

## RWANDA IN THE CONGO

### The Origins of the RPF and the 1994 Rwanda Genocide

In the late 1950s and early 1960s, many among Rwanda's minority Tutsis fled persecutors and settled in exile in Southern Uganda. For decades the idea of returning to Rwanda was kept alive in these refugee camps, not least among the second-generation refugees, and in the late 1980s a rebel movement - the *Rwandan Patriotic Front* (RPF) - was formed with the declared aim of returning to Rwanda. As in many other exile communities all over the world, the mother country was embraced in mythical terms and believed to be the promised land, 'the land of milk and honey'.<sup>1</sup> Meanwhile, the people from Rwanda, the *Banyarwanda*, had helped Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni to power in 1986, but Museveni faced internal criticism because his power was based on what was considered to be foreigners. This brought the former refugees, who since 1986 had held high-ranking positions in the Ugandan government as well as in the army, in a precarious position, since the Rwandan President Juvénal Habyarimana in the early 1990s flatly refused to allow the refugees back into his already overpopulated country. These political tensions nourished the idea of returning home and fundraising events were frequently organized in support of the RPF.<sup>2</sup>

With the help, knowledge, and equipment of the Ugandan army, an attack was staged on 1 October 1990, against Habyarimana's government. Initially, the RPF suffered severe losses and most soldiers had to escape back into Uganda; others hid in the mountains in Northern Rwanda, where many froze to death or died of starvation.<sup>3</sup> But after reorganizing and re-arming, the RPF managed to build up strength, and it eventually seized more and more of Northern Rwanda. However, the French government under Francois Mitterand, a long-time friend of Habyarimana, stepped in and sent French paratroopers to the rescue, which effectively stopped the RPF from reaching the capital, Kigali. While French soldiers kept the RPF forces at bay, French army

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<sup>1</sup> Prunier, Gérard, *The Rwanda Crisis: History of a Genocide* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), first edition, p. 66

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 61-92

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp 114-115 and Strizek, Helmut, *Kongo/Zaire – Ruanda – Burundi: Stabilität durch eneute Militärherrschaft?* (München: Weltforum Verlag, 1998) (Afrika Studien No. 125), pp. 143-144

instructors tried to strengthen the poorly organized, poorly trained and poorly equipped *Forces Armées Rwandaises* (FAR).<sup>4</sup>

Western-backed negotiations between the RPF and Habyarimana's government eventually led to the so-called *Arusha Accords* signed between the Habyarimana government and the RPF in mid-1993. In late 1993, the first batch of approximately 2,500 UN peacekeeping troops began to arrive in the country to oversee the implementation of the peace agreement, which included setting up a transitional government with the participation of both Habyarimana's government, the RPF and domestic political opposition parties.<sup>5</sup>

Habyarimana, caught between Hutu extremists in his own government, who were rejecting the Arusha Accords, and western donors favouring the Accords, postponed the swearing in of the new government. Meanwhile, Hutu extremists armed and organized militias, and created a vociferous extremist radio station, the *Radio-Télévision Libre des Mille Collines* (RTLM), which in between the latest western hit music slipped explicit hate propaganda alerting its listeners to be aware of the treacherous Tutsis, who were seen as the incarnation of the devil, without whom the country would be better off. The calls of the RTLM, who despite its name did not have a television counterpart, was hailed by the well-controlled militias that terrorized the Tutsi population by carrying out small-scale massacres on Tutsis, whenever the implementation of the Arusha Accords moved yet another little bit ahead.<sup>6</sup>

On the eve of 6 April 1994, the presidential Falcon-50 jet, carrying among others Habyarimana himself, was shot down while approaching Kigali, capital of the President's small Central African country.<sup>7</sup> All those who were aboard the jet were instantly killed as the plane crashed into the backyard of Habyarimana's palace. The hitherto unknown perpetrators thereby effectively ended the peace talks and triggered the well-planned Rwandan Genocide. The 1994

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<sup>4</sup> In addition, then Egyptian Foreign Minister Boutros Boutros -Ghali facilitated a purchase of Egyptian weapons, which was secured through a credit from the then state-owned French bank *Credit Lyonnais*. Melvern, Linda, *A People Betrayed: The Role of the West in Rwanda's Genocide* (London: Zed Books, 2000), pp. 66-67

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 82-98

<sup>7</sup> For subsequent investigations by the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda into the shooting down of Habyarimana's plane, see *National Post*, "'Explosive' leak on Rwanda genocide', 1 March 2000, also available at <http://www.hartford-hwp.com/archives/35/134.html>; *Vrai Papier Journal*, 'Bruguière traque le président rwandais', October 2000, also available at <http://www.obsac.com/OBSV4N10-VPJPean.html>, and in English translation at <http://www2.minorisa.es/inshuti/bruguiea.htm>; *Aktuelt* (Copenhagen), 'Ny kritisk efterforskning af Rwanda-massakren', 17 April 2000, available in English translation at [http://www.willum.com/articles/aktuelt17april2000\\_1/index.htm](http://www.willum.com/articles/aktuelt17april2000_1/index.htm); and Mugabe, Jean-Pierre, *Declaration on the Shooting Down of the Aircraft Carrying Rwandan Declaration on the Shooting Down of the Aircraft Carrying Rwandan President Juvénal Habyalimana and Burundi President Cyprien Ntaryamira on April 6, 1994*, 21 April 2000, available at <http://www.multimania.com/obsac/OBSV3N16-PlaneCrash94.html>

Genocide in Rwanda commenced in the early hours of 7 April, shortly after unknown assailants had grounded Habyarimana's presidential jet.

Though it appears that Hutu extremists in Habyarimana's government initially were surprised by the events, they managed within a few days to organize the well-armed militias under their control to wipe out most of the non-extremist Hutu social and political elite in Kigali. All real and imagined opponents of the regime, including the minority Tutsi community in general, were simply targeted for elimination.<sup>8</sup>

When the sun rose on 7 April, several key politicians opposed to the Hutu extremist core in the government, such as the Prime Minister, had been murdered. A few days later, an 'interim government' controlled by the hardcore Hutu extremists had constituted itself, and the killings spread to other areas of the country. Estimates vary from 800,000 to more than one million people killed during the 100 days following 6 April.<sup>9</sup>

Shortly after the massacres began, the RPF broke the cease-fire and the fighting between the armed forces of the RPF, the *Rwandan Patriotic Army* (RPA), and the FAR resumed, despite resistance from several high-ranking FAR officers.<sup>10</sup> UN-led negotiations for a permanent ceasefire made no real headway.<sup>11</sup> Despite being inferior in terms of material and men, the much better disciplined RPF managed to defeat the FAR. On 19 July, the RPF established itself as the new government of the country.<sup>12</sup> The composition and structure of this post-Genocide government will be examined in a subsequent chapter.

