

**The Rwandan Political Opposition In Exile:
A Valid Interlocutor Vis-à-vis Kigali?**

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Abstract

Post-genocide Rwanda has been trapped in a situation of armed peace. Paul Kagame has used repressive state machinery to rule over the entire political space. The opposition has either been eliminated or forced into exile, leaving the regime politically and intellectually unchallenged in the interior.

A wave of defections began in 1995. Hutu personalities outside Rwanda were making efforts to form an opposition. Among them were elements linked to the genocide. The government, therefore, branded the opposition genocidal, accused it of being ethnic-based and called it an invalid interlocutor.

A second wave of defections that began in 2000 changed the face of the political opposition in exile. Tutsi personalities, among them genocide survivors, began to flee Rwanda. This opened the way for inter-ethnic cooperation, making it difficult for the government to continue to accuse the opposition of being genocidal or divisionist. The Rwandan problem could consequently be re-defined as political, rather than ethnic.

The political diaspora has mainly taken the path of pressure politics through the international community, calling for an inclusive inter-Rwandese dialogue. The alternative path— military intervention— has so far been avoided. However, following his crushing victory in the Presidential elections of August 2003, Kagame was able to claim that there is no opposition to the Rwandan regime. Kigali's persistence to shut the opposition out of the Rwandan political scene has led to radicalisation. The presence of armed opposition groups in the Great Lakes region increases the possibility of a military confrontation. Certain movements among the opposition in exile are in a position to check the armed forces if Kigali appears ready to negotiate.

Résumé

Le Rwanda, depuis le génocide, est dans une situation de paix armée. Paul Kagame a utilisé l'appareil étatique d'une manière répressive afin de dominer l'entièreté de l'espace politique. L'opposition a été soit éliminée, soit forcée à l'exil, de telle façon que le régime est politiquement et intellectuellement sans rival.

Une première vague de défections a lieu en 1995. Des personnalités hutu ont, à l'extérieur du pays, essayé de former une opposition. Parmi eux se trouvaient alors des personnes liées au génocide. Le gouvernement a pu dès lors facilement vouer aux gémonies cette opposition «génocidaire» et il l'a accusé d'avoir un projet ethnique et de ne pas être un interlocuteur valable.

Une seconde vague de défections, qui a commencé en 2000, a donné une nouvelle dimension à l'opposition en exil. Des personnalités tutsi, et notamment des rescapés du génocide, ont commencé à fuir le Rwanda. Cela a favorisé la coopération entre les deux ethnies et a rendu difficile au gouvernement d'accuser l'opposition d'être «génocidaire» ou divisionniste. Le problème rwandais a dès lors été reformulé en termes politiques plutôt qu'ethniques.

La diaspora politique a choisi la voie de pressions à travers la communauté internationale. Jusqu'à maintenant, l'opposition n'a pas versé dans l'alternative que constitue une intervention militaire. Toutefois, après sa victoire écrasante aux élections présidentielles en août 2003, Kagame a pu proclamer qu'il n'y a pas d'opposition au régime rwandais. L'obstination de Kigali de s'ouvrir au dialogue avec l'opposition a conduit à la radicalisation de celle-ci. La présence de groupes armés opposés au régime dans la région des grands lacs renforce la possibilité d'une issue militaire. Des mouvements de l'opposition en exil sont en position de contrôler ces forces armées au cas où Kigali serait prêt à négocier.

Preface

I would like to thank Rene Lemarchand for introducing me to Rwandan politics, Bernard Leloup for putting me on the right track to start my research and Filip Reyntjens for helping me put all the information together.

I especially want to thank my sister, Christina, for her support throughout my studies.

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Introduction

Post-genocide Rwanda has been characterised by militarisation, polarisation and ethnic exclusion. Paul Kagame and his political party, the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), have pre-empted the opposition space and have reigned supreme over the entire country. The RPF has utilised the legacy of the genocide to consolidate its grip on Rwanda. In the name of “security”, militarisation and tight surveillance of public liberties prevail. In the name of “unity”, pre-1994 political figures are held back by the threat of impeachment for being “sectarian” and “divisive”. The country has fallen prey to an authoritarian mode of governance, where no disagreement with or criticism of the regime is permitted. The resulting “brain drain” that saw the flight of Hutu and Tutsi public figures has transferred the opposition from the Rwandan interior into exile.

This paper sets out to delineate the political opposition movements in exile from 1994 to date. The central point at issue is whether the political diaspora has evolved into a credible opposition that is prepared to reconcile Rwandans and set in motion the process of real democratisation in the country. The main body of the paper is organised into four sections. The first section briefly looks at the ascendance of the RPF following the genocide, which has gradually driven the opposition out of the country. The RPF set about restructuring the social fabric of Rwanda and soon emerged as the sole power. Disaffection was growing, even among Kagame’s own ethnic group, the Tutsi. The relations of Rwanda with the Democratic Republic of the Congo and with Uganda are also touched on, due to the role the two countries have played in the emergence and evolution of the Rwandan opposition movements. The first Rwandan opposition movement in exile was born on Congolese territory and Hutu rebel factions can still be found there. Uganda hosted Tutsi, especially army deserters, who were fleeing Rwanda. Seeing that justice is one of the main concerns of the political opposition, this section ends with a brief view of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda and the Rwandan system of justice.

Having set the background, the second section explores the first wave of defections. From 1995 onwards, Hutu personalities outside Rwanda were making efforts to form an opposition. Among them were elements linked to the genocide. The government, thus, branded the opposition genocidal and accused it of being ethnic-based in order to discredit it. A second wave of defections that began in 2000 changed the face of the opposition. Tutsi, among them the group that the regime’s tight security purportedly aimed to protect, i.e. genocide survivors, began to take the road to exile. The third section of the paper, therefore, investigates the formation of the new groups and alliances that followed. The fourth section deals with the latest developments concerning the Rwandan political diaspora. Problems have risen as a result of the 2003 Presidential elections and due to attempts to dismantle the largest existing platform in favour of a new organisation. Elite factions are vy-

ing for the leadership of the opposition, while in Rwanda Kagame crushed his rivals in the elections on 25th August 2003. Emerging as the unmatched leader, Kagame was able to claim that there is no opposition to the regime. The concluding section seeks to evaluate the opposition, trying to discern if it can be considered “valid” by Kigali, thus agreeing to dialogue. A consultation procedure that was set up at the end of 2002 offers the best potential avenue for pressure politics. The question of an armed intervention, resulting from increasing polarisation, is being raised in view of the latest developments. Kigali’s persistence to keep the Rwandan elite out of the country’s affairs increases such a possibility.

This paper is a result of research conducted between July and November 2003. The study is mainly based on interviews with members of the Rwandan political opposition movements in exile and certain other informants, as well as on declarations and press releases of the movements and on written reports on Rwanda. The interviews were conducted in Belgium, for the main part, and in the Netherlands. Interviews were also made by telephone with officials who are based in the US. E-mail exchange was another frequent method of communication with the various informants.

There were limitations to the research, as the members of the political movements have vested interests in voicing their points of view. On the other hand, informants who are not affiliated to a political organisation provided invaluable information. Sometimes the informants were in disagreement with printed information sources and at times it was impossible to know which of the sources was correct.

1. Background to a continuing crisis

Following the cataclysmic events of 1994 that saw the extermination of around 800.000 Tutsi and Hutu opponents of the Habyarimana regime, the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) crushed the genocidal government in mid-July and emerged as the “victor” of a war that had begun when it invaded Rwanda in October 1990.¹ The defeated government fled to the neighbouring countries, with more than one million ethnic Hutu Rwandans, in fear for their lives. With the motto “*Never Again*”² the RPF set about reconstructing Rwanda purportedly in such a way as to safeguard the well-being of the Tutsi minority, while “reconciling” the divided nation.

1.1. The Consolidation of the RPF in Rwanda

In July 1994 a broad-based Government of National Unity was established in accordance with the 1993 Arusha Accords. The RPF was to share power with the Democratic Republican Movement (MDR) and the smaller Social Democratic Party (PSD) and the Liberal Party (PL). Pasteur

¹ The civil war and the events leading to the 1994 genocide have been well documented in a multitude of sources, such as Prunier, G.: *The Rwanda Crisis 1959-1994: History of a Genocide* (1995); and Des Forges, A.: *Leave None To Tell The Story* (1999).

² This referred to the genocide. The RPF asserted that it would make sure that genocidal forces would never again threaten the Tutsi minority, but used such moral justification to check public liberties.

Bizimungu, a Hutu RPF member, was the first President of post-genocide Rwanda. MDR member Faustin Twagiramungu, who had been the champion of the Arusha Accords before the genocide, became Prime Minister and RPF General Paul Kagame became Vice-President and Minister of National Defence. The National Revolutionary Movement for Development (MRND) and the Coalition for the Defence of the Republic (CDR) were outlawed by an amendment of the Arusha Accords in November 1994, due to their leading role in the genocide.

Pluralism soon proved to be just a façade for RPF authoritarian rule. The transitional government was reshuffled and it eventually revealed the concentration of power in the hands of the RPF, which was itself a tool in the hands of Paul Kagame and his *akazu*.³ The first cracks in the Government of National Unity appeared in 1995 when Prime Minister Faustin Twagiramungu began to criticise the government for failing to comply with the Arusha Accords on power sharing. In August Twagiramungu was forced to resign and he took the path of exile, where he formed an opposition movement to the RPF-led government. The wave of defections had begun. Pierre Célestin Rwigema, another MDR Hutu, replaced Twagiramungu. He would eventually suffer the same fate as his predecessor. A gradual purge of all rival elements was taking place, reaching its peak in April 2000, when Kagame became President of the Republic. Between February and May 1999 sixteen deputies in the Transitional National Assembly (TNA) either resigned or were expelled. In the meantime, the political transition period that was to be concluded in June 1999 was extended by a further four years with the agreement of all major political parties. By the beginning of the year 2000 the state was immersed in a profound political crisis. The speaker of the TNA, Joseph Sebarenzi, was forced to resign, followed by the Prime Minister⁴ and six Ministers. The government was re-organised and in March 2000, displeased with the new state of affairs, President Bizimungu also resigned, leaving Kagame as interim President and the sole “survivor” of the original government. On 17th April 2000 the legislature elected Kagame President. Kagame had long dominated the country without being the front figure but in 2000 he emerged as the real authority.⁵

Yet Kagame did not stop there. The RPF has expanded its hold over the entire political space of Rwanda. It has co-opted existing political entities and politicians can only remain on the public scene by complying with the RPF; political parties are nothing more than window-dressing. The government is spinning more and more into a tyrannical mode of governance. The Rwandan Patriotic Army (RPA) and the security services execute the whims of Kagame. The political landscape has become highly militarised and smear campaigns accuse government critics of “corruption” and “embezzlement.” Arbitrary arrests, assassinations, “disappearances” and intimidation of political opponents are widespread. Journalists who dare to criticise the RPF are subject to police control,

³ Akazu, literally meaning “little house”, had referred to the previous President Juvénal Habyarimana’s close circle. Kagame now has his own akazu, which has infiltrated all spheres of Rwandan society.

⁴ Another Hutu, Bernard Makuza, replaced Célestin Rwigema. Makuza was the Ambassador of Rwanda in Germany. Although he also belonged to the MDR, he did not have the popular support that Rwigema did and so posed no threat to Kagame.

⁵ For more details on the internal situation in Rwanda and the shuffling of power; see Reyntjens, F.: “Rwanda. Evolution Politique en 1996-1997”, “Evolution Politique au Rwanda et au Burundi, 1997-1998”, “Evolution Politique au Rwanda et au Burundi, 1998-1999”, “Chronique Politique du Rwanda et du Burundi, 1999-2000”, “Chronique Politique du Rwanda et du Burundi, 2000-2001”, “Chronique Politique du Rwanda et du Burundi, 2001-2002”, and “Chronique Politique du Rwanda et du Burundi, 2002-2003”, in *L’Afrique des Grands Lacs. Annuaire 1996-1997 / 1997-1998 / 1998-1999 / 1999-2000 / 2000-2001 / 2001-2002 / 2002-2003*

resulting in a muffled press.⁶ Journals that continue to exist have become the mouthpiece of the RPF, accusing people that the government wishes to vilify, while the Rwandan Information Agency (ARI) is subservient to Kagame's party, having changed stakeholders and Board of Directors in 2000.⁷ Consensual democracy has in effect been equated with consensus to the RPF. The government uses the pretext of the need for "security" and "unity" as well as a fight against "divisionism"⁸ and against "ethnically-based projects" to undermine democracy. In the name of "unity" there can be no criticism or opposition. Instead the opposition has been forced into exile; it can only exist *outside* Rwanda.

Discontent is growing in the population. Ethnic exclusion continues in Rwanda, which has been "Tutsified" at all but the government level. At this level a semblance of pluralism and "national unity" continue to exist; Hutu politicians who comply with the RPF line are "involved" in politics. However, exclusion has taken a new form. *Within* the Tutsi community it is the returnees from Uganda who hold the positions of power. Military promotions, jobs in the administration and private business are taken by the "Ugandan" Tutsi. The repatriated francophone diaspora is increasingly becoming disaffected with playing second fiddle to the Anglophones. The genocide survivors are also vexed with the Tutsi-led government that has marginalized them and treats them as "second-class" citizens.⁹ Foreign aid is not reaching the widows and orphans of the genocide.¹⁰ Many genocide survivors have also fled the country.

