

ETHNIC CONFLICT IN RWANDA: PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES

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ABSTRACT: Ethnic conflict resolution has been a challenge faced by the State and the international community at large since the Cold War period. Rwanda represents an example of the worst form of ethnic genocide in the contemporary times. The rivalry between the Hutus and Tutsis intensified during the colonial period. However, it was after the end of the Cold War that it took a violent turn. Early warning signs were ignored and parties were not ready to compromise on their incompatibilities and interests. The Arusha peace proposal ended the Civil War but deep rooted discontent and suspicion prevailed. The cause of the conflict can be traced to the colonial past. This carried itself forward in the form of a persistent external interference in Rwandan politics be it from Uganda or France. Military aid and assistance along with political support nurtured the conflict and finally took the form of genocide. For a complete resolution of the conflict both short term and long term measures were required. It can be said that conflict in Rwanda was managed but not resolved.

KEY WORDS: Ethnic Conflict, Incompatibilities, Militia, Refugees, Transitional Government.

I. INTRODUCTION

On 1st October 1990, the RPF-Rwanda Patriotic Front- led by Maj. Gen. Fred Rwigyema launched an offensive in the northern region of Rwanda. The events that followed culminated in the April 1994 genocide which is described as an ethnic genocide. The concept of ethnicity has always been predominant in Rwanda politics right since the pre-colonial era. Rwanda is a small central African state consisting of three types of ethnic groups. The majority Hutus constitute about 90% of the population. The minority Tutsis constitute about 9% and the Twas about 1% of the total population. The Twas mainly the potters and weavers are the indigenous people but have been completely sidelined by the other two groups. The Hutus are the agriculturalists who came to Rwanda in search of better prospects of living or as refugees of war. The Tutsis with their cattle came after the Hutus and established their predominance over them.

Though discontent based on differences in socio politico-economic status existed since the pre-colonial period it manifested itself only during the colonial period due to the policy of the colonial masters of openly favouring the Tutsis. The identity card system that was introduced in 1933 clearly defined an individual status as Hutu, Tutsis or Twas. Thus, distinct ethnic groups were created in Rwanda. Ethnic discrimination led to ethnic consciousness that finally resulted in the ethnic conflict. Though the conflict started with the RPF invasion, it eventually came to be recognized as a broader conflict between the Hutus and the Tutsis. This paper seeks to understand the multi dimensionality of the conflict, its dynamics and the efforts made to resolve incompatibilities. The purpose of this study is to facilitate a comparative analysis of conflicts so that universal commonalities in ethnic conflicts can be identified and solutions can be worked out around them. A comprehensive study of ethnic conflicts, on the basis of several categories available for analysis, is used to get a holistic picture.

II. HISTORY AND CONTEXT

The historical roots of the crisis can be found in both external as well as internal facts. The external factor dates back to the 1959-62 revolution in Rwanda that replaced the centuries old Tutsis rule by the Hutus. In the 1950s, the Hutus started articulating their demands in violent terms. The resistance of the Tutsis to change and the enthusiasm of the Hutus to bring about changes led to violent clashes between the two groups. This led to a vast exodus of people mainly Tutsis into the neighbouring countries. By 1964, the UNHCR estimated that about 1,50,000 refugees lived in the neighbouring areas. The problem of the 1990s was caused by the Ugandan refugees numbering about 70,000. Milton Obote, who was at the helm of affairs in Uganda during that period, did not have a favourable attitude towards the refugees. Obote belonged to a party-the Ugandan People's Congress- that was protestant whereas most of the refugees were Catholic. The common man in Uganda was also displeased with the refugees. The refugees were receiving scholarships from the UNHCR to secondary