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<sup>8</sup> Melvern, pp. 115-136

<sup>9</sup> For a discussion on the death toll, see Adelman, Howard, 'Genocidists And Saviours in Rwanda', in *Other Voices* Vol. 2, No. 1 (February 2000), also available at <http://www.othervoices.org/2.1/adelman/rwanda.html>, unpaginated version; and Prunier, Gérard, *The Rwanda Crisis...*, first edition, pp. 262-268

<sup>10</sup> See for instance Reyntjens, Filip, *Rwanda: trois jours qui ont fait basculer l'histoire* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1995), p. 140

<sup>11</sup> The RFP's role is not as clear-cut as suggested by many western donors (and the RPF itself). In fact, according to Deputy Commander of the UN troops, Colonel Luc Marchal, the RPF itself was not very interested in a UN intervention, since it would rather conquer the country and defeat the badly armed troops in the deceased Habyarimana's Government. Few days into the Genocide, the RPF even warned UNAMIR commanders on the ground that it would resist a UN intervention by violent means. Interview with Colonel Luc Marchal, former Deputy Force Commander of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Rwanda (UNAMIR), Brussels, April 2000. Investigations at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda have also suggested that the RPA could have been behind the shooting down of President Habyarimana's plane in order to provoke a conflict. See *National Post*, "Explosive" leak on Rwanda genocide', 1 March 2000, also available at <http://www.hartford-hwp.com/archives/35/134.html> and *Aktuelt* (Copenhagen), 'Ny kritisk efterforskning af Rwanda-massakren', 17 April 2000, available in English translation at [http://www.willum.com/articles/aktuelt17april2000\\_1/index.htm](http://www.willum.com/articles/aktuelt17april2000_1/index.htm)

<sup>12</sup> Melvern, pp. 245-248

## **RPF War Crimes and the Role of the United Nations**

Shortly after the massacres had begun, the Security Council withdrew most of the UN troops, which meant that they only managed to protect a few civilians that had sought refuge at a few UN-guarded locations.<sup>13</sup> Most members of the UN Security Council were not keen on providing the UN troops with a more pro-active mandate, but outside pressure from the media and human rights groups finally made the Security Council approve a new mission on 13 May that had a more aggressive mandate. However, an insufficient number of troops and materials were volunteered by other UN member states. Only too late did the Government of France at the end of June dispatch a force to suppress the massacres, but by then most killings were over and the Hutu extremist government had begun to flee the country.<sup>14</sup>

Likewise, the role of the UN in post-Genocide Rwanda has been complicated. According to a classified report by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNCHR), reports by human rights organizations, and defected RPA officers, the RPA organized massacres of tens of thousands of civilians as its soldiers advanced in Rwanda. Apparently the motive was to revenge killings of Tutsis as well as to eliminate the Hutu political and social elite in the countryside to avoid future opposition to the RPF.<sup>15</sup>

When a small UNCHR-sponsored team was about to release a report based on a 5-week field trip in the Rwandan countryside, UNCHR chief Sadako Ogata notified then UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, who stopped the publication. He then sent Kofi Annan to Rwanda to inform the new RPF government that the report would not be published; according to Human Rights Watch: "because the international community understood the difficult context in which the new government was operating".<sup>16</sup> In other words, the UN top seemed afraid of

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<sup>13</sup> As we shall see later, the RPF has successfully been able to capitalize on the U.N.'s failure and has never missed an opportunity to point out the role of the world body, including the unfortunate role played by Kofi Annan, then head of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations at UN Headquarters in New York. For an analysis of the role of the UN Headquarters in the 1994 Genocide, see Willum, Bjørn, 'Legitimizing Inaction Towards Genocide in Rwanda: A Matter of Misperception?', *International Peacekeeping* Vol. 6, No. 3 (Autumn 1999), pp. 11-30, also available at <http://www.willum.com/articles/intpeaceaug1999/index.htm>

<sup>14</sup> Prunier, Gérard, 'Opération Turquoise: A Humanitarian Escape from a Political Dead End', in Adelman, Howard, and Suhrke, Astri, *The Rwanda Crisis from Uganda to Zaire: The Path of a Genocide* (London: Transaction Publishers, 1999), pp. 281-305

<sup>15</sup> Human Rights Watch, *Leave None to Tell the Story: Genocide in Rwanda* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 1999), also available at <http://www.hrw.org/reports/1999/rwanda>, pp. 728-9 and Interview with former Prime Minister of Rwanda, Faustin Twagiramungu, Brussels, April 2000. On the RPF killings, see also Prunier, Gérard, *The Rwanda Crisis: History of a Genocide* (London: Hurst, 1998), third edition, pp. 358-262

<sup>16</sup> Another reason behind Boutros -Ghali's decision not to publicize the report was the desire to avoid discrediting the UN peacekeeping forces in the country, which had failed to realize the killings. Human Rights Watch, *Leave None ...*,

destabilizing the fragile RPF government, which was taking control of Rwanda. The team leader, Robert Gersony, instead wrapped up the main conclusions in an 8-page summary, in which he estimated that between 25,000 and 45,000 people has been killed by the RPA from April throughout August 1994.<sup>17</sup>

The US State Department was also briefed on the Gersony report, according to several sources, but was reluctant to act on it.<sup>18</sup>

## **Hutu Refugees in Eastern Zaire**

What was left of the former regime, including most ministers, officers, high-ranking civil servants and militia leaders, managed to escape across the border to the Republic of Zaire and some also to Tanzania and Burundi. These ex-top leaders succeeded in bringing about two million people with them. These refugees, mostly ordinary Hutus, were either forced along or intimidated into doing so by shrewd propaganda aired on the notorious RTLM radio, which grossly exaggerated the number of Hutus massacred by the RPF in retaliation for the Genocide.<sup>19</sup>

Outside Rwanda, primarily in Zaire's eastern provinces of South Kivu and North Kivu, large camps were established with the help of numerous international aid agencies to assist the displaced populations. However, it became clear that these camps – many of them erected just a few kilometres off the Rwandan border – quickly turned into hotbeds of crime. The former government politicians, militia leaders, and ex-army officers kept a tight grip on the camps, while they benefited from the humanitarian aid, and in many cases themselves distributed the aid provided, in so doing reinforcing their control over the camps' inmates. Anybody airing ideas of returning to Rwanda, as recommended by for instance the UNHCR, were harassed, raped, or

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at <http://www.hrw.org/reports/1999/rwanda>, pp. 728-9 and Interview with former Prime Minister of Rwanda, Faustin Twagiramungu, Brussels, April 2000

<sup>17</sup> So far, only a few high-ranking UN officials have seen this so-called 'Gersony Report', and officially its existence is denied. *Information* (Copenhagen), 'FN holdt 'modfolkemord' i Rwanda skjult', 21 June 1999, also available at <http://www.information.dk/Indgang/VisArkiv.dna?pArtNo=19990621s03a01>; English translation available at <http://www.willum.com/articles/information21jun99/index.htm>; and Prunier, *The Rwanda Crisis...*, third edition, p. 360

<sup>18</sup> It was also afraid of destabilizing the Rwandan government, despite the magnitude of the killings; thereby following the non-intervention attitude adopted by Clinton during the Genocide. A US government official explains the decision not to publicize in this way: "Even if they killed 50,000 people this was at least nothing compared to the number of people killed in the Genocide," adding that what the US and others least wanted was to have the genocidal government back in place. *Information* (Copenhagen), 'FN holdt 'modfolkemord' i Rwanda skjult', 21 June 1999, also available at <http://www.information.dk/Indgang/VisArkiv.dna?pArtNo=19990621s03a01>; English translation available at <http://www.willum.com/articles/information21jun99/index.htm>. US Assistant Secretary for African Affairs, Prudence Bushnell, nevertheless made some feeble attempts to check some of Gersony's findings, according to Human Rights Watch. Human Rights Watch, *Leave None ...*, at <http://www.hrw.org/reports/1999/rwanda>, p. 729