Since May 2003 Kagame has enhanced the RPF's and his own power through a new Constitution that was approved in a national referendum by the overwhelming majority of the population.¹¹ With the new constitution, the importance of political parties has dwindled even further. A Forum of Political Parties dominated by the RPF can intervene in internal matters of a party, allowing the RPF to suppress organised political dissent. Public meetings are forbidden, political parties are prohibited from grassroots political activity and they must align their views on major issues, while a National Electoral Commission (NAC) screens candidates, leaving little space for an alternation of power.¹²

1.2. The External "Threat": Relations with the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Uganda

The flight of the genocidal government and Hutu refugees from Rwanda saw a spillover of Rwandan problems into the eastern Congo, where refugee camps were set up. The anti-Tutsi ideologues were able to regroup in the camps from where they were allegedly preparing an invasion of Rwanda. In view of the pending security threat, the RPA invaded Zaire at the end of 1996 with the three-pronged aim of crushing the genocidal elements found in the refugee camps, ensuring the safety of the Kivu Tutsi and ousting Mobu-

⁶ See Human Rights Watch: "Rwanda: The Search for Security and Human Rights Abuses", Human Rights Watch, Vol. 12, No. 1 (A), (New York, April 2000); and Amnesty International: "Rwanda: Political Opposition Repressed", Amnesty International Worldwide Appeal, (London, April 2003)

⁷ ICG: "Rwanda at the End of the Transition: A Necessary Political Liberalisation", ICG Africa Report No.53, (Nairobi/Brussels, 13th November 2002), p.15

⁸ "Divisionism" entails the double genocide discourse, which claims that the RPF had sought to eliminate the Hutu, just as the Hutu extremists had attempted to exterminate the Tutsi, playing down the genocide. It even entails divergence from the government line. See Human Rights Watch: "Preparing for Elections: Tightening Control in the Name of Unity", Human Rights Watch Briefing Paper, (New York, May 2003), p.6

⁹ Reyntjens: (1997), p. 45

¹⁰ Human Rights Watch: World Report 2001: Rwanda, (New York, 2002)

¹¹ BBC News/Africa: "New Era Looms in Rwanda", (London, 27th May 2003)

¹² See Human Rights Watch: (May 2003) and ICG: (November 2002)

tu Sese Seko, thus promoting democracy in the country. With Uganda and Laurent Kabila's Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire (ADFL) at its side, Rwanda embarked on a war against Zaire. In a "search and destroy operation"¹³ the RPA attacked Hutu refugee camps and unleashed a murderous retaliation against hundreds of thousands civilians in the process. 600.000 refugees, among them elements of the former Rwandan Armed Forces (FAR) and the *Interahamwe* militias, were then forcibly repatriated. Some 30.000 ex-FAR/*Interahamwe* infiltrated the northwest of Rwanda.¹⁴ The manhunt continued until the fall of 1997. In the meantime Mobutu was overthrown in May, at which time Zaire was renamed the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

With Laurent Kabila at the head of the DRC, Rwanda was able to continue exerting influence in the Congo. Congolese Tutsi and even Rwandans held positions in the new government and the Congolese Armed Forces (FAC). However, the Rwandan presence was a millstone round Kabila's neck, as the Congolese population was growing increasingly resentful of foreign intervention in their country. By mid-July 1998 relations between Kagame and Kabila had reached the lowest point when the Rwandan Chief of Staff of the FAC was replaced.¹⁵ In the meantime, Kabila had allegedly contacted and armed Hutu rebels operating in the DRC.¹⁶ A second war began again as an extension of the Rwandan civil war. In unison with Uganda¹⁷ and supporting a rebel insurgency against Kabila, mainly with the Congolese Rally for Democracy (RCD), Rwanda again invaded the Congo on the pretext of a threat to its security. The fact that the RPA did not limit its offensive to the Kivus, but stretched it into the mineral-rich provinces of Katanga and Kasai indicates that security was not the main concern of Kigali. By 1999 Rwanda was also at odds with Uganda. The RCD had split into two factions, each siding with either of the two former allies, who subsequently fought on several occasions for the control of Kisangani.¹⁸

Rwanda came to face two enemies in the region, both of whom it suspected of supporting the opposition that was fleeing Rwanda. With growing anti-RPF resentment in Rwanda, many opponents of the regime, mostly RPA defectors, were seeking refuge in Uganda.¹⁹ This did not augur well for the tense relations of the two countries.²⁰ The continued presence of Hutu armed factions in the DRC, on the other hand, has given to the RPF the pretext to maintain troops on Congolese territory and to continue to loot its resources.

¹³ Lemarchand, R. & Niwese, M.: "Mass Murder, the Politics of Memory and Post-Genocide Reconstruction: The Cases of Rwanda and Burundi", (Unpublished Paper, March 2003)

¹⁴ In May 1997 and continuing well into 1998, the infiltrators led an insurgency in the northwestern provinces of Gisenyi and Ruhengeri, where Hutu extremist ideology had originated. Tutsi genocide survivors were killed and the regime played on Tutsi fears of a so-called "plan to complete the genocide". A Hutu movement, the Rwanda Liberation Army (ALiR), was acknowledged as the perpetrator. The insurgents were pushed back into the Congo from where they launched small-scale attacks at the end of 1999 and again in 2001. The RPA was able to suppress these, killing thousands of civilians in the process. The regime once again employed the need for "security" to justify its crimes but also to justify its presence in the Congo. For more information on the insurgencies, see African Rights: "Rwanda: The Insurgency in the Northwest", (24th September 1998); and Reyntjens: (1999, 2000 and 2001)

¹⁵ Longman, T.: "The complex Reasons for Rwanda's Engagement in the Congo", in John F. Clark (ed.), *The African Stakes of the Congo War*, (Florida, 2002), p. 138

¹⁶ Interview made in Charleroi, 9th August 2003. The source does not wish to be disclosed.

¹⁷ Uganda was trying to fend off its own rebels who were based in the DRC.

¹⁸ ICG: (November 2002), p. 2

¹⁹ A number of Tutsi RPA officers began to flee to Uganda in 1999 from where many sought refuge in other countries. (Telephone communication with Jean Baptiste Mberabahizi). Also see ICG: (November 2002), pp. 2-3

²⁰ For more information on the deteriorating relations between Rwanda and Uganda, see Reyntjens: (2000 and 2001)

1.3. Is Justice for All Rwandans?

The United Nations Security Council established the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) by Resolution 955 of 1994 in order to investigate the genocide, war crimes and other crimes against humanity.²¹ Notwithstanding the fact that the ICTR was mandated to investigate crimes committed by all sides in Rwanda, the tribunal has so far limited its indictments and prosecutions to *génocidaires*. The chief prosecutor, Carla del Ponte, had stated that she would indict RPA members for violations of international humanitarian law, but such indictments never came about.²² Kigali has persistently failed to provide Del Ponte with documents that she had requested²³, but members of the opposition in exile, including former officials of the RPF-led government, have given evidence to the ICTR concerning RPF crimes during the civil war. Their efforts were of no avail.²⁴ Kigali has hampered witnesses from travelling to Arusha in fear of demands for such documents, causing the suspension of three genocide trials. The Rwandan government asserts that *national* courts will deal with RPA soldiers and that the ICTR should limit itself to the genocide. To date, few RPA soldiers have been tried and even fewer have been convicted in Rwandan military courts. Those who were convicted received very light sentences.²⁵

The Rwandan system of justice is also problematic. It has been marred by persistent delays of the genocide trials and an extremely high number of Hutu have been cramped in prisons for years, waiting for trial. To speed up the process, the government decided to adapt the traditional *gacaca* proceedings to the genocide trials but they are flawed. By tradition *gacaca* only dealt with small disputes between family members, different families, or all inhabitants of a hill, not criminal cases.²⁶ The “judges” who are overseeing the procedures have been poorly trained, many prisoners have no files and to the indignation of the Hutu population, the tribunals do not hear RPA crimes but *only* Hutu are charged, as they are genocide trials.

A tainted system of justice and the impunity enjoyed by the RPF, against a backdrop of continued crimes by the regime in the interior and in the DRC, may have resulted in a regression to ethnic identity dominating other identities. The victims of RPF and RPA crimes cannot seek justice in Rwanda, because the perpetrators are in control of the entire social and political space of the country. They have similarly been unable to do so *outside* of Rwanda. The International Criminal Tribunal has failed to respect its mandate to prosecute all culprits. It has only charged Hutu genocidal elements, leading to the impression that the Tutsi were the only victims of crimes committed in Rwanda.

²¹ Human Rights Watch: “UNSC: Do not Undermine Rwanda Tribunal”, Human Rights Watch Media Alert, (New York, 7th August 2003)

²² Del Ponte’s mandate expired on the 14th September 2003. Although she requested that she would continue to be the chief prosecutor for Rwanda, the Security Council did not renew her mandate, but replaced her with Hassan Bubcar Jallow. See IRIN News: “Jallow confirmed as ICTR prosecutor, replacing Del Ponte”, (Nairobi, 5th September 2003).

²³ Human Rights Watch: “Rwanda: Deliver Justice for Victims of Both Sides”, (New York, 12th August 2002)

²⁴ Interview with Jean de Dieu Tulikumana made in Brussels, 1st August 2003. In June 1996 the Democratic Forces for Resistance (see section II: The Political Opposition In Exile: The First Wave) provided lists of people massacred by the RPA in Gitarama. Similarly, other opposition movements in exile had contacted the prosecutor in The Hague, but the information they provided was essentially disregarded (interviews with François Nzabahimana made in Brussels, 8th August 2003, and with Victoire Ingabire Umuhoza made in Rotterdam, 12th August 2003).

²⁵ Human Rights Watch: (August 2003)

²⁶ Reyntjens, F. & Vandeginste, S.: “Traditional Approaches to Negotiation and Mediation. Burundi, Rwanda and Congo”, in L. Reyhler & T. Paffenholz (ed.), *Peace-Building. A Field Guide*, (Colorado and London, 2001), p. 129

2. The Political Opposition in Exile: the First Wave

2.1. The “Government in Exile”; Creation of the RDR

The defeated Habyarimana government that had fled in July 1994 was mainly concentrated in the Kivu areas of what was then eastern Zaire. The “government in exile”, represented by Jean Kambanda, was able to regroup in Bukavu in November 1994. It was made up of seven ministers from Juvénal Habyarimana’s MRND, three from the MDR and a minister of the PL, and set up an opposition movement whose principal objective was to fight its way back to Rwanda. Some months later, in April 1995, the Rally for the Return of Refugees (RDR) was created in Mugunga, North Kivu under the presidency of François Nzabahimana. Its main objective reflected that of the “government in exile” and included the repatriation of Hutu refugees. The very first opposition movement to the new regime was, thus, a militant organisation, set up in the harsh conditions of the refugee camps, bent on seizing back power.

The RDR was founded by a group of civilians. Yet the negative elements associated with the genocide, namely the former Rwandan Armed Forces (FAR) and youth militias, known as *Interahamwe*, soon joined their ranks,²⁷ giving the RDR its military tinge. Human Rights Watch has reported on how the ex-FAR was able to rebuild its military infrastructure in the refugee camps and to recruit new members for the new cause— a plan to invade Rwanda and defeat the new regime. The ideology of “Hutu Power”²⁸ was, therefore, transferred to eastern Zaire where Mobutu Sese Seko himself lent support to the ex-FAR. The armed wing of the RDR raised a force of between 50.000 and 70.000, under the leadership of ex-FAR generals, such as Augustin Bizimungu and Gratién Kabiligi.²⁹

In October 1996 the RPF launched an attack on the refugee camps, in an effort to crush any trace of opposition and the remaining elements of the ex-FAR. In the process it massacred hundreds of thousands of unarmed civilians, dissolved the refugee camps and forced some 600.000 refugees, among them ex-FAR, to return to Rwanda. This attack signalled the failure of the RDR mission to represent the Hutu refugees. The organisation could no longer operate as a pressure group. Moreover, it was significantly weakened as many of its leaders were massacred in the raid³⁰, while others were dispersed in the region. Soon after, the biggest RDR office, that of Nairobi, ceased to operate on account of security reasons and the organisation realised the need to change outlook; it was to become a *political* organisation. Although the re-organisation of the RDR was not swift, the need to first deal with the governance issue before the refugee question became the new RDR credo.³¹ This change created an ideological rupture in the ranks of the RDR. The ex-FAR and *Interahamwe* still wanted to wage war, whereas the civilian leadership preferred to take a political route, using a network of diplomacy and international pressure. Europe, specifically the Netherlands, became host to the main

²⁷ Interviews with François Nzabahimana and with Victoire Ingabire Umuhoya. When the RDR was created, its leaders received a letter of support from many people in the refugee community, including ex-FAR and *Interahamwe*, asking to join the movement.

²⁸ Hutu extremist ideology

²⁹ Human Rights Watch: “Rwanda/ Zaire: Rearming with Impunity. International Support for the Perpetrators of the Rwandan Genocide”, Human Rights Watch Arms Project Report, Vol. 7, No. 4, (New York, May 1995). Bonaventure Hakizimana, former RDR member and now member of the FDLR (see *infra*), also maintains that the RDR had a potent military branch in the refugee camps (interview with Bonaventure Hakizimana made in Utrecht, 12th August 2003).

³⁰ Interview with François Nzabahimana

³¹ *Ibid.*

RDR headquarters, while Germany and Canada accommodated information centres and Senegal and Togo hosted the new Africa offices. With this departure from prior strategy, a number of extremists left to form ALiR and later the FDLR.³²

³²Interview with Victoire Ingabire Umuhoza

While the RDR was aiming to change its stance, a group from Côte d'Ivoire issued a declaration in the name of the organisation, echoing a revisionist stand, that there had been no genocide in Rwanda, but only in eastern Zaire by the RPF. The Nairobi Committee was quick to dissociate the RDR from this.³³

³³ Interview with Victoire Ingabire Umuhoza and e-mail exchange with Charles Ndereyehe

2.2. The West Harbours Rwandan Political Refugees

In the meantime, in Europe, mainly in Brussels, other political movements began to spring. In November 1994 former Prime Minister Dismas Nsengiyaremye tried to launch a social movement in Paris. The Rwandan Democratic Union (UDR) never quite took off the ground, though. Some months later, in June 1995 Nsengiyaremye joined forces with James Gasana and Joseph Ndahimana to form the movement *Rwanda Pour Tous*³⁴ (RPT).³⁵ In March 1996 Faustin Twagiramungu and the former Minister of the Interior, Seth Sendashonga, formed the Democratic Forces for Resistance (FRD).³⁶

³⁴ I.e. "Rwanda for All"

³⁵ Interview with Joseph Ndahimana made in Brussels, 21st August 2003

Rwanda Pour Tous enjoyed the support of Belgian and Dutch NGOs, because of the presence of Nkiko Nsengimana, Gaspard Karemera, Monique Mujawamariya and Tatien Musabyimana – all civil society personalities. Despite its name and ideology of being inclusive of all Rwandans, RPT was composed solely of Hutu. The political opposition movements in exile were still at a fledgling stage and it was too early to approach the Tutsi, as the wounds of the genocide were still fresh. The life span of the RPT was extremely short, not surpassing a year. The ensuing arrival of other personalities from Rwandan public life would open the way for new movements.

