

Fairfield University Model United Nations  
High School Conference 2009  
Historical Security Council: Rwandan Genocide  
Background Guide

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to Fairfield University's Model United Nations High School Conference 2009! My name is Jenny Mingus and I will be chairing your committee. As a senior at Fairfield University, I have been able to partake in many activities on campus including such organizations as Students for Social Justice, Dance Ensemble, the Jesuit University Humanitarian Action Network, and Model UN, among others. I participated in Model UN my freshmen and sophomore year before going abroad for my entire junior year. I was fortunate to have been able to study in Prague for one semester and Ghana for one semester this past year. Living in Africa was an experience beyond words and I am pleased to conduct a historical security council based on an event which occurred in an area I am now familiar with. I'm very excited to meet you all and hope you enjoy your experience at Fairfield University. If you have any questions concerning the committee, background guide, or conference please feel free to contact me via email at [jennifer.mingus@student.fairfield.edu](mailto:jennifer.mingus@student.fairfield.edu).

Thank you,  
Jenny Mingus  
Co-President FUMUN

## I. Description of Committee

The Security Council consists of 15 voting members, five of which are permanent and ten non-permanent members who rotate based on alphabetical order. Nations who are not on the Security Council yet effect a given situation may participate in debate though they are not allowed to vote on any actions. Essentially, the Security Council seeks to bring potential or occurring violent events to peaceful resolutions. The Council is able to do this through investigation, mediation, cease-fire directives, economic sanctions, enforcement procedures, as well as the sending of peace-keeping troops to the area of conflict or collective military measures. It is important to note, however, that peace-keeping troops are not allowed to attack or use their weapons on aggressors unless personally assaulted. The Council wants to end hostility as soon as possible, therefore quick decisions and lively debate is necessary to come to action agreements. If a member nation involved in the conflict is preventing peaceful resolutions the Security Council has the power to recommend to the General Assembly that that country lose its rights and privileges as part of the United Nations, thus stripping them of voting and speaking rights.

## II. History of Issue

Like many countries in Africa, Rwanda was under colonial rule until it gained its independence from Belgium in 1962. Before Belgian occupation Rwanda was under German

control until WWI, after which the League of Nations, now known as the United Nations, produced a mandate giving former German occupied lands to Belgium. It is relevant to examine German occupation despite Rwanda's strong ties to their history with Belgium. Surrounding WWI Germany was beginning to form its obsession with race, in turn producing theories and mandates based on the physical differences between Hutu's and Tutsi's. Many have claimed this laid the groundwork for further racial tensions between the two people; indeed, when Belgium started their occupation of Rwanda they continued with many German practices of Hutu-Tutsi separation and class distinction.

During Belgium's period of colonization, the nation became further divided by race with the help of former German influence. Belgian actions thus essentially made the minority population, the Tutsi's, the aristocracy. The majority population, the Hutu's, were therefore made into a lower class entity during the time of colonial rule. Following independence from Belgium, however, the Hutu's, tired of being dominated by Tutsi's, seized control of Rwanda. The result of the Hutu's claim to power was a Tutsi rebel army, called the Rwandan Patriotic Front, which formed throughout neighboring countries as many Tutsi's were compelled to flee after 1962. It was also during this time, in particular during the 1980s, that Tutsi refugees joined the Ugandan resistance movement, known as the Ugandan Bush War. It was not until 1990 that the Tutsi rebels took action against Hutu power in Rwanda.



Wanting to return to their home country and free their fellow people from Hutu persecution and cruelty, the Tutsi rebels invaded Rwanda in order to force the current Hutu President into signing an agreement which would result in an equally shared government between Hutu's and Tutsi's. President Juvenal Habyalimana signed the agreement, in effect sparking further resentment of Hutu's towards Tutsi's. For the next three years the tension between the

two ethnicities grew as Tutsi refugees came back to Rwanda and neighboring countries began experiencing their own ethnic problems. One such problem was the situation in Burundi, where the first popularly elected Hutu president was assassinated in October 1993.

Angered by the death of a Hutu president, violence escalated between Tutsi's and Hutu's in both Burundi and Rwanda, leading to a major outbreak of hostility during which the United Nations decided to become involved. The UN peace-keepers attempted to preserve the cease-fire agreement that had been drawn between the government and the Tutsi rebels, though it was clear the aggression between the two people was not one to be calmed. In 1993 the Arusha Accords were created in order to lessen violence in Rwanda by dwindling the President's power. While the Accords were signed by the Tutsi rebels, the Coalition for the Defense of the Republic, an extremist Hutu organization led by the President, refused to sign the agreement.

