Components and Solutions of Social Science Research



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chapter

5

UN PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS AND DOMESTIC POLITICS IN RWANDA

Abdullah KAYAR ¹ & Yasin Çağlar KAYA²

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¹ 0000-0002-0755-3930, RA., Karadeniz Technical University, abdullahkayar@ktu.edu.tr ² 0000-0001-9401-4566, RA., Karadeniz Technical University, y.caglarkaya@ktu.edu.tr

Abdullah KAYAR & Yasin Çağlar KAYA

INTRODUCTION

In 1994 Rwandans became the subject of the world's second-largest genocide after the Jewish Holocaust. The distinctive future of this genocide events in Rwanda was that although it took place in a very short time-period; the number of casualties that occurred during this short period was catastrophic. Only in 100 days, 800,000 to 1,000,000 Rwandans were killed, and millions were forced to seek refuge in neighboring states; additionally, thousands were maimed, raped, and tortured (Adekunle, 2007, s. 22). The genocide shouldn't be seen as a mere ethnic violence that occurred between conflicting ethnic groups, but they were committed and supported mainly by state apparatus and wide state propaganda, so for these reasons the genocide can easily be compared with the Holocaust (Hintjens, 2001, s. 41).

International society and the UN did not interfere efficiently with the events and the genocide continued for a violent 100 days. When the UN Mission UNAMIR II arrived in Rwanda the genocide had already been ceased by the internal dynamics of Rwanda (Dallaire, 2005, s. 459). A lot of different reasons can be listed for the indifferent behavior of the international community.

Firstly, UN peacekeeping operations in general will be explained. Then, a brief information about demographic attributes of Rwanda will be discussed. Secondly, historical roots of the ethnic conflict will be explained, and the roots of the conflict will be investigated starting from the pre-colonial period up to the eve of the genocide events. Thirdly, unilateral, and multilateral interventions that have been made in Rwanda will be examined. Finally, the importance of domestic politics in Rwanda where the UN peacekeeping operations are directed will be examined.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF UN PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS

The United Nation Peacekeeping operations began in 1948 in the aftermath of World War-II. The devastating situation of the world in that time had led states to have military power to contain the lawlessness and civil maladministration some of the war-torn countries. Fortunately, collective effort, including peacekeeping operations, were envisaged within the framework of the United Nations to achieve following objectives which are; Ensuring rule of law, Providing assistance to local police and military forces to hold elections, Protecting the civil lives, children, women and other section of the society, and Creating a conducive environment to uphold the human rights of the citizens (UN, 2016).

UN Peacekeeping operation can be defined as "a unique and dynamic instrument developed by the organization as a way to help countries torn by conflict to create the conditions for lasting peace". It can be argued that the abovementioned objectives became the primary and necessary goals soon after the World War-II, but it is also observed that the objectives of the UN Peacekeeping Operations were extended and thus the role of the peacekeeping operations went beyond the concept designed initially (UN, 2019).

The first formal peacekeeping operation was conducted to observe and maintain the ceasefire during the 1948 Arab–Israeli War (Goulding, 1996). However, the UN carried out the peacekeeping operations all over the world increasingly. It is very important to note the fact that the most of the operations took place after 1990. It may be argued that it is not so difficult to understand the reason of the increase in peacekeeping operation after 1990. At this point, the end of the Cold War opened the can of worms. The spread of violence, civil wars, atrocities, and the examples of human right violations in newly established democracies paved the way for the deployment of the UN Peacekeeping missions (Fortna, 2004). In the next chapter, it is aimed to sum up the various reasons of the UN peacekeeping missions in brief.

THE APPARENT REASONS FOR PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS

There are three major grounds for United Nations to carry out peacekeeping operation in the required country. These are consent of the parties, impartiality and non-use of force except in self-defense and defense of the mandate. The operations are carried out with the consent of the main parties, thus preventing the parties to take side in the existing conflict. The missions' goal is to resolve the conflict therefore they should not choose sides and stay impartial at all times. UN Peacekeeping operations are not allowed to use for against any parties. However, it can use for against any threat in cases of self-defense and/or defense of any parties with the permission of the UN Security Council (Sheeran, 2011).

