - Tutsis were taller;
  - Tutsis had more “honorable and eloquent personalities;” and
  - Tutsis were more willing to convert to Roman Catholicism.
At the end of World War I, Belgium accepted the League of Nation’s mandate to govern Ruanda-Urundi.

Belgian rule created a greater divide between the Hutus and the Tutsis
- Scientists arrived to measure the skull size of Hutus and Tutsis
  - Because Tutsis skulls were bigger, they were taller, and skin was lighter, Europeans believed that the Tutsis came from Caucasian ancestry and were superior to the Hutus.

In 1931 an ethnic identity was officially mandated and from 1935 on Rwandans were identified as Hutu, Tutsi, or Twa.

Owners of more than 10 head of cattle were considered Tutsi.
Hutu or Tutsi?
In the late 1950s ethnic tensions increased as Hutus rebelled against ongoing Tutsi domination of Rwanda’s government.

Gregoire Kayibanda led a “Hutu emancipation” movement.
- In 1959 Tutsi tried to assassinate him.
- Rumors of the death of another Hutu politician at the hands of the Tutsis set off a violent reaction called “winds of destruction.”
  - Between 20,000 and 100,000 Tutsis were killed.

Independence was declared on July 1, 1962.

Gregoire Kayibanda was the first elected president (July 1, 1962-July 5, 1973).
Modern Rwandan History

- The Tutsi RPF invades Rwanda in 1990 from bases in Uganda.
- In 1992-93 the Habyarimana Government and the RPF agree to a cease-fire and power-sharing accord in Arusha, Tanzania. The Arusha Accords are never implemented.
- April 6, 1994 Habyarimana is assassinated and the genocide begins.
- Theodore Sindikuwabo serves as Interim President from April 8, 1994-July 19, 1994.
- The RPF overthrows the government and Pasteur Bizimungu serves as President from July 19, 1994-March 23, 2000.
- Paul Kagame has served as the President of Rwanda since March 23, 2000.
WHAT IS GENOCIDE?
Genocide Defined

- Genocide is any of the following acts committed with the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group:
  - Killing members of the group;
  - Causing serious bodily harm or mental harm to members of a group;
  - Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring physical destruction in whole or in part;
  - Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;
  - Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group; or
  - Following the Rwanda genocide, the international community formally recognized rape as a method of committing genocide.
Genocide Throughout History

“The international community has both the moral duty and the legal power to attempt prevent and punish the crimes of genocide.”

DORINA Lea Peacock, Legal Scholar

- In addition to Rwanda, the international community has witnessed genocide in:
  - Armenia: 1915-1918
  - Ukraine: 1932-1935
  - Holocaust: 1938-1945
  - Cambodia: 1975-1979
  - Guatemala: 1982-1986
  - Iraq: 1988
  - Darfur: 2003-2011*
THE RWANDAN GENOCIDE
(April 6, 1994-July 16, 1994)

“The typhoon of madness that swept through the country [of Rwanda] between April 7 and the third week of May accounted for 80 percent of the victims of the genocide. That means about 800,000 people were murdered during those six weeks.”

JOHN Ruchyahana, Rwandan bishop
Rwanda Genocide Overview

- In **100 days** from April 6, 1994 to July 16, 1994, approximately **800,000 to 1 million** Tutsis and thousands of Hutus were massacred (approximately 11.5% of the population).
- An average of 6 men, women, and children were killed every minute of every day.
- An estimated 200,000 individuals participated in the genocide.
- Between 250,000 and 500,000 women were raped during the Genocide.
- 50,000 widows were created by the genocide.
- 7 out of 10 survivors make less than 5000 Rwandan Francs a month ($8).
Translating The Numbers

- If you assume that 900,000 were killed during the Genocide:
  - Austin, Texas 842,592 (11);
  - Jacksonville, Florida 836,507 (12); or
  - Indianapolis, Indiana 834,852 (13).
- If 11.5% of the U.S.'s population was killed in 100 days:
  - Equivalent of 36.1 million people.
April 6th: Plane carrying President Habyarimana of Rwanda is shot down. Almost immediately, Government soldiers start killing political opponents.

April 7th: Prime Minister Agathe Uwilingiyimana is killed by soldiers. Interhawme militia begin systematically killing Tutsi and moderate Hutu.

April 8th: Under Arusha Accords, RPF launches offenses to stop killings and rescue troops located in Kigali.

April 15th: Slaughter of thousands of Tutsis gathered at Nyarubuye Church seeking protection.

April 21st: International Red Cross announces that 500,000 Tutsi have been massacred since April 6.
Genocide Timeline

- **July 4th**: RPF takes control of Kigali, and forms a government on basis of Arusha Accords.
- **July 13th**: Refugees fleeing RPF flood into Congo. Severe humanitarian crisis in Goma.
- **July 18th**: RPF announces the war is over and names Pasteur Bizimungu as President. Paul Kagame is named Vice President.
HOW TO KILL 900,000 PEOPLE IN 100 DAYS
Starting in early 1990s, Hutu elite began constructing kill lists.