³⁶ Interview made in Brussels, 6th August 2003. The source does not wish to be disclosed. Also see Reynjens: (1997), p.49

The Democratic Forces for Resistance was formed on the idea of gathering a plurality of forces to form a credible and effective opposition. Its founding members were "moderate" Hutus³⁷ who enjoyed national and international respect for having taken a strong stand against the genocide. Seth Sendashonga had virulently expressed his discontent with RPF crimes against humanity as Minister of the Interior and was very popular in Rwanda. Other members of the organisation include Jean de Dieu Tulikumana, a Hutu opposition survivor of the genocide³⁸ and more recently, Tutsi have joined the party. The issue of justice ranked high among the priorities of the FRD. The party offered evidence to the ICTR on RPF massacres in the Gitarama region in April 1994, but has so far had little response.³⁹

³⁷ The term came to apply to non-advocates of "Hutu power" extremism, but many see it as a derogatory term that implies that Hutu are extremist, save for some "moderates".

³⁸ Tulikumana was in the Ministers' and high-ranked officials' quarter of Kimihurura in Kigali, where the killings had begun in April 1994.

³⁹ Interview with Jean de Dieu Tulikumana

The organisation was based in Brussels and Nairobi, where the Europe and Africa sections were found under the leadership of Faustin Twagiramun-

gu and Seth Sendashonga respectively. The FRD was comprised of people who left direct from the Kigali regime. The leadership question was thus a significant issue in the movement. Neither Twagiramungu nor Sendashonga held the position of President, in order to avoid any clash. Instead, Eugène Ndahayo has been the President since 1997.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ Interview made in Brussels, 6th August 2003.

The strategy of the FRD excludes military intervention, owing to the importance of Rwandan reconstruction on the FRD agenda. It chose to follow the route of exerting pressure on the international community to pressurise and isolate Kigali in its turn to agree to a political opening.

2.3. Alliances and Rifts

The end of 1996 saw a gesture of political opening, as the parties in exile began to make attempts to co-ordinate so as to “rise” to the level of a “valid negotiator”.⁴¹ The rapprochement began with the coming together of the FRD, UDR and RPT at a meeting in Antwerp on 7th November 1996, which concluded with a joint communiqué.⁴² The RDR had not been able to attend the Antwerp meeting but began to work with the FRD in Nairobi, where Seth Sendashonga and the then main headquarters of the RDR were based, and in Brussels. In 1997 the bulk of the political organisations in exile came together in Europe.

⁴¹ On 16th March 1998 an RPF Member of Parliament, Tito Rutaremara, outrightly rejected the idea of negotiating with opposition movements. He claimed that “all anti-RPF movements are genocidal movements” and, as such, non-valid. See Reyntjens: (1998), p. 82.

⁴² Ndahayo, E.: *Débâillonner le Rwanda. Pour un nouveau pacte social*, (Paris, 2003), p. 160

During 1998 there was a process of renewal of the RDR. A new cadre was sought out and in August the “new” RDR was launched at a conference held in Paris, in an attempt to surface as a more politically credible and responsible party. As mentioned above, whereas the old RDR had to a significant extent been dominated by the military with troops based in the DRC, in 1998 the RDR embarked upon a task of purification, by dissociating itself from the genocide. As such, there was a change of guard, with Charles Ndereyehe taking over the Presidency from François Nzabanimana, along with other changes in the party’s *ostensible* leadership.⁴³

⁴³ Charles Ndereyehe had been in Italy since 1993 and could not be associated with the génocidaires. Likewise, the current President of the RDR, Victoire Ingabire Umuhiza, was studying in the Netherlands during the genocide, whereas François Nzabanimana had been a member of Habyarimana’s government.

⁴⁴ Interview made in Brussels, 6th August 2003

In view of this change, the FRD invited the RDR and the other existing political groups in exile to form an alliance.⁴⁴ It approached the reflection group Initiative Group for Dialogue (GID), and two monarchist parties, the Rwandan National Liberation Movement (RNLM) and the National Union of Rwanda (UNAR), in order to form an alliance, hence reinforcing the voice of the opposition in exile. The RNLM and UNAR offered a new element to the political opposition, as they were seen to represent Tutsi concerns.⁴⁵ Their presence merely made consensus all the more difficult because of their monarchist ideology, but also because of their mistrust of the RDR and its links to the ex-FAR. A “Common Declaration of the Democratic Opposition of Rwanda” was issued in September 1998 but it was merely initialled, not signed, by the participating parties.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ UNAR and the RNLM were present in Europe from the 1960s when the monarchy was abolished. In essence they comprised the family of the former King Kigeri V and a close circle of his friends. RNLM was mainly operating in Scandinavian countries. Today they still exist but are not in effect operational.

⁴⁶ Interview made in Brussels, 6th August 2003. Also see Reyntjens: (1999)

Concomitant of the “Common Declaration” was a project to launch the Union of Rwandan Democratic Forces (UFDR). This alliance was put in force on 21st September 1998 in Brussels. UNAR and RNLM had only half-heartedly taken part in the “Common Declaration” and were soon deciding not to join the alliance. A major incentive to concoct such a union had been the presence of Seth Sendashonga. However, Seth Sendashonga had been assassinated in Nairobi in May 1998 by the Kigali regime. Sendashonga’s popularity inside and outside Rwanda but also his knowledge of the events surrounding the shooting down of the aeroplane of former President Habyarimana meant that he posed a grave threat to Kagame.⁴⁷ With his elimination from the political scene, the monarchists decided to abandon the alliance.

It would appear that Sendashonga was the balancing figure in the FRD and the UFDR, as a number of FRD sceptics had also wavered in their support of the UFDR after the assassination. They left the FRD in September and created a competing platform— the African Democratic Congress (CDA) on 25th September 1998 in Brussels. The former RPT members James Gasana, Dismas Nsengiyaremye and Nkiko Nsengimana joined FRD “defectors” Jean Baptiste Mberabahizi, Jean Marie Vianney Nkezabera and Jean Marie Nkuriyigoma, all from moderate Rwandan parties. The organisation aimed to be “Pan-African”, stemming from a belief that Rwanda’s problems emanate from regional problems. They adhered to a regional political structure, which was adamantly opposed to ethnic discrimination.⁴⁸ Nevertheless, the fact that the CDA was formed and operated in exile and was only composed of Rwandans rendered its name and aspiration slightly deceptive. The CDA was a social democratic movement whose political programme revolved around the principles of decentralisation, consensual democracy and public and individual freedom.

The UFDR aligned the RDR and the FRD in a common political programme. Although the two parties are compatible, they mostly functioned as autonomous organisations within the alliance. They have a difference in strategy and tactics, which renders the task of co-ordination somewhat difficult.⁴⁹ Nonetheless, the two parties need one another for credibility in view of the other’s nature. The FRD’s support base is limited, whereas that of the RDR is extensive owing to its representation of the refugee community. The FRD was not only more moderate from the outset, but also includes some Tutsi in its ranks, such as its Vice-President, Emmanuel Muhire, whereas the RDR is fundamentally a Hutu movement, predominantly from the north. A close look at the RDR Executive Committee reveals that all members are ethnically Hutu.

From 1998 until 2002 Faustin Twagiramungu held the Presidency of the UFDR. The old guard of the RDR that had remained in the movement did not take this well, because of his leading role in the Rwandan opposition to Juvénal Habyarimana’s government and his position in the moderate section of the MDR.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ Before the assassination of President Habyarimana Seth Sendashonga had met with Theoneste Lizinde and Paul Kagame, warning them that such a move would ignite a massacre of the Rwandan people. Kagame allegedly replied that in such a case they would “re-populate” Rwanda. (Interview made in Charleroi, 9th August 2003). In February 1996 a Rwandan diplomat in Nairobi, François Mugabe, had attempted to murder Sendashonga, but was never prosecuted by the Rwandan state.

⁴⁸ Interview with Jean Baptiste Mberabahizi made in Brussels, 27th July 2003

⁴⁹ Interview with Victoire Ingabire Umuhoza

⁵⁰ Interview made in Brussels, 6th August 2003. Also confirmed by Charles Ndereyehe. Some members of the RDR were sceptical of Twagiramungu’s sincerity, as they felt that he had played a role in the RPF’s ascendance to power in Rwanda and they accused Twagiramungu’s government of having included people on the *génocidaires* list only to harass and bedevil them.

The political programme of the UFDR follows those of the RDR and the FRD, which are very similar. It primarily entails justice and the fight against the impunity of the RPF, the question of the role of the army and the need to establish a set of institutions that will guarantee internal security and peace.

In 2000 another small organisation emerged by a group of former MDR members in the Benelux countries, including former RDR members, who felt that the movement had betrayed its original ideology. Fulgence Ryezembere, Marie Natuze and Aloys Simpunga brought the Rwandan Democratic Union (URD) to life but its presence on the political opposition in exile scene bore little impact.⁵¹

⁵¹ Interview with Jean Marie Vianney Nkezabera made in Brussels, 20th August 2003

2.4. Monarchists Alarm Kigali

In January 1997 a group of petitioners called on the former *mwami* Kigeri V to assume the role of mediator so as to reconcile Rwandans. The petitioners thought that by taking refuge in the past and in Rwandan tradition they could seek a route to unity through the king, whose role had traditionally been a unifying one. They called upon Kigeri not to return as king but merely to play the role of mediator between Rwandans. The petitioners came from all over Rwanda and abroad but Joseph Ndahimana signed the petition. Various monarchists, including Kigeri's family that had been in Europe since 1961, turned to Ndahimana. A small group of monarchists began to meet informally in Brussels, pondering on the idea. They called on other monarchists in Europe and the US to organise *Rwanda Notre Avenir*.⁵² A seminar was organised in Brussels on 16th-18th July 1999 and the association came to life as a medium to organise the seminar. Following the seminar, *Rwanda Notre Avenir* continued to function and set up a committee, in which the presence of the old royal family was strong. However, the idea behind the movement was in many ways archaic, falling back to the idea of an *absolute* monarchy. It was mainly the Tutsi close to the royal family who had adhered to such an idea.⁵³

⁵² I.e. "Rwanda Our Future"

⁵³ Interview with Joseph Ndahimana

The bi-ethnic support of the monarchist movement alarmed the RPF. A significant proportion of monarchists are found in the RPF, mainly stemming from those who followed Kigeri V into exile and their descendants. Before the RPF gained power, those in exile had been told that the Rwandan people would be given a choice between republicanism and monarchy by referendum, but talk of the monarchy is still "profane" in Rwanda. Kagame is apprehensive of a loss of power to Kigeri and so the issue remains off limits. Kagame has, in fact, belied the extremist propaganda of "Tutsi reactionaries trying to install a Hima Empire" in the Great Lakes region.⁵⁴ Hutu support for the monarchy was all the more disquieting for Kagame. In the face of the July seminar, Kagame had sent the chief of the External Service Organisation (ESO), Patrick Karegeya, twice to Belgium to look into the initiative.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ After the October 1990 invasion on Rwanda the media was flooded with propaganda that the RPF had a feudalist "Tutsi colonisation" plan for the Great Lakes of Africa. See Kirschke, L.: *Broadcasting Genocide. Censorship, Propaganda and State-Sponsored Violence in Rwanda 1990-1994*, (Article XIX, International Centre Against Censorship, London, October 1996)

⁵⁵ Reyntjens: (2000), p. 119

2.5. Politicisation of the Armed Opposition

With the diplomatic failure of the RDR and its change of objective, a myriad of former RDR combatants continued to fight mainly in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. With the destruction of the refugee camps many fighters were dispersed around Congo-Brazzaville, Angola, the Central African Republic, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Kenya and Tanzania. Ex-FAR leaders, such as Tharcisse Renzaho and Paul Rwarakabije⁵⁶, reportedly created the Rwandan Liberation Army (ALiR) whose aim was to overthrow the Tutsi-dominated government and reinstall Hutu control in Rwanda.⁵⁷ Though the leadership of ALiR has been accused of inducing the 1994 genocide, the bulk of its troops were newly recruited young refugees who were trained in the camps.⁵⁸

Concurrently another Hutu rebel group, which was later to be known as the Rwandan Liberation Democratic Forces (FDLR), was operating clandestinely in the DRC, mainly in the Masisi planes.⁵⁹ As relations between Laurent Desiré Kabila and Paul Kagame began to deteriorate, the rebel group came to the aid of Kabila to fight the common enemy.⁶⁰ The DRC Director of National Intelligence, Didier Kazadi, was able to contact the Hutu rebels and, with the assistance of ministers Mwenze Kongolo and Gaetan Kakudji, organised them as a military opposition that would destabilise Rwanda. By April 1998 the first troops were at Laurent Kabila's disposal and in August they were officially mobilised to assist him in the second Congo war.⁶¹ Until 2000 the group had no political structure. However, it felt the urge to have a voice and so decided to assume a political face that could represent the needs of the combatants and the overall refugee population. In May 2000 the Rwandan Liberation Democratic Forces emerged in Nasho, Kenya as a politico-military organisation. It was an umbrella of fighters and civilians.

The FDLR aimed to "reveal" itself in an attempt to contradict Kagame's propaganda that preached that the ex-FAR were operating in the DRC under the direction of Kabila. By coming out in the open, the young face of the majority troops would belie Kagame's claims.⁶² The FDLR's political leadership was fittingly dominated by personalities who were not involved in the genocide. The President of the movement, Ignace Murwanashyaka, had been in Germany since 1989.⁶³ Jean Marie Vianney Higiroy, the Vice-President, was a founding member of the MDR in 1991 and was among the Hutu who had taken a stand against the genocide from a very early stage.⁶⁴ The Steering Commissioner, Christophe Hakizabera had left for Uganda after Habyarimana's coup in 1973, where he joined the ranks of the RPF in 1988,⁶⁵ and Alexis Nshimiyimana, the spokesman, had been studying in Austria since 1992, though he has been accused of sharing the genocidal ideology.⁶⁶

As far as the military arm of the movement is concerned, Paul Rwarakabije rose as the leader who took the responsibility to re-organise the troops. Nevertheless, individuals under international warrant for involvement in the

⁵⁶ Although Rwarakabije had served in the FAR, he was not involved in the genocidal massacres. See Human Rights Watch: "Rwanda: Observing the Rules of War?", *Human Rights Watch*, Vol. 13, No. 8(A), (New York: December 2001), p. 6. It must be noted that not all ex-FAR took part in the killings.

