Such a Long Journey: Peacebuilding After Genocide in Rwanda

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INTRODUCTION

Until 1994, Rwanda was among the world's most obscure countries. A tiny dot on the map of Africa—89 times smaller than its neighbor to the west—that was rarely studied, and even more rarely in the news. During the colonial period, Rwanda was an afterthought. The first colonial power, Germany, took little interest: Rwanda had few resources, and was too isolated and far from the coasts. It is said that for years after the Germans had arrived, the native *Banyarwanda* did not even realize they were a colonized people.¹ Germany's successor, Belgium, didn't do much in the colony either, other than maim its social fabric. During its first three decades as an independent country, which were scarred by communal massacres, civil wars, and dictatorships, Rwanda remained inconspicuous

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in the eyes of the world.² The genocide—and what came after—changed that.

Today, no country in Africa—arguably the world—divides opinion among scholars and commentators as fiercely as Rwanda. It has become a *cause célèbre* for billionaires, ex-statesmen, and celebrities. The polarized nature of the debate is generally expressed thus: Rwanda is a remarkable development success, risen from the ashes of mass ethnic slaughter, steered and safeguarded by a visionary leader; or, a case of autocratic recidivism, masked by implausibly rosy statistics and a bogus narrative of national unity, contrived by a strongman intent on staying in power forever. Essentially, this clash is all about one man: Rwanda's president, Paul Kagame.

No study on Rwanda can avoid this discussion, but it need not be the dominant focus. Large parts of Rwanda's post-conflict reconstruction speak for themselves—in terms of reduced poverty, improvements in public safety and security, sustained economic growth, less corruption, better health care, and vastly more women in government and politics. This chapter ranges across Rwanda's peacebuilding landscape, alighting on key developments since 1994; it does not privilege a single issue or policy. In a volume that addresses myriad themes and case studies of peacebuilding in Africa, as this book does, context is vital. The aim here is to set the broad contours in a way that invites comparisons, touching on how major transformations came about and how peace has been enhanced as a result.

This is not to gainsay the darker aspects of Rwanda's peacebuilding journey. Nor is it to suggest that Rwanda is out-of-the-woods; far from it. The state all but disintegrated a quarter century ago. Ten percent of its population of roughly ten million in 1994, including three out of every four Tutsis in the country, was killed during the genocide. Since then, an unspoken fear that Rwanda could slide back into the abyss has been the backcloth against which all key government policies are drawn.

This chapter reflects briefly on several parts of Rwanda's peacebuilding journey that are broadly perceived as successful works-in-progress. This includes some of the above-mentioned improvements as well as reforms in the areas of justice and security. It also interrogates the lack of competitive politics in Rwanda as a "necessary evil"—which requires some understanding of the complex dynamics which seeded the genocide—an argument frequently made in support of the government, explicitly or otherwise. Drawing on firsthand experience and various secondary sources, including a recent insider perspective of reconstruction

in Rwanda,³ it also tries to identify the key drivers behind the Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF)'s peacebuilding choices.

ORIGINS OF GENOCIDE

The mist which covers Rwanda's famed "thousand hills" provides an apt metaphor for its precolonial history: much of it is shrouded in mystery. We know that for centuries there existed in this hilly region a kind of feudal monarchy, distinct in its social system and traditions, comprised of pluralistic clans. The clans were made up of three groups, the majority Hutu (84 percent),⁴ the Tutsi (15 percent), and the Twa (1 percent), which together formed the *Banyarwanda* people. The cattle owners, the Tutsi, were the ruling class. Although categories were somewhat fluid, and conflicts between the wealthy and poor may have been common, there existed some shared identity of living under the same royal authority.

The Belgian colonial administration amplified historic divisions by consolidating local power in the hands of the minority Tutsi chiefs and removing traditional Hutu public figures. Tutsis were given monopolies over land rights and access to socio-economic opportunities, hardening a sense of ethnic inferiority among the majority Hutu. In 1932, the Belgians introduced identity cards which stated the ethnicity of the bearer. The labels "Hutu" and "Tutsi" were thus formalized in everyday life. All the while, competition over scarce land intensified as Rwanda's population increased dramatically. When Tutsi leaders began clamoring for independence in the late 1950s, the Belgians switched tactics and fomented a "Hutu peasant revolution." Tens of thousands of Tutsis were killed in the ensuing violence and many more fled to neighboring countries. Independence occasioned more massacres against Tutsis, retaliations, and a further exodus. The first Hutu nationalist regime could not provide any stable grounds for cohabitation. It was eventually overthrown in the early 1970s by another Hutu nationalist, Juvenal Habyarimana, who imposed a measure of stability through an iron-clad dictatorship. Over the next two decades, the conflict between Hutus and Tutsis began to merge with struggles between the forces of democracy—which included moderate Hutu leaders—and tyranny.

