

Second Genocide in Rwanda? Slow, Silent, and Systematic?

What is happening in Rwanda? And, is the UN turning away?

By [Ann Garrison](#)

Global Research, August 30, 2014

Region: [sub-Saharan Africa](#)

Theme: [Crimes against Humanity](#)

What is happening in Rwanda? [On Aug. 26, the BBC reported that Burundian officials are investigating to determine why Rwandan bodies have been found floating in Lake Rweru, on Burundi's border with Rwanda.](#)

The discovery is not only gruesome but also ominous because both East African nations suffer from extremely volatile Hutu-Tutsi ethnic rivalries rooted in centuries of Hutu oppression by a feudal Tutsi aristocracy, which became a colonial elite in the 18th and 19th centuries.

Attempts to institute European democracy, between 1959 and 1961 in Rwanda, and in 1993 in Burundi, turned the existing social order upside down, giving electoral advantage to the Hutu majorities, which the Tutsi minorities refused to accept. War, genocide and massacres ensued and both nations, neither of which is yet 100 years old, are commonly described as tinderboxes awaiting a match.

Rwanda's President Paul Kagame is a Tutsi, Burundi's President Pierre Nkurunziza a Hutu. Despite past alliances of convenience, they are now antagonists. In 1993, Burundi's Tutsi military elite assassinated that country's first democratically elected president, Hutu Melchior Ndadaye, triggering genocidal massacres of both ethnicities in Burundi and escalating fears of the same – which did indeed follow – in Rwanda.

In 1994, near the end of a four year war of aggression, Kagame ordered the assassination of both Rwanda and Burundi's Hutu presidents by shooting their plane out of the sky on April 6, 1994, and then launched a carefully planned, U.S. backed military offensive to seize power and restore Tutsi rule in Rwanda, even as the country sank into chaos and genocidal massacres of both ethnicities.

Any conclusion that the bodies floating in the lake are victims of state execution, genocidal execution or both could be incendiary within the two countries and/or between them. That incendiary potential has been manipulated by both foreign and domestic elites, who are no doubt following this story closely, and most likely attempting to control its outcomes.

These bound and bagged bodies certainly have the look of state execution, genocidal or not, and the simple conclusion that they were state executions has incendiary potential in itself. Rwandan President Paul Kagame arrested three of his own top military officers last week, as [resistance continued to rise within his own Tutsi elite.](#)

Rwandan or Burundian bodies?

Burundian official Jean Berchmans Mpabansi told the BBC that, “The victims are not Burundian citizens because the bodies are coming from Akagera River flowing from Rwanda.”

The [Voice of Burundi](#) reported, translated here from the French: “In recent days corpses wrapped in plastic bags are found floating on Lake Rweru on the border between Burundi and Rwanda in Muyinga Province.

“More than 40 bodies floating in the Rweru Lake town of Giteranyi have been seen and counted since the month of July by the fishermen, as confirmed by the local administration and police. This week, these fishermen, accompanied by a unit of the Navy, saw two bodies on the mouth of the Akagera.”

[Rwandan Police said that no one has been reported missing in Rwanda, and Burundian Police said the same about Burundi.](#) Both claims are unlikely because the national police of any country of 10 or 11 million people is sure to have a list of missing persons at any given time.

It’s particularly unlikely in the case of Rwanda, because on [May 16, Human Rights Watch](#) reported that “an increasing number of Rwandans have been forcibly disappeared or reported missing” and that some were known to have been forcibly disappeared by Rwanda’s army, the Rwandan Defense Force. HRW detailed 14 cases of missing persons.

[In mid-July HRW spoke to the anniversary of the murder of Gustave Makonene](#), coordinator of Transparency International Rwanda’s Advocacy and Legal Advice Center in Rubavu, Rwanda:

“The details of Gustave Makonene’s death are gruesome. His body was found outside the lakeside town of Rubavu, in northwestern Rwanda, on July 18, 2013. The police medical report indicated he was strangled. Local residents who saw his body gave Human Rights Watch more graphic detail. They believed his body may have been thrown from a car on a road above the lake and ended up twisted around a large tree, which had blocked its fall into the water.”

