

**“NEVER AGAIN, NEVER FORGET”**

This was the motto of President Kigame when he delivered his speech at the celebration of the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Rwandan genocide in Kigali on April 6, 2014. This horrendous genocide has left an indelible blot on the conscience of mankind. Nothing like this has happened since the massacre of the Jews, Gypsies, the mentally challenged, homosexuals and undesirables by Nazi Germany in the 1940's. Just like the elimination of the Jews of Europe, the massacre of Tutsis in Rwanda where they number only 15% of the population was planned by the Hutu and their Western backers, France and Belgium in particular, for a long time. The infamous Berlin Conference of 1884 which divided Africa among European colonial powers has given the former Rwanda-Urundi (now the two independent countries of Rwanda and Brundi) to Germany. After the defeat of Germany in the First World War, the League of Nations in 1919 gave this former German colony to Belgium. Of the 7.5 million population, the Tutsis were a minority, only 15% and Hutus were the majority, 84% (the remaining 1% was another clan) With 408 persons /sq.km. Rwanda has the highest population density in Africa. The Tutsi were cattle herders, and the Hutu were farmers. In 1931 the evil Belgians (about whose colony of Congo I have earlier written an article elsewhere) introduced “ethnic identity cards” (does this sound familiar?) to the Rwandans. Unfortunately, this practice continued even after independence. Everyone was required to carry an identity card at all times. The Belgians said that the skulls of the Tutsis were bigger, that they were taller and light skinned and thus superior to the Hutus thus planting the seed of enmity between the two tribes. Like the Italians did in their colony of Eritrea (creating a division between the Hamasen, the Serai and Akele Guzay) and tried to do to Ethiopia between the Amara and the rest during their brief five year occupation.

The genocide of the Tutsi as a “final solution” was planned meticulously by the ruling Hutu. The ‘infamous’(for us Ethiopians) Butros- butros Ghali as Foreign Minister of Egypt, facilitated a huge sale of arms from Egypt including hundreds of thousands of machetes – the main weapon of choice for the coming genocide. As if on cue the genocide begun when a plane carrying the two Hutu presidents of Rwanda and Burundi was shot down on April 6, 1994. It went on non-stop for **100 days** during which time about one million Tutsis were massacred indiscriminately as the world looked on and refused to intervene to its eternal shame.

The following are the main ones who chose to be silent or assisted in the genocide directly or indirectly:

President Clinton who refused to intervene to stop the genocide. Sadly his Secretary of State who blocked the assistance at the UN Security Council, Madeline Albright, was a Jew and a daughter of Holocaust victims of Nazi Germany.

President Mitterrand the socialist president of France who supplied the weapons to the Hutu regime and whose silence during the genocide was deafening. When the French

troops intervened much later after the tide has turned it was to give cover and shelter to the defeated and retreating Hutu murderers when they fled to Eastern Congo.

Kofi Annan- the Nobel Prize winner former Secretary General of the UN who was Head of the UN Peace Keeping Operations, for holding back the UN troops already in Rwanda from intervening to stop the genocide.

The Catholic Church which actively assisted the genocide by directing the Hutus to their churches where the Tutsi had taken refuge and watching while the Tutsis were murdered or burnt alive. This has been documented in many occasions but the Catholic Church did not even condemn the genocide even after it was over.

Some of these later apologized. President Clinton considered his non interference as the greatest failure of his administration and admitted that had the US intervened maybe half a million Tutsis would have been saved. Kofi Annan has voiced his regret many times. Not France or Belgium. Actually during this 20th anniversary Rwanda refused to invite the French Foreign Minister and when the French Ambassador in Kigali demurred, he was disinvented as well.

