



EXECUTIVE  
COMMITTEE

## RDR

Rassemblement pour le Retour des Réfugiés et la Démocratie au Rwanda  
Rally for the Return of Refugees and Democracy in Rwanda  
Ihuliro Liharanira Itahuka ry'Impunzi na Demokarasi mu Rwanda

Pour un Peuple Reconcilié dans un Etat de droit - For a Reconciled People in a Rule of Law  
Duharanire Ubwiyunge bw'Abanyarwanda mu Gihugu cyubahiriza Amategeko

### PRESS RELEASE NO. 9/2001

#### RDR CALLS FOR THE PROSECUTION OF CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY AND OTHER VIOLATIONS OF THE INTERNATIONAL LAW COMMITTED BY THE RWANDAN ARMY

On behalf of the oppressed people of Rwanda struggling for justice, democracy and freedom, the Rally for the Return of Refugees and Democracy in Rwanda (RDR) calls on the United Nations and all countries to prosecute the persons responsible for crimes against humanity, war crimes, acts of genocide and other violations of the international law committed by the Rwandan Patriotic Army (RPA) in Rwanda and in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

On the basis of the preliminary report S/1994/1125 of the impartial Commission of Experts, the U.N. Security Council created the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) by its resolution 955 of 8 November 1994. The Commission of Experts concluded in its preliminary report S/1994/1125 and final report S/1994/1405 that " *individuals from both sides to the armed conflict in Rwanda during the period from 6 April 1994 to 15 July 1994 perpetrated serious breaches of international humanitarian law, in particular of obligations set forth in Article 3 common to the four Geneva Conventions and relating to the protection of victims of non-international armed conflicts of 8 June 1977* " and that " *ample evidence indicates that individuals from both sides to the armed conflict perpetrated crimes against humanity* ". The Special Rapporteur of the U.N. Commission on Human Rights on the situation of human rights in Rwanda, Mr. René Degni Segui, identified the then " *Rwandese State authorities* " overthrown by the RPA in July 1994 and the " *RPF organs, particularly those in charge of military operations* " as the perpetrators of those crimes. While the ICTR is being criticized for not having tried enough Hutus responsible for genocide and other crimes against humanity, no single element within the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) or its armed wing, RPA, has yet been indicted or tried.

In its Presidential Statement S/PRST/1998/20 of 13 July 1998, the U.N. Security Council condemned " *the massacres, other atrocities and violations of international humanitarian law committed in Zaire/Democratic Republic of Congo, and especially its eastern provinces, including crimes against humanity and those other violations described in the Report of the Secretary-General's Investigative Team (S/1998/581)* ". More than 200,000 Rwandan Hutu refugees in Eastern and dozen thousands of Congolese civilians had been butchered in cold blood in 1996-1997 by military units of the RPA allied to the forces of the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo (ADFL) which overthrew the dictatorial regime of late President Mobutu in May 1997. The Secretary-General's Investigative Team in DRC had documented only some of these crimes because it was not allowed to carry out its mission fully and without hindrance. The Security Council requested the Governments of the DRC and Rwanda to provide, before 15 October 1998, an initial progress report to the Secretary-General on the steps taken by them to investigate and prosecute those responsible for these massacres, atrocities and violations of international humanitarian law. This deadline had not been met. Until now, no lone military officer or political leader has been punished for the killings of Hutu refugees.

info@rdrwanda.org  
http://www.rdrwanda.org

Victoire Ingabire, Chairperson  
Postbus 3124  
2280 GC, Rijswijk, Netherlands  
Phone/Fax : 00-31-180633822

Emmanuel Nyemera, Vice-Chairman  
P.O. Box 5352, Postal Station B  
Montreal, Canada, H3B 4P1

RDR is member of the  
Union of Democratic  
Rwandese Forces (UDRF)

The policy of appeasement towards the RPF/RPA is responsible for what people refer to now as “The First African World War” taking place in the Great Lakes Region. The continuous prevalence of impunity has encouraged the leaders of the RPF/RPA to perpetrate crimes against humanity, war crimes and acts of genocide in Rwanda and DRC without fear of prosecution. It has consolidated the power and the wealth of criminal elements within the RPF-led dictatorial regime. After the Security Council’s Presidential Statement S/PRST/1998/20 of 13 July 2001, the then Congolese President, H.E. Mr. Laurent Desire Kabila, decided on 27 July 1998 to send back home Rwandan military advisers and ordered all foreign troops out of the Congolese territory. Considering the DRC as their Ali Baba’s cave, Rwandan military advisers refused to leave Congo when ordered to do so. A week later, on 2 August 1998, Rwandan and Ugandan armies invaded the DRC. The report of the Expert Panel on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth in the DRC (S/2001/357) transmitted by the Secretary-General to the President of the Security Council on 12 April 2001 accuses Rwanda, Uganda, Burundi and Congolese rebel groups of plundering DRC’s wealth to finance war and the continuation of grave human rights abuses.

In terms of loss of lives, more than 2.5 million Congolese civilians had died in 33 months since August 1998 according to the mortality study released by the New York-based International Rescue Committee (<http://www.theirc.org/mortality.cfm>) on 8 May 2001. If the cycle of wars and mass killings of civilians is ever to be interrupted in the African Great Lakes region, the democratization of each country in the region and the punishment of all the perpetrators of past and current crimes against humanity, war crimes and genocide committed in Rwanda and DRC, without any discrimination based on their ethnic group, nationality, past or current social, military or political status, are of utmost urgency.

In order to put an end to the culture of impunity plaguing Rwanda and the African Great Lakes region, RDR calls on the U.N. Security Council and General Secretariat:

- ◆ to create an independent commission of inquiry with sufficient resources in order to complete the report of the Secretary General's Investigative Team (S/1998/581) by collecting all relevant information on individual and command responsibilities for the massacres of Rwandan Hutu refugees and other violations of international humanitarian law committed in DRC;

- ◆ to extend the mandate of the already existing International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) in order to prosecute the persons responsible for the crimes against humanity, acts of genocide and other violations of the international law committed in Rwanda and in the DRC after 31 December 1994 or, alternatively, to create an ad hoc International Criminal Tribunal for the DRC.

Done in Montreal on 15 June 2001

For the RDR,

Emmanuel Nyemera, Ph.D.

Vice Chairman

For media inquiries: contact Mr. Eric Bahemba, Commissioner for Information and Documentation, Phone/Fax: 0049 6039 934359 Email: [info@rdrwanda.org](mailto:info@rdrwanda.org).