<sup>19</sup> Melvern, pp. 217-218

murdered by the still active militias, which were commanded by the government-in-exile. In addition, the Hutu extremist establishment ran all sorts of flourishing small businesses, and the surplus was for instance spent on purchasing weapons abroad in violation of a UN Security Council arms embargo.<sup>20</sup> Zaire's ageing dictator Mobutu Sese Seko neither clamped down on the Hutu extremists nor aided the repatriation process. Instead he actually provided luxurious mansions for the perpetrators of the Rwandan Genocide and supplied weapons to aid their efforts to overthrow the RPF regime in Kigali.<sup>21</sup> From the bases in Eastern Zaire, the Hutu militias and the ex-FAR made raids into Rwanda, thus making life in North-western Rwanda insecure.<sup>22</sup>

### **The AFDL 'Rebellion' and Massacres in Eastern Zaire**

In the summer 1996, Paul Kagame, the then Rwandan Vice-President and de facto head of state in Rwanda, travelled to Washington. Meeting with several high-ranking officials in the US government, Kagame warned that if the international community would not do something about the refugee camps, he would. It is quite likely that Kagame got some sort of tacit approval for his invasion of Zaire, although this has always been officially denied.<sup>23</sup> According to one anonymous Pentagon official, Washington feared that the RPA "would publicly launch a cross-border strike into Zaire to thwart the Hutu militias in the refugee camps". This Pentagon official, interviewed by the *Washington Post*, said that Kagame had discussed this "strike" option with US officials, but that he was counselled several times not to do that.<sup>24</sup> Kagame followed the US instructions and avoided a show of force. Instead, he sought to conceal his hand in the hostilities that followed.

In October 1996, Rwanda and Uganda commenced the First Congo War, and attacked the refugee camps across the border in Zaire, shooting indiscriminately at men, women and children

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<sup>20</sup> Credible evidence also suggests that France, a permanent member of the Security Council and thus a signatory to the embargo, flew in weapons. Human Rights Watch, 'Rearming with Impunity: International Support for the Perpetrators of the Rwandan Genocide', *Country Report Africa* Vol. 7, No. 4 (May 1995), pp. 6-9

<sup>21</sup> Read a fascinating report on a visit to these mansions in Jennings, Christian, *Across the Red River: Rwanda, Burundi & The Heart of Darkness* (London: Victor Gollanz, 2000), pp. 3-63

<sup>22</sup> Melvern, pp. 22-25

<sup>23</sup> Reyntjens, Filip, *La Guerre des Grands Lacs : Alliances mouvantes et conflits extraterritoriaux en Afrique centrale* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1999), p 76. In a later interview, Kagame commended the United States for 'taking the right decisions' to let the war proceed. *Washington Post*, 'Rwandans Led Revolt In Congo', 9 July 1997, also available at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/inatl/longterm/congo/stories/070997.htm>

<sup>24</sup> *Washington Post*, 'U.S. Military Role in Rwanda Greater Than Disclosed', 16 August 1997, also available at <http://www.udayton.edu/~rwanda/articles/usrole.html> and *Washington Post*, 'Africans Use Training in Unexpected Ways', 14 July 1998, also available at <http://www.mapinc.org/drugnews/v98/n576/a01.html?347>. See also World Policy Institute, Arms Trade Research Center, *Deadly Legacy: U.S. Arms to Africa and the Congo War*, Report, January 2000, at <http://www.worldpolicy.org/projects/arms/reports/congo.htm> and *WorldNetDaily.com*, 'Did U.S. Help Zaire's Rebels?', 5 May 1997, at [http://worldnetdaily.com/news/article.asp?ARTICLE\\_ID=16481](http://worldnetdaily.com/news/article.asp?ARTICLE_ID=16481)

alike.<sup>25</sup> The camps were dissolved within days and most refugees returned back to Rwanda overnight. However, hundreds of thousands of other refugees were cut off from returning eastwards into Rwanda and were forced to flee westwards into the dense jungle.<sup>26</sup>

In the Zairian jungle, the RPA hunted most of them down, probably killing several hundred thousand refugees, genocidal militias, and innocent refugees alike.<sup>27</sup> Journalists and humanitarian organizations were denied access to the massacre sites.<sup>28</sup> What is more, unsuspecting international humanitarian organizations were also used by the RPA to lure refugees out from their hideouts in the forests.<sup>29</sup> The systematic nature of the killings later made a UN investigation team describe these massacres as genocide.<sup>30</sup>

Other refugees escaped by fleeing as far away as to the Central African Republic and the Republic of Congo (a.k.a. Congo-Brazzaville), over one thousand kilometres from the Rwandan border.<sup>31</sup>

Strongly supported by the governments of the United States and the United Kingdom, the Rwandan authorities claimed that all genuine refugees had already returned from Congo at the

<sup>25</sup> Human Rights Watch, "Attacked by All Sides": Civilians and the War in Eastern Zaire', *Country Report Africa* Vol. 9, No. 1 (March 1997), p. 10 and Interview with western humanitarian worker present in Zaire in 1996, Gisenyi, September 1997

<sup>26</sup> Stockton, Nicholas, 'The Great Vanishing Trick', *Crosslines*, Spring 1997, also available at <http://www.oxfam.org.uk/atwork/emerg/crosslin.htm>, , unpaginated version, and Human Rights Watch, 'What Kabila is Hiding: Civilian Killings and Impunity in Congo', *Country Report Africa* Vol. 9, No. 5 (October 1997), also available at <http://www.hrw.org/reports97/congo>, p. 10; and Lemarchand, René, 'The Fire in the Great Lakes', *Current History* Vol. 98, No. 628 (May 1999), p. 196

<sup>27</sup> Doctors Without Borders – USA, *Forced Flight: A Brutal Strategy of Elimination in Eastern Zaire*, Report, 27 May 1997; Gowing, Nik, *Dispatches from Disaster Zones – The Reporting of Humanitarian Emergencies*, Conference Paper, London, 27 May 1998, also available at <ftp://63.104.169.22/events/managing-info-chaos/gowing.pdf>, unpaginated version; Reyntjens, *La Guerre des Grands Lacs...*, pp. 100-122; Human Rights Watch, 'What Kabila is Hiding: Civilian Killings and Impunity in Congo', *Country Report Africa* Vol. 9, No. 5 (October 1997), also available at <http://www.hrw.org/reports97/congo>, p. 10; Physicians for Human Rights, *Investigations in Eastern Congo and Western Rwanda*, Research Report, 16 July 1997, at [http://www.phrusa.org/research/health\\_effects/humcongo.html](http://www.phrusa.org/research/health_effects/humcongo.html), unpaginated version; Amnesty International, *DRC: Deadly alliances in Congolese forests*, Report No. AFR 62/33/1997, 3 December 1997; Sunday Times, 'Killing Fields of Kisangani', 14 May 1997; and New York Times, 'In Congo, Forbidding Terrain Hides a Calamity', 1 June 1997, also available at <http://www2.minorisa.es/inshuti/atrociti.htm>

