

NINE VOICES THAT NOBODY WILL BE ABLE TO SILENCE
Crimes of genocide in Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo lead to
40 international arrest warrants that will mark a historical turning point.

Shortly before being tortured and murdered along with five other colleagues, Catalanian missionary Joaquim Vallmajo was slapped in the face by Colonel Rwahama Jackson Mutabazi who spat at him “You’ll never be able to squeak report on anything again, Vallmajo.” Yet far from being silenced, the missionary’s voice resounds even louder today. Quim was the first Spanish victim, but all of them had become inconvenient witnesses of the systematic mass crimes against Hutu civilians perpetrated by the political military honchos of the RPF (Rwandan Patriotic Front) who now rule Rwanda. Vallmajo’s death, thus, is directly linked to information. More specifically, it has to do with the challenging of the official version about the events in Rwanda in the last decade of the 20th century. The official version, which has managed to prevail in international public opinion, is not the whole story, though: it reduces everything to the huge massacres from April-June 1994 perpetrated by Hutu extremists and decried as genocide. It is also a distorted rendering of the facts, since it depicts as noble liberators of that 1994 genocide the very same people who had themselves committed crimes *before*, *during* and *after* the April-June genocide in 1994 both in Rwanda as in the D.R. of Congo—a fact that has led to charging them with genocide and now issuing arrest warrants against them.

The RPF has spared no efforts to conceal the truth, and has drowned it brutally in blood. Sooner or later, though, it will come out into the open with all its detail. Quim’s denunciations were accurate and disturbing. It is no wonder, then, that the RPF has focused one of its main aims on eliminating precisely the missionaries who had been living the longest in Rwanda, or on forcing these incorruptible witnesses of Rwanda’s historical reality to leave the country. In several letters he wrote to his friends in Figueres, Quim begged them to denounce the RPF “invaders” who were seeking to grab power at any cost, or who “have started a disinformation campaign to make people believe the victims are the executioners and the executioners, the victims.” To make matters worse, three days before his abduction, while in his parish house, Quim had no choice but to listen to the screeching cries, grenade explosions and rattle of sub-machine guns piercing the air during the midnight massacre of some 2,500 Hutu peasants locked up inside the Byumba stadium nearby.

The four Marian brothers who were accompanying hundreds of thousands of Hutu on their exodus towards the hinterlands of former Zaire, were in turn, according to General Kayumba Nyamwasa, “disturbing the operatives in Congo.” They were not only witnesses taking part in the people’s flight and sharing their fright, but they had also managed to relay the tragedy of the plight live to a Spanish radio station. Likewise, even though they had only been in Rwanda for a short time, the three members of Médicos del Mundo had learned of some big massacres such as those in Kabere or Nyakinama. The Sevillian doctor Manuel Madrazo had

called his family two days before his murder and asked them to help him leave Rwanda since he and others had just witnessed “something real serious.” Flors Sirera, the nurse from Manresa, even managed to report the situation to a Rwandan radio, a move that left her with great unease. As in Quim’s case, another missionary, the Basque Isidro Uzcudun, who had always stood up to challenge all excesses publicly and forcefully, was executed with a symbolic shot to the mouth.

The investigative proceedings ordered by Judge Fernando Andreu, judge of the Spanish National Court’s Juzgado Central de Instrucción nº 4 (pre-trial examining court) have confirmed and even broadened with great detail the scope of the criminal acts disclosed by the International Forum for Truth and Justice in Africa of the Great Lakes Region in its lawsuit filed on February 22, 2005.

Our fellow countrymen’s courage and prescience of mind have allowed us to learn about the RPF’s rigid, hierarchical chain of command and its alleged responsibility for three major and closely interrelated types of crime: those perpetrated against 9 exceptional Spanish nationals; crimes against Rwandans and Congolese (crimes either targeted against specific leaders or carried out systematically as mass murders of hundreds of thousands of civilians); and thirdly, systematic and large-scale pillage. Former rebel and now President Paul Kagame stood at the vertex of it all, micro-managing every single move and making everyone shudder with fear. The great number of testimonies all agree with each other: Kagame repeatedly orders “screening”- the internal code standing for “indiscriminate extermination.” Extermination of thousands of unarmed civilians – in Byumba, Ruhengeri, Kigali, Gitarama, Kibuye, Gisenyi, Cyangugu, Goma... Only in the case of the three bishops, the various clergymen and nuns - murdered in Kabgayi alongside a numerous crowd of civilians - did he phrase it differently: “Get rid of that trash.”