schools. They were hard working and soon surpassed the Ugandan nationals. The land scarcity and unemployment problems also intensified. All these factors led to the victimisation of the refugees in Uganda. In 1981, Yoweri Museveni – the leader of the Uganda Patriotic Front organised a rebel army called the National Liberation Army-NLA- to overthrow Obote. The refugees were integrated into the army with a promise to help them return to Rwanda in the future. The refugee integration into the NLA was not only a reaction to the worsening internal situation in Uganda but also a reaction to the apathy of the Rwandan government towards them. The Rwandan Government was citing land scarcity and population pressures as reasons for not considering the repatriation of the refugees. The refugees had two ways to return to Rwanda either by peaceful means secured through bilateral or multilateral talks or by force and usurpation of power. (Veld, 1996, 111). By 1982-83, 35,000 refugees were expelled from Uganda. When Museveni, came to power in 1986, the Rwandan government realised that the refugees had the means to return by force and therefore set up in 1988 a joint commission to consider their repatriation. The terms laid down for return were unrealistic and therefore unacceptable to the RPF. The crisis of Oct 1990, was essentially a crisis of refugees with roots in the events of 1959-62, reinforced by subsequent political developments within Rwanda, and in the neighbouring states, particularly Uganda. (Joint Evaluation of Emergency Assistance to Rwanda Study I, 1996, 31).

Apart from these external pressures Habyarimana also had to deal with several internal pressures and structural problems that had their effect on the genocide. Major Gen Habyarimana came to power in 1973, after overthrowing Kayibanda in a military coup. He introduced several programs of modernisation which had their positive as well as negative effects. Industrialisation increased the gap between the urban and the rural sector. Power came to be increasingly centralised in the urban areas. The policy of privatisation also brought with it problems of corruption within the government. Added to all this was the economic crisis faced by Rwanda in the 1980s. The world coffee prices which constitutes about 82% of the exports of Rwanda fell by 50%. The government in 1990 also had to accept the structural adjustment program with the World Bank and the IMF along with joint and co-financing from seven bilateral donors plus the African donor bank and the EU amounting to US dollars 216 million (Joint Evaluation of Emergency Assistance to Rwanda Study I, 1996, 37). This led to the devaluation of the Rwandan franc by 40% creating problems of inflation. The attack of the RPF led to the divergence of resources for defence purposes.

Through all these changes that were taking place within and outside Rwanda certain ideological perceptions developed. The RPF mainly consisted of the Tutsis and was seen to represent only the Tutsis interests. The MRND – Movement Revolutionaire National Pour le Development – consists of Hutus from the Northern region of Rwanda. The Northern Hutus have always distrusted the Tutsis. They wished to make Rwanda a Hutu nation. The crisis in Burundi in 1993 heightened the fear of the Tutsi along with the Hutus which was exploited by the elites of the MRND. The crisis of 1994, was a manifestation of the ideological notion that defined Rwanda as a Hutu nation, more specifically for the “Pure Hutus of the North”.

One issue that needs to be addressed here is whether the civil war and civil violence could have been avoided. There were several early warning signs if interpreted properly could have avoided the conflict. The visible movement towards the border of Tutsis soldiers and officers of the Ugandan army; an aborted invasion that had been attempted in 1989, the sudden slaughter in refugee areas of 1200 cattle to make provision of smoked meat in July 1990, the fact that the training of Rwandese military refugees on the ranches in the NBARRARA border region was raised in the same time in the Ugandan parliament, furtive fund raising among the Tutsis in the NRA. The intelligence that was available to Habyarimana, was certainly also available to diplomats and other observers in the region. (Joint Evaluation of Emergency Assistance to Rwanda Study II, 1996, 20). Just like there were indications of the RPF attack there were indications of the genocide. With the signing of the Arusha agreement, killings of the Tutsis became more frequent. The RTL – Radio and Television Libre Mille Collin – incited the people to take to arms. Confidential government documents also showed plans of killing the Tutsis and the opponents of the regime. It is generally believed that the UN had information of this. Though several early warning signs existed they could not be transformed into effective conflict management. The context under which the conflict took place was intra state. Both the conflicts were armed conflicts taking place within a ‘democratic state’. The RPF allegedly received arms from Uganda and the government forces from France. The militia involved in the civil violence used weapons like machetes, knives, bows and arrows. (Lindsey, 1994, 14). Until 1990 Rwanda was an authoritarian single party state. In 1991, a multi-party system was introduced. The conflict in Rwanda can be regarded as an ethnic conflict since one ethnic group was instigated against the other. In Rwanda two distinct conflicts were underway: The slaughter of civilians which was systematic and the war between the RPF and the Rwandan army. (Africa Confidential, 1994, 5).