<sup>28</sup> *New York Times*, 'In Congo, Forbidding Terrain Hides a Calamity', 1 June 1997, also available at <http://www2.minorisa.es/inshuti/atrociti.htm>

<sup>29</sup> Gowing, *Dispatches from Disaster Zones...*, at <ftp://63.104.169.22/events/managing-info-chaos/gowing.pdf>, unpaginated version

<sup>30</sup> The team headed by Roberto Garretón published a report on 2 July 1997 stating that some of the alleged massacres could constitute acts of genocide. It also concluded that "there are reliable indications that persons belonging to one or other of the parties to the conflict [...] probably committed serious violations of international humanitarian law, particularly article 3 common to the four Geneva Conventions of 1949," and that "[s]uch crimes seem to be sufficiently massive and systematic to be characterized as crimes against humanity." United Nations, Economic and Social Council, Commission on Human Rights, *Report of the Special Rapporteur Charged with Investigating the Situation of Human Rights in the Republic of Zaire, Pursuant to Commission on Human Rights Resolution UN 1997/58, A/51/942*, 2 July 1997

end of November 1996. The Rwandan government described those who had not returned either implicitly or explicitly as murderers guilty of genocide, and by implication they were thus considered virtually free game.<sup>32</sup> Certain members of the diplomatic community in Kigali apparently still maintain this view.<sup>33</sup>

In late 1996, quite a few international NGOs nevertheless insisted that hundreds of thousands of genuine refugees had been left in the jungle. But, eventually, the Rwandan information campaign gained the upper hand in the 'number game': A Canadian-led UN mission planned to ensure the safety of refugees as well as the delivery of humanitarian aid was cancelled at the last moment, despite protests by relief organizations.<sup>34</sup> Afterwards Søren Jessen Pedersen, Deputy Chief of UNHCR, commented:

From one day to the next, there were no more refugees. We lacked about 500,000. A quite conservative figure, which was disputed by several countries, because there was no interest in implementing a military operation.<sup>35</sup>

It is unlikely that the US government was unaware of what was going on, although it appears that even at the State Department a disinformation campaign was orchestrated by the Embassy in Kigali, which constantly sent reports claiming that Rwanda was not involved in the rebellion at all. Much to the consternation of the embassy in Kinshasa, whose reports back to Washington painted quite a different picture of the Rwandan involvement.<sup>36</sup> According to a US government official:

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<sup>31</sup> See for instance *Christian Science Monitor*, 'Missing Refugees Found in Zaire – Despite US Claim', 16 January 1997.

<sup>32</sup> Amnesty International, *DRC: Deadly alliances in Congolese forests*, Report No. AFR 62/33/1 997, 3 December 1997, p. 3

<sup>33</sup> *Information* (Copenhagen), 'Hør, hvad blev der af 200.000 flygtninge?', 16 February 1999, also available at <http://www.information.dk/Indgang/VisArkiv.dna?pArtNo=19990216s07a01>

<sup>34</sup> *Electronic Mail and Guardian*, 'Genocide continues behind Kabila's lines', 20 June 1997, at <http://www.mg.co.za/mg/news/97june2/20june-genocide.html> and Gowing, *Dispatches from Disaster Zones...*, at <http://63.104.169.22/events/managing-info-chaos/gowing.pdf>, unpaginated version

<sup>35</sup> Translated into English by the author. *Information* (Copenhagen), '500.000 flygtninge forsvundet på en dag', 25 July 2000, also available at <http://www.information.dk/Indgang/VisArkiv.dna?pArtNo=20000725s06a01>; English translation available at <http://www.willum.com/articles/information25jul00/index.htm>. The UK-based group Oxfam even alleged that in order to support claims that only a few refugees were left in the jungle, the US Embassy in Kigali had manipulated with aerial imagery of Eastern Zaire before it was released to the press. Stockton, Nicholas, 'The Great Vanishing Trick', *Crosslines*, Spring 1997, also available at <http://www.oxfam.org.uk/atwork/emerg/crosslin.htm>, unpaginated version

<sup>36</sup> Confidential interview with US Government official, n.p., 1999. This happened again during the subsequent Second Congo War. Confer section 'Battle Against Kabila – the Second Rebellion'. Confronted with questions on whether or not the US government supported the Rwandan and Ugandan-backed rebels, the US Ambassador to the Congo, William Swing, said on 17 October 1998 on Kinshasa TV, "We condemned the external military interference from



Already from October 1996, intelligence was pouring in from several independent sources as well as from our own people on the ground that Uganda and Rwanda had invaded Zaire, and that Rwanda's Army committed mass killings on the Hutu refugees [...] One had chosen sides and closed one's eyes to what they were doing.<sup>37</sup>

The role of US officials and forces on the ground in Rwanda and Zaire has also been the subject of dispute. By April 1997, a State Department official, Dennis Hankins, had settled in a local Congolese hotel in Goma just across the border from Rwanda "as the first full-time American diplomat posted to the capital of the rebel alliance", according to the *Wall Street Journal*.<sup>38</sup>

In addition, a number of US soldiers were in Rwanda when the war began, since US soldiers were training the RPA, though they officially masqueraded as 'civilian affairs'.<sup>39</sup> In August 1997, an internal US Department of Defense chronology revealed that US troops had indeed been on the ground in Rwanda in the months before the invasion of Zaire. Quite a few soldiers had also remained there after the beginning of the Zairian war, officially as land-mine-removal trainers, civil affairs, or public information instructors. While US officials publicly portrayed this assistance as classroom style or devoted almost entirely to the promotion of human rights, the training had also included psychological operations and tactical Special Forces exercises, which had lasted until a few weeks before the hostilities in Zaire.<sup>40</sup> The US instructors trained hundreds of Rwandan troops, and the operation was "not [...] as innocuous as it is being made out to be,"

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countries such as Rwanda and Uganda back in August. It is President Clinton who accredited me to President Kabila and his government. This should represent for you a signal and evidence of where we stand in our relations with your country. I am here to support your government." *Executive Intelligence Review*, 'Rice caught in Iran-Contra-style capers in Africa', 20 November 1998, at [http://www.larouchepub.com/other/1998/rice\\_2546.html](http://www.larouchepub.com/other/1998/rice_2546.html) This is quite different from official statements by high-ranking US government officials, who as already mentioned have taken a very sympathetic view of the Rwandan participation in the Second Congo War

<sup>37</sup> *Information*, '500.000 flygtninge forsvundet...', at <http://www.information.dk/Indgang/VisArkiv.dna?pArtNo=20000725s06a01>; English translation at <http://www.willum.com/articles/information25jul00/index.htm>

<sup>38</sup> Although the rebels apparently addressed him as 'Monsieur Ambassadeur Americain', he stressed in an interview with the *Wall Street Journal* that he was not an ambassador with powers to recognize the rebels as a new government: "I tell them over and over I am just a diplomat, and that I'm not here to recognize them as the new government of Zaire [...] What I am here to do is to acknowledge them as a very significant military and political player on the scene, and, of course, to represent American interests." *Wall Street Journal*, 'Lost In Africa: How the U.S. Landed on Sidelines in Zaire', 22 April 1997. The *Washington Post* also claims that a US Embassy official travelled to Eastern Zaire numerous times to see the AFDL's official leader, Laurent-Desiré Kabila, but it is uncertain whether this person was Dennis Hankins or someone else. *Washington Post*, 'Africans Use Training in Unexpected Ways', 14 July 1998, also available at <http://www.mapinc.org/drugnews/v98/n576/a01.html?347>