The judge has received a huge amount of information. Just to cite an example we can mention the fact that a former high-ranking official of the Secret Service got to provide a detailed account of the names and location of 173 graves where the RPA/RPF had buried tens of thousands of corpses in less than a year. In addition, several tens of thousands others were incinerated, for example, in the jungle of Nyungwe, in Akagera Park, or thrown into the river. Other expert witnesses have explained, for instance, how the rural Hutu population had been completely exterminated in several municipalities in the north since late 1990. Around 10,000 people died in a massacre in the municipality of Nyakiamana alone, where the three Spaniards from Médicos del Mundo unfortunately visited its University Campus shortly before being murdered in 1997. Villages which Tutsi from Uganda occupied subsequently. Yet not only the magnitude of these crimes is shocking but also the depravity of the methods used to reach power. Indeed, testimonies agree in confirming that the RPF intended to gain absolute power. They didn’t want to share it, not even with its allied parties: the MDR, mostly Hutu, the PL, mostly Tutsi, and the PSD. As a minority, the RPF would have never

been able to gain total power through the ballots – they could only achieve this through chaos and violence.

Killing as many Hutu as possible aimed not only at achieving a thorough ethnic cleansing, but also sought to fan the ethnic hatred towards the Tutsi, thus allowing an extremist group like the RPF to emerge as the heroic savior of the people of its own ethnic group. At the same time, it also turned into an untenable position the stance of those moderate leaders from both ethnic groups who continued to advocate negotiations. The RPF's plan, however, also comprised another set of interrelated goals that were just as perverse and had been devised to blast the Arusha Agreements which raised well-founded hopes for peace. By so doing, they set to drive the country into a dynamics of chaos and war that they intended to win. Among these other goals: the assassination of Hutu and Tutsi leaders, including leaders of opposition parties (such as Emmanuel Gapysi's and Felicien Gatabazi's), and blaming it on President Habyarimana's government (these murders were allegedly planned and carried out by, among others, Lieutenant Colonel Karake Karenzi, current Deputy Commander of the UN's peacekeeping forces in Darfur); the assassination of Habyarimana himself, the only person able to stand for and maintain a minimum level of order and consensus in the country; after the president's assassination, allowing or not hindering the massacres of Tutsis to take place in the hinterlands by deliberately assigning its troops to other tasks; and all along, managing to get Washington to not intervene. The RPF succeeded in accomplishing all these goals – a fact now well substantiated by evidence.

The RPF did not just intend to regain control of the idyllic Rwanda which they had always felt entitled to govern, according to their ancestral feudal system of values, symbols and beliefs. Another major goal spurred them on: the valuable resources in neighboring Zaire. The crimes of systematic pillage of coltan, diamonds, gold, etc., were carried out after the extermination of hundreds of thousands of fleeing Hutu civilians – all of this by command of Paul Kagame and army chief in Zaire James Karabebe – and while the population of that neighboring country was – as it continues to be – decimated. The crimes of pillage are so outrageously blatant and large-scale that ample proof and evidence exist in this regard. The U.N, manipulated by the U.S. and dozens of multinational mining companies, has played a dismal role in this conflict and its involvement regarding everything concerning the UNHCR has been particularly deplorable. This Agency, acting against its own mandate and the Gersony report (which investigated safety and security in Rwanda and reported crimes against at least 30,000 people alone in 3 prefectures from July-October 1994) forced Hutu refugees in Zaire to return to Rwanda, all along knowing full well that forcing them to return would mean the disappearance, imprisonment or violent death of the very refugees it sought to protect. Even though the U.S. (Deputy Prudence Bushnell) Assistant (George Moose) Secretary of State for African Affairs and the General Director of USAID offered the RPF to embargo that report if they would stop the killings, the fact is that this report is still suppressed by the UN and the killings did not stop in

Rwanda and still continue in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Another shady matter is this organization's role concerning the transport of weapons, hidden amidst the aid food supplies, and their delivery to the attackers with whom they maintained close ties.

A staggering contrast indeed: on the one hand, the scope of the crimes and the iniquity of their methods; and on the other, a level of disinformation so widespread worldwide that it has become almost impossible for any common individual to learn about, grasp and accept a reality which is both disturbing and "inexistent." These international arrest warrants, however, may represent a historical turning point – especially because they describe as perpetrators of genocide those people who have until now considered themselves to be the sole victims and sole liberators of what they claimed to be the only genocide that ever took place.

Sure enough, this gang of ruthless alleged perpetrators of mass crimes continues to enjoy too much military and law enforcement power. Sure enough, their mafia-like ties to dozens of multinational giants have given them untouchable status. Sure enough, too many US-led democratic governments keep providing this gang with great political and diplomatic support and people of the likes of Tony Blair keep serving as their consultants. Yet things have changed now. Those mighty international powers will, to say the least, be exposed if they don't cut ties with those people who have been their watchdogs in that region. Carla del Ponte, Chief Prosecutor for the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, was removed from her position as soon as she tried to bring charges against just one of those 40 alleged terrorists on active service. Judge Fernando Andreu, acting with his trademark integrity and professionalism, has now marked a historical turning point: with his well-founded Decision, victors are being prosecuted for international crimes – the first time ever this happens in history.

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