III. PARTIES AND TIME PERIOD

Since the conflict in Rwanda took place at two levels, there were two sets of political actors. The primary parties to the civil war were the RPF- the guerrilla forces and the MRND- the threatened regime. The civil violence was instigated by the extremists functioning through the party militia. The conflict that the paper will focus on is between the RPF and the government though references to the civil violence will also be made since it was a product of the war. The RPF was a result of the refugee victimisation in Uganda. It was initially organised as the RANU- Rwanda Alliance for National Unity. It broadened its base in 1986 and called itself the RPF –Rwanda Patriotic Front- after the victory of the NRA in Uganda. The RPF leaders were trained in the NRA and they served them well in the war when it came to discipline. (African Rights, 1994, 630). The MRND was the other key actor in this conflict. The MRND was formed in 1975 and by the December 1978 constitution it became the only political party in Rwanda. It consisted of the Northern Hutus preaching the ideology of the Hutu nation. The Party militia were responsible for carrying out a large scale of the killings along with the presidential guards which was formed during the rapid expansion of the army after the outbreak of the war. (African Rights, 1994, 31).

The militias were created in September 1991 to mobilise the people against the RPF especially in the border areas. Later on they were, however, used for identifying and killing the Tutsi and Hutu moderates. The Akazu or the ‘little house’ was in charge of commanding the militia. The members of the Akazu belonged to Habyarimana family. The local organisers, the militias and the Presidential guards took their orders from them. The presidential guards and the militia systematically massacred perceived opponents- Tutsis and Hutus, throughout the country. (Africa Confidential, 1994, 5). The RTLM also played a key role in the killings. It broadcast a message that the RPF and hence all the Tutsis were cockroaches who infested Rwanda and therefore, had to be eliminated. (Lindsey, 1994, 14). Apart from these actors who were directly involved in the conflict there were several secondary actors or parties as well. Chief among them were Uganda and France. Ugandan government had a special interest in the Rwandan crisis right since the beginning. They wanted the conflict to be resolved in favour of RPF. This would not only end the problem of refugees in Uganda but would also ensure a friendly government in the neighbourhood. The RPF was not only trained by the Ugandan army but also got arms and ammunitions from them. The French, too, wanted to retain their influence, in Franco-Phone Africa. The RPF leaders were educated in Uganda and spoke English. (Africa Rights, 1994, 668). The French, therefore, were not favourable towards the RPF. They had very close relations with the Habyarimana family.

Both the French and the Ugandan government pursued a dual policy in Rwanda. At the individual level they supported the parties and at the international level they participated in the peace process. The chairperson of the OAU Dr. Salim Salim was a Ugandan. The other neighbouring countries also wanted the conflict to end. Zaire, too, was in favour of the government. The other countries were neutral and pressured the parties to end the war since that would also end the fresh influx of refugees in their territories. The UN did play a role in the peace process. But its contribution will be discussed later in the discussion of the dynamics of the conflict as well as the settlement proposal.

IV. INCOMPATIBILITIES

One of the most important factors to be considered while analysing a conflict is the incompatibilities or issues that create the conflict. Subjectively defined, the issues are disguised in ideological terms. The RPF in 1986 declared its objectives in an eight point programme calling the Habyarimana regime corrupt and inefficient. Not only was the regime not sympathetic towards the refugees, it also indulged in killings of Tutsis within Rwanda. The RPF wanted to ensure the return of the refugees, if need be through force. It also wanted to overthrow the regime. It stated its goal of putting an end to systems that created refugees. It promised a democratic and truly ‘national’ regime. The regime justified itself on the basis of ‘self-defence’ and maintenance of national integrity against external attacks. The actions of the regime were portrayed as defensive.