<sup>39</sup> Confidential telephone interview with former investigator at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, 2000

<sup>40</sup> United States, Department of Defense, *Report to Congress on U.S. Military Activities in Rwanda, 1994 - August 1997*, available at <http://www.defenselink.mil/pubs/rwanda/index.html>

according to a policy official interviewed by the *Washington Post*<sup>41</sup> US Special Forces also trained 30 Rwandan soldiers for one and a half month in the United States during July and August 1996. In addition to the Special Forces training, a US *Joint Psychological Operations Task Force* mounted a training program for Rwandan soldiers that culminated in a propaganda campaign in November, which encouraged the hundreds of thousands of refugees camped in Zaire to return home to Rwanda.<sup>42</sup>

It has also been alleged that US soldiers participated in the invasion as such, but I have found no evidence to prove this. In fact, reports containing such allegations are mostly – if not entirely - based on French intelligence sources. And since the French government, and in particular the French military, has largely sided with the forces of former President Habyarimana and provided these with weapons, both before, during, and after the Genocide, such sources cannot be considered reliable.<sup>43</sup>

In keeping with US advice, the RPA and the Ugandan army, the *Uganda People's Defence Forces* (UPDF), sought to camouflage their involvement in the war against Mobutu and the Hutu refugees.<sup>44</sup> In order to make the insurgency look like a popular uprising instead of a foreign invasion, the Zairian born Laurent-Desiré Kabila - who until then had made a living as a smuggler and a kidnapper - was appointed as the spokesman for an alliance of rebel movements fighting to liberate Zaire from the long-time dictator Mobutu Sese Seko.<sup>45</sup>

As part of this strategy, both the Rwandan and Ugandan governments for a long time vigorously denied their involvement in the war.<sup>46</sup> Not until more than half a year into the war did the Rwandan Vice-President and Defence Minister, Paul Kagame, finally admit to the mere

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<sup>41</sup> *Washington Post*, 'U.S. Military Role in Rwanda Greater Than Disclosed', 16 August 1997, also available at <http://www.udayton.edu/~rwanda/articles/usrole.html>

<sup>42</sup> United States, Department of Defense, *Report to Congress...*, at <http://www.defenselink.mil/pubs/rwanda/index.html> and *Washington Post*, 'U.S. Military Role in Rwanda Greater Than Disclosed', 16 August 1997, also available at <http://www.udayton.edu/~rwanda/articles/usrole.html>

<sup>43</sup> Human Rights Watch, 'Rearming with Impunity: International Support for the Perpetrators of the Rwandan Genocide', *Country Report Africa* Vol. 7, No. 4 (May 1995), pp. 6-9, and Callamard, Agnes, 'French policy in Rwanda', in Adelman, Howard, and Suhrke, Astri, *The Rwanda Crisis from Uganda to Zaire: The Path of a Genocide* (London: Transaction Publishers, 1999), pp. 157-183

<sup>44</sup> See for instance Reyntjens, *La Guerre des Grands Lacs...*, pp. 51-65

<sup>45</sup> Lemarchand, René, 'The Fire in the Great Lakes', *Current History* Vol. 98, No. 628 (May 1999), p. 199

<sup>46</sup> During the first weeks of the rebellion, then Rwandan Vice-President and Defence Minister, Paul Kagame, even made a fuss about being relaxed, playing tennis in Kigali all day long with diplomats in an effort to underline how uninvolved he was in the Zaire war. Confidential interview with diplomat, Kigali, August 1997

presence of the RPA in Zaire, which was by then common knowledge – except, perhaps, at official cocktail parties in Kigali.<sup>47</sup>

On 25 May 1997, the rebels seized Zaire's capital Kinshasa, and Kabila was made the president of the rapidly renamed country, the Democratic Republic of Congo. However, RPA officers continued to pull the strings behind the scenes. They even forced a personal secretary on him, who decided whom the new President could meet. In this way, the Rwandan government was able to effectively block a subsequent UN investigation of the killings of Hutu refugees by denying researchers access to massacre sites.<sup>48</sup> The UN investigative team delivered its strongly worded but half-done 52-page report in July 1998, and UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan recommended to the Security Council that the responsible persons be brought to justice. However, the Security Council merely asked the Rwandan and Congolese governments to respond to the allegations. Despite calls by human rights groups for proper investigations and prosecution of the responsible persons, no one has been tried in courts anywhere for these crimes.<sup>49</sup>

Given the US green light for the overall operation, speculations have arisen that the United States, one of the permanent members of the Council holding veto power, was not interested in a full and detailed report. UN sources confirm this interpretation, "The US made us understand that one was not interested in a clear-up of what happened to the refugees. They had their own interests," a high-ranking UN diplomat told the Danish daily *Information*.<sup>50</sup> The head of the UN investigative team, Reed Brody, voiced a similar opinion.<sup>51</sup> The fact that the US government was not helpful in passing on information to UN investigators that might have helped produce a more detailed report further substantiates this view. For instance, the US National Security Agency "maintained a communications intercept station in Fort Portal, Uganda, which intercepted military and government communications in Zaire during the first Rwandan invasion," according to

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<sup>47</sup> *Washington Post*, 'Rwandans Led Revolt In Congo', 9 July 1997, also available at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/inatl/longterm/congo/stories/070997.htm>. One diplomat recounted how his delegation immediately had burst out laughing after a formal meeting with the Rwandan government, where the latter had denied any involvement in the Congo war and the former had pretended to believe it. Confidential interview with diplomat, Kigali, August 1997

<sup>48</sup> *Information* (Copenhagen), 'Kabla slipper billigt fra massakrer', 31 July 1998, also available at <http://www.information.dk/Indgang/VisArkiv.dna?pArtNo=19980731s05a01>

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>50</sup> Translated into English by the author. *Information*, '500.000 flygtninge forsvundet...', at <http://www.information.dk/Indgang/VisArkiv.dna?pArtNo=20000725s06a01>; English translation at <http://www.willum.com/articles/information25jul00/index.htm>

<sup>51</sup> *Information* (Copenhagen), 'Kabla slipper billigt fra massakrer', 31 July 1998, also available at <http://www.information.dk/Indgang/VisArkiv.dna?pArtNo=19980731s05a01>

Wayne Madsen, a former NSA official.<sup>52</sup> Such interception of Rwandan radio communications could have provided information about those responsible for the massacres, which was one of the issues Brody said the UN investigators lacked the means to establish.<sup>53</sup>

Though there is, as discussed above, no evidence to suggest that US forces actually participated directly in the war against Mobutu, the US Government really helped the RPA. While the US government throughout the conflict denied reports that Rwandan soldiers were involved in the war and thereby concealed their war crimes, it was at the same time training Rwandan soldiers and offering strategic advice, as stated aptly by *The Guardian*:

U.S. policy initially was divided between offering active support for Rwandan intervention and looking the other way [...] In practice, it did both: The Pentagon helped out while the State Department pretended it wasn't happening.<sup>54</sup>

