

ICTR Legacy Risked by Failure to Charge Rwandan Patriotic Front

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In-depth Report: [CRIMINALIZE WAR](#)

On January 15th, 2010, Human Rights Watch warned that the legacy of the International Criminal Tribunal on Rwanda is jeopardized by the prosecutor's failure to bring charges against members of the Rwandan Patriotic Front which became the Rwandan Army.

On January 15th, 2010, Human Rights Watch (HRW) released its 500 page "Genocide, War Crimes and Crimes Against Humanity: A Digest of the Case Law of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda," which it said had "enriched the law on genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity."

HRW's press release, however, included this caveat:

"Human Rights Watch said that it was unfortunate that the Rwanda tribunal's prosecutor did not charge those accused from all sides in the conflict, as the Yugoslav tribunal and the Sierra Leone Special Court did in the conflicts they addressed. The Rwanda tribunal's prosecutor failed to bring charges against members of the Rwandan Patriotic Front, which became the Rwandan Army, who had been implicated in war crimes. This failure jeopardizes the tribunal's long-term legacy, Human Rights Watch said."

Their statement is especially noteworthy now, with the argument over disputed histories of the [Rwanda Genocide](#) intensifying as opposition parties attempt to register and field candidates in Rwanda's 2010 elections. See Digital Journal, "[Rwanda's 1994 genocide and 2010 elections](#)."

On September 9th, 2009, former President [Bill Clinton presented a Global Citizenship Award to Rwandan President Paul Kagame](#), who led the Rwandan Patriotic Front which HRW believes the ICTR should have charged with war crimes. The RPF seized power in Rwanda in 1994, at the time of the [Rwanda Genocide](#), and Kagame is now the country's President and Commander-in-Chief of the Rwandan Army, the [Rwandan Defense Force \(RDF\)](#).

The United States has no stronger ally in Africa than Rwanda, and its leader, President Paul Kagame. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, speaking at the [African Growth and Opportunities Act conference](#), in 2009, pointed to Rwanda as a "beacon of hope for Africa. " Here is the full [Human Rights Watch release, published on Common Dreams](#)

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