Considering the issues at stake from a non-party point of view, however, leads us to conclude that in the conflict, power play was central. The conflict was a result of both parties wanting to attain and in the case of the government, wanting to retain control over the resources that were getting scarce. Although the immediate motive of the RPF was the settlement of the refugee crisis, the front also wanted to structurally modify Rwandese political culture. (Joint Evaluation of Emergency Assistance to Rwanda Study I, 1996, 35). The timing of the RPF attack leads us to question its real motive. In 1988 talks had been initiated between the Ugandan and the Rwandan government to consider the problem of the refugees. They decided to establish a joint commission to look into the problem and decided to take UNHCR aid to survey settlements to determine the willingness of the refugees to return or stay in Uganda. (Watson, 1991, 13). Habyarimana was also

democratising the system. It is felt that if all these efforts would have succeeded the RPF would not be left with any cause to declare war. The RPF also misjudged the discontent of the people towards the regime. The main aim of the RPF was the usurpation of power. There is also cause to suspect the intentions of the regime and its supporters. By agreeing to a joint commission Habyarimana wanted to project the regime as sensitive to the problems of the refugees. In the commission, however, he laid down certain conditions that were unrealistic and therefore, unacceptable to the RPF. Refugee repatriation was to be considered on an individual basis and only people who had a means of survival in Rwanda were allowed. It was unrealistic to assume that people who were out of the country for almost 25 years would have a means of livelihood inside. Habyarimana also allowed the emergence of political parties in Rwanda after 1990 but he also consistently tried to divide them. Within Rwanda, it was the Akazu that were controlling all the resources. Power sharing with the RPF would have meant limiting their power. They would have lost the privileges that they were enjoying. To avoid this, they exploited the ethnic sentiments and created in the minds of the Hutus a fear of the Tutsis. The issues were, therefore, specific. The subjective claims of refugee repatriation and protection of the territory from external threats were clear. Even non-party defined issue of securing power denoted a conflict over concrete things. They were covered in certain general terms using ethnicity as a tool. The RPF portrayed itself as a national party concerned with the elimination of ethnic discrimination. The regime, especially, the extremists, manipulated the ethnic sentiments. The extremists claimed that the mistake they made in 1959 by not finishing off the Tutsis and allowing them to flee made them come back, to avoid this mistake they should be eliminated. (African Rights, 1994, 27). The conflict was over specific issues coined in general terms.

V. SYMPTOMS

An understanding of the issues of the conflict gives us an idea of the attitude of the parties. Though both the parties hated each other, the regimes feeling of hatred was much stronger than the feeling of the RPF. The RPF in its political programme had accused the Habyarimana regime of corruption, ethnic discrimination and authoritarianism. The MRND also regarded RPF as a Tutsis organisation with an aim to overthrow the Hutu domination and re-establish Tutsi supremacy. They developed stereotypical images of the Tutsis as invaders. They restored the 'Hamitic' images of the Tutsis. It was the European rulers who applied the 'Hamitic Theory' to Rwandan politics. They regarded the Tutsis as 'Hamites' who were tall, slender and aristocratic in appearance. The Tutsis were regarded as Europeans with black skins. The Tutsis were, therefore, the legitimate rulers. The Hutus, on the other hand, were stocky fit only for menial jobs. With the attack of the RPF in 1990, the theory was raised again but this time to justify the Hutu action against the Tutsis. The masses were mobilised to fight against the RPF by creating images of the RPF as imperialists who wanted to take over the 'Hutu-Land'. The RPF and the Tutsis were projected as ethnic enemies. (Joint Evaluation of Emergency Assistance to Rwanda Study I, 1996, 40). Both the parties had very clear, fixed and negative views about each other.