## **Battle Against Kabila - the Second 'Rebellion'**

While Kabila's rebel alliance, named AFDL, had been initially greeted in Kinshasa as heroes and liberators, the Tutsi domination in his government made both the newly arrived Rwandans as well as the Tutsi community in Kinshasa enormously unpopular. In an effort to unite the Congolese population behind him, Kabila in the summer 1998 asked his foreign protégés to leave the country while he at the same time orchestrated a campaign on national TV and radio denouncing all Tutsis in general. His former allies were given 72 hours to leave the country, while Kabila sent the security services to persecute Tutsis living in Kinshasa.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Madsen, Wayne, *Suffering and Despair: Humanitarian Crisis in the Congo*, prepared statement before the US House of Representatives, Subcommittee on International Operations and Human Rights, Committee on International Relations, 17 May 2001, available at [http://www.house.gov/international\\_relations/mads0517.htm](http://www.house.gov/international_relations/mads0517.htm)

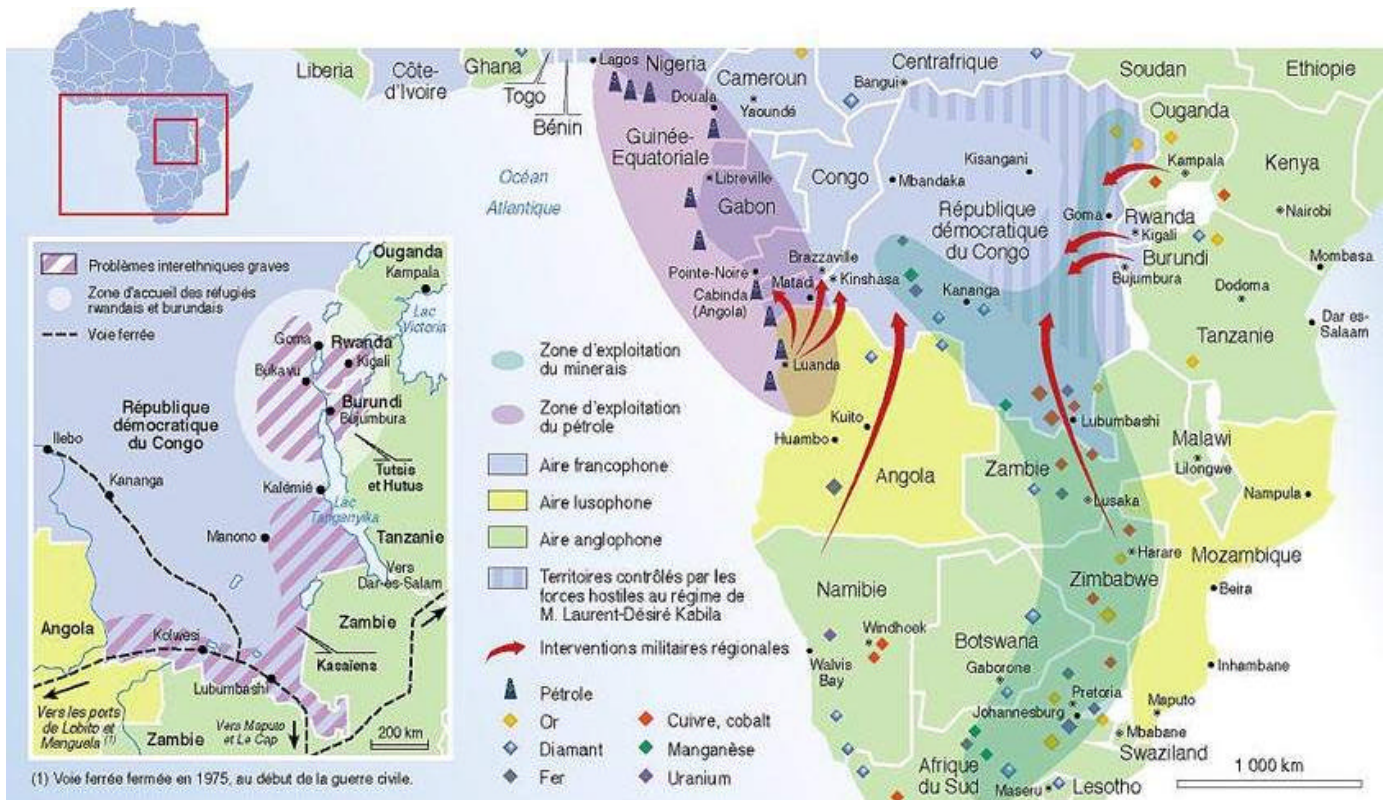
<sup>53</sup> Ibid. and *Information* (Copenhagen), 'Kabila slipper billigt fra massakrer', 31 July 1998, also available at <http://www.information.dk/Indgang/VisArkiv.dna?pArtNo=19980731s05a01>

<sup>54</sup> *Guardian* quoted in *WorldNetDaily.com*, 'Did U.S. Help Zaire's Rebels?', 5 May 1997, at [http://worldnetdaily.com/news/article.asp?ARTICLE\\_ID=16481](http://worldnetdaily.com/news/article.asp?ARTICLE_ID=16481)

<sup>55</sup> Lemarchand, René, 'The Fire in the Great Lakes', *Current History* Vol. 98, No. 628 (May 1999), pp. 199-200

## Map 1 – The Regional Perspective of the Second Congo War

Frontlines accurate as of May 2000. Reprinted with the kind permission of Dr Philippe Rekacewicz, *Le Monde Diplomatique*, Paris



Source: *Le Monde Diplomatique*, 'Rivalités dans les Grands Lacs', map, May 2000, at <http://www.monde-diplomatique.fr/cartes>

Kabila's move prompted Rwanda and Uganda to immediately commence a war against him under cover of yet another rebel movement, the *Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie* (RCD), which was hastily pieced together using the recipe from the first campaign: A native Congolese figurehead as official leader, who could claim that he had 'invited' the foreign armies

to participate in the 'liberation struggle'. Only this time around the enemy was Kabila instead of Mobutu.<sup>56</sup>

However, the RCD did not last long in its original form. Already in 1999, it split into two separate movements: the *Rassemblement Congolais pour la Democratie – Mouvement de Liberation* (RCD-ML), initially based in Kisangani (hence a.k.a. RCD-Kisangani)<sup>57</sup>, and the *Rassemblement Congolais pour la Democratie – Goma* (RCD-Goma), headquartered right at the Rwandan border. Besides these two new movements, there was also the *Mouvement pour la Libération du Congo* (MLC) operating in Northern and North-Western Congo and assisted by Uganda.