There have been neither investigations nor charges. Another HRW essayist asked, “[Why is the whole world still silent on the murder of Rwandan activist Makonene?](#)” On August 1 [Transparency International issued a press release](#) saying that the staff of all five of their Rwandan offices are in danger.

President Paul Kagame’s plausibility problem

Rwandan President Paul Kagame has never been noted for plausible or consistent explanation. After 18 years of Rwandan invasion, occupation, assassination and resource plunder in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, all copiously documented, he continues to tell Western television audiences that he cannot be held responsible for the problems of Congo, that Congo’s problems began with colonialism long before his birth.

And, of course, he continues to say that his destiny is to save and forever protect the Rwandan people from genocide, because, as he tells the story over and over, the world abandoned Rwanda in 1994. [It’s a matter of record that Kagame himself threatened to fire on U.N. troops if they attempted to intervene](#) in Rwanda in 1994, but that’s never been of

concern to corporate broadcast anchors. Neither has Kagame's U.S-backed invasion of Rwanda, commanding a detachment of the Ugandan army in October 1990. Nor has the four year war that those Ugandan troops waged in Rwanda between October 1990 and July 1994. Nor has the active intervention of the Clinton Administration to prevent the UN from intervening in Rwanda in 1994.

The story of four years of war and mass killing in Rwanda has instead been shortened and simplified into a 100-day morality play about genocide ending with "Never again!" And, Kagame has been allowed to trump all evidence and reason by playing the genocide card for so long that he feels in no way compelled to offer a plausible or consistent explanation of anything.

Nearly 50,000 people reported missing in Rwanda this year

Although Rwandan officials denied, on August 26th, that anyone is missing, the government has, on other days, acknowledged that nearly 50,000 people have disappeared this year. The government says they're missing, but dissident Rwandan refugees and exiles say they're dead - and that they are Hutu victims of Kagame's slow, silent, systematic Hutu genocide - genocide by exclusion, poverty, starvation, sterilization and execution.

Rwandans whom the government acknowledges are missing include 16,000 Hutu villagers from the country's northwestern Ngororero District. [Rwandan Interior Minister James Musoni acknowledged, in the country's Kinyarwanda language, that these villagers are missing](#) but said that the government has no idea where they've gone and fears they may have crossed Rwanda's border with DR Congo to join the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR).

Rwandan refugee Ambrose Nzeyimana translated the English into Kinyarwanda and posted "[Kigali acknowledges the disappearance of 16,000 of its citizens](#)" to his British-based blog, The Rising Continent. [Rwandans in exile write that these people have been massacred by the Kagame regime](#) as part of its program to slowly, quietly, and systematically eliminate the Hutu population. Their belief is based on their own experience, their contact with extended family in Rwanda, and their attention to the Kinyarwanda press.

[Rwandan prison authorities acknowledge that 30,000 Hutu prisoners sentenced to "community service" \(hard labor\) have also disappeared](#), Rwandan exiles, again, write that they've been executed by Kagame's genocidal government.

It's difficult to imagine how a government with one of the best trained, best equipped African military and security forces, including [local forces](#) everywhere, in one of the most tightly controlled, dictatorial regimes in the world, could lose track of 30,000 state prisoners. However, [the government, again, and the Ibuka Tutsi survivors' group, claim to fear that these people may have escaped across the border to join the FDLR in DR Congo, where they now constitute a threat to genocide survivors](#).

As with so much in Rwanda, including the history of the 1990-1994 war and genocide, there is a Tutsi version of the truth and a Hutu version, but the Tutsi version is legally enforced and championed worldwide by rich and powerful people, including Bill Clinton, Tony Blair, Rev. Rick Warren and Howard Buffett. Despite wholesale de facto discrimination against Hutu people, they join Kagame in proclaiming that truth and reconciliation have been achieved in Rwanda, and ethnicity is no longer important.

Prisoners incinerated?