The behaviour of the parties reflects their attitudes. The RPF believed that the MRND was not ready to consider its demand of refugee repatriation seriously and it had to use force. Since most of the refugees were Tutsis, it was also seen as an attempt to keep the Tutsis out of Rwanda. Moreover, despite signing the accords of power sharing with the RPF Habyarimana delayed its implementation. A coalition government with the RPF was one of the clauses of the accord. The non-implementation of the accord was seen an attempt by the regime to keep the RPF and hence the Tutsis out. The shooting down of the President's plane was seen as an act to blame the RPF and instigate the masses against them. A peculiar thing about the attitudes and behaviour in the Rwandan context is the differences between the Hutus themselves. The Northern Hutus believed that they were superior to the Southern Hutus. The Southern Hutus have always been moderate in their attitude towards the Tutsis and have intermingled with them. They are, therefore, regarded as the 'impure' Hutus whereas the Northern Hutus are the pure Hutus. The Northern Hutus justified their power and control based on Hutu purity unmixed and unconquered with Tutsi blood and culture. (Veld, 1996, 22). The attitudes of the parties made them violent in their behaviour towards each other. Though the RPF was the aggressor, the regime retaliated not only by repelling the RPF attack but also by spreading a reign of terror in Rwanda and thus compelling the people to kill. The government also made better use of the propaganda machinery than the RPF.

VI. DYNAMICS

One of the interesting things to note while considering the dynamics of the conflict is that the composition of the conflict remained the same, however, the MRND witnessed factional divisions and polarisation between the Hutu extremists and moderates. As the conflict developed, the RPF recruited as many people as it could. Most of these people were youth who were frustrated with their conditions within Rwanda. They saw the RPF as a means of venting their anger. Some of these people had seen their friends and family being killed and had nearly

escaped death themselves. They lacked the discipline and training of the RPF trained in Uganda. They were also not dedicated and clear about the objectives. Despite problems of indiscipline like looting and indiscriminate killings, the RPF leadership was able to maintain command and control. The case with the MRND was different. President Habyarimana was increasingly viewed as a moderate who was compromising the interests of the Hutus and more specifically of the extremists. The introduction of a multi-party system and of parliamentary democracy considerably reduced the power of the extremists. The extremist party the CDR- Coalition for the Defence of the Republic – was formed in March 1992. Party militias were also created. The ‘interahamwe’, ‘those who attack together’, was part of the MRND and the impuzamugambi, ‘those with a single purpose’ was attached to the CDR. (Human Rights Watch Africa, 1994, 2). Serious differences, thus, arose in the MRND. The signing of the Arusha Accord in 1993 gave the hope that the RPF and the MRND would finally end the war but the extremist wing in the MRND did not let it happen. Soon after the assassination of President Habyarimana in 1994 a new government of extremists within the MRND was formed led by Theodore Sindikubwabo as President and Jean Kambanda as Prime Minister. The conflict lasted from 1st October 1990 to 18th July 1994 with several phases of escalation and de-escalation. The whole of October fighting lasted on a small-scale with the government retaliating on 3rd Oct 1990. It not only fought against the RPF but also started killings of Tutsis within Rwanda. The Tutsis were arrested as the alleged sympathisers of the RPF. In March 1991 fighting intensified when the RPF attacked Ruhengiri in the North. The Tutsis had started fleeing to the neighbouring countries. The neighbouring countries, realising the problems this would cause to their territories, took the initiative in organising peace talks. This resulted in a ceasefire on 29 March 1991 at N’Sele Zaire. The ceasefire, however, lasted only for two weeks and fighting again resumed and continued throughout April, May June. On 7th September 1991, another summit was held and a second ceasefire was signed on 26th October 1991. Meanwhile, crackdown on the Tutsis continued. The second ceasefire was also violated by both the parties.