By the mid-1980s in Uganda, a highly unified, battle-tested group of young Rwandan Tutsi exiles had formed the RPF. Its aim: the liberation of their motherland. The RPF invaded Rwanda in 1990, overrunning Habyarimana's army, but were pushed back by reinforcements from

France, with whom the regime had close ties. The subsequent de facto partitioning of Rwanda led to peace negotiations between the government and the RPF, tit-for-tat killings, and new massacres. Extremists in President Habyarimana's regime promoted a new "Hutu Power" bloc, which suppressed moderate Hutu voices and promoted hatred and fear of Tutsis. External pressure eventually forced Habyarimana to agree to ratify the Arusha Peace Accords, which had paved the way for the deployment of a United Nations (UN) peacekeeping force to Rwanda (UNAMIR) in 1993 to assist in their implementation. But it was not to be. Returning home from a meeting in Tanzania on April 6, 1994, Habyarimana's plane was shot down on its approach to Kigali's airport.

In its scope and intensity, the hundred-day genocide which followed was perhaps unprecedented in human history. Upward of a million Rwandans—some moderate Hutus but mostly Tutsis—were killed by their fellow Rwandans, usually in broad daylight, often by militia and ordinary people using machetes, garden implements, or other tools. Hutu extremists nearly achieved their aim of extermination. Rwanda's constricted geography and the mass participation in the killings meant that Tutsis had few ways to escape the slaughter. Peacekeeping forces on the ground were degraded, rather than reinforced, by the UN after the genocide began, permitting them to bear witness to it but not much else.⁵ The symbolic date on which the genocide was brought to an end is July 4, 1994, when the RPF took the capital, though it would take another two weeks for the civil war to be declared over and the RPF announce the creation of a new government.

Those who were in Rwanda at the time described the situation in apocalyptic terms, such was the extent of societal collapse; a land of walking ghosts.⁶ Analysts predicted that it would take more than a generation for the country to recover in any substantial way, if it ever would.

BUILDING PEACE

The one advantage enjoyed by the RPF in this otherwise awful predicament was that they could call the shots. Its military victory was total. This allowed the RPF to consolidate its power across the country over the next few years. It persuaded former enemies and ordinary Hutus to change allegiances; dealt militarily with the numerous threats to the new political dispensation, including former *génocidaires* within and outside its borders; and defined a post-conflict future for Rwanda. This "victors'

peace” had common features with experiences in Uganda, Eritrea, and Angola, where strong cliques who had triumphed in civil wars exerted a firm hold over reconstruction. But only the leader of the RPF, Paul Kagame, would gain an international reputation for building a stable and functioning state. This perception inspired a level of donor goodwill and generosity toward Rwanda that eluded others.

What followed genocide in Rwanda was not all by design. The devastating wars and interventions in neighboring Zaire/Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) shaped the RPF’s policies and programs in ways that may never have been predicted when the RPF seized power, as did other regional and global developments in the 1990s. What is more, the plans agreed upon and put in place by the RPF were not influenced solely by the genocide and its aftermath. Jean Paul Kimonyo, drawing on internal documents, traces the historical antecedents of the RPF’s worldview. He explains its transformative ambitions for Rwanda as arising, in part, from ideas and myths of a “Grand Rwanda,” and a desire to break with the country’s highly stratified, monarchical past. The genocide focused RPF minds in unimaginable ways. But the desire to develop the country and bring about a fundamental shift in Rwandans’ thinking germinated before the events of 1994.