⁵⁷ ICG: "Les Rebelles Hutu Rwandais au Congo: Pour Une Nouvelle Approche du Désarmement et de la Réintégration", *ICG Africa Report*, No. 63, (Nairobi/Brussels, 23rd May 2003), p. 5

⁵⁸ Human Rights Watch: (December 2001), p. 2

⁵⁹ Interview with Christophe Hakizabera made in Brussels, 5th August 2003

⁶⁰ Interview by telephone with Félicien Kanyamibwa, 20th August 2003

⁶¹ Interview made in Charleroi, 9th August 2003

⁶² Interview with Christophe Hakizabera

⁶³ Murwanashyaka was nevertheless connected with "Hutu Power" ideology.

⁶⁴ ICG: (November 2002), p. 21

⁶⁵ Hakizabera left the RPF on account of the massacres it committed between 1990 and 1994. Although he officially left the party in 1995, he had been inactive since 1993 and he later joined the Hutu rebels in Congo-Brazzaville, from where he recruited members for the FDLR.

⁶⁶ Nshimiyimana founded *Radio Afrika* in Vienna in 1997 and he has used the radio facility to mobilise support for the armed struggle. He was removed from the position of spokesman and became Secretary-General, but was later replaced by a more judicious civilian, Félicien Kanyamibwa, officially at his own request to resign from the movement's Executive Committee. Although Nshimiyimana seemed to "confuse" politics with armed struggle (which is not altogether surpris-

genocide were also found in the movement. Until April 2002 Tharcisse Renzaho⁶⁷ had been a member of the FDLR, Augustin Ndirabatware was a political commissioner and Protais Mpiranya was an ex-Commander.⁶⁸ According to reports another suspected *génocidaire*, Augustin Bizimungu⁶⁹ was also an FDLR member, but FDLR officials deny this.⁷⁰ By and large the FDLR refutes connection with the ex-FAR/*Interahamwe* and with ALiR. The UNDP identifies the FDLR with the ex-FAR and *Interahamwe*⁷¹, while according to ALiR combatants it is the “public voice of ALiR”⁷². In view of the proclamation of ALiR as a terrorist organisation, it is claimed that Kabila merely renamed ALiR in 2000, seeking to purge himself of negative overtones. However, the alleged association of the FDLR with ALiR is largely based on speculation; the evidence is unclear, although it does point to a link. Indeed members of both organisations claim to be *abacunguzi* – the liberators of Rwanda. There is a blur between the two. Kabila has been connected with both and there seems to have been an overlap of their respective military leadership. FDLR officials acknowledge that there *may* be elements of ALiR or the ex-FAR in their ranks, but they attribute allegations that they are ALiR to a Kigali policy of vilification.⁷³

The FDLR is structured around a National Conference, a Central Committee and a Representation of Members. The Central Committee runs daily affairs and is composed of the political leadership and the military high command, run by army officers. It maintains troops on the Congolese territory and, according to FDLR officials, around Africa. They also maintain that as a *Rwandan* “liberation movement” the majority of its troops are in the country’s interior.⁷⁴

As a political movement, the FDLR demands the opening of Kigali to dialogue and a general amnesty to all Hutu fighters. It is a republican movement, calling for quota representation. Its political programme entails the return of all Rwandan refugees, human rights, including freedom of speech and association, non-exclusion, guarantee of minorities, justice and reconciliation, regional co-operation and an open-market economy. The FDLR has denounced the genocide, aiming to earn international recognition, and it tries to steer a political route in addition to maintaining its troops, which it claims serve the combatants’ “right to self-defence”. Members of the FDLR claim that the movement has a very large social base that is entrenched in the diaspora around the world, mainly in Central Africa, and that they have even penetrated Rwanda at all levels, although they have never been militarily engaged in Rwanda.⁷⁵ The FDLR is the only Rwandan movement that openly declares to be military, even though there are other Rwandan groups mixed with the Congolese population.

The FDLR wants to be considered a *legitimate political actor*. With DRC official assistance, the FDLR has tried to make a palpable presence on the political and military scene of the Great Lakes region. In August 2001 Joseph Kabila, who had succeeded his father in January, assembled 1.800

ing in a politico-military structure), he was an important figure for the communication of the movement because of that same radio station. At the Congress of the FDLR in September 2003 Nshimyimana assumed the position of Commissioner for Inter-Rwandese Dialogue.

⁶⁷ Renzaho was prefect of Kigali city during the genocide and was under ICTR warrant for genocide charges.

⁶⁸ They too were wanted by the ICTR.

⁶⁹ An extremist member of the old guard of the RDR, who had left in 1996

⁷⁰ Interviews made with Christophe Hakizabera, Félicien Kanyamibwa, Bonaventure Hakizimana and François Kanyamihanda. They point to the fact that Bizimungu was arrested in Angola as indicative that he was not involved in the movement, but the fact that the FDLR has been operating around Central Africa does *not* rule out the possibility that he may have been an FDLR member.

⁷¹ UNDP: “Donor Mission to Great Lakes Region/DRC: Defining UNDP’s role in Disarmament, Demobilisation and Durable Solutions (D3)”, (28th November 2001)

⁷² Human Rights Watch: (December 2001), p.4

⁷³ Interview with Félicien Kanyamibwa and with Christophe Hakizabera. See also FDLR: “The Democratic Liberation Forces of Rwanda (FDLR) condemn terrorism and reject Rwanda’s foreign minister’s statement linking the FDLR to ALiR”, *FDLR Press Release*, (Bonn, 12th December 2001)

⁷⁴ Interview with Félicien Kanyamibwa

⁷⁵ FDLR officials maintain that the movement has large national representation. They claim to have civilian and military members, responsible for intelligence, mobilisation and training throughout the country. They also claim that new recruits are swarming to the movement.

combatants and delivered them to the UN observer mission in the Congo (MONUC) at Kamina for disarmament, with the official support of the FDLR. Mwenze Kongolo, Minister of Internal Security, was in the meantime trying to arrange for a meeting between the FDLR and the UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, who was expected in Kinshasa. At the same time the DRC Ambassador to Belgium introduced the FDLR at a Press Conference in Brussels.⁷⁶ In November the disarmament ceremony of 1.800 Hutu combatants took place. The FDLR showed its readiness to be a sincere interlocutor for peace negotiations through this act of good will, conforming to international demands for disarmament, demobilisation, repatriation, reintegration and resettlement (DDRRR) of the armed groups.⁷⁷

A year later, on 30th July 2002, an agreement was signed between Rwanda and the DRC under the “third-party” supervision of the United Nations and the government of South Africa. The Pretoria Accords called for the withdrawal and repatriation of all Rwandan troops from the DRC, including those in Kamina, within ninety days and the collaboration of the DRC government to track down and disarm the ex-FAR and *Interahamwe* within the territory under its control. Without more ado the FDLR rejected the Pretoria Accords as a political manoeuvre on the part of Kigali. The accords made no reference whatsoever to an amnesty, but demanded *unconditional repatriation*. Rwanda swiftly withdrew the bulk of its troops in September 2002 despite the considerable time limit, which put the Congolese government on the spot. In an attempt to save face, Kabila banned the FDLR rebels on 24th September and gave a deadline of 72 hours to its leaders to depart, calling them *personae non grata*. The DRC government went on to arrest Tharcisse Renzaho, who had been “relieved” of his duties in the FDLR in April⁷⁸, and delivered him to the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda.

Following the South African agreement, MONUC and the European Union had arranged for 79 FDLR representatives taken from Kamina to go to Kigali in October 2002 on an “exploratory mission” to see if conditions were safe for the return of the disarmed and demobilised Hutu combatants.⁷⁹ The FDLR political leadership had asked to represent the movement, but Kigali refused on the grounds that the problem was one of security, hence of a *military* not political nature. At Kigali the 79 Hutu were finger-pointed as *génocidaires*, three were detained and continue to be in jail and the remainder returned to the DRC, disinclined to repatriate.⁸⁰ In a letter to Namanga Ngongi, the UN Secretary-General’s Special Representative to the DRC, the FDLR protested that it was deceived by the United Nations, as MONUC had failed to fulfil its commitment to ensure the security and return of all 79 to Kamina.⁸¹ The FDLR could not now be swayed to return without guarantees. It had nonetheless lost the patronage of the DRC government. In another ploy to save face, the Congolese Armed Forces (FAC) provided intelligence for a South African operation that attacked the Kamina military base, trying to force the troops back to Rwanda on November 1st 2002. In so doing, they killed the FDLR Commander of the demobilised brigade, Colonel Ndanda

⁷⁶ Interview with François Kanyami-handa made in Utrecht, 12th August 2003

⁷⁷ See ICG: “Disarmament in the Congo: Jump-Starting DDRRR to Prevent Further War”, (Nairobi/Brussels, 14th November 2001)

⁷⁸ ICG: (May 2003), p.21

⁷⁹ IRIN News: “DRC-Rwanda: Rwandan ex-combatant mission arrives in Kigali”, (Kamina, 2nd October 2002)

⁸⁰ Interview with François Kanyami-handa

⁸¹ Letter by Ignace Murwanashyaka to Namanga Ngongi, (Bonn, 10th October 2002)

and, according to the FDLR, 437 combatants. The attack by the “third party” participant of the Pretoria Agreement was a great embarrassment to MONUC and the UNHCR. Not only were the United Nations responsible for the physical security of the combatants, but the subsequent rearmament and disappearance of most combatants into the bush was also a failure of the observation mission’s monitoring of the DDRRR.⁸² The Kamina incident proved to be a setback for any inclination of the FDLR to show good will. The FDLR now recalls the incident to vindicate its continued military presence in the Great Lakes.⁸³ It has also created an uneasy relationship between the FDLR and its present political allies in *Igihango* and the CPODR.⁸⁴

⁸² ICG: (May 2003), pp.15-17

⁸³ Interview with Félicien Kanyamibwa

⁸⁴ See section III: *The Tutsi Begin to Flee: The Second Wave of Rwandan Opposition in Exile*

3. The Tutsi Begin to Flee: the Second Wave of Rwandan Opposition in Exile

As 1999 came to a close, Rwanda reached a structural impasse. The state was becoming more criminal, nearing totalitarianism and assuming a predatory disposition that revolved around violence and exclusion. As the nature of the regime was surfacing, internal opposition began to grow. However, internal opposition was not allowed to exist as such – an opposition. Kigali resorted to intimidations, arrests and political manipulations to ensure the elimination of any defiance or its flight from the country.

By the beginning of 2000 senior state officials had been forced to resign, in an RPF purge of the state apparatus. On 6th January the Speaker of the National Assembly, Joseph Sebarenzi, a respected personality aligned with the Tutsi genocide survivors, was forced to resign from his post. Sebarenzi was respected by all ethnic groups on account of his sound position as speaker in the National Assembly and was also considered the “voice of the genocide survivors.”⁸⁵ In challenging the RPF’s line on the genocide, he offered an alternative to the regime. He affirmed the role of Parliament as an independent institution aiming to check governmental action. As such, he aimed to launch an enquiry into two RPF ministers, Patrick Mazimhaka and Emmanuel Mudidi.⁸⁶ Not only did Sebarenzi pose a threat to the regime in his bold aspirations, but also owing to his popularity he could seriously challenge the President. He was accused of a “monarchist conspiracy” and was forced to flee the country at the end of January 2000, going to the US via Uganda and Norway.

⁸⁵ ICG: (November 2002), p. 10

⁸⁶ Reyntjens: (2000), pp. 97-98

The weight of Sebarenzi’s flight lies in the fact that it underlined the drift of the RPF from the population it claimed to be representing – the Tutsi genocide survivors. An intra-Tutsi conflict slashed through the heart of Kigali, undermining the RPF’s purported role as guarantor of security, unity and national reconciliation. The RPF itself was fissured and proved to be an instrument in the hands of Kagame and his new-found *akazu*. A breach between the government and *Ibuka*⁸⁷ also lay at the heart of this crisis. Although Kag-

⁸⁷ *Ibuka* is the organisation of genocide survivors.

ame persistently used the genocide to justify the tight security measures of the regime and the limits on public and personal freedom, *Ibuka* denounced its abuses and its members were increasingly fleeing Rwanda, in fear of the government that claimed to be protecting them. Jean Pierre Mugabe, editor of *Le Tribun du Peuple*, reformulated *Ibuka's* grievances against the establishment, while after Sebarenzi's departure, a special issue of the journal *Imboni* begged the question of why it was that Tutsi were fleeing. The president of the Rwandan Journalists Association at the time, Tutsi genocide survivor and former member of the RPF, Déo Mushayidi, voiced the concern that accusations of conspiring for the return of the monarchy could be equated with the pre-genocide propaganda of being *ibytso*.⁸⁸ *Imboni* was immediately withdrawn from circulation and Mushayidi himself was removed from the position of president of the Journalists Association.⁸⁹ The message was clear: those who dared to criticise the government would have to run for their lives. In April the two Tutsi journalists fled Rwanda, followed soon after by another prominent journalist, Jean Claude Nkubito.⁹⁰

In addition to disillusioned politicians and journalists, Tutsi students and businessmen began to leave, seeing how the presence of the former Ugandan diaspora blocked their endeavours, while disaffection and disillusionment also spread to the ranks of the army. Divisions in the RPA between francophone and Anglophone elements⁹¹ were exacerbated by rumours of a royalist faction and many military men were arrested on accusations of plotting with the "king's army". Many were disenchanted with the continued use of violence inside and outside of Rwanda to serve the interests of the new *akazu*, while educated recruits fell to misgivings of higher ranked officers who feared they could lose their positions to them. By 2001 defectors were many and even high ranked officers of the RPA took the path of exile, from where they would try to form an opposition to the Kigali regime. Among them were former DMI⁹² officer and RPF deputy to the TNA, Deus Kagiraneza, Majors Gérard Ntashamaje, Alphonse Furuma, Michael Mupende, Frank Bizimungu, and Captain Frank Tega.

From their respective countries of exile, these Tutsi personalities were able to make contacts and form new opposition movements. The flight of Tutsi gave a new vitality to the Rwandan political opposition in exile. The balance now changed. Whereas before the political diaspora consisted of intrinsically Hutu movements, which could be explained away by Kigali as *génocidaires* and as ethnically-based projects, a Tutsi opposition ingrained with genocide survivors unequivocally places Kigali in a difficult predicament. The Tutsi cannot be tainted by association with the genocide, as it is impossible that they "autogenocided" themselves.⁹³ This pushed Kigali to accuse and even convict Tutsi in exile *in absentia* of such crimes as embezzlement.