In June 1992, the proposal for the Arusha talks was initiated by Tanzania. Both the Parties could not agree to a solution. A ceasefire was, however, declared on 31st July 1992 which was violated by both the parties. The RPF accused the government of indulging in civilian killings. Between all these violations, an agreement was finally reached between the RPF and members of the transitional government. President Habyarimana, however, rejected this agreement and fighting resumed. Clashes between civilians also followed. Demonstrations were held against the government who imposed a curfew on 20th January 1993. The worst phase of the conflict was in February 1993, when it escalated the most. The RPF alleging the government of killing civilians undertook a major offensive. The government forces were severely defeated and they called for French help. Fighting lasted for two days but the RPF was able to make a lot of gains. After 8th February the RPF had doubled the size of its territory in Rwanda. (Joint Evaluation of Emergency Assistance to Rwanda Study I, 1996, 48). The RPF was willing to accept a ceasefire provided the government stopped killing the Tutsis and the French withdrew. The government, on the other hand, wanted the RPF to go back to the position it held prior to 8th February. The RPF withdrew to its position and the Arusha Talks resumed. A ceasefire was also declared on 21st February 1993. No major ceasefire violations occurred till April 1994. An interesting thing to note here is that after every round of talks both the parties indulged in heavy fighting to consolidate their positions. Finally, an agreement was signed in August 1993 and a transitional government was to be established by September 1993. Delays in the establishment of a transitional government caused tensions though it did not result in fighting. With the death of Habyarimana massacres of the Tutsis began. Within 30 minutes of the plane crash barricades were thrown up around the city and killings began. (Burkhalter, 1994, 18). By mid-June 500,000 were killed, 2 million displaced and over a million fled the country. (Vassall-Adam, 1994, 41). On 12th April fighting resumed. RPF advanced towards Kigali and finally on 18th July RPF won the war and the government had to flee. On 19th July an RPF government was inaugurated in Kigali.

However, there were several internal factors limiting the actions of the parties. The introduction of a multi-party system in Rwanda saw the proliferation of political parties like the MDR- Democratic Republican Movement, PSD- Social Democratic party, PL- Liberal Party, PDC- Christian Democratic Party. The internal opposition to his policies compelled Habyarimana to take a moderate stance. On 12th October 1991, Sylvestre Nsanzimana was appointed as Prime Minister. A transitional government was also established which held talks with the RPF. Habyarimana had also announced elections in September 1991. The parties opposed this since they would not have any time to mobilise support and the only party that would have benefitted would be the MRND. The parties, therefore, insisted that a national convention to discuss elections takes place. This demand was rejected by Habyarimana which escalated violence. The opposition parties in Rwanda acted as pressure groups. They forced the government to compromise on several issues. Several external factors also limited the actions of the parties. In this regard, special mention of the UN and France is essential. The UN presence in Rwanda limited the actions of the RPF and the French presence limited the actions of the government. The UNAMIR force

stationed in Rwanda was constantly seeking an end to the war. Even after the death of the President when genocide had commenced the UN was making efforts for a ceasefire. This limited the actions of the RPF. It was felt that the only way the genocide could be stopped and the Tutsis saved was through the advancement of the RPF. By emphasising on a ceasefire and making efforts in that direction, the UN was strengthening the hands of the extremists. Though the French government supported the regime in the beginning, around 1994, France announced its decision to send 2500 troops to Rwanda on a strictly humanitarian mission to save human lives by creating a 'safe-zone' in the South West. (Vassall-Adams, 1994, 45). This was only an interim arrangement till the deployment of UNAMIR-II. Though the RPF was opposed to this move, it did help to stop the killings of the civilians who took refuge in this zone. It, thus, limited the actions of the extremists. The safe zone also called the zone 'turquoise' also assured 1,500,000 people who were displaced that it was safe to stay thus preventing a mass exodus into Zaire. (Vassall-Adams, 1994, 46).

VII. POWER RELATIONS

One of the reasons for the government using the propaganda machinery better than the RPF was because it had better control over the power resources. The RPF was militarily more powerful than the government. The RPF training in the Ugandan army served them well in the war. The RPF was more dedicated and disciplined than the government forces. The government forces though trained by French professional soldiers, well equipped and larger than the RPF were poorly motivated. (McCullum, 1995, 8). The government commanded all the political and economic resources. Psychologically too, the attack of the RPF enabled the government to create a fear in the minds of the people against the Tutsis and manipulate them to undertake mass killings. This was merely a reversal of the system that existed in the past when the Tutsis dominated all the resources. From 1990 onwards, however, the domination of the Northern Hutus began. An asymmetrical relation existed between the RPF and the government, with the RPF being militarily in a better commanding position and the government being in command in the other spheres.