The so-called “Urugwiro Village discussions,” named after and held at the presidential residence, took place over several months in 1998/9. Firmly guided by RPF leaders but involving representatives of all parts of society, the discussions helped frame the government’s vision and policies for building peace and reconstructing the country (enshrined in law a few years later), which became manifest in some of the key transformations described below. Of overarching importance was the commitment to align all initiatives to the aim of strengthening national unity. A National Unity and Reconciliation Commission was established in 1999 “to educate, sensitize and mobilize the population in areas of national unity and reconciliation.” Also notable was the strong emphasis placed on independent, homegrown solutions. The pledge to make the RPF “the motor of government that would bring about real change in the country”⁷ put paid—or should have—to any hopes people might have harbored that free-flowing democracy might be encouraged or tolerated.

Democracy

“Those who look in from outside ignore the fact that competitive democracy requires sustained social cohesion,” wrote President Paul Kagame in an Op-ed for London’s *Financial Times* in 2010.⁸ Rhetorically, if not practically, few guiding principles to emerge from the Urugwiro Village discussions became as sacrosanct as this in the RPF’s approach to governing. Democratic legitimacy would derive from Rwandans’ own values, traditions, and life experiences, not criteria pushed by donors.

Decentralization has been a central motif in post-genocide governance: non-partisan elections are held at the local level, where all citizens can participate in community planning and initiate processes to hold civil servants accountable. (Kagame’s often-heard refrain that the Western democratic model in its entirety will not be right for everyone has become something of an Africa-wide mantra.) In the face of criticism, his supporters have leaned on credible research to explain why, in conditions of acute poverty and stark societal divisions like Rwanda, competitive politics *increases* the likelihood of violence (whereas in middle- and higher-income countries, it reduces it).⁹

No one can pretend that there is a real electoral choice at the national level; or that participating in public life as a critic of government policy does not carry grave risks. Kagame won re-election in 2017 with a 99 percent share of the vote after securing a constitutional change that allowed him a third 7-year term in office. He is genuinely popular, to be sure; but also widely feared. The amended constitution would permit him to rule until 2034. More proof, critics say, his heart is a dictator’s, not a democrat’s. Kagame or no Kagame, whether Rwanda can cope with peppy democracy is not an academic matter. The introduction of competitive elections (under pressure from the West) in the early 1990s is thought by many to have tilled the field for the later genocide, as Hutu-led political parties campaigned on virulent anti-Tutsi platforms in a fragmented political landscape.

It begs the question: why does Rwanda even bother with elections? Popular legitimacy is clearly a factor. Even if Rwanda’s are less elections than “election-like events,” it is still hard to convey authority in their absence. Rwanda’s elections have been geared toward endorsing the status quo, yet they have still served as useful litmus tests for the direction of the country. Campaigns and elections have also afforded opportunities to test loyalties and manage internal dissent. Suffice to say, no one in the

President's Office is losing sleep over Bertelsmann Stiftung's Transformation Index (BTI), which scores Rwanda's elections 2 out of 10 for (not) being "free and fair."¹⁰

Security

The reform of militaries and security institutions in post-conflict environments is one of the thorniest parts of peacebuilding. All too often, such reforms fail to achieve their targets. More damaging, they are also exploited in struggles over state power between emerging actors, creating new triggers for instability.¹¹ Post-1994 Rwanda faced an additional challenge: one side of the reform equation had committed genocide against the other.

Between 1997 and 2007, 60,000 ex-combatants were demobilized. This included the ex-*Forces Armées Rwandais* (FAR, the pre-1994, largely Hutu, Rwandan government army) and the various armed groups involved in the genocide—the former *génocidaires*—most of whom had fled to the DRC, then eventually returned to Rwanda.¹² During this period, the RDF (the Rwandan Defense Force, the name given to the new national army in 2002) was considerably reduced. In broad terms, the reintegration of ex-fighters back to civilian life has been successful, assessed against other disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) programs in Africa.¹³

Insofar as peacebuilding, the experience of the disparate forces brought into a united RDF has drawn particular attention.¹⁴ Integration served as a conflict management strategy in Rwanda. Ex-FAR soldiers and rebels now serving in the RDF were deployed near their native communities to help establish trust in the new dispensation among wary locals. The wars in the Congo aided integration, too. Under fire and around the campfires, former enemies forged strong bonds and demystified toxic myths from back home. Within Rwanda, workshops based on the traditional Rwandan concept of *Ingando*—a military encampment or assembly area—were used to instill a sense of national identity and overcome mutual fear and suspicion. *Ingando* was both an ethos and a means for promoting stability, reconciliation, and professionalization within the armed forces.¹⁵ By the late 2000s, the RDF was in the vanguard of peacebuilding. "Heroes at home and abroad,"¹⁶ the soldiers had become an exemplar for reconciliation, helped in no small measure by their growing international reputation: professional, disciplined, and courageous troops. The RDF was called on to contribute peacekeepers and mission commanders to Darfur and Mali.