Two million of the Hutu criminals fled when the Tutsi took power in Rwanda. But as the saying goes ‘you can run but not hide.’ They were initially supported by the dictator Mobutu but he was soon to die. In the ongoing conflict to hunt the Hutu criminals five million died in Eastern Congo, the highest since the end of the Second World War. It is believed that the vast majority of the Hutu criminals have been killed; the hunters are being hunted and systematically eliminated in the last 20 years – a feat which they have done to the Tutsi in a mere 100 days. So criminals beware there is Divine Justice, there is no crime that remains unanswered in due course. Those who issue tribal identity cards and who promote ethnic cleansing beware. Next time it may be their turn

*Interahawme* which means “those whose strike as one” is an anti-Tutsi youth organization of Hutu extremists. For some unknown reason it was a word which the late Prime Minister of the TPLF Tigrean oligarchy, Meles Zenawi, was fond of repeating. Could it have been a veiled threat directed to one ethnic group? These Hutu youth were at the forefront of the Tutsi massacre for whom machetes had been secretly distributed beforehand. Their aim was to kill every Tutsi living in Rwanda, to spare no one including babies – but to rape the women before killing them. They also performed sexual mutilation on them until they died. Those kept as sexual slaves were deliberately infected with HIV Aids. Their methods of killing were by grenade, machete, and rifle or having them burnt alive. How savage and horrible! The magnitude of the horror is difficult to encompass. Some books have been written about it. Just to mention a couple: *Shake Hands with the Devil*; *Hotel Rwanda*, the latter has been made into a film

Ironically there was even a debate as to how to call this genocide by the UN thus adding insult to injury. Finally UN declared the Rwanda genocide as ‘**Genocide against Tutsi**’ All in all 70% of the Tutsi were massacred. After such a terrible loss, it is difficult to imagine how a people can reconstitute themselves. But the Tutsi of Rwanda did. Like the legendary bird, the phoenix, which after being burnt rose from the ashes, the Tutsis of Rwanda just did that. Not only did they rise and prosper, they exacted sweet revenge on

their killers. It is estimated that in the last 20 years twice as many Hutus has been killed to that of the Tutsi, but the meting out of justice continues. As Paul Kugame said the Tutsi have to ensure “**never again**” similar to what the Jewish survivors of the Nazi holocaust said. But the Rwandans also said “**never forget**” It is a truism that a people who forget their past do not deserve to be remembered.

It is a known fact that a low level genocide of the Amara has occurred in Ethiopia. By the government’s own admission 5.2 million Amaras have “disappeared’ since the last census. Where have they gone? Many Amara women complain that they have been sterilized. Who is coming to their aid? Who is investigating? Even those organizations that stood to protect the Amara are being sneered at and put down by other Amaras. There has not been a shortage of self-hating ‘*hodam* Amaras’ who can be manipulated by Tigreans. The latest is an empty foul mouthed empty barrel, a *Hodam* Amara called Alemneh who crudely and graphically vilified the Amara; and during the student movement days there was a foolhardy loud-mouthed self-hating Amara called Wallelgen who was also being manipulated by the Tigreans even then. As Prof Asrat rightfully stated there are many, many, more “*Hodam* Amaras. However, the center will not hold for long, and the Amara core will not shift or fade away and they will surely redress the wrongs that other Amaras and other ethnics did to them. The noble Tutsis have led the way.

“Ethnic cleansing” (ugly word) is a forceful removal of an ethnically defined population. It was dramatically witnessed in Bosnia and Herzegovina (former Yugoslavia) even though the Croatians have used it against Serbians in the past (1941) The TPLF Tigrean oligarchy has used it against the Amara in many place and is still continuing to do this. Fake stories are being fabricated and propagated Consider the battle of Chelenko in the outskirts of Harar. It was the briefest engagement on record. It lasted only 15 minutes. Consider also the totally fabricated story (*teret teret*) about Annole where a monument of hate has been recently inaugurated. Hate could never be a substitute for truth and truth will always prevail including in this case when the time comes.

The Tutsis say that they were descendents of Ethiopians and it is widely believed that they may be ethnically closer to the Oromos. When Hutus in one of their methods of massacre pushed them en mass into crocodile infested waters they did that by shouting to them “go back to your country, Ethiopia if you survive the crocodiles” (as reminisced by Dr. Yacob who was a member of the UN War crimes Tribunal) In the wake of the Tutsi massacre the Crimes against Humanity, the UN War Crimes Tribunal and the International Criminal Court were established. Rwanda is not the end of genocide. There was Bosnia, and there may be others who might appear all of a sudden in any part of the world. God forbid. Humanity has not yet got rid of its primitive instincts. The new Rwanda constitution, reminiscent of its tumultuous past, and to its credit outlaws **reversionism, negativism, and trivialization of genocide**. Let those who have ears to hear listen. No nation or people can survive through ethnic conflict.

A luta continua

The struggle continues