More Rwandan Hutu prisoners may have perished in a [fire on June 5, 2014, in Rwanda's largest prison, Muhanga Central Prison in Gitarama](#), and then in a second prison fire at Nyakiriba Prison in Rubavu (Gisenyi) on July 7.

Rwandan exiles [write that prisoners in both Muhanga Central Prison and Nyakiriba Prison were intentionally incinerated in their cells](#), once again as part of a slow, silent, systematic Hutu genocide.

Is it likely that two, geographically distant Rwandan prisons would be destroyed or badly damaged by fire in barely more than one month? All we know is what Rwandan authorities say, and all they say is that there were two prison fires but no prisoners died.

Muhanga Prison, formerly known as Gitarama Central Prison, was known to be one of the most hellish prisons on earth. In 1995, a London Independent headline about it read, "[Hutus held in 'worst prison in world': 7,000 suspects of Rwanda massacre are kept in jail built for 400.](#)"

On June 6, the International Red Cross reported that "[the accommodations](#)" of 3,500 prisoners went up in flames in Gitarama but that the Rwandan government said no prisoners were in their cells at the time.

Hard evidence?

There will be no hard evidence of the truth behind any of these missing persons reports, except perhaps those few filed by Human Rights Watch, unless the U.N. Security Council deems the situation in Rwanda so dangerous to international security and stability that an independent U.N. investigative team must be allowed in, as when U.N. investigator Hans Blix's team was allowed into Iraq before the 2003 U.S./U.K. invasion.

Of course, [the U.S. and U.K. ignored Blix's conclusion that there were no weapons of mass destruction in Iraq](#), as the U.S. and allied states will ignore any evidence counter to the security interests now defined by their executive corporate, military and foreign policy elites, not by popular democracy.

However, that's no reason not to call for investigation. It's better that Hans Blix's team was allowed into Iraq than not, for the sake of history and global consciousness, and we can continue to work for just outcomes. Independent U.N. investigations should be undertaken, post haste, into each instance of individual and mass disappearances in Rwanda, and into why bound, bagged bodies were found floating in Lake Rweru between the shores of Rwanda and Burundi.

Why has the U.S. renewed support for Kagame's Rwanda?

Why did the U.S. renew its political and military support of Rwandan President Paul Kagame's dictatorship at the U.S.-Africa Summit? [Why is the U.S. threatening the Hutu refugees organized as the FDLR](#) with military action if they refuse to disarm and surrender unconditionally?

The FDLR may be armed in self-defense, but Special Envoy to the Great Lakes Region Russ Feingold has acknowledged that [they pose no credible threat to Rwanda](#). The majority of

Rwandan Hutu refugees in eastern Congo are simply that – refugees – who dare not return to Rwanda for fear of having their names added to these long lists of missing persons that the Rwandan government says it's unable to explain.

Rwandan opposition leaders, Hutu and Tutsi alike, and Tanzanian President Jakaya Kikwete have all called upon the Rwandan government to negotiate with the FDLR for safe repatriation to a Rwanda in which they will not be a de facto Hutu underclass threatened with elimination. ,

On January 4th, former Rwandan General Kayumba Nyamwasa told KPFA: "I understand the guiltiness that maybe some could be feeling about their failure to stop the genocide. But you don't support somebody who's in the process of creating another genocide. And I think they should be able to examine their consciences, look at what is happening in Rwanda, and see exactly what is taking place."

Many Rwandan Hutus, refugees and exiles believe that if the regime now headed by Paul Kagame remains in power for another 50 years, there will be no Hutu people left in Rwanda.

Oakland writer Ann Garrison writes for the [San Francisco Bay View](#), [Counterpunch](#), [Global Research](#), [Colored Opinions](#), [Black Agenda Report](#), and [Black Star News](#), and produces radio news and features for Pacifica's [WBAI-NYC](#), [KPFA-Berkeley](#) and her own [YouTube Channel](#). She can be reached at anniegarrison@gmail.com. If you want to see Ann Garrison's independent reporting continue, please contribute on her website, anngarrison.com.

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