Justice and Unity

The RPF knew that building cohesion within Rwanda's armed forces—a single institution, part of but also outside society—was going to be easier than in society at large. For decades, hatred of the other had been cultivated by ethno-nationalists through speeches and media. The language of dehumanization reached its apogee at the outbreak of genocide, with the government-allied radio station, RTL, imploring listeners to exterminate the Tutsi *inyenzi* or “cockroaches.”

In common with nation-building everywhere, the RPF promotes a history of (pre- and post-colonial) Rwanda that is partly true and partly imagined. Rwanda's official policy of unity and reconciliation exalts rather than merely emphasizes Rwandan-ness. Laws meant to keep the ethnic genie in the bottle are expansive. Categorizations of “Hutu” and “Tutsi” have been expunged from public life. Strong restrictions have been imposed on how the genocide can be discussed publicly in Rwanda.

Nationwide “de-ethnicization” has taken many forms, most recently the program *Ndi Umunyarwanda*, which means, “I am Rwandan” (not Hutu, Tutsi, or Twa). Consistent with other government initiatives, officially aimed at overcoming tribalism and building a national identity, *Ndi Umunyarwanda* is also about shoring up a single narrative of the country's past, present, and future. Critics say that it only encourages Hutus to apologize to Tutsis, reinforcing the former's social positioning as *généralistes*¹⁷; others suggest that it is a troubling echo of other top-down, de-ethnicization programs: based on the erroneous premise that if “ethnic divisions can be made, they can also be unmade.”¹⁸

Ndi Umunyarwanda was established in 2013, a year after the community-based *Gacaca* courts finished their work. Following the Urugwiro Village discussions, the RPF turned to *Gacaca*—a traditional forum meaning “justice on the grass”—out of practical necessity: no conventional means to hold ordinary Rwandans who committed genocide accountable existed. There were simply too many cases; nearly two million, or about 1 in 5, Rwandans were implicated.¹⁹ The majority of trials ended in convictions, with crimes against property resulting in fines paid to victims or community work; and prison sentences for murder and other serious crimes. At a minimum, masses of isolated Rwandans finally had their pain and frustration recognized.

As with so much else, opinions are divided on Rwanda's mode of devolved justice, which was also meant to promote forgiveness by victims, ownership of guilt by perpetrators, and national reconciliation.²⁰ Its

supporters argue that *Gacaca*, for all its flaws, probably saved Rwanda.²¹ The most tangible benefit of *Gacaca* for many was in simply discovering where their relatives were buried. Its limitations—no legal representation for defendants, a bias toward confessions—were not atypical of other transitional justice mechanisms. But the absence of Tutsis facing trial exposed the government to allegations that *Gacaca* was, ultimately, another vehicle for the RPF to further centralize and consolidate its grip on power, especially in the countryside.

Economic Vision

Rwanda's "Vision 2020" strategy was launched in 2000, another product of the discussions at Urugwiro Village. Unlike most countries' strategic frameworks for their future development, which involve changing course, building on or reversing existing projects, the RPF essentially had a blank slate. The goal—transform post-genocide Rwanda into a middle-income country by 2020—was hugely ambitious for a poor, rural, landlocked country with few natural resources. The Vision 2020 document, and subsequent policies oriented to it, would be critical to building peace and consolidating the RPF's legitimacy.²²

The rhetoric of an investment-friendly, modernizing economy was supported by substantial policy shifts. Rwanda became one of the staunchest advocates of regional integration. In a context where neighbors are most frequently associated with conflict—and tensions flare-up over the intersection of national struggles, as happens often between Rwanda and Uganda or the DRC²³—this can only further peace in the region.

But regionalization has also demanded a fundamental shift in people's minds. The adoption of a new economic identity—tech-savvy, service-oriented, outward-looking, and linked strongly to East Africa—has placed a strain on the rhythms and culture of Rwanda's countryside, historically closed to the outside world. For some time yet, public officials will need to convince local populations that rapid, dislocating economic change will be beneficial to them in the long run.