The UN carried out the most of its peacekeeping operations in African, Latin American and Asian countries. The common characteristic of these regions is that they were the subject of colonization for many years. As the legacy of the colonial rule, it may be observed that the weak political structure, autocracy, corruption, poor quality of education system, and poverty contributed to civil strife in these countries (Goulding, 1996).

Despite the common aims of the operations spread to different continents, it can be also noticed that each peacekeeping mission has its specific reasons, conditions, and background. Like in African Countries, culture of lordship in Political Governance were in vogue and administration failed to take into account the developmental path of all communities, tribes and clans (Tarus, 2010).

In the Middle East, the problem was related to ethnic and religious settings. On the other hand, in Latin American Countries, problem was racism and civil violence and maladministration under the influence of USA and its allied forces (Tarus, 2010).

The conflicts between societies of different countries due to geographical locations can also be cause for peacekeeping oeprations (Şahingöz & Tütüncü, 2017: 5).

The various objectives for the peacekeeping operations have already been marked out and the most important thing which has to be looked for is the reason for the application of the peacekeeping operation in any country. An example for the same would give an insight of how the situation was handled due to the peacekeeping operation. Beyond the overall causes which indicate the need for the deployment of the peacekeeping missions, these UN tasks affected and reconstructed the domestic political structure of the subject countries. The case of Congo will be a relevant and prominent example to uncover the effect of the UN peacekeeping operation on the domestic politics.

ETHNIC DIVISION OF RWANDA

Rwanda was a densely populated country even before the genocide, Rwanda's population was around 5.4 million people before the events and today it is estimated that the population of Rwanda is 12.95 million (World Bank, 2022). Unlike other African states, Rwanda doesn't have a wide range of ethnic groups but there are only three major ethnicities living in Rwanda. So, it could be claimed that Rwanda is more homogenous than other African states. These three groups are Twa, Hutu, and Tutsi. Together these three groups comprise about 97 percent of the total population of Rwanda (Blouin & Mukand, 2018: 1014).

The main difference among these ethnic groups can be listed as their general wealth, status in the social hierarchy, and small physical differences. Twa are considered as the autochthonous people of the region. They are pygmies and they are a hunter-gatherer society. They compose about 1 percent of the population. Tutsi are cattle owners, and they are generally claimed to be thin and tall. What distinguished Tutsi from the others was that they were the only group who had the right to own cattle in Rwandan society and this surely made them privileged. Hutu, on the other hand were farmers and rather than Tutsi they are told to be shorter and described as "square". The arrival of these ethnicities on Rwandan soil is also what differentiates these ethnic groups. As aforementioned, Twa are considered as the indigenous people of Rwanda. Hutu are considered to have arrived in Rwanda in 1000 A.D. Tutsi are considered to arrive in Rwanda between the 15th and 16th centuries from Uganda and because of their experience in warfare they easily captured Rwanda and they gained wealth, political control and prestige till the end of the Abanyiginya Dynasty (Adekunle, 2007: 4-5). In Pre-Colonial times this classification had been made by social status rather than ethnic origins. So, Rwanda had similarities to the caste system; Tutsi were at the top of the social hierarchy and Twa were at the bottom of the pyramid. These castes were not absolute, and one could easily excel its social status and become a member of the higher status groups. It can be said that before the colonial period of Rwanda, a Hutu could become a Tutsi if they gained wealth -which was generally measured by cattle ownership-, political power or prestige (Hintjens, 2001: 28). Intermarriage was also common in these societies, especially between the Hutu and the Tutsi (Adekunle, 2007: 15). But according to some authors like Goyvaerts and Hintjens, this distinction has no grounds as there is no evidence for the later coming of Tutsi in the region and additionally, there is no evidence for them being separate and distinct people (Hintjens, 2001: 29).

Society was partly a semi-feudal society, and they lived together in harmony before the colonial era. In this semi-feudal society, there was a cliental relationship developed between Tutsi and Hutu. Twa generally were excluded from this economic and socio-political relationship. This cliental relationship worked harmoniously because it was based on consent and in willingness and castes were not absolute for a Tutsi or a Hutu (Renny, 1972: 33). This social structure continued until the arrival of the colonial powers.