Following the Arusha Accords, the CDR (a Hutu supremacy party) began broadcasting propaganda, through their radio/TV station RLTM, against the Tutsis and the Accords.

Within an hour of the President’s plane being shot down, the Presidential Guard began killing members of the opposition parties including the Prime Minister, the President of the Supreme Court, and well known Rwandan human rights activists.
During the genocide, the radio broadcasted “names, addresses and even license-plate numbers” those who the Hutus wanted killed.

After the violence started, militia groups encouraged civilian Hutus to attack their Tutsi neighbors, causing the Tutsi population to gather in communal places such as schools and churches for defense.

- In the first two weeks almost 50% of genocide victims had died, largely through mass attacks on Tutsi gathering sites.

This genocide was very different from previous genocides seen in the 20th century because people from all parts of society—including civilians, women and clergy—participated.
Picture of Victims Hanging in Kigali Genocide Memorial
A Failed International Response

“In their greatest hour of need, the world failed the people of Rwanda.”

KOFI Annan, Nobel Laureate
Did the International Community have any Warning About the Genocide?

- Prior “Conflict” in Neighboring Burundi
  - Although not labeled a genocide, Hutus massacred Tutsis in Burundi in 1993.

- Recommendations in Arusha Accords
  - In 1993, the Accords recommended sending a peacekeeping force to Rwanda to seize arms collections of the local militias. However, UN Resolution provided only for monitoring.
  - International Commissions sent to monitor peace treaty warned the UN of a possible genocide based on weapons moving rapidly into the country.

- Reports from Peacekeeping Mission
  - UN Commander of Peacekeeping Force Romeo Dallaire sent the “Genocide Fax” to the UN ten weeks before genocide started. Fax accurately foreshadowed ability of Hutu militias to kill Tutsis.
Why Did the International Community not Intervene in Rwanda?:

- Lack of Understanding about Type and Extent of Conflict in Rwanda
  - Media and political experts believed for a long time that the conflict was an insurgency movement rather than a genocide.

- Limited Media Coverage Lead to Lack of Public Outrage in the US and Western Europe
  - When journalists realized the extent of the genocide, there were virtually no reporters inside Rwanda to document what was going on during the massacre.
International Intervention

What Could the International Community have Done?:

- Authorize Peacekeeping Troops to Use Force to Protect Civilians Rather than Removing Them From Conflict
  - Provide additional troops and equipment to assist the troops in protecting civilians.

- Jam Radio Signals to Shut Down Broadcast
  - A broadcast show was credited with providing locations of fleeing civilians and coordinating militia roadblocks through the country.

- Send Specialized Military Units to Create Safe Zones for Tutsis
  - Because the militias had only basic weaponry (mostly machetes), any Western armed force would likely have greatly deterred militias from attacking civilians.
Pursuing Justice
Rwanda’s Judicial Challenges

After the Genocide Ended, the New Rwandan Government Faced:

- No Functioning Court System
- Physical Inability to Detain all Perpetrators of Genocide
- Dire Economic Conditions
- Lack of Trained Lawyers, Judges and Investigations (because almost all been killed)
- Limited International Precedent about How to Deal with Genocide Perpetrators
- Mass Exodus of Genocide Perpetrators into Refugee Camps
Gacaca Courts

Rwanda’s New Legal Creation: “Justice on the Grass”

- Gacaca Courts are a short term answer to Rwanda’s judicial overload following the genocide.
- Judges were chosen by community election and adult Rwandan survivors were expected to participate.
- Gacaca courts heard cases from 2001 - 2012 and tried over TWO MILLION cases.
- Courts were the primary mechanism for adjudicating genocide-related cases and could impose sentences up to 30 years.
Gacaca Courts
International Tribunals

**International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR):**

- ICTR was created by the UN Security Council in 1994 to try high-level perpetrators of the genocide.

- Tribunal, located in Tanzania, finished all trials in 2012 and will finish all appeals by the end of 2014.
  - First conviction of genocide by international tribunal
  - First time rape was recognized as a method of committing genocide

- US voted to authorize creation of Tribunal and has since donated money to support court system.
The Rwanda Genocide: A Lesson, a Political Weapon, or Both?

“In the wake of violence on a societal scale, finding the right balance between justice and healing, remembering and “moving on,” is a messy if not impossible goal.”

EUGENIA Zorbas, Political Scholar
Lesson or Weapon?

- Using the Genocide as a Lesson
  - Creation of Genocide Memorial
  - Preservation of exhibits to remember the Genocide

- Using the Genocide to Suppress Opposition:
  - Rwanda Remains Dominated by the RPF and Kagame, Whose Government is Considered Repressive.
  - Laws prohibit criticism of government officials.
  - Calls for investigations into RPF abuses have been ignored.
  - Labeling the opposition “Genocide Deniers.”
YOU ARE THE LOSS THAT SHALL NEVER BE REPLACED