During his first two terms in office, President Kagame proved exceptionally adept at managing a frequent scourge of one-party dominated states: patrimonial politics. Described by some scholars as "developmental patrimonialism,"²⁴ the RPF's approach has avoided its worst excesses (rampant corruption and inefficiencies) by maintaining internal (party) and external (state) control in ways that permit long-term investments.

Typically, networks exist on short-term gains. Kagame has also shrewdly pushed the mantra of African self-reliance while the government pocketed substantial donor support, on which the first phase of Vision 2020 relied heavily. Their sustained goodwill was based, partly, on sheer performance. Between 2001 and 2015, overall poverty reduced by 19.8 percent while extreme poverty declined by 23.7 percent.²⁵ Rwanda became one of the world's fastest growing economies year on year; the only low-income country in the World Bank's top 30 "easiest places to do business;" and a mini tourism mecca, increasing revenues from visitors from US \$27 million in 2000 to US \$438 million in 2017. Donors also lauded the government on delivery: Rwanda walked the talk on corruption as almost no other aid recipient did. Donors praised the government's seemingly ceaseless attention to accountability, transparency, and efficiency in deploying its scarce resources to key sectors of the economy.

Despite sharp criticisms on human rights and rule-of-law issues, donors have remained largely supportive of the executive's domination of the state apparatus. This is likely to continue, provided the RPF's commitment to building a capable state and its intolerance of corruption—Rwanda now beats the likes of Italy and Greece in Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI)—doesn't wane.²⁶

Women

As is increasingly the case in wars, women suffered disproportionately in the violence of the early 90 s and especially the genocide. It is estimated that between 250,000 and 500,000, mostly Tutsi, women were exposed to some form of gender-based violence, mainly rape. Two-thirds of the raped victims later tested positive for the HIV/AIDS disease.²⁷ In the aftermath of the genocide, women were more numerous—up to 70 percent of the population in parts of the country—due to the higher rates of death, exile, or imprisonment of men. Women's mental health and economic well-being were shattered. Hutu women faced the added burden of being socially excluded and shamed due to their husbands' suspected role in the killings.

A seemingly hopeless situation opened the way for women to play leading roles in repairing a broken society. Without much planning or coordination, at least initially, women began to distribute assistance and relief to communities, mediate and resolve disputes, and advocate for peace. Women increasingly became involved in shaping policy, driving

socio-economic change and even serving as judges on *Gacaca*, once the exclusive preserve of “wise and respected old men” (*inyangamugayo*). The emergence of women in important, non-traditional roles after the genocide stirred and intersected with conversations at the national level. Ideas and experiences were eventually co-opted into the RPF’s policymaking—as a core tenet. Set in Rwanda’s 2003 Constitution, a law requiring that women hold a minimum 30 percent of elected positions would be improved upon in practice in ways that may never have been foreseen. In 2018, 49 women sat in Rwanda’s parliament, which represented 61 percent of total seats—the highest proportion in the world. Four of the seven Supreme Court seats were also held by women.

The centrality of women to all parts of Rwanda’s peacebuilding and post-conflict recovery is distinct in the African context. In doing so, it has accelerated the process of overcoming the entrenched patriarchy once common in Rwanda and still pervasive across the continent.

CONCLUSION

The most striking feature of Rwanda’s peacebuilding journey is also the most obvious: there has been no large-scale violence inside the country since the genocide. More than a quarter of a century of peace—however uneasy—has made possible important advances across society. In assessing whether it can be sustained for the next 25 years, several questions arise.

Popular support for the RPF is, outwardly, very strong. But no one knows where the line between fear, belief, and moral duty lies: how many support the government’s narrative in the name of peace and stability, but nothing more? And how long might that pact survive? Similarly, the balance of opinion suggests that de-ethnicization overall is working²⁸—but how much that is acted out by individuals in society is genuinely felt internally is an open question.²⁹ This is least clear in the countryside, where more than 80 percent of Rwandans live. Interactions between survivors and participants in the genocide are more immediate and personal in rural areas, where unresolved material claims still persist.³⁰ Community-level peace processes have proliferated in the past two decades, though often it is unclear whether they are government-sanctioned or government-initiated. In the country’s increasingly dynamic capital, Kigali, differences are less salient. Improved education and opportunities in the city are resulting in new identities, not necessarily just national ones. And most of Rwanda’s current population of 12 million

were born after the genocide. They live with its legacy. But how has their “inherited trauma” impacted their worldview?