HISTORICAL ROOTS OF THE ETHNIC CONFLICT

Rwandan society was harmonious until the arrival of the Western great powers. When they came to Rwanda at the end of the 19th Century, they faced a centralized, hierarchical Kingdom with class distinctions. The Rwandan Kingdom held nearly all parts of the current Rwandan soil except the Northeastern part of today's country. (Newbury, 1998: 10). German explorer Count Von Gotzen was the first European who arrived in Rwanda in 1894. Two years later German occupation began, and a military post was established in 1899. Rwanda and today's Burundi were colonized and the Rwanda-Urundi colony was established under German-East Africa. During World War I, Rwanda was given to Belgians in 1916 and the whole Rwanda-Urundi colony were given to Belgium by the League of Nations in 1922 (Adekunle, 2007: xv).

White colonists admired the tall, thin pastoralists who were scattered all over East Africa. They developed a theory that the Tutsi who ruled East Africa were Hamitic descendants, and they were not African. They were manifesting their destiny to rule the Bantus in East Africa (Hintjens, 2001: 29). This racial theory and legitimation of the Tutsi as rulers of Rwanda sharpened the caste system in the society. Ascending to a higher caste or "becoming a Tutsi" became impossible. To assess and strengthen their rule, they allied with the "Hamitic" Tutsis and they deposed the Hutu elites in the ruling class. They put an end to the voluntarist and consentbased client relationship; from then on Hutu have not had the right to abandon their lord and work for some other lord in other parts of the Kingdom (Jefremovas, 1997: 96). Belgians favored Tutsi more than Germans. Tutsi become the chiefs of all Hutu and Hutu were forced to heavy labor. Between 1933 and 1934 Belgians established some reforms and started to give the natives identity cards that showed who was a Tutsi, a Hutu, or a Twa. They decided who belongs in which ethnic group based on how much cattle they owned. People who owned more than 10 cattle were recognized as Tutsi. This deepened the already existing ethnic division of people, and one would inherit his father's ethnicity without his/her mother's ethnicity taken into account. This practice continued until the post-genocide administration (Magnarella, 2005: 808). According to Prunier these identity cards divided the nation deeply and gave everyone a subnational identity, however, in precolonial times marriages and tribal bonds were important. These identity cards and factitious distinctions were seen as "races" in the minds of the people. These identity cards played a great role in the upcoming genocide and decisions about who was going to be killed were given by these identity cards. (Prunier, 1995: 45-46).

Hutu began to be seen as secondary citizens and their attendance at school and achieving primary education were limited drastically. They were excluded from the high-level positions in the administration of the country. Twa were discriminated against even more severely than the Hutu as they couldn't access any types of social service and they were excluded from administrative positions (Newbury, 1998: 11).

After WWII, decolonization of Rwanda became certain like everywhere in Africa. Before decolonization, western powers pressured Belgians for reforms in Rwanda. Belgians did several reforms between 1949 and 1954 but they were only on paper, and it did not improve the livelihood of Hutu and Twa whatsoever (Jefremovas, 1997: 96). Improvement of the rights of the Hutu only took place after the late 1950s when the independence of Rwanda became certain and after the date of independence targeted in 1962 (Magnarella, 2005: 809).

1990s violent events weren't the first-time violence occurred in Rwanda. With the internalization of identity cards, Tutsi superiority and the idea that Tutsi were colonial foreigners in Rwanda canalized all the colonial hatred towards the Tutsi population and not Belgians (Hintjens, 2001: 32). In 1954 "ubuhake", the cattle-based social structure was abolished. In 1959 the Monarch died because of mysterious reasons, and afterwards between 1959 and 1962 the Rwandan Revolution took place. During the Revolution, for the first time ever Tutsi people were killed in masses without considering their social status or wealth. Surprisingly, most of the refugees and casualties of the Revolution were unwealthy Tutsis. This was the first systematic act of violence that happened in Rwanda which targeted the civilians as well. (Van Der Mereen, 1996) After gaining independence, all administrations in Rwanda used the problems between Hutu and the Tutsi for their own sake (Hintjens, 2001: 33).