Uganda's army, the *Uganda People's Defence Forces* (UPDF), has tried to control the MLC and the RCD-ML, which both enjoy strong military support by the estimated 10,000-15,000 UPDF troops in the Congo.<sup>58</sup> While the MLC-chairman Jean-Pierre Bemba has retained control of his movement, the RCD-ML has been largely a puppet of the UPDF, much to the dismay of the former leader of the RCD-ML, Ernest Wamba Dia Wamba. In an interview with the Danish daily *Aktuelt* in January 2001, Wamba confirmed his lack of control over his own movement and complained that the Ugandan Commander-in-Chief in the Congo "doesn't understand that an alliance means consultations. He thinks, he rules a district in Uganda."<sup>59</sup> Since Wamba opposed a Ugandan-introduced merger between the MLC and the RCD-ML, he was sacked as head of RCD-ML by the UPDF in January 2001 and even had his home in North-Western Congo ransacked by Ugandan troops, who seized his satellite phone and took one of his close advisers as hostage.<sup>60</sup> The outcome of the Ugandan interference was the unification of the RCD-ML and MLC into a single movement known as the *Congolese Liberation Front* (CLF) under the leadership of Jean-Pierre Bemba.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> Lemarchand, René, *The Democratic Republic of Congo: From Failed State to Statelessness*, unpublished paper, December 2000

<sup>57</sup> Also referred to as RCD-Kisangani since the movement's headquarters was initially located in Kisangani

<sup>58</sup> 15,000 UPDF troops are in the Congo, according to the Institute for International and Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance 2000-2001* (London: Oxford University Press, October 2001), p. 286; while the International Crisis Group estimates that 'at least' 10,000 UPDF troops are in the Congo. International Crisis Group, *Scramble for the Congo: Anatomy of an Ugly War*, Africa Report N° 26, 20 December 2000, at <http://www.crisisweb.org/projects/showreport.cfm?reportid=130>, p. 38

<sup>59</sup> *Aktuelt* (Copenhagen), 'Oprørsleder bekræfter, hvad udenlandske donorer afviser: Uganda plyndrer Congo', 22 January 2001, also available at <http://www.willum.com/artikler/aktuelt22jan01.htm>, and in English translation at <http://www.willum.com/articles/aktuelt22jan2001/index.htm>

<sup>60</sup> United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *Integrated Regional Information Network for Central and Eastern Africa* (IRIN-CEA), 'DRC: UN rapporteur condemns Bunia violence', 29 January 2001, at <http://www.reliefweb.int/IRIN/cea/countrystories/drc/20010129f.phtml>

<sup>61</sup> For the ongoing leadership struggles within the RCD-ML, see for instance United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *Integrated Regional Information Network for Central and Eastern Africa* (IRIN-CEA), 'DRC:

Rwanda has evidently been more successful in controlling the other heir to the original RCD, which has been done by installing a number of trusted *Banyamulenge* associates in RCD-Goma, whose headquarters is comfortably situated right across the Rwandan-Congolese border in the trading town of Goma. The Banyamulenge is a group of people of Tutsi decent that primarily live in the Congolese provinces of North Kivu and South Kivu.<sup>62</sup>

In August 1999, all governments and rebel movements involved in the war, except the Hutu militias, the ex-FAR, and the *Mai-Mai*, signed the so-called *Lusaka Accords*, according to which all foreign troops have to withdraw from the Congo in a peace agreement monitored by the UN. But Kabila, who refused to let in UN monitors behind the lines of his army, mostly stalled the implementation of this agreement. The RPA has however warned that it is unlikely to leave even when UN monitors have been deployed, unless the so-called 'negative forces' mentioned in the Lusaka Accords, i.e. the Hutu militias and the ex-FAR, will be dealt with by someone else. This is highly unlikely. Using this pretext, the RPA has made no serious preparation for a disengagement from the Congo.<sup>63</sup>

Instead, the RPA and RCD-Goma has used several strategies with ethnic overtones in order to come to grips with the situation in the two Kivu provinces bordering Rwanda. In North Kivu and South Kivu, the remnants of the former Hutu extremist regime has sought to rearm and reorganize, supported partially by the government of the late Laurent-Desiré Kabila, who was assassinated on 16 January 2001. Virtually all top officers in Habyarimana's army, the *Forces Armées Rwandaises* (FAR), fled the country and the remainder of this army has merged with the various militias responsible for the Genocide into a rebel movement named the *Armée de Libération du Rwanda* (ALIR). The London-based International Institute for Strategic Studies has estimated the number of ALIR fighters to approximately 7,000 ex-FAR troops and 55,000 '*Interahamwe*', the name of the most well known Hutu militia during the Genocide.<sup>64</sup> The International Crisis Group has a significantly lower estimate, suggesting that ALIR forces total between 30,000 and 40,000 fighters.<sup>65</sup> Though these forces are thought to be armed only with

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IRIN Interview with RCD-ML official Mbusa Nyamwisi', 3 August 2001, at <http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/9ca65951ee22658ec125663300408599/5a6722fc99c5b58d85256a9d00521c49?OpenDocument>

<sup>62</sup> Lemarchand, René, *The Democratic Republic of Congo: From Failed State to Statelessness*, unpublished paper, December 2000

<sup>63</sup> RPA motivations for staying in the Congo are discussed at length in the next chapter

<sup>64</sup> Institute for International and Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance 2000-2001* (London: Oxford University Press, October 2001), p. 279

<sup>65</sup> International Crisis Group, *Scramble for the Congo...*, at <http://www.crisisweb.org/projects/showreport.cfm?reportid=130>, p. 4

light mortars, small arms, and primitive radio equipment, they are well organized and capable of carrying out well-prepared attacks.<sup>66</sup> Various reports have suggested that ALIR received weapons by airdrops from the late Laurent-Desiré Kabila's government. ALIR has even been reported to seize certain airfields in the two Kivu provinces and hold them just long enough for a small plane to land, deliver its shipment, and take off.<sup>67</sup>

ALIR has largely pursued the same goals as the original Hutu extremist militias, namely a destabilization of Rwanda by means of cross-border attacks and massacres on Tutsis from time to time, both in the Congo and Rwanda. But the Hutu rebels have also teamed up with local Congolese warriors known as the Mai-Mai, a mix of nationalists and bandits operating in both the Rwandan and Ugandan controlled territory of Congo. Given the disorganized nature of the numerous groups of Mai-Mai, it is impossible to accurately estimate the number of Mai-Mai warriors, but they are surely tens of thousands. These groups have had a revival after the arrival of the Rwandan soldiers in the Congo, and some have teamed up with ALIR with the purpose of resisting the Rwandan occupation. The Mai-Mai members receive increasing financial backing from the local population, which detests the Rwandan invaders. The populations of the two Kivu provinces also manifest their political support by civilian disobedience, such as the 'ville morte': staying indoors in silent protest.<sup>68</sup>

RCD-Goma and the RPA have responded to ALIR and Mai-Mai attacks "by massacring defenceless civilian populations with machetes, knives and guns, causing thousands of victims," according to the UN Special Rapporteur for Human Rights, Roberto Garretón.<sup>69</sup> Local and international rights groups confirm this pattern in many reports.<sup>70</sup> Human Rights Watch

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<sup>66</sup> Institute for International and Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance 2000-2001* (London: Oxford University Press, October 2001), p. 279, and International Crisis Group, *Scramble for the Congo...*, at <http://www.crisisweb.org/projects/showreport.cfm?reportid=130>, pp. 14-15

<sup>67</sup> International Crisis Group, *Scramble for the Congo...*, at <http://www.crisisweb.org/projects/showreport.cfm?reportid=130>, p. 15

<sup>68</sup> See for instance Jackson, Stephen, "'Our Riches are being Looted!': War Economies and Rumour in the Kivus, D.R. Congo", *Politique Africaine*, forthcoming issue