Outcomes in post-conflict settings hinge to a great extent on whether local stakeholders are actively committed to peacebuilding or not. On the face of it, Rwanda is a model on two levels. National government has maintained a firm grip on its reform agenda, based on its own assessment of the country’s needs. High priority is given to relations with donors and partners; they are active in areas where national capacity and resources are lacking, but rarely encroach on state sovereignty. As one scholar described Rwanda’s approach, “Don’t tell us what to do; help us to do what we want to do.”³¹ The second level is local agency. For all the criticism of its muscular, top-down approach, Rwanda has exercised state power in ways that give voice and legitimacy to communities and grassroots movements. *Gacaca* illustrates the scale of Rwanda’s ambition in this regard. Understanding its complex origins and legacy, however, must be part of any lessons gleaned from Rwanda’s successes in local peacebuilding.³²

The changes evident in Rwanda since 1994—in people’s safety and security, in its economy and governance structures—are too substantial to be dismissed as a “veneer of peacebuilding,” as some critics allege. Developments in the Great Lakes region reinforce the point. Chronic insecurity and violence in its southern neighbor, Burundi, whose policies toward its own Hutu–Tutsi divide were once touted as an antidote to Rwanda’s, show no sign of abating. Nor in the DRC, despite the presence of one of the world’s largest UN peacekeeping missions for 20 years and counting. The ruinous impact of official looting and rent-seeking in the wider region attests to another key feature of Rwanda’s peacebuilding trajectory that cannot be minimized: its strong record on corruption.

That is not to say romantic notions of the post-genocide “miracle” ought to go unchallenged. In building peace and a functioning state, the RPF has defied the famous entreaty of Prince Johnson, for a time Liberia’s most powerful rebel leader: “the gun that liberates shall not rule!” Doubtless, Rwandans have asked themselves countless times: can their peacebuilding journey continue without “the leadership that initiated it?”³³ Even if there is a popular consensus which favors stability over a free press and other liberties—a binary choice—the rationalizations for the RPF’s seemingly permanent claim on state power are thinning. More and more, the stifling of political dissent jars with the progress and openness evident in other spheres of Rwandan society.

President Kagame once despaired of his critics: “I have all these names associated with me. Some of which I accept, others which are not fair.

God created me in a very strange way.”³⁴ Of the many complexities in the character of Africa’s most analyzed statesman and the main architect of Rwanda’s post-genocide stability, one bears particular attention going forward: he knows—as well as anyone—that autocracies and dictatorships are almost never removed without bloodshed.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. *Learn from failed transitions from liberation to governance, and reform accordingly.* The RPF has clearly learned from the mistakes of other liberation leaders who have transitioned into power, but more relevant to its current peacebuilding phase would be a systematic examination of failures at the cultural and institutional level of the movements. In a different way, running contemporaneously to post-genocide Rwanda’s journey, South Africa’s democratic path after 1994 from rainbow nation to failing state offers a salutary warning to the RPF. Once the global standard for reconciliation and peacebuilding, the dramatic fall in state capacity and effectiveness in South Africa between 2010 and 2020 has shattered its international reputation, degraded social cohesion, and rendered it incapable of improving public safety (South Africa has the 5th highest murder rate in the world³⁵; and the highest rate of rape).³⁶ During its first decade and a half in power, the ruling liberation party made significant strides in addressing the vast inequities and distortions wrought by colonialism and apartheid, but its failure to change the way it governed is largely to blame for the dramatic backsliding South Africa has experienced in the past ten years. One-party dominance and a pervasive sense of entitlement within the African National Congress (ANC) bred overconfidence in the efficacy of its internal processes and policies—such as cadre deployment rather than merit-based appointment—which have proved ruinous in the context of (attempted) democratic consolidation.
2. *Make “succession” less forbidding by gradually creating more channels for discussion and debate.* The obsession with whether or not President Kagame is grooming a successor intensifies year on year. The risk to stability and growth of a disorderly succession is very high. Rwanda has done much to promote social channels for discourse and redress. A gradual opening up of political channels for

dialogue and power negotiation will help institutions adjust to the prospect of a new leader over time.