Before the Revolution in 1957, Grégoire Kayibanda established the Mouvement Social Muhutu (Hutu Social Movement, MSM), which was later renamed Parti du Mouvement de l'Emancipation Hutu (PARMEHUTU), a political party that fought for Rwandan independence and increase of Hutu rights. In 1959 conservative Tutsi formed the Rwandese National Union (UNAR). In 1960 PARMEHUTU abolished the Monarchy and declared the Rwandan republic and independence. Kayibanda became the first prime minister of Rwanda. In 1962 Belgium granted independence and Kayibanda remained in power until the 1973 coup (Adekunle, 2007: 19).

In 1973 200,000 Hutus were killed in Burundi and as a response the Rwandan government began killing Tutsi in Rwanda. During these events, Kayibanda's popularity declined even more and in 1973 with the support of the moderate Hutu, Juvenal Habyarimana made a bloodless coup. Habyarimana stayed in power until his death in 1994. During the 70s and 80s skirmishes between Hutu and Tutsi occurred in the neighboring regions and the image of Tutsi and Hutu hostility was deepened (Hintjens, 2001: 33).

Habyarimana's regime was one of the most oppressive regimes in Africa. He implemented quotas in all the civil services. Hutu and especially Habyarimana's fellow countryman Northeastern Hutus were given privileges (Gatwa, 1995: 18-20). Established in Uganda in 1987, RPF attempted to invade Rwanda with the aim of overthrowing Habyarimana; the invasion made returning to Rwanda possible for exiled Tutsi. This civil war continued until the genocide. Habyarimana was in a difficult position to maintain its power because of the civil war and other different crisis (Kellow & Steeves, 2006: 114). In 1991 he introduced a new constitution and formed a transitional government which had a Tutsi prime minister, but when he turned the country into a single-party state in 1992, protests broke in Kigali. The relatives of Habyarimana and his wife which formed the AKAZU declared a "zero networks" goal which meant that there should be zero Tutsi in Rwanda because they were held responsible for every problem Rwanda was facing. The AKAZU consisted of the most radical Hutu. Interahamwe supported by AKAZU which consists of Hutu extremist militias was also established during this period in Kigali for mainly defending Kigali during the civil war (Wallis, 2018: 46). During the protests Habyarimana had to end the civil war and parties -RPF and Habyarimana- came together and reached an agreement called Arusha Peace Accords (Magnarella, 2005: 814-816). AKAZU and another extremist party CDR (Coalition pour la Défense de la République) were excluded from the power-sharing arrangements both in administration and in the army. That is why with their media organs they started to produce propaganda against the RPF, Tutsi, and moderate Hutu who supported the agreement. Tutsi and moderate Hutu started to be viewed as the source of every failure of the Rwandan System and socio-economic conditions. Cleansing these evils became the civil duty of all Hutu (Hintjens, 2001: 35-37).

The genocide started when a plane crashed on 6 April 1994 while Juvenal Habriyamana and Burundi's president Cyprien Ntaryamira were on board. Plain was shot down and RPF was held responsible for the assassination of the two Hutu presidents. With this assassination and combined with all the ethnic hatred that was already prevalent in the society, mass killings and genocidal actions began in Rwanda mainly by Interahamwe. Between April and July 1994 800,000 to 1,000,000 Tutsi and moderate Hutu were killed, and thousands were maimed, raped, and millions forced to seek refuge in Burundi, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zaire. Radio broadcasts were used extensively during the genocide, called Tutsi cockroaches, and promised Hutu who killed Tutsi with land, money, property of the dead, and sometimes a couple of beer (Adekunle, 2007: 22; Hintjens, 2001: 39-40).

PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS IN RWANDA

Peacekeeping operations started after the second world war, and there have been numerous operations since then. However, with the rise of humanitarian concerns in international society in 1900s, a new form of intervention called "humanitarian intervention" surfaced. The concepts of Peacekeeping operations and humanitarian intervention can be mingled. Therefore, the beginning of this chapter, we will briefly define humanitarian intervention. Humanitarian intervention has two main aspects in its definition, firstly it must be an armed intervention or a threat of armed intervention and secondly it has to occur because of humanitarian concerns, and thirdly it should be carried out under a coalition of states, or by a unilateral state in the territory of a third state. (Ludlow, 1999).

