

# Rwanda genocide



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## The Rwanda Genocide

In 1994 Rwanda was known for one of the worst genocides since the Holocaust. The very name is sketched into our histories consciousness as a place of evil and unimaginable pain. Between April and July 1994, more than 800, 000 Tutsi civilians were brutally slaughtered in a genocidal campaign organized by Hutu hardliners. The world turned a blind eye to this small African nation's suffering, despite the media reports and the legal international laws specifically designed to prevent genocide.

On April 6, 1994 the Rwandan President Juvenal Habyarimana was killed in a plane crash along with Burundi President, Cyprien Ntaryamira. Within half an hour the Hutu began radio broadcasts calling for the destruction of the Tutsi. The genocide then began.

Prior to the April 1994 crisis in Rwanda, General Dallaire, head of the UNAMIR mission, made repeated requests for more troops and equipment. He also asked for permission to confiscate known arms imports to protect civilians. All these requests were denied. On January 11, 1994, General Dallaire sent a cable to Kofi Annan, head of UN Peace Keepings that detailed credible evidence from a Rwandan government informer of a plan to kill Belgian UNAMIR troops and then murder all Tutsi living in Kigali. The informer also detailed the location of secret arms caches for this purpose.

Despite General Dallaire's efforts, the 2, 700 United Nations peacekeeping troops stationed in Rwanda at the time were withdrawn to about 270 troops within days. A key withdrawal was on April 11, 1994 when UNAMIR troops were ordered to leave the Don Bosco School, which was housing approximately two thousand refugees, and report to the airport. After their

withdrawal all refugees were executed by the Interahamwe, the armed Hutu militia. However, the decrease of troops was mostly due to the fact that Belgium decided to withdraw its troops out of Rwanda due to the assassination of the dozen or so Belgium soldiers.

During this time, which the U. N. Security Council refused to refer to as genocide, tens of thousands of Tutsi's have already been slaughtered. Major General Dallarie and the Force Commander of the UN troops were faced with a moral dilemma that was whether or not they should remove their troops out of the Don Bosco School. They realized that the removal of their troops would for sure mark the end of the refugees living there. However, they choose to obey orders and removed all the troops out of the School.

On May 3, 1994, President Clinton signed the Presidential Decision Directive (PDD 25), which set strict conditions on the U. S. military involvement in international peacekeeping operations. The rescue mission, Operation Turquoise Operation took place late June, and consisted of 2, 330 French troops. Immediately, the troops began deployment into the humanitarian protection zone in southwest Rwanda. By July 1994, Tutsi dominated Rwandan Patriotic Front had succeeded in waging armed war against the Interhamwe, authors of the genocide, and capture Kigali.

American History