The final event which led the beginning of the Rwandan genocide was the assassination of President Juvenal Habyalimana of Rwanda and the new President of Burundi. The two presidents were on a plane that was about to land at the Rwandan airport when it was shot down by missiles. After news spread of the plane crash and the death of their Hutu President, coalitions for Hutu power and civilians alike began the massive killings that would plague Rwanda for years to come. Our simulation begins here, after the UN is notified of the two president's assassination.

### III. Timeline

- 1885 German's are given African land including Rwanda
- 1916 Belgium takes over German lands following WWI
- 1926 Ethnicity cards are created by Belgians for the identification of Tutsi's and Hutu's
- 1959 Following the death of Rwanda's king, Hutu's stage an uprising against Tutsi's
- 1960 Hutu's gain majority in elections
- 1962 Independence from Belgium
- 1973 Habyalimana becomes president; Tutsi's are forced from jobs and schools
- 1986 Rwandan Patriotic Front is formed by refugees in Uganda
- 1990 Violence between Tutsi's and Hutu's
- 1991 March Cease-fire agreement
- 1993 August Arusha Accords; 2,500 UN peace-keeping troops sent to Rwanda
- 1993/1994 Habyalimana delays Arusha Accords and thus hinders peace-keeping efforts
- 1994 April 6 Habyalimana is allegedly killed by Tutsi rebels, the genocide begins

### IV. Statement of Issue

Now that you have a brief history of the Rwandan Genocide leading up to April 6th, 1994, it is your responsibility as members of the UN Security Council to solve this situation. Our simulation will begin with the mindset that the genocide has not occurred and violence may still be avoided if we act fast. Word has already reached you that Hutu rebels have started killing

important government officials, both Tutsi and moderate Hutu's. There has been aggression in Rwanda even before independence from Belgium and the country is currently on the brink of becoming out of control. It is your responsibility to act now, as a representative of your respective country. I urge you to take the time to research what happened after the plane crash to understand how your country would vote, what actions seem appropriate and how best to move on.

## V. Importance of the Issue

Genocide is not a term one uses lightly, therefore it is vital one understands the nature and consequences behind such a situation. What constitutes a genocide? When can one call a war a genocide? These are just a few questions that have been the base of various arguments within and beyond the United Nations. The genocide in Rwanda was an atrocity, one which resulted in the killing of approximately one million people - roughly twenty percent of the entire nations population. This was a very difficult situation for the United Nations, one which tested their ability to resolve a massive outbreak of violence. Such situations you should all be familiar with today having heard and seen the news surrounding the recent genocide in Darfur. To look back upon the timeline of Rwanda, what actions were taken to prevent further violence and the result of those actions, provide you with a knowledge of not only the United Nations but of genocide.

## VI. Questions to Consider

- What diplomatic steps should be taken regarding the assassination of the two presidents?
- Should peace-keeping troops be sent to Rwanda? To Uganda?
- If peace-keeping troops are sent, how many?
- How soon should they be deployed?
- Should the UN call upon foreign military assistance?
- What should happen to victims who flee into neighboring countries?
- Should refugee camps be established?
- What steps does one take in order to secure safe areas for victims of violence?
- How should the Hutu rebels be dealt with?
- What countries should be contacted in order to establish refugee camps and aide?
- What actions should be taken to secure the safety of all foreign citizens in Rwanda?
- How should the evacuation of foreign citizens be organized?
- Is it legitimate to call the situation in Rwanda a genocide?

## VII. Research Ideas

- BBC News Special Reports Archives
- *We Wish to Inform You That Tomorrow We Will Be Killed with Our Families: Stories from Rwanda* by Philip Gourevitch
- Amnesty International website – [www.amnesty.org](http://www.amnesty.org)
- CIA World Fact Book – [www.cia.gov](http://www.cia.gov)
- The Library – there are multiple books concerning the genocide in Rwanda.

## VIII. Bibliography

Gourevitch, Philip. *We Wish to Inform You That Tomorrow We Will Be Killed with Our Families: Stories from Rwanda*. Picador Publishing: New York City, New York. 1999.

Holocaust Memorial Trust: The Legacy of Hope. <http://www.hmd.org.uk/>

Mamdani, Mahmood. *When Victims Become Killers: Colonialism, Nativism, and the Genocide in Rwanda*. Princeton University Press: Princeton, New Jersey. 2002.

Rwanda: The Wake of a Genocide. [www.rwanda-genocide.org](http://www.rwanda-genocide.org)