The power of these parties was dependent on external support as well. The secondary parties to the conflict were the major arms suppliers to the primary parties. The Rwandan government got support from France, Egypt, and South Africa. The French role in the conflict needs special attention. France directly supplied arms to the government provided it with military training as well as troops (African Rights, 1994, 34). The French supplied the government with mortars, light artillery, armoured cars and helicopters. Ironically, the 'Mystere-Falcon' sent to Habyarimana by the Elysee in the late 1980s with the encouragement of Jean Christophe Mitterand-son of the French President - was downed by rockets France had supplied to the presidential guards. (Africa Confidential, 1994, 08). The French also trained the Presidential guard who further trained the militias. France provided the Rwandese army with troops, though, they were officially stationed in Rwanda for protection of their nationals. By 1993, France had about 700 troops in Rwanda often seen helping the army against the RPF battalions. The French also deployed Force-Noroit' for defensive and humanitarian measures.(Joint Evaluation of Emergency Assistance to Rwanda Study II, 1996, 22). France provided the government finances to purchase arms. The supply of almost 6 million dollars, worth of small arms from Egypt to Rwanda was made possible by credit extended by the French bank Credit Lyonnais. (African Rights, 1994, 35).

Egypt was also a major supplier of arms to the Rwandan Government. In 1991, Egypt supplied a shipment of arms which included 450 Kalashnikovs, assault rifles with more than 3 million rounds of ammunition, 50 mortars with 16000 mortar shells, 2000 rocket propelled grenades, 2000 anti-personnel land mines and 6 long range artillery guns with 3000 shells. (Human Rights Watch Arms Project, 1994, 15). South Africa, too, supplied machine guns and ammunition to the government. The RPF received a lot of support from Uganda. Ugandan served as a rare base for invasion enabling the front to regroup, recruit and noblesse among the refugee community and evidently to funnel weapons and supplies to the RPF controlled areas inside Rwanda. (Joint Evaluation of Emergency Assistance to Rwanda StudyII, 1996, 22). The RPF forces had weapons which included land mines, rocket propelled grenades, 60mm mortars and recoilless cannons and also multiple rocket launcher system which they claimed to have stolen from the NRA but which the NRA is suspected to have given them. (Human Rights Watch Arms Project, 1994, 10). Uganda was the main arms supplier to the RPF though the Ugandan government denied any type of involvement. It is believed that Uganda has become a steady source of light arms, ammunition uniforms, batteries food and gasoline from Oct 1990 to as late as May 1993. Soldiers were also seen openly unloading 2 crates of about 30 Kalashnikovs in Southern Rwanda near the Ugandan Border. (Human Rights Watch Arms Project, 1994, 20). RPF also received support from the diaspora community especially in North America and Europe.

VIII. SETTLEMENT PROPOSAL

Apart from the external powers who were supporting one party or the other in the conflict, there was also third party intervention in resolving the conflict. The on-going conflict was creating a problem of the refugees in the neighbouring countries. Two ceasefire agreements had been signed on 29th March and 26th October in N'Sele and Gbadolite respectively. However, no progress in the conflict was made. Finally, Tanzania acting as a facilitator took the initiative in the introduction of the Arusha Peace Process. The negotiating process involved countries like Belgium, France, Uganda, Zaire, Tanzania, Germany, US, OAU and the UN. (Joint Evaluation of Emergency Assistance Rwanda Study I, 1996, 24). The Arusha Talks began on 10th July 1992 and the agreement was finally signed on 4th August 1993. It led to a power sharing between the parties. The two parties agreed to the establishment of Rule of Law, a Transitional Government, a National Army and also the reintegration of all the refugees. (Joint Evaluation of Emergency Assistance to Rwanda Study I, 1996, 43).