During the conflict started from 1990 to 1994. Rwanda witnessed a couple of different forms of intervention from the outside. This intervention had been made both by unilateral practices of different states and by the international society mainly from the UN.

In 1990 with the RPF's invasion of Rwanda, three different states Belgium, Zaire, and France deployed forces in Rwanda. Belgium and France deployed forces to Rwanda to protect its citizens and nationals from the violent atrocities. Zaire's only aim was to support Habyarimana's regime. All these interventions were asked by the Rwandan government (Jones, 1995: 230). Thus, none of these interventions can be considered as humanitarian interventions.

First military intervention was deployed by the UN under the authorization of the UN Security Council Resolution 873. As a result of this resolution, UNAMIR (UN Assistance Mission in Rwanda) was established. The mission was to support the transitional government and to make sure that the agreement which concluded in Arusha was implemented (UN, 2022). These peacekeeping forces were also welcomed by the government of Rwanda and conflicting parties. This intervention was a classic peace-keeping mission made by the UN (Jones, 1995). During the genocidal events, these forces were present in Kigali, and they were even attacked by Interahamwe forces while protecting Prime Minister Agathe Uwilingiyimana and as a result ten of the Belgian UNAMIR soldiers were killed. Belgium proposed empowering the UNAMIR and enabling its forces to intervene militarily but when this idea was opposed, they decided to abandon the UNAMIR forces (Prunier, 1995: 234). UNAMIR Force commander General Romeo Dallaire requested reinforcements, but it was rejected by the UN, and they were ordered to evacuate Rwanda in two weeks on 9 April 1994 and decrease the number of UNAMIR forces in Rwanda to 450 (Dallaire, 2005: 220). On 21 April 1994 UNSC adopted Resolution 912 which extended the mandate of UNAMIR and emphasized its role in mediating the conflict (UN, 2022).

The second intervention took place by France unilaterally. Later this operation gained authorization from the Security Council. For "Operation Turquoise" France deployed 2500 troops supported with 500 Senegal forces. With these troops France built a French zone in the southwest of Rwanda and RPF's advance was blocked by these troops. Even though this operation started and was designed as humanitarian intervention under UN Charter Chapter VII operation quickly turned out as an operation to secure French interests in the Great Lakes regions (Jones, 1995: 231).

All these aforementioned interventions from the international community can't be considered humanitarian interventions because all these interventions had been made by different means. The first three interventions were made for protecting a small group in Rwanda or in the case of the Zaire's intervention the only aim was to protect the existing regime. The UN Mission UNAMIR was a peace-keeping mission that was evacuated when the genocide started. French intervention was made because of protecting French interests and blocking the progress of RPF. It can be said that the international community acted upon the nonintervention principle except for France which only pursued its own interest but no humanitarian means.

On 13 May 1994 UN Security Council took another decision and established the UNAMIR II mission under Resolution 918. UNAMIR II consisted of 5500 men, and it was authorized under Chapter VII and expanded the duties of UNAMIR (Prunier, 1995: 276). Because of the tardy deployment of the troops UNAMIR II forces arrived after the genocide (Kuperman, 2001: 84). General Dallaire stated that there was an opportunity to prevent the genocide for about two weeks, but the international community had failed to respond to the crisis in the timespan it needed to respond.

Genocide ended when the RPF forces under Kagame entered Kigali and drove Interahamwe forces and forced civilian Hutu into refuge in Zaire. While this was processing -even though it wasn't accepted by the RPF or Kagame- thousands of civilian Hutus were also killed (Dallaire, 2005: 459). According to General Dallaire, the reason for the success of RPF is because government forces were so concentrated on committing a genocide than defending the capital (Dallaire, 2005: 451). Kagame has accused the West because of its failure to stop the genocide and even accused France of helping the people who were committing the genocide during "Operation Turquiose" (Kuperman, 2001: 106).