3. *Encourage multilateral approaches and solutions for the Great Lakes region.* Sustainable, long-term peace and security in Rwanda is closely linked to the rest of the Great Lakes region, where conflicts feed off and reinforce each other. The actions of the UN and donors in the region have arguably made things worse. Collaborative multilateral solutions led by the regional states are the only hope of managing the displacement of millions of people within countries and across borders, alleviating extreme poverty and the endemic violence communities are exposed to, especially in the region's peripheries.

NOTES

1. Ryszard Kapuscinski, *The Shadow of the Sun: My African Life*, Klara Glowczewska (trans.) (London: Penguin Books, 2001), 165.
2. Roméo Dallaire's response to being appointed by the United Nations in 1993 to command the peacekeeping force of the UN Assistance Mission in Rwanda (UNAMIR), "Rwanda, that's somewhere in Africa, isn't it?," typified Rwanda's relative international obscurity at the time. Interview with Romeo Dallaire, London, August 30, 2005, conducted by the author.
3. Jean Paul Kimonyo, *Transforming Rwanda: Challenges on the Road to Reconstruction* (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2019).
4. Figures at the time of the genocide in 1994.
5. Roméo Dallaire, *Shake Hands with the Devil: The Failure of Humanity in Rwanda* (London: Arrow Books, 2004).
6. See, for instance, Philip Gourevitch, "After the Genocide," *The New Yorker*, December 18, 1995.
7. Kimonyo, *Transforming Rwanda*, 146.
8. Paul Kagame, "Rwanda's Democracy is Still the Model for Africa," *The Financial Times*, August 19, 2010.
9. See Paul Collier, *Wars, Guns and Votes: Democracy in Dangerous Places* (London: Vintage Books, 2010).
10. Bertelsmann Stiftung, *BTI 2018 | Rwanda Country Report*, <https://www.bti-project.org/en/reports/country-reports/detail/itc/RWA/>.
11. See Christopher von Dyck, "DDR and SSR in War-to-Peace Transition," SSR Paper 14 (Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, 2016), <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/ONLINE-DCAF-SSR-14-2016-12-21.pdf>.

12. The figure by 2017 was 70,000. See The World Bank, "New Beginnings for Ex-Combatants in Rwanda," *World Bank report*, January 28, 2019, <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2019/01/28/new-beginnings-for-ex-combatants-in-rwanda>.
13. The World Bank, "New Beginnings."
14. To put DRR into effect, Rwanda established the Rwanda Demobilization and Reintegration Commission (RDRC) in January 1997. Rwandan "ownership" of DDR has been *sine qua non* of all phases of the process. When the international community suspended funding of the DDR scheme in 1997 because of Rwanda's invasion of the DRC, they carried on regardless with their own money. Of the US \$39 million in international assistance promised in the first phase from 1997–2001, just US \$8 million had been received before the donors cut the supply. The following phase, from 2001–2007, has been funded to a total of US \$85 million from various sources, including the World Bank-led Great Lakes Multi-Country Demobilization and Reintegration Programme (MDRP). See Martin Edmonds, Greg Mills, and Terence McNamee, "Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration and Local Ownership in the Great Lakes: The Experience of Rwanda, Burundi, and the Democratic Republic of Congo," *African Security* 2, no. 1 (2009): 29–58.
15. Edmonds, Mills, and McNamee, "Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration," 42–43. The use of *Ingando* camps in wider society has drawn criticism from some scholars who depict them as less nation-building platforms than repressive reeducation facilities, see Sue Thomson, *Whispering Truth to Power: Everyday Resistance to Reconciliation in Post-Genocide Rwanda* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2013); Anna Purdekova, "Rwanda's Ingando Camps: Liminality and the Reproduction of Power," Oxford University Refugee Studies Centre *Working Paper* 80 (2011).
16. Josefine Kuehnelt and Nina Wilén, "Rwanda's Military as a People's Army: Heroes at Home and Abroad," *Journal of Eastern African Studies* 12, no. 1 (2018): 154–171.
17. See Laura Blackie and Nicki Hitchcott, "'I am Rwandan': Unity and Reconciliation in Post-Genocide Rwanda," *Genocide Studies and Prevention: An International Journal* 12, no. 1 (2018): 24–37.
18. Filip Reyntjens, "How Inclusive Is Rwanda's Reconciliation Project?," *Africa in Fact* no. 31 (2019), <https://gga.org/how-inclusive-is-rwandas-reconciliation-project-2/>.
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