The Rule of Law clause stated that all citizens would be treated equally irrespective of their ethnic or other identities which was the easiest to agree upon. The other points included specifics about power sharing and therefore, took several rounds of discussion before final approval. The accords stated that a parliamentary form of government would be constituted with election to be held in June 1995. Meanwhile, a transitional government which would be operative from 10th September onwards would be established. The Transitional government would consist of 21 ministers out of which five would be from the MRND, five from the RPF, four from the MDR, three from the PDS, three from the PL and one from the PDC. The Parliament would also be divided with the MRND, MDR, PSD, PL, RPF having eleven seats each, four would go to the PDC and one each to the other parties that emerged. (Joint Evaluation of Emergency Assistance to Rwanda Study I, 1996, 43). The accords dealt with the tricky issue of refugee repatriation. Any person who was out of Rwanda for 10 years or more could not reclaim land. It was also decided to take help of the OAU and the UNHCR to consider a programme for repatriation. As far as the question of the national army was concerned, the RPF was to obtain 40% of the troops and 50% of all the commanding positions. An army of 13,000 troops and 6000gendarmarie was to be constituted. (Joint Evaluation of Emergency Assistance to Rwanda Study I, 1996, 44). The entire negotiating process however, excluded the CDR which had become important in Rwandan Politics. It was felt that speedy implementation of the accords and the formation of a transitional government would tackle the extremist question. Later events showed that the CDR should have been included in the process.

All the issues both subjectively and non-party defined were included. The government, however, had to compromise on several issues. A Parliamentary government was to be established which made the Presidential office merely symbolic. This meant a considerable loss of power for the Habyarimana and his inner circle. In the power distribution, important ministries like Prime Minister, Vice Prime Minister, and Minister of Interior Finance were given to the opposition parties. This, along with, reduction in the army, too, meant that a substantial portion of government troops would lose their jobs. Whereas majority of the RPF would be integrated. The negotiators of the RPF were definitely better than those of the government. By excluding extremists from the negotiations, the initiators of the peace process only succeeded in managing the conflict for a brief period. They tackled only one level of the conflict the Civil War. The level of Civil Violence was left out. To resolve the conflict it was necessary to tackle the second level also.

IX. CONCLUSION

After a careful analysis of the ethnic conflict in Rwanda, it can be said that to resolve the conflict in Rwanda both short term and long term solutions were required. The most important problem before the RPF government in Rwanda was the problem of the refugees. This problem needed to be tackled first especially since there were reports of the refugees being organised into military groups in the refugee camps. The Rwandan government needed to create an atmosphere where the refugees would feel safe to return. For this, it was very essential that the RPF punish those people within the government who were committing atrocities on the people. There were several reports of revenge killings in Rwanda and also of forcible acquisition of property by the Tutsi refugees of 1959. This needed to stop. The Arusha Proposal for refugee repatriation could have been used while settling this issue. The regional organisations could have established monitoring groups and could have ensured the rehabilitation of the refugees.

Another equally important task that the government and the international community should have undertaken was to punish the criminals involved in the genocide. The role of the international community was very crucial here. Many of the key people involved in the genocide were residing in countries abroad. These countries had a special responsibility towards Rwandan people. They should have ensured that justice was done.

Short term solutions also included determining the legitimacy of the RPF government. The problem with Rwandan politics had been the lack of legitimacy of the government. The government should have truly represented the people's interest. The RPF government in Rwanda was not seen as a national party representing the interests of all groups. To integrate all the groups in decision making process elections on the basis of proportional representation could have been a solution. This should have been employed as early as possible. International monitors should have been present to determine neutrality. Long term solutions to the Rwandese problem should have included measures to form a civil society. A civil society needed to be created. A civil society in Rwanda was possible only when centuries old rivalries were eliminated and an open competitive system established. The political nature of Rwanda should have been made more participant. This would have happened only when everybody would have got an equal share in the power resources. Economic development of Rwanda was also essential. Industrialisation and increase in agricultural production should have gone hand in hand. In this regard, the role of the international community was essential. Aid without any qualifications should have been granted. There was also a proposal that the Regional biases in Rwanda could have ended by dividing the country on regional basis. The North could have been granted a choice to either remain in Rwanda or integrate with the other neighbouring countries. Regional powers should have taken a lead in this respect. Thus, apart from certain internal solutions to the problem, the external factor proved to be significant. There are lessons to be learnt from the ethnic conflict in Rwanda. Conflicts can be resolved only after certain ground level demands are accommodated and power sharing formula that represents equality are devised.

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