It is clear that international society and the miniature attempts of peacekeeping operations have failed in Rwanda. Only in 100 days, 800,000

to 1,000,000 Rwandans were killed. Rwandan genocide lay the moral failure and opened the concepts of sovereignty, peacekeeping operations, and humanitarian intervention to debate. This process leads up to the evolution of the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) principle in 2001 by International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS) (Widmaier & Glanville, 2015: 368).

DOMESTIC POLITICS AND PEACEKEEPING MISSIONS

Even though, the UN intervened in Rwanda with UNAMIR and UNAMIR II, it was too late. The damage was already done, and thousands of people died violently. The aim of Peacekeeping missions is to intervene in order to stop the killing and end the violence from taking place if possible. Peacekeeping Missions which were held in different continent and geopolitical regions, under different political regimes, would be considered different in nature but there are various points in respect of national political situation of the respective countries are common such as; Every Peacekeeping mission started in the existing politically turmoil background, there were various political groups in those countries wanting to capture power, the outside influence of might forces of the world disintegrated the task of peacekeeping mission, though the mandate to restore the democratic and political rehabilitation was given to mission but mission either failed to take into account or subverted during the operation, the political imbalance and tentativeness in national political reconciliation remained undecided even after completion of mission or made grimmer than ever (Sadiki, 2016).

First, UN missions should never lose sight of their political context into which they are deployed. The first duty of UN leadership is to understand these limitations and to work with their bilateral and multilateral partners to reshape these political confines. If these parameters cannot be changed, or the host party refuses to grant the mission a significant political role in shaping the peace process, the UN should think carefully about how it engages and, if needed, withdraw its forces altogether (Krasno et al., 2016).

This has led to absence of understanding of the victim country's cultural, political, and social background. This is somewhat imposition of solution in any country (Ledgerwood, 1994). The Colonial history and hatred for most of the coalition forces under UN Peacekeeping Mission had restricted its achievement and made fewer positive effects in Indigenous politics.

CONCLUSION

"The world is ruled by a belief that will permit other genocides. The superpowers had no interest in you, they were only interested in Yugoslavia. Thousands upon thousands of soldiers were sent there, and here I barely had 450. The guiding principle was that in Rwanda its tribalism, its history repeating itself. In Yugoslavia, it's different...It's ethnic cleansing. It's European security. It's white. Rwanda is black. It's in the middle of Africa. It has no strategic value. And all that's there, they told me, are people, and there are too many anyway." (Wallis, 2014: 11).

Due to the devastating wars between the different groups, the human rights could not be paid heed and that is when these peace keeping agreements had to be formed in order to safeguard the basic human rights of the people as these are fundamental in nature and are the inalienable rights. Whether it was Rwanda or somewhere else, the peacekeeping missions in these countries were employed for the purpose of handling the political conditions in each country. These UN peacekeeping operations were employed for the purpose of enhancing the lives of the people. Sustainable development was one of the main reasons for which these missions were brought into picture.

Despite of several efforts the success of the Peacekeeping missions could not be achieved. There are many reasons due to which proper remedies could not be worked out. Firstly, the lack of understanding in the people of those regions and their resistance towards these missions has been one of the reasons due to which the goals could not be achieved.

Secondly, the unwillingness of the states in intervention is another stepback for the success of peacekeeping operations. For General Dallaire, main reason for this was Rwanda wasn't an important country. The other explanation for non-intervention is because the Rwandan Genocide happened shortly after the Somalian Civil War which caused the death of 10 US soldiers and therefore the US was unwilling to intervene militarily in another intrastate conflict (Prunier, 1995: 274). Whatever the reason was, Rwandan Genocide shows the deficiency of peacekeeping operations and opens it to debate (Widmaier & Glanville, 2015: 368).

Also, the inadequate research about the political, social and cultural situation of the destination of the country further aggravated problems. The UN Peacekeeping Mission could not bring any solutions to the problems related to the internal conflicts in the country. Therefore, due to the various reasons that have been mentioned above led to the failure of the UN peacekeeping mission in Rwanda.

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