⁸⁸ This means "traitor" in Kinyarwanda. It was hurled at the Tutsi population after the 1990 invasion of the RPF, aiming to incriminate all Tutsi as collaborators of the RPF, hence portraying Tutsi as the enemy of (Hutu) Rwandans.

⁸⁹ Human Rights Watch: (April 2000)

⁹⁰ Interview with Déo Mushayidi made in Brussels, 28th July 2003

⁹¹ Interview with Gérard Ntashamaje made in Charleroi, 9th August 2003. Ntashamaje was in fact accused of inciting a francophone insurgency in the RPA in 1999.

⁹² Department of Military Intelligence

⁹³ Reyntjens: (2002), p. 71

3.1. New Movements Come to Life in Exile

The Tutsi presence infused the opposition in exile with new blood; it brought new dynamics and the capability to transform and fortify it. There was now the potential to form bi-ethnic groups that would offer a *political* rather than ethnic quality to the movements. This could help Rwanda to surpass its protracted ethnic conflict. Many existing groups were no longer demarcated on ethnic lines, while new movements were born.

In February 2001 a monarchist movement composed of Hutu and Tutsi was formed in Brussels. *Nation-Imbaga y'Inyabutatu Nyarwanda*⁹⁴ was created by *Rwanda Notre Avenir*'s Joseph Ndahimana consequent with the arrival of Déo Mushayidi and Gérard Ntashamaje in Europe. The group singled out the aspects of monarchy that seemed necessary for the functioning of modern Rwanda and they came up with a set of modern monarchist objectives; they proposed a constitutional monarchy. *Nation-Imbaga* organised conferences around Belgium to explain the unifying cause of monarchy. It felt the urge to persuade Rwandans that constitutional monarchy *could* work in Rwanda. By and large *Nation-Imbaga* has constructively criticised the previous monarchy and aims to change those aspects it deems to be negative.⁹⁵ The proposed regime would merely have symbolic power. It is here that the distance with other monarchists is found. Whereas some monarchists, particularly those close to the former king, go so far as to speak of an *absolute* monarchy, *Nation-Imbaga* is more down-to-earth and democratic. It is a political movement with a similar ideology to the other organisations – consensual democracy. *Imbaga*'s faith in the utility of constitutional monarchy lies in the criminalisation of the Rwandan state and in the problematic and bloody successions of the subsequent republics.⁹⁶ *Nation* believes that this would be avoided if the Head of State would inherit his position, rather than create an *akazu* and use state institutions to uphold his power. The cycle of institutional instability could be averted. *Nation-Imbaga* is not ideologically anti-republican, nor is it ideologically monarchist. It merely favours constitutional monarchy because of the failure of the Rwandan republics. Moreover, monarchy would only be installed if it were agreed by national referendum. *Nation* is not the “king's party”, but a movement offering an alternative solution to the Rwandan impasse. The King himself need not be Tutsi, but could be Hutu, though the movement's General Delegate, Joseph Ndahimana, is willing to give the existing dynasty a try.⁹⁷

Monarchy is still seen as a reactionary Tutsi institution by many Hutu, who identify Rwandan republicanism as a Hutu institution. At the same time, a significant problem is the potential to find the person who would fit the role of *mwami* in a new Rwanda. Kigeri V is old and has been tainted with negative attributes for a number of years. There would be a need to find an alternative *mwami*, which is an arduous task. The situation is further complicated by Kigeri V's refusal to relinquish his title, even in favour of a member of his family.⁹⁸ As such, *Nation-Imbaga* is faced with an impasse. Nevertheless,

⁹⁴ The name reflects the gist of the movement: national unity, by reference of three cords strung together as one; a symbol of the three *ethnies* of Rwanda. Notwithstanding the fact that the mwami was historically Tutsi and, despite years of propaganda against the kingship under the first two Republics, he is by tradition *outside* of ethnies. Many Hutu and a few Twa in fact had influential positions in the royal court and Kigeri IV Rwagubiri even favoured the Hutu and Twa as soldiers and army chiefs over the Tutsi. For more information see Prunier: (1995).

⁹⁵ Interview with Joseph Ndahimana

⁹⁶ The first republic ended with a coup d'état in 1973, whereby Juvénal Habyarimana succeeded Grégoire Kayibanda, and in 1994 it was again by use of force that the previous regime was crushed and the current installed. The RPF-dominated republic has also failed, lending to the movement's argument in favour of a figurehead mwami in the place of an all-powerful President.

⁹⁷ Interview with Déo Mushayidi

⁹⁸ Interview with Joseph Ndahimana.

Nation is more pressed with the substantial matter of inter-Rwandan dialogue and achieving a democratic administration, with a separation of powers, rather than with who is eventually to head the state.⁹⁹

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

For the time being, *Nation-Imbaga* is limited to its operations in Brussels, though it has think tanks in Rwanda, Burundi and Uganda, which are spreading the movement's ideas and giving feedback to *Nation*. They are collecting information on the ideas of inter-Rwandese dialogue, monarchy and the possibility of a relative of Kigeri assuming the role of *mwami*.¹⁰⁰

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

In March 2001 another organisation was formed. A number of personalities from the post-genocide political class of Rwanda, mainly stemming from the RPF, created the Rwandan Alliance for the Renaissance of the Nation (ARENA) in the US. Well-known public figures that had fallen out with the RPF on moral and political grounds gave a credible air to the movement. Tutsi personalities like Joseph Sebarenzi, Gérard Karangwa, Augustin Kamongi and Alexandre Kimenyi¹⁰¹ formed the group with the former Hutu Prime Minister Pierre Célestin Rwigema and Joseph Ngarambe, a former PSD Hutu, who had taken an ardent stand against the genocide and had closely collaborated with the ICTR.¹⁰² Deus Kagiraneza, who had also crossed swords with the RPF, believing that the regime was unwilling to offer a sustainable solution to the country's stalemate, joined them some months later.¹⁰³

¹⁰¹ Kimenyi and Kamongi had been RPF members in the US, where they had been living for years before the genocide.

¹⁰² ICG: (November 2002), p. 20

¹⁰³ Interview with Deus Kagiraneza made in Brussels, 11th August 2003

As such, another bi-ethnic, though predominantly Tutsi, organisation was fashioned out of disputes with the RPF. ARENA is a republican movement, but there are monarchists, such as Sebarenzi and Murumba¹⁰⁴, in its ranks. The movement does not rule out the idea of a constitutional monarchy if it is chosen by the Rwandan masses. Its strength lies in that it is not limited to the French-speaking diaspora, but it also harbours Anglophone students who joined the movement in the US.¹⁰⁵ It advocates a parliamentary system with a Prime Minister heading the government and a President or Monarch heading the state, a bi-cameral National Assembly and the establishment of a Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission to achieve restorative justice.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁴ The two had in fact been accused by the RPF of conspiring with monarchists in exile to re-install Kigeri V. See Reyntjens: (1998)

¹⁰⁵ Interview with Gérard Karangwa made in Brussels, 10th August 2003

¹⁰⁶ ARENA: *Press Release 001*, (Washington D.C., 28th March 2001)

In 2001 the Movement for Peace and Democracy (MPD), which had allegedly operated underground in Rwanda since 2000, was revealed in Uganda by a number of military men, under the leadership of former RPF founding member, Alphonse Furuma.¹⁰⁷ The MPD was just that though, a peripheral group of former soldiers. Even the Tutsi present in Uganda did not support the organisation. As such, from Kampala the MPD was trying to make contact with other expatriate opposition movements.

¹⁰⁷ Telephone conversation with Jean Baptiste Mberabahizi. Also see Reyntjens: (2001), pp.42-43

3.2. Further Efforts at Consolidation

Before *Nation-Imbaga* and ARENA were created, the CDA approached the initiators of the movements bidding them to launch a movement cheek by jowl. The new movements were, nonetheless, put in place. The CDA repeated its proposition to launch a new movement shortly after their birth,¹⁰⁸ but this time it was chiefly targeted at ARENA, due to fears of an ideological conflict with the monarchist movement. The drive behind the proposal was the opportunity at hand for the exclusively Hutu CDA to fulfil its purported political line— to become a *national* movement.¹⁰⁹ The newcomers offered the best avenue to this. At a meeting on 7th July 2001 ARENA and the CDA agreed to launch the Rwandan Democratic Alliance (ADR), but it ARENA faltered shortly after, possibly out of a lack of trust of the initiative. Albeit a neophyte, ARENA seemed wary of political machinations that aimed at steering the leadership of movements and so chose to remain independent and develop its propounded programme.

On 31st December 2001 the ADR was launched in Brussels, but the CDA's partner was Furuma's MPD. Gérard Ntashamaje, who had been a member of *Nation-Imbaga*, also joined the movement, completing a puzzle of a seemingly military sketch. The movement is composed of a number of former army men, who continue to use their military designation. Despite the organisation's claims to non-violence, it revels in a revolutionary outlook.¹¹⁰ It is unlikely that the ADR has a military force. The same former soldiers who were in Uganda have been relocated to the US and do not appear to be in contact with RPA deserters or other military groups in Uganda or the overall region.¹¹¹ Although the ADR claims that it would resort to violent means to return to Rwanda as a last resort, its members are aware that setting up an army is wrought with difficulties.¹¹² Whatever the case may be, a peaceful solution is the priority.

The vision of the ADR is not far from that of the CDA. The ADR insists on the supremacy of *social* over ethnic issues as the cause of Rwanda's destitution and it too revolves around the idea of a political and economic regional integration, possibly a loose confederation with Burundi and other neighbouring countries.¹¹³ Moreover, the ostensible leadership of the group indicates that the CDA has indeed achieved its aspiration to be bi-ethnic, with six Tutsi and four Hutu constituting the party's Executive Committee. Nevertheless, former RPT founder James Gasana may be pulling the strings of the ADR from behind the scenes. Although Gasana is seemingly inactive in the movement, due to a conflict of interest with his work at the Swiss Technical Cooperation, he seems to be "on hold" for a leading post in a new Rwanda.¹¹⁴

¹⁰⁸E-mail exchange with Gérard Karangwa and with Déo Mushayidi

¹⁰⁹Telephone conversation with Jean Baptiste Mberabahizi

¹¹⁰See Annex III. The majority of the members of the ADR Executive Committee "adorn" their names with a military title, in an attempt to inflate the weight of the movement.

¹¹¹ Interview made in Charleroi on 9th August 2003

¹¹² Interview with Gérard Ntashamaje

¹¹³ Interview with Jean Baptiste Mberabahizi

¹¹⁴This seems to be the impression of many of the people interviewed.

3.3. Igihango; the Rapprochement

On 27th March 2002 what has been quoted as the most astonishing political alliance¹¹⁵ was forged between ARENA, *Nation-Imbaga* and the FDLR at Bad Honnef in Germany – the Alliance for Democracy and National reconciliation (ADRN-*Igihango*). The resulting “blood-pact”¹¹⁶ united an umbrella of Tutsi, among them genocide survivors and former RPA elements, with Hutu elements that have been linked with the genocidal ex-FAR and *Interahamwe* militias. Hutu and Tutsi from both ends were united in exile. Putting the alliance to operation proved to be a Sisyphean task.

Under the mediation of Valens Kajeguhakwa, a former RPF member of the TNA, the initiative to close the ethnic gap was taken and the groups reached an agreement after a series of contacts in Europe and in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Kajeguhakwa’s priority was to approach the FDLR, as he sought a strong military group, forming a common front between Hutu and Tutsi. He knew the potency of the FDLR and he was also aware of their common determination to return to Rwanda by any means necessary.¹¹⁷ In 2001 Christophe Hakizabera of the FDLR had contacted Deus Kagiraneza of ARENA, wanting to reach out to RPA deserters who were in Kampala with Alphonse Furuma. In view of Rwanda’s deteriorating relations with Uganda, it would have been ill-advised for the three military men to meet. The meeting was postponed *sine die*.¹¹⁸ A year later, in 2002, Deus Kagiraneza again acted as go-between, this time bringing Christophe Hakizabera together with another Tutsi “warrior”, Valens Kajeguhakwa, in the DRC.

On the one hand the FDLR needed the alliance for political credibility. On the other hand ARENA and *Nation-Imbaga*, both lacking a military arm, needed the FDLR’s military power to attract Kigali’s attention and thus be able to act as a pressure force pushing for negotiations. Through this alliance, *political* forces were in a position to check the FDLR, whereas alone the FDLR could be dangerous. The socio-political significance of *Igihango* lies mainly in that Hutu and Tutsi were decisively brought together. The two ethnic groups have been unified in exile, despite difficulties. The Hutu FDLR was sceptical and suspicious of the rapprochement but it needed the alliance for legitimacy and a positive image. The FDLR poses a very real problem for Rwanda, as it holds arms and has men in the bush. Its presence in the Great Lakes denies stability in the area. Kagame has so far been unable to solve this problem. Yet *Igihango* may be able to do so. Seizing power is not an option of the movement, as it realises that this is dangerous for the masses. Instead, reintegration and rehabilitation of the FDLR is advocated. At the level of the alliance the FDLR has repeatedly been urged to stop its military engagements and to opt for peaceful, political means. The issue of self-defence in the face of RPF attacks projected by the FDLR is no longer valid. The political side of the FDLR could supersede its military face through its presence in the alliance. *Igihango* is, therefore, more than a tactical alliance. It emerged from the need to create sustainable conditions for a united Rwanda. The alliance

¹¹⁵ Reyntjens: (2002), p.68

¹¹⁶ *Igihango* translates from Kinyarwanda as a “pact sealed in blood”.

¹¹⁷ Valens Kajeguhakwa seems determined to hold a position in the high echelons of Rwanda no matter what the price or with whom he works. He had been a close friend of President Juvénal Habyarimana, yet financed the RPF raid from Uganda. He subsequently was an RPF deputy but fell out of Kagame’s favour because he demanded more. After fleeing Rwanda he appears determined to make a comeback in Rwanda, to face Kagame with a strong force behind him. (Interview made on 6th August 2003).

¹¹⁸ Interview with Deus Kagiraneza

was formed around an inclusive and unified vision; it is proof that Hutu and Tutsi can reconcile.

