

The rwandan genocide essay sample

[Life](#), [Death](#)



The international community, the United States and the United Nations were to blame for the 1994 genocide in Rwanda. The United States, where people would normally look for help, surprisingly did not do as much apart from watching the genocide happen. The United Nations also did not provide enough support as they withdrew all their forces during the genocide. The international community such as France and Belgium, both failing to prevent the killing in Rwanda. All three different groups are to blame for the genocide before, during and after.

Rwanda was divided into two groups known as the Tutsis and the Hutus. Before the Europeans arrived, the elite were the Tutsi cattle herders while the peasant farmers were known as the Hutus. In 1917 Rwanda was given to Belgium from Germany and by 1933 they already introduced ethnic ID cards and favoured the Tutsis. Not surprisingly, they agreed and welcomed this idea. And for the next twenty years they enjoyed better jobs and educational opportunities than their neighbours. The Hutus eventually uprose and culminated in a series of riots in 1959. More than 20, 000 Tutsis were killed and more fled to the neighbouring countries of Burundi, Tanzania and Uganda. Belgium surprisingly gave Rwanda independence and left the country in 1962 while the Hutus took their place and began their revenge on the Tutsis.

Belgium was definitely to blame before the genocide. They were the ones to start the whole ID card concept, which instantly brought in an unfair judgement between the Hutus and the Tutsis. It was disgusting that the Belgians had to make a superior group. By doing this they left the Hutus in rage, thinking why should we be the lower class. By giving Rwanda

independence in 1962, they've basically left Rwanda with a group of raging Hutus ready to slaughter the Tutsis for what they've done in the past 20 years. All these riots and clashes before the genocide were all very serious and it could've been prevented if Belgium either stayed in charge or never gave one group superior over another. In 1959 the Tutsi king was overthrown by the Hutus, and the Belgians again did very little to save them.

Over the next 30 years there were astounding amounts of murder by both the Tutsis and the Hutus. During this time the coffee prices collapsed, meaning hundreds of Rwandan farmers to lose their incomes. Survivors of the Rwandan genocide stated that the government has not done merely enough to aid the orphans, widows and other vulnerable groups. Overall Belgium was to blame before the genocide because by preferring Tutsis than Hutus throughout the colonial period, they should be blamed for the ethnic segregation between the two groups which then led to the inevitably Rwandan genocide, and did barely anything afterwards to help Rwanda after the genocide.

During the genocide up to a million people died before the RPF was able to take full control. Although on a large scale, this genocide was carried out entirely by hand, often using machetes imported from China or clubs. The major group of the killers were members of civilians death squads called the Interahamwe, meaning 'those who fight together'. The Interahamwe slaughtered men, women and children in schools, churches or even just in an open area. The victims also had to face the fact that some of these killers were their friends, neighbours or even relatives through marriage. The

Interahamwe weren't just fuelled by drugs or relentless violence, but by fanatic dedication to a political cause. The US was to blame for this. Firstly, President Clinton's administration knew about the genocide but decided to bury the information to cover up their indecision to help Rwanda.

They heard the genocide 16 days after it started but the president chose to avoid talking and being involved in it. The UNAMIR asked the US to send in 50 armoured personnel carriers, and instead of sending them straightaway, the US argued for weeks over who will pay for these vehicles. Also another reason for the US being inactive during this time was that they didn't want to repeat the fiasco of US intervention in Somalia, where US troops became sucked into fighting which caused casualties. They also thought that there were no benefits by helping Rwanda as it's a small African country with no minerals or any value.

The US, instead of helping, they decided to argue the term ' genocide' when they could've sent troops from their country to help Rwanda. The UNAMIR could also be blamed for withdrawing troops from Rwanda after 10 of their men were killed. The initial presence of the UN included over 2500 soldiers, mainly Belgians but it got reduced to 270 soldiers by the end. Overall, the UN and the US were both to blame for their little contribution in helping the Rwanda Genocide.

After the genocide many Hutus fled over the borders. At first it was hard to find Hutu men in Congo (called Zaire back then) who admitted to their part in the killings. They knew it was risky. By the end of 1995 it was hard to find anyone who would admit there'd been any genocides at all. Instead they

treated as a civil war and 'some massacres'. Some Hutus found exile in the Congo camps was tolerable. But in 1996 the refugees were forced out. Many returned home as others remained a nomadic and fugitive existence in Congo. A man named Gregory Stanton came up with the '8 stages of genocide'. The first two stages, Classification (people divided into us and them) and Symbolisation (ID cards being developed) were done before the genocide. From then on, Dehumanisation, Organisation, Polarization, Preparations and Extermination were all brought to the table with the Interahamwe being the organisation and controlling the slaughter.

After the genocide, the last stage, Denial, was taken into place. "The perpetrators...deny that they committed any crimes." The former Prime Minister of France, Francois Mitterrand was not concerned about the remembrance of the 800,000 Tutsis who were killed between April and July in 1994. The UN accepted the responsibility for failing to prevent the 1994 genocide in Rwanda in 2000. The US Ambassador Richard Holbrook also said: "In the days ahead, how we act to help bring peace to Congo will be the best evidence that we've learned the lessons of our past failures." Belgium sent their apology on Friday, 7th of April, 2000.

The Belgian Prime Minister has asked for forgiveness for his country's part in failing to prevent the killing of hundreds of thousands Rwandans in the 1994 genocide. He unveiled a plaque in memory of the 10 peacekeepers that had been assigned to protect the Rwandan Prime Minister Agathe Uwilingiyimana but later was slaughtered by the Rwandan army. "For reasons beyond our understanding, nothing was done to help them." After the genocide the US,

the UN and Belgium all sent their apology but if all of them had put in more assistance during the genocide, there would've been a lot more unharmed survivors.

In conclusion the US, the UN and the international community were to blame for their lack of contribution in the Rwandan genocide. The US refused and delayed support at the start of the genocide. The UN pulled out most of their soldiers causing a lot more deaths in Rwanda and the Belgians caused segregation before the genocide which ultimately led to the disaster in 1994. Overall the US, UN and the international community were to blame for the Rwandan genocide in 1994 as they all failed to provide enough aid and support for Rwanda.

Bibliography:

Rwanda 1994 2005, Peace Pledge Union Information - Genocide, accessed 9 September 2014, .

Role of the West 2011, Rwandan Stories, accessed 9 September 2014, .

The Rwandan Genocide 2014, History, accessed 9 September 2014, .

Papers prove US knew of genocide in Rwanda 2004, FairFaxDigital, accessed 9 September 2014, .