<sup>69</sup> United Nations, Economic and Social Council, Commission on Human Rights, *Report on the situation of human rights in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, submitted by the Special Rapporteur, Mr. Roberto Garretón, in accordance with Commission on Human Rights resolution 1999/56, E/CN.4/2000/42*, 18 January 2000, also available at [http://www.unhcr.ch/Huridocda/Huridoca.nsf/0/87cbe9be9dc541db802568b300561be2/\\$FILE/G0010229.pdf](http://www.unhcr.ch/Huridocda/Huridoca.nsf/0/87cbe9be9dc541db802568b300561be2/$FILE/G0010229.pdf)

<sup>70</sup> See for instance Human Rights Watch, 'Eastern Congo Ravaged: Killing Civilians and Silencing Protest', *Country Report Africa* Vol. 12, No. 3 (16 May 2000), also available at <http://www.hrw.org/reports/2000/drc/Drc005.htm#TopOfPage>, unpaginated version; Amnesty International, *Democratic Republic of Congo: Rwandese-controlled east: Devastating human toll*, 19 June 2001, Report No. AFR 62/011/2001, at <http://web.amnesty.org/ai.nsf/Index/AFR620112001?OpenDocument&of=COUNTRIES%5CRWANDA>, unpaginated version; and Amnesty International, *Killing Human Decency*, Report No. AFR 62/07/00, 31 May 2000, at <http://www.amnesty.org/ailib/aipub/2000/SUM/16200700.htm>



researchers estimates that at least 10,000 civilians have been killed and 200,000 people have been displaced in North-Eastern Congo since June 1999.<sup>71</sup>

In order to erode the support base for ALIR, the RPA has encouraged the return of Hutu refugees to Rwanda, where the country following a massive counter-insurgency campaign has been relatively stable and where it is easier for the RPA to deal with the refugees, including armed groups. There has thus, till now, been a continuous stream of refugees back to Rwanda.<sup>72</sup>

The RPA is, however, also trying to 'Tutsificate' the two Kivu provinces by bringing back Congolese Banyamulenge refugees who fled these provinces during the first war in 1996; some 10,000 refugees have been resettled in Masisi in North Kivu, according to the International Crisis Group. Moreover, *Tous pour la Paix et le Développement* (TPD), an organization in existence since October 1998, has worked to resettle Tutsi refugees on the Rwandan-Congolese border, apparently with the hope that these people could act as a buffer for ALIR infiltration into Rwanda.<sup>73</sup> The Rwandan government has denied assisting these migrations, but as argued by the International Crisis Group, "it is hard to believe that the transportation of more than a thousand people across the border and through Goma by night could happen without the permission of Kigali."<sup>74</sup> Border posts on both the Rwandan and Congolese sides keep a fairly strict control of those passing the Goma-Gisenyi border, in particular those passing in vehicles.<sup>75</sup>

Though the border between Eastern Congo and Rwanda can be passed by RPA soldiers without any kind of formalities, Rwandan officials from time to time advocate that the Kivu provinces should be formally annexed to Rwanda, something that is vehemently resisted by the indigenous population because of the Rwandan suppression of any genuine local political

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<sup>71</sup> Human Rights Watch researchers quoted in *Industry Standard Magazine*, 'A Call to Arms', 11 June 2001, also available at [http://www.thestandard.com/article/0,1902,26784,00.html?printer\\_friendly](http://www.thestandard.com/article/0,1902,26784,00.html?printer_friendly)

<sup>72</sup> According to the UNCHR's branch office in Rwanda, 60,576 refugees returned home to Rwanda during 1999 and 2000. 70% of those that returned in 2000 had come from North Kivu, although "there was also a significant number of returnees from South Kivu and Tanzania". *East African*, 'Rwandans Trickling back home', 1 Jan 2001, also available at <http://www.nationaudio.com/News/EastAfrican/08012001/Regional/Regional30.html>

On 1 February 2001, the Economist Intelligence Unit reported, "There are still an estimated 29,000 Rwandan refugees in the Kivu provinces, and their repatriation continues." Economist Intelligence Unit, *Country Report Rwanda*, 1 February 2001. Curiously, the Economist Intelligence Unit's sister magazine, the *Economist*, has shortly before, on 23 December 2000, written that the UNCHR's 'best guess' was that twice as many refugees, 60,000 that is, were still in the Kivu provinces. *Economist*, 'Thousands of Hutu refugees went missing in Congo in 1996. What happened to them?', 23 December 2000

<sup>73</sup> International Crisis Group, *Scramble for the Congo...*, at <http://www.crisisweb.org/projects/showreport.cfm?reportid=130>, p. 16

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 17

<sup>75</sup> The authors own observations from three visits to that border post during November 2000. In fact, according to several journalists in the region, the head of the border post on the Congolese side of the Goma-Gisenyi border, the busiest of its kind in RCD-Goma territory, is a Rwandan national. Interviews with journalists based in the region, Rwanda and Congo, November 2000

initiatives and the RPA's exploitation of profitable commodities.<sup>76</sup> Certain high-ranking US officials such as the newly appointed Assistant Secretary of State in the Bush administration, Walter Kansteiner, have also supported this view.<sup>77</sup>

The alliance of certain Banyamulenge with the Rwandan invaders has also made the whole Banyamulenge group increasingly unpopular throughout Congo, but nowhere more than in the Kivu provinces. A number of local Mai-Mai militias have emerged working in close cooperation with ALIR to fight not only RCD-Goma and the RPA, but also ordinary Banyamulenge. Public busses are stopped on the road, and all Banyamulenge passengers are singled out for execution while others are left to escape.<sup>78</sup> Some Banyamulenge have reacted by creating defence forces, but others have begun distancing themselves from RCD-Goma and the RPA, well aware that the foreign occupation can end up costing them their lives.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> Confer the next chapter, 'The Rwandan Patriotic Army and Military Commercialism in Eastern Congo'

<sup>77</sup> According to Wayne Madsen, in an 15 October 1996 paper written by Kansteiner for the Forum for International Policy on the then-eastern Zaire, Walter Kansteiner suggested voluntary repatriation of ethnic groups and the formation of ethnically pure states. Madsen, Wayne, *Suffering and Despair: Humanitarian Crisis in the Congo*, prepared statement before the US House of Representatives, Subcommittee on International Operations and Human Rights, Committee on International Relations, 17 May 2001, available at [http://www.house.gov/international\\_relations/mads0517.htm](http://www.house.gov/international_relations/mads0517.htm)

<sup>78</sup> Amnesty International, *Democratic Republic of Congo: Rwandese-controlled east: Devastating human toll*, 19 June 2001, Report No. AFR 62/011/2001, at <http://web.amnesty.org/ai.nsf/Index/AFR620112001?OpenDocument&of=COUNTRIES%5CRWANDA>, unpaginated version

<sup>79</sup> Lemarchand, René, *Exclusion, Marginalization and Political Mobilization: Road to Hell in the Great Lakes*, unpublished paper, December 2000, and Amnesty International, *Democratic Republic of Congo: Rwandese-controlled east: Devastating human toll*, 19 June 2001, Report No. AFR 62/011/2001, at <http://web.amnesty.org/ai.nsf/Index/AFR620112001?OpenDocument&of=COUNTRIES%5CRWANDA>, unpaginated version