When Valens Kajeguhakwa took the initiative to bring the diverse groups together, he was inclusive and open to all. Indeed the FDLR was his main priority, motivated by an urge to advance war against the RPF-dominated regime, but he also contacted the ADR and the UFDR in addition to ARENA and *Nation-Imbaga*. At the level of the UFDR alliance, the FRD was cautious of Kajeguhakwa's motives and his willingness to wage war. To the RDR the proposal rang hollow in the absence of a solid proposal.¹¹⁹ Despite the similarity of outlook with the FDLR, the RDR leadership did not want to co-operate with those negative elements that were once connected with its own movement either. The position of the ADR was similarly negative, not wanting to co-operate with what they considered extremist elements. A personality clash between Furuma and Kajeguhakwa was yet another explanatory factor to the refusal to join such a platform¹²⁰, as Furuma had not blocked the idea of negotiating with Hakizabera and Kagiraneza in 2001. Three of the most recent movements in exile, thus, formed the alliance.

¹¹⁹Interview with Victoire Ingabire Umuhoza

¹²⁰Interview made in Charleroi on 9th August 2003 and interview with Bonaventure Hakizimana

After a three-month process in the DRC and Europe, the alliance was crystallised at Bad Honnef. At the meeting DRC officials, such as Seraphin Ngwej, had accompanied the FDLR.¹²¹ They had facilitated the FDLR leaders' arrival in Germany financially and politically,¹²² confirming whispers of Congolese support for the Hutu movement. There, the genocide and post-genocide counterattack were condemned. Assuming responsibility for the events that had taken place in Rwanda was high on the agenda at Bad Honnef. Those who had worked with the RPF assumed part of the responsibility. Yet the FDLR was cautious not to confirm RPF propaganda by doing so. A need for consensual democracy, with a symbolic Head of State – either a President or Monarch, to be decided by national referendum – and a commitment to achieve inter-Rwandese dialogue were stated as the platform's main objectives. It was also concluded that those under international warrant for arrest would be delivered to justice. The presidency was given to ARENA, specifically to Augustin Kamongi, in spite of FDLR claims to the leadership. In such a case, the military character of the FDLR and its negative image, stemming from links to the ex-FAR/Interahamwe, would have debilitated the platform from the outset. ARENA offered a strong structure to *Igihango* as an unarmed republican organisation. Not only is it more politically acceptable, but it also holds the middle ground between a politico-military republican movement and an unarmed monarchist movement. It is more compatible with both organisations, acting as a balancing force in *Igihango*.

¹²¹Interview with Deus Kagiraneza

¹²²Interview with Christophe Hakizabera

By July 2002 Valens Kajeguhakwa had withdrawn, assuming the title of "Honorary President." Whereas Kajeguhakwa had aspired to meet Kagame as the *leader* of the opposition, following his mediation he was marginalized. The platform was steering a clear political trajectory in spite of the FDLR's continued military angle. A champion of military struggle outside

of the FDLR would only make matters thornier for *Igihango*. Although the position of *Igihango* is that the FDLR should be disarmed and repatriated, the FDLR is hesitant to do so. It still wants to use its troops, despite having signed the *Edenbridge Initiatives Declaration* on 28th October 2001, which called for peace in the Great Lakes and the withdrawal of foreign forces from the Democratic Republic of the Congo.¹²³ At the mention of the military issue, the FDLR hides behind *Igihango*'s commitment to a peaceful solution. In principle it has pledged to oust any criminal elements that may be present in its ranks and rehabilitate its "freedom fighters". Yet there is clearly a gap between principle and practice. In view of militant elements inciting Rwandans to arms, ARENA and *Nation* asked for the removal of Alexis Nshimiyimana from the Executive Committee of *Igihango*.¹²⁴ Nshimiyimana had been broadcasting war over his radio facility in Vienna, making the task of the alliance very difficult, but the FDLR has shown its commitment to the platform, and has made piece-meal changes to conform to *Igihango*'s aspired outlook. In spite of having different views on how to achieve peace, all three organisations are involved in policy framing and they prepare the political programme ensemble. Together they aim to assure international political and financial pressure on the Rwandan regime, in order to force Kigali to the negotiating table.

3.4. Mushrooming of Splinter Groups

An outcome of the creation of *Igihango* was a fissure in the ranks of ARENA. A faction led by Alexandre Kimenyi affirmed that it was compromising to join forces with *génocidaires*. They feared that the alliance masks a "warmongering" ideology.¹²⁵ After claims of not having been aware of the timing of the creation of the new platform, they split off from ARENA to form AMAHORO-People's Congress in May 2002 in Ottawa.¹²⁶ In all likelihood Kimenyi and his group *were* aware of the proceedings. Members of ARENA maintain that it had been discussed at the ARENA forum,¹²⁷ but in addition to that Kimenyi was a close friend of Valens Kajeguhakwa, leaving little space for ignorance. Kimenyi was perceived as an obstacle to *Igihango*,¹²⁸ as he insisted that the project be discussed in May at the party's Congress¹²⁹ and as such he was cut off.

AMAHORO is based in the US, with members in Europe and Africa, but its support-base appears to be narrow. The movement presses for a parliamentary system through consociational democracy.¹³⁰ It advocates decentralisation and speaks of punitive and restorative justice, effected by means of a Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission. It also emphasises land reform, in view of the problems the pressure on land has caused in Rwandan society.¹³¹

In December 2001 it was the turn of Faustin Twagiramungu to break away from his movement. The leading man of the opposition left the UFDR

¹²³A conference was held by PAX-Peace for the African Great Lakes and "One World Week 2001" at Edenbridge on 26th-27th October 2001 on the "Genocide in Rwanda and War in the Democratic Republic of the Congo – What we've learnt and what can be done". There, participants condemned the 1994 genocide, the massacres that took place between 1990 and 1994, the assassination of Juvénal Habyarimana, the massacres of Hutu refugees in the DRC between 1996 and 1997 and they pledged their support of the ICTR.

¹²⁴Interview with Gérard Karangwa

¹²⁵A R E N A - I s a n g a n o Ry'Abanyarwanda: "ARENA is not a Member of the alliance "Igihango" Formed This Past Week in Germany", *Declaration 002/2002*, (Merrifield, 31st March 2002)

¹²⁶AMAHORO means "peace" in Kinyarwanda. The group claims to have merely changed its name from ARENA to AMAHORO and to have "expelled" Sebarenzi, Ngarambe, Karangwa, Kamongi, Kagiraneza and Kaviziya. E-mail exchange with Jeff Nsengimana. Also see AMAHORO-People's Congress: "First Congress of the Party", *Declaration 001/Col. III/2002*, (Merrifield, 20th May 2002). However, it was in effect a new movement, as ARENA continues to exist *within* the *Igihango* alliance.

¹²⁷Interviews with Gérard Karangwa and with Deus Kagiraneza

¹²⁸Interview with Deus Kagiraneza

¹²⁹E-mail exchange with Jeff Nsengimana

¹³⁰AMAHORO-People's Congress: (20th May 2002)

¹³¹AMAHORO- People's Congress: *Political Programme*, (Montreal, 2002)

alliance and essentially detached himself from the opposition movements, as collaboration between the UFDR and armed groups loomed on the horizon.¹³² Twagiramungu's resignation came three months ahead of the end of his mandate. Given his distance from the majority of the UFDR members, even the majority of his own party, his resignation came as no great surprise. While Seth Sendashonga was still alive, Twagiramungu had wanted the leadership of the party, but until August 1997 the FRD only had a Secretary-General—Jean de Dieu Tulikumana—and treasurers. With the formation of the UFDR Twagiramungu headed the alliance. However, within the UFDR he worked as though he was alone; he had created a “party within a party”. His former collaborators assert that he failed to consult with or inform them on his activities, even though he travelled frequently, visiting countries at a political level.¹³³ He appeared to have been making contacts to serve his personal objectives, which surfaced in December 2002 when he revealed his aspiration to run for President in the 2003 elections.¹³⁴

Faustin Twagiramungu's political programme primarily focuses on poverty alleviation and a commitment to the Arusha Accords of 1993,¹³⁵ rather than inter-Rwandese dialogue. His statement that there is no need for dialogue after Arusha is reminiscent of Kagame's statement that “everything has been negotiated at Arusha”¹³⁶ aimed to close off the calls of the opposition in exile for dialogue.

A small splinter group of the FRD had treaded on the heels of Twagiramungu. Under the auspices of Evariste Nduyutse, Alphonse Nshimiyimana, Alain Maniraguha and Eric Habineza formed the Movement for Change and Democracy (MCD) in Brussels in 2002, in another shuffling of the opposition. The MCD unofficially offered its support to Faustin Twagiramungu.¹³⁷ Its base was one and the same as the party's Executive Committee. In essence the MCD is even less than a semblance of a party— it has failed to issue even a single declaration as such an entity.

On 1st July 2003 yet another movement resulting from a fissure was launched in Brussels. The minuscule URD was suspended when its leading members “recreated” the Democratic Republican Movement (MDR) in the Benelux countries. Jean Marie Vianney Nkezabera, Marie Natuze and Prosper Cyiza formed the MDR¹³⁸ after the party was banned in the interior of Rwanda in May 2003. The MDR-Benelux attributes the ban to Faustin Twagiramungu, who had alarmed Kagame with his proposed candidacy, even though Twagiramungu announced his intentions *after* the TNA had recommended the prohibition of the MDR.¹³⁹ The quixotic movement is still in the process of organisation and only lays claims to dialogue with Kigali. Its leaders are counting on being joined by former MDR members who had joined the RDR, and members of the banned MDR. The movement aims to pursue diplomatic pressure, but strongly feels that it will have to resort to force, even though it has no armed wing or links with armed groups in the Great Lakes.¹⁴⁰

¹³²Interview with Salomon Baravuga

¹³³Interview made in Brussels, 6th August 2003

¹³⁴IRIN News: “Rwanda: Interview with Presidential hopeful Faustin Twagiramungu”, (Brussels, 16th May 2003)

¹³⁵Twagiramungu, F: “Rwanda: Cradle of all Rwandan Peoples”, *Manifesto*, (Brussels, February 2003)

¹³⁶Reyntjens: (1998), p.81

¹³⁷Telephone conversation with Jean Baptiste Mberabahizi

¹³⁸Also referred to as MDR-Benelux, owing to its place of establishment.

¹³⁹IRIN News: (16th May 2002). In his interview Twagiramungu said that he did not yet know if he would be running as a member of the MDR or as an independent candidate, because the TNA had suggested banning the MDR

¹⁴⁰Interview with Jean Marie Vianney Nkezabera

3.5. The CPODR: a Platform for Dialogue

Perhaps the most significant political gesture in the exile movements was made at the end of April 2002. At its Conference held on 27th April the UFDR decided to call on the ADR and *Igihango* to form a common opposition front to Kigali.¹⁴¹ The three alliances met in August 2002, and the UFDR and *Igihango* took the joint initiative to launch the Permanent Consultation of the Rwandese Democratic Opposition (CPODR). ADR President Jean Baptiste Mberabahizi gave no answer, saying that Alphonse Furuma had to be consulted.¹⁴² ADR members were adamantly opposed to this, owing to the partly military nature of *Igihango*. The second and final meeting took place in Brussels on 12th October 2002 at which time the CPODR was created without the ADR and was officially launched three days later, on 15th October.¹⁴³

The CPODR provides a forum where the five parties of the two alliances can discuss and search for potential solutions to the problems facing the opposition and Rwandan society at large. Within this platform, the original parties exist and function as autonomous entities. In spite of the diversity of the two alliances, the consultative structure of the CPODR leaves room for discussion and harmonisation. The purpose of the consultation is to come up with an aligned strategy and co-ordination, which entails a piecemeal process. From the outset it was a risky venture because of the existing differences between the various opposition movements. The CPODR was, nevertheless, a necessary step towards unity and elite reconciliation; it was a progressive motion.

The educational value of the CPODR is that it provides the terrain on which diverse movements can put their views forward— it is a reflection of multi-party democracy at work, a “preview” of how Rwandan politics could be. The ADR wanted to form a new *party* but *Igihango* and the UFDR opposed the idea, as it would mean that the constituent parties would be absorbed and a new leadership would be set in place. Instead the consultation procedure is in line with the need for an inclusive debate on the roots of and solutions to the Rwandan impasse.

The return to Rwanda for an inter-Rwandese dialogue is a condition *sine qua non*. The CPODR proposes that dialogue take place in Rwanda, in order to enable the participation of the affected population and the ensuing democratisation and reconciliation process. The inter-Rwandese dialogue demanded would be highly inclusive, involving a political opening on behalf of the government. It would entail the participation of representatives of political and civil society¹⁴⁴ and of peasant organisations, in a broadly free and safe environment, where the population would be able to express its views and genuinely participate in institution-building. The dialogue themes involve primarily the genocide, massacres and the crimes committed against humanity; prosecution; protection of the minorities; interpretations of the past; the

¹⁴¹ UFDR: *Communiqué de presse issu du Congrès de l'Union des Forces Démocratiques Rwandaises*, (Brussels, 27th April 2002)

¹⁴² Interview made in Brussels on 6th August 2003

¹⁴³ Eugène Ndahayo, Victoire Ingabire Umuhoza, Jean de Dieu Tuli-kumana and Charles Ndereyehe represented the UFDR and Joseph Ndahimana, Gérard Karangwa, Deus Kagiraneza, Alexis Nshimiyimana and Déo Mushayidi represented ADRN-*Igihango* at the meeting (e-mail exchange with Déo Mushayidi).

¹⁴⁴ In addition to the recognition of the opposition, the release of political prisoners and prisoners of conscience is also demanded.

role of the defence and security forces; demilitarisation; justice and reconciliation; and poverty alleviation.¹⁴⁵ A minimum requirement of the physical security of the opposition is also stated by the CPODR.

¹⁴⁵CPODR: "The CPODR proposes to the Kigali government to postpone the current constitutional and electoral process", (Brussels, 9th January 2003)

The consultation has a simple structure. Within its framework there is an orientation and an execution level. At the first level, the Presidents or representatives of the alliances try to co-ordinate co-operation between *Igihango* and the UFDR. At the execution level, Déo Mushayidi runs the daily affairs of the Permanent Secretariat of the platform.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁶E-mail exchange with Déo Mushayidi

4. Unravelling Events: Consonance, Dissonance and Political Manoeuvres

Until May 2003 the CPODR seemed to be working well, despite disagreements among the five organisations. The military issue was invariably the main source of dispute,¹⁴⁷ but the consultation managed to function relatively smoothly and to produce solid results. The high point of co-operation came on 20th March 2003 when the Rwandan Ambassador met a CPODR delegation headed by Joseph Ndahimana. This was a positive step towards the recognition of the opposition by Kigali.

¹⁴⁷ARENA, the FRD and *Nation-Imbaga* were adamantly opposed to a military solution and were solely committed to a political solution, whereas the FDLR and the RDR did not write off such a strategy.

The consultation process has been impaired by weaknesses at the bases of the alliances. Decisions at the CPODR level have been spun-out because of divisions within the alliances. *Igihango* has been perturbed by the irksome persistence of the FDLR to bear arms and to maintain troops in the Great Lakes region. *Igihango* needs to comply with international demands of disarmament and the search for peace, but the FDLR military arm has been a thorn in the flesh of the alliance. The alliance was also anxious not to cause trouble in the form of a military destabilisation ahead of the elections, to avoid giving Kagame a pretext to discredit the opposition to his own advantage. Nonetheless, by May divisions in the CPODR were sharpened and became more apparent with the prospect of participation in the elections.

4.1. The Elections Bring Discord to Light

In January 2003 the Permanent Consultation appealed to Kigali to postpone the electoral process. Unsurprisingly Kigali went forth with the procedure and set about creating conditions that ensured the RPF's continued grip on the political space of the country. By the end of April the RDR toyed with the idea of producing a leader who could run for the Presidency but the problem of ideological discord impedes a *single* leadership. Consultation is still sounder.

The UFDR was plagued by disagreements on strategy between its component organisations. The RDR had remained firm in its objective to regain

power,¹⁴⁸ feeling the pressure of time. The FRD, on the other hand, was hostile to an engagement in a flawed electoral process. It felt that the time was not right to re-enter the Rwandan political scene. In view of the new electoral law the RDR conceded but the cracks had surfaced.

As far as *Igihango* was concerned the elections were “irrelevant”. The real issue continues to lie in reaching consensus based on popular will and not on winning an election within a flawed system. The CPODR finally decided collectively against any such involvement.

In the meantime Faustin Twagiramungu was making efforts to gain support for his candidacy from the same movements he had chosen to distance himself at the end of 2001. The ADR had mused over the idea of participating in the elections by supporting Twagiramungu, but the other movements were opposed to this. Not only were they opposed to taking part in the elections but also they disagreed on the core issue of the solution to the Rwandan crisis – Twagiramungu continued to believe in the viability of the Arusha Accords and not in the need for inter-Rwandese dialogue. Furthermore, Twagiramungu had asked for *support* and not for co-operation. Those who had previously worked with him were unwilling to do so. Some members of the RDR were especially nettled by his candidacy, and many among the movements felt that he would “legitimise” the elections. The political diaspora had been pressing the international community not to fund the Rwandan elections. To support Twagiramungu would have been a discrepancy. Twagiramungu only enjoyed the sotto voce support of ADR members, who feel that the opposition in exile is out of touch with Rwandans, and of certain individuals in other movements.¹⁴⁹

Inside Rwanda, Twagiramungu did enjoy support, even though his party had been dismantled, but the conditions were not yet ripe for his return. Fears ran high in Rwanda for the population to have made any choice other than Kagame. Although Faustin Twagiramungu’s presence has highlighted the errors of the Rwandan system,¹⁵⁰ the overwhelming “victory” of Kagame over Twagiramungu— 95% vis-à-vis 3.6%— puts the latter’s political career in serious jeopardy. Kagame has used the outcome to claim that there *is* no political opposition. Even in the case that Faustin Twagiramungu had won the elections, without a party to support him in the National Assembly, he would not have been able to effect significant changes; the existing system would still be in place. The National Forum of Parties has not approved the Alliance for Democracy, Equality and Progress-Hope (ADEP-Mizero) that re-grouped the forces of the dissolved MDR and which was behind Twagiramungu’s electoral campaign. Twagiramungu was thus chasing a chimera, if he genuinely believed that he could make changes in the system.

¹⁴⁸Although the RDR *per se* had never been in power in Rwanda, many of its members come from the MRND, which had ruled Rwanda from 1973 until 1994. See section II. i. *The “Government in Exile”*; *Creation of the RDR*, p. 8.

¹⁴⁹Interview with Salomon Baravuga

¹⁵⁰The Head of the EU Election Observation Mission (EOM) to Rwanda, Colette Flesch, reported the harassment and arrests of Twagiramungu’s supporters and campaign managers, who were forced to denounce Twagiramungu, while Twagiramungu himself was under the close scrutiny of the DMI. See EU EOM to Rwanda: “Déclaration préliminaire des élections présidentielles”, (Kigali, 27th August 2003). Twagiramungu was the only candidate who could threaten Kagame, but his campaign was riddled with obstacles. The NEC accused him of preaching “ethnic propaganda”, which resulted in the confiscation of his campaign leaflets, and his voters were intimidated at the polling stations.

4.2. Reforms in Igihango: the Primacy of Politics

The restructuring of *Igihango* was completed in August 2003 after a process that aimed to reinforce the alliance over the three individual organisations. Whereas the three constituent parties have been autonomous and tended to operate on that basis, the objectives of the alliance changed in August. The new structure favours closer collaboration at the alliance level and the promotion of a team spirit. Within the new framework of *Igihango*, a more lucid organisation could emerge around a team of active young leaders.

At the level of the “old” *Igihango*, ARENA and *Nation-Imbaga* had generally co-ordinated well, owing to their non-military nature, as opposed to the FDLR’s insistence on a military component. The FDLR has tended to hide behind *Igihango*, leaving a shadow over its presence. When the DRC ban on the Hutu rebel groups in the country was proclaimed in September 2002, the alliance welcomed the ban, despite the continued presence of FDLR troops in the DRC.¹⁵¹ Although the three movements have a different ideology and outlook, they have brought about positive results, but the military arm of the FDLR has been a menace to the credibility of *Igihango*. The case of the Hutu rebels’ self-defence is now weak and the international community is becoming weary of the presence of foreign troops in the DRC, which are accused of impeding peace in the region. At a conference early in August 2003 ARENA and *Nation-Imbaga* had tried to shift the FDLR away from a military to a political role, in an effort to gain international sympathy for the alliance’s cause. Nevertheless, the FDLR does not yet feel fully in control of the situation and is faltering in its objective to clarify its position. The primary weakness of *Igihango* ultimately lies in this lack of comprehension and communication. Its principal objective is a *political* struggle. The partly military nature of the FDLR impedes the full pursuit of such an objective, but the political branch of the movement needs to lead the military wing.

¹⁵¹IRIN News: “DRC: Rwandan opposition group supports ban on rebels”, (Brussels, 27th September 2002)

At a conference held on 22nd August 2003 the process of reconstructing the ADRN-*Igihango* was concluded. Life was breathed into the faltering alliance and a more realistic and strong structure was fashioned. The division of labour has been divided into two poles – one in the US and the other in Europe, specifically Belgium. The organisation has been divided into an annual Congress, a new Executive Committee and an Arbitration Council. The Congress will be held in 2004 with up to five representatives from each organisation and a rotating Presidency, first to be held by the FDLR.¹⁵² The role of the FDLR has clearly been boosted. The seat of the Executive Committee has been moved to Brussels and the tasks are to be shared according to geographic proximity, making concrete results possible. The Presidency has remained in the hands of ARENA and US-based Augustin Kamongi, and the Vice-Presidency has been given to the “strong man” of the FDLR, Félicien Kanyamibwa, who is also based in the US. From the US the two figures will be in a position to closely collaborate and lobby. The most significant innovation has been the creation of a strong Secretariat-General in Europe.

¹⁵²Telephone conversation with Déo Mushayidi

Nation-Imbaga and the FDLR hold the Secretary-General and Deputy Secretary-General positions respectively. The Arbitration Council will seek to resolve problems and has been given a mediation role, again based in the two axes – the US and Belgium.¹⁵³

However, notwithstanding this positive step made towards the integration of the constituent entities of *Igihango*, the problems of the alliance have not been fully overcome. Despite pressure from ARENA and *Nation*, the FDLR has not yet signed a protocol of allegiance of its military arm to the political authority of *Igihango*.¹⁵⁴ In fact, the FDLR has itself been plagued by problems between its political and military wings. FDLR combatants in the DRC are allegedly frustrated with their political leaders for not being in touch with the problems they are facing due to the DRC peace process.¹⁵⁵ At the same time, the FDLR political leadership has purportedly marginalized certain military leaders, such as Paul Rwarakabije, who were beyond its control.¹⁵⁶

4.3. The Political Diaspora in Disarray: An Antagonistic Platform to the CPODR?

Seeing how the problems of the CPODR have stemmed from problems of the alliances themselves, *Igihango*'s weaknesses have caused problems for the Permanent Consultation. To make matters worse, the UFDR is currently in a state of crisis. By extension, the CPODR is also in crisis.

The root of the predicament can be traced back to a drive by the ADR to launch a new movement, the "Rwandan National Congress" (CNR). The project began by overtures of the ADR to the UFDR, particularly to the RDR within the latter alliance. It revolved around two options. The first was a "parliament-in-exile" and the second a new party that would be highly integrated and co-ordinated. RDR elements favoured the former and the ADR favoured the second option.¹⁵⁷ An ambitious, even polemical, "Common Declaration" between the UFDR and the ADR was issued after a meeting on 12th July 2003, in which the two groups demanded the modification of the Presidential and Parliamentary elections in a way that would allow the opposition to participate. In such a case, a common candidate would have been sought for the Presidential elections and a coalition government would have been prepared in the case of a parliamentary electoral victory. Finally, they declared that they will "take any means necessary" to stop their exclusion from the Rwandan political scene.¹⁵⁸ Such a bellicose attitude is not quite in line with the FRD credo of seeking a peaceful resolution. It also revealed a leadership confrontation in the UFDR, owing to the FRD's opposition to engage in the electoral process. It is worth noting that no mention was made of *Igihango*, despite its co-operation with the UFDR in the CPODR structure. The above-mentioned conditions concerning the electoral process were not met. The idea of involvement in the elections was dropped but the idea of launching the CNR, which

¹⁵³ADRN-Igihango: "Igihango se restructure et se reorganise", *Communiqué*, (Brussels, 23rd August 2003)

¹⁵⁴Interview made in Brussels, 10th November 2003. The source does not wish to be disclosed.

¹⁵⁵Interview made in Brussels, 28th October 2003. The source does not wish to be disclosed. Pressure on the Hutu rebels operating in the DRC is growing. On 16th October 2003 Kinshasa re-iterated its ban on Hutu rebels and its determination to oust them from the country, while MONUC has threatened to end the voluntary nature of the DDRRR (IRIN News: "DRC: Kabila orders ex-FAR and *Interahamwe* out of country", 17th October 2003).

¹⁵⁶ Interview made in Brussels, 10th November 2003.

¹⁵⁷ Telephone conversation with Jean Baptiste Mberabahizi

¹⁵⁸ UFDR & ADR-Isangano: "Déclaration Commune de l'UFDR et de l'ADR-Isangano sur la crise politique et le processus de démocratisation au Rwanda", (Brussels, 12th July 2003)

was concluded at that same meeting, was not. A team was put in place to set it in motion. Victoire Ingabire Umuhoza took the responsibility of swaying the FRD and *Igihango* to join and Jean Baptiste Mberabahizi was to contact Célestin Muhindura's Rwandan National Forum (RNF)¹⁵⁹ and the MCD.

As a "parliament-in-exile" the CNR would offer a structure where representatives of the different organisations would harmonise their ideology,¹⁶⁰ with a common leader who would also represent the opposition in exile, acting as spokesperson. The ADR's ambition is to concentrate the opposition forces and form a "super-party" around minimal political objectives— democratisation, national unity and peace and security for Rwanda and the region. Where the common leadership is concerned the heterogeneity of the various organisations renders this a Herculean task. On the other hand, the creation of a "super-party" raises objections and has merely served to induce infighting in the existing alliances. The appeal for unity begs the question of *why the ADR will not join the CPODR*. The ADR is obdurately opposed to joining an existing structure, but as a member of the consultation forum it would have the liberty to act on its beliefs and its work would not be impeded. Its intransigence is viewed with suspicion by the other organisations. Many in fact feel that the ADR President, Jean Baptiste Mberabahizi, has a hidden agenda¹⁶¹ and that James Gasana may be trying to break the opposition, led from a drive for the leadership of the political diaspora. A *single* party would close off the political space to the existing organisations. It would appear that the ADR aim of proselytising the UFDR was to wound the CPODR, under the guise of a new organisation. The CNR posed an antagonistic structure to the CPODR. Inasmuch as *Igihango* was hesitant to join the movement, the concurrent existence of the CNR and the CPODR was impossible. Yet without *Igihango*, the FRD would not join the CNR.¹⁶²

On 22nd August 2003 the UFDR explicitly stated its commitment to the CPODR. At a meeting with *Igihango* the decision to preserve the *acquis* and to invite the ADR to join the CPODR, ameliorating its structure through the collaboration of three alliances was made.¹⁶³ The following day the ADR repeated its ambition to set up a new organisation. Hiding behind the cloak of Alphonse Furuma, Jean Baptiste Mberabahizi affirmed that he lacked the mandate to join the existing platform.¹⁶⁴

Despite the UFDR's collective decision against the formation of a new organisation, on 25th August 2003 Victoire Ingabire Umuhoza bemused the alliance by resigning from the Presidency, leaving the UFDR in a state of suspension. The germ of the crisis rests in the fact that Victoire Ingabire Umuhoza did not also cede the Presidency of the RDR. By virtue of the UFDR *Collaboration Charter* the Presidency of the UFDR is to be held by the RDR until April 2004. As such, the alliance only has a Vice-President, Eugène Ndahayo, at its head. The RDR must now choose another official to complete the mandate of Victoire Ingabire Umuhoza.¹⁶⁵ Questions are now being raised over the possibility of the termination of the partnership, possibly in favour of a

¹⁵⁹ The RNF is a small civil society organisation based in the US.

¹⁶⁰ The RDR blames the heterogeneity of the organisations for the impasse of the opposition.

¹⁶¹ Kigali may in fact be trying to disrupt the opposition by placing agents to act as "an opposition to the opposition", but it is difficult to know who may be an agent of the regime.

¹⁶² Interview made in Brussels on 6th August 2003.

¹⁶³ CPODR: "Compte-rendu de la reunion de la CPODR du 22 août 2003", (Brussels, 25th August 2003)

¹⁶⁴ CPODR: "Compte-rendu de la reunion de la CPODR/ADR-Isangano du 23 août 2003", (Brussels, 25th August 2003)

¹⁶⁵ Telephone conversation with Jean de Dieu Tulikumana

fresh re-grouping with the ADR. Such a prospect is slight. It would be politically unsound to risk forsaking a well-functioning group for the creation of a new league with a smaller base. It is not to the RDR's advantage to do so.

The CNR has been a setback to the political opposition in exile. To embark upon a "super-party" before co-ordinating well at the level of base would be futile. It could also serve to discredit the opposition and it would ebb its efforts to crystallise into a "valid" interlocutor. The credibility and consistency of the opposition in the eyes of the international community would be undermined, as it has witnessed constant shuffling of the political diaspora. It could also be used by Kagame to point to infighting and instability. Furthermore, dismantling or even weakening the CPODR would be short-sighted, for it seems that if Kigali were to assume dialogue with the opposition, in all likelihood it would do so at the level of the Permanent Consultation. The CPODR has made important contacts with the European Union and with European governments. It has in many ways placed the Rwandan exiled opposition "on the map". It would be unwise to compromise a structure that has made some steps towards recognition as a valid opposition.

5. Conclusion: A Valid Interlocutor?

Rwanda is trapped in a situation of armed peace. Paul Kagame uses repressive state machinery to rule over the entire political space. Civil society is stillborn, political society has been stifled and the press has been silenced. The opposition to the regime has either been eliminated or forced to leave the country, leaving the regime politically and intellectually unchallenged in the interior. The population continues to live in a state of fear, exclusion, acute inequality and mass poverty, with no outlet to its wants.

As Kigali closed off, refusing to engage in dialogue with "divisionist" or "genocidal" elements, the diverse political movements in exile have opened up. The initially Hutu opposition that began to appear in exile in 1994 was buttressed by the arrival of a Tutsi political diaspora in 2000. This opened the way for inter-ethnic co-operation. The flight of the Tutsi was reassuring to the Hutu, who could see that even those belonging to the same ethnic group as Kagame were displeased with Rwandan governance. The two ethnic groups began to work together, with some Tutsi joining existing political movements and others forming new organisations with Hutu personalities in 2001. By 2002 a number of small movements were in place alongside three alliances – the UFDR, consisting of the mainly Hutu republicans of the RDR and the FRD, the social democratic ADR, which merged the Hutu CDA and the Tutsi MPD, and the most recent, ADRN-*Igihango*, which grouped the Tutsi-led ARENA and the mainly Hutu politico-military FDLR, both republican movements, with the bi-ethnic monarchist *Nation-Imbaga*. At the end of 2002 the UFDR and *Igihango* made a step towards further consolidation by co-operating in the "consultative forum" of the CPODR.

Kagame has persistently tried to tarnish the image of his opponents by accusing them mainly of “divisionism.” Hutu who were fleeing were labelled “*génocidaires*” and Tito Rutaremara had called them “invalid” interlocutors. The balance has changed now. It is difficult to accuse the opposition of divisionism when it is co-operating with the ethnic “other”. As a result, it is one step closer to being recognised as “valid.” Whereas Kagame preaches the need for “unity” and “reconciliation”, it is in exile that attempts at elite reconciliation are taking place.

Despite the diverse outlook of the opposition movements, there is an ideological convergence on the issues that need to be addressed. All organisations speak of consensual democracy, non-exclusion, justice and reconciliation, human rights, a revision of the role of the armed forces, and the issue of poverty. However, the movements diverge on the weight and the interpretation given to each point in question. The UFDR primarily focuses on justice and the fight against impunity and, within the alliance, the RDR also gives much attention to the pressing question of the army.¹⁶⁶ ARENA is concerned with restorative justice and reconciliation¹⁶⁷ and its ally in *Igihango, Nation-Imbaga* mainly focuses on the reconciliation of Rwandans and national unity, which is why it adheres to the installation of a king as a figure that would cut across the three ethnic groups. As a social political movement, the ADR-*Isangano* focuses principally on the eradication of poverty as the remedy to Rwandan ills. The predominantly Tutsi movement ARENA also gives considerable weight to the guarantee of the ethnic minorities.¹⁶⁸ The Tutsi continue to be concerned with the security of their ethnic group in a nation where the majority is overwhelmingly Hutu.

The different interpretations given to justice and reconciliation are also worth noting. Reconciliation is a broad-based concept that has become axiomatic. All organisations have condemned the genocide and the crimes committed by the RPF. Condemning the genocide has become indispensable to a movement’s credibility but also to reconciliation. That is not to say that movements are dishonest in their denunciation of the genocide, but some are focusing more on the crimes committed by the RPF during the civil war and in the post-genocide period than with the genocide. To date the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda has only charged Hutu for crimes, despite evidence against the RPF provided by the political opposition. The mandate of the ICTR is restricted to the period between 1st January 1994 and 31st December 1994, rather than beginning from October 1990 when the RPF invaded Rwanda. The Hutu feel that this has given the RPF a free hand to continue to commit crimes.¹⁶⁹ No Tutsi faces trial in the *gacaca* tribunals either. Whereas the genocide has been well documented and widely acknowledged, the RPF crimes have not. Kigali even refuses to recognise that tens of thousands of Hutu were also slaughtered in the genocide. Conventional wisdom has tended to treat the Tutsi *as a whole* as victims and the Hutu *as a whole* as culprits. The generalisation of guilt deeply frustrates the Hutu, even those who had taken a firm stand against “Hutu power”, and the discourse is increasingly

¹⁶⁶Interview with François Nzabimana

¹⁶⁷Interview with Gérard Karangwa

¹⁶⁸*Ibid.*

¹⁶⁹Nyemera, E.: “One-Sided Justice At the Rwanda Tribunal”, (s.l., s.d.),

becoming revisionist. They, therefore, choose to focus more on RPF crimes in an effort to “balance” the situation.

Nevertheless, all opposition movements in exile understand the value of reconciliation. Alliances are not merely tactical but they stem from the need to rise above the ethnic impasse and focus on political solutions. Seeing how the political elite has largely generated the waves of violence in Rwanda after 1959, including the 1994 genocide, a political reconciliation is necessary. It could then “trickle down” to the grassroots level.

The creation of the Permanent Consultation of the Rwandan Opposition has been especially important for the process of elite reconciliation. In this forum the bulk of the opposition has been able to communicate its points of view and to discuss possible solutions. Consultation is important in that it is a learning process. It offers the possibility to participate on an equal basis. Trust and mutual respect can emanate from co-operation, leading to a more democratic culture. The efforts to break the consultation in favour of a “Rwandan National Congress” on the other hand do not seem as positive. The CNR was advocated by those who wish to co-ordinate more and to “discipline” the opposition. It would either take the form of a “parliament-in-exile” or a merger of existing alliances. The democratic nature of such a structure is questionable. Attempts to create a “parliament-in-exile” would be futile without a population to represent. The aim of the political diaspora should not shift away from bringing democratisation to *Rwanda* and to represent the Rwandan *people*. A “super-party” contradicts the aim of ending the monopolisation of power by the RPF— another “super-party.” If the objective is to achieve pluralism and a voice for all in Rwanda, then there should likewise be a plurality of voices in the opposition in exile. The opposition has been plagued by a series of leadership struggles that has impeded the fruition of a culture of trust among the members of the organisations. The desire by personalities to lead or have an influential position within a movement deflects the opposition from its objective and renders appearances more important than the substance. Constant re-alignments of the movements can also serve to undermine its credibility, giving leeway to Kigali to point to “instability” and refuse to engage in dialogue. Kigali has made a step towards the recognition of the opposition as a “valid” interlocutor in March 2003 when the Rwandan Embassy in Brussels received the CPODR. It would seem a prudent choice for the ADR to join the consultation procedure, reinforcing the opposition through this forum.

The political diaspora has mainly taken the path of pressure politics through the international community, calling for dialogue. The alternative path— a military threat— has so far been avoided. However, after his crushing victory in the Presidential elections of 25th August 2003, and the RPF’s victory in September’s Parliamentary elections¹⁷⁰, Kagame and his *akazu* feel more assured. Despite the EU electoral observer mission’s report on “irregularities” in the electoral procedure, no objection to the outcome has been made.

¹⁷⁰ The RPF-led coalition gained 73.78% of the votes (IRIN News: “Ruling party wins landslide in legislative polls”, 8th October 2003).

The Italian Presidency of the European Union has congratulated Kagame,¹⁷¹ indicating that the international community is unwilling to acknowledge that there is a real problem. It may now be more difficult to sway the government to the negotiating table. Kigali's persistence to shut the opposition out of the Rwandan political scene has increased the possibility that some movements in the diaspora will choose the path of military destabilisation. Elements in the opposition are exasperated and point out that exclusion leads to radicalisation.¹⁷² When there is nothing left to lose, there could be everything to win by waging war. The FDLR maintains troops in the region of the Great Lakes, though their magnitude cannot be known. It even claims to maintain troops inside Rwanda. RPA deserters are also numerous among the opposition. The choice of waging war is now on the horizon. This may no longer be a question of *Hutu* infiltrations of and "insurgencies" in Rwanda. It may be a case of *Hutu and Tutsi* aiming for an end to their exclusion and a political opening.

An inclusive inter-Rwandese dialogue would offer the best solution to overcome the problems the country is facing. The opposition continues to demand that political and civil society be allowed to negotiate with the government to search for solutions to the fundamental problems of Rwanda that are acceptable to the population at large.¹⁷³ Inter-Rwandese dialogue would allow the population to channel its demands to reform and create the institutions that would secure their well-being and to achieve a pluralist democracy. The Rwandan government needs to acknowledge that the opposition in exile is a valid interlocutor. The mere fact that its only opposition is found *outside* Rwanda could prove to be dangerous and destabilising. The presence of armed opposition groups in the Great Lakes region raises the question of a potential military confrontation in Rwanda. The political diaspora, particularly the *Igihango* alliance, is in a position to check the armed forces if Kigali appears ready to negotiate. Kigali must therefore recognise the opposition and open up.

¹⁷¹Agence Europe: "EU/Rwanda: EU Welcomes Peaceful Presidential Elections but wants an Investigation of Cases of Fraud and Intimidation detected by EU Observers", in *Bulletin Quotidien Europe*, No. 8532, (Brussels, 2nd September 2003). Similarly, the Secretary-General of the UN, the US State Department and the majority of states have also congratulated Kagame.

¹⁷²E-mail communication with Charles Ndereyehe. Ndereyehe, Victoire Ingabire Umuhiza and Jean Baptiste Mberabahizi all claim to give precedence to a political solution, but if the intransigence of Kigali continues, they may have to consider the military option. Given the growing disaffection with the government, even *within* the RPA, Victoire Ingabire Umuhiza has claimed that it is possible to contact armed factions and organise a military intervention if it is deemed necessary. Also see ARENA & *Nation-Imbaga*: "Mémorandum sur le renforcement et une meilleure integration des activités au sein de l'Alliance *Igihango*", (22nd September 2003). The FRD seems to be among the few movements that are not considering the option of war.

¹⁷³CPODR: "Le Triomphe électoral du Général Kagame ne doit pas voiler les problèmes de fond", (Brussels, 27th August 2003)

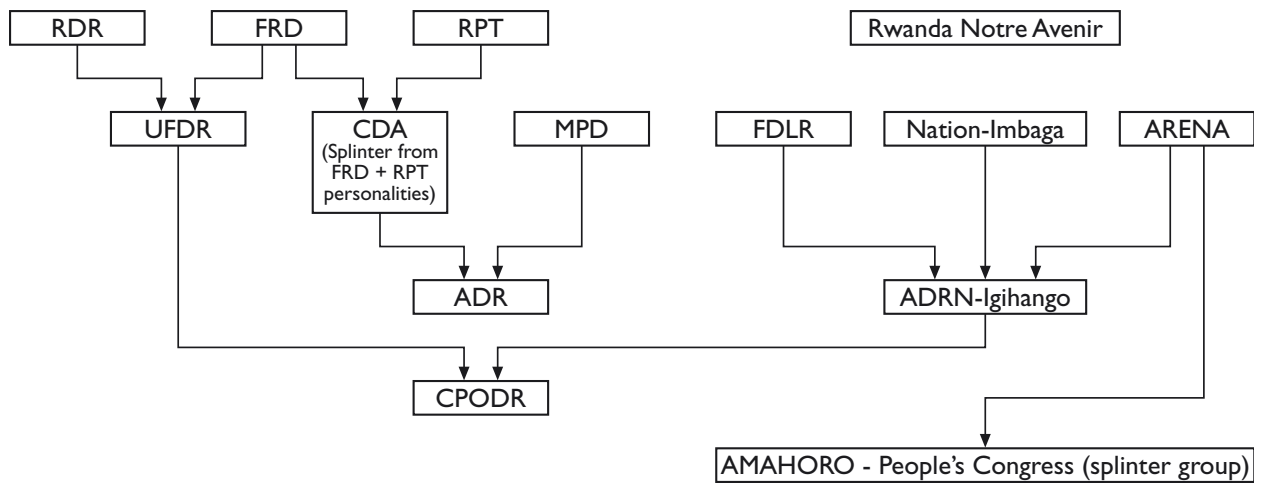
Annex 1: Glossary

ADEP-Mizero	Alliance for Democracy, Equality and Progress-Hope
ADFL	Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire
ADR	Rwanda Democratic Alliance
ADRN-Igihango	Alliance for Democracy and National Reconciliation
ALiR	Army for the Liberation of Rwanda, Rwandan Hutu rebels including ex-FAR and Interahamwe
ARENA	Alliance for the Rebirth of the Nation
AMAHORO	Movement created from ARENA split
ARI	Rwandan Information Agency
CDA	African Democratic Congress
CNR	Rwandan National Congress
CPODR	Permanent Consultation of the Rwandese Democratic Opposition
DDRRR	Disarmament, Demobilisation, Repatriation, Reintegration and Resettlement
DMI	Department of Military Intelligence
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
EOM Rwanda	EU Election Observation Mission to Rwanda
ESO	External Service Organisation
FAC	Congolese Armed Forces
FAR	Rwandan Armed Forces, former Rwandan National Army
FDLR	Rwandan Liberation Democratic Forces
FRD	Democratic Forces for Resistance
GID	Initiative Group for Dialogue
Ibuka	Association of Genocide Survivors
ICTR	International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda
Interahamwe	Militias that took part in the genocide
MCD	Movement for Change and Democracy
MDR	Democratic Republican Movement, banned party of Rwanda
MDR-Benelux	Democratic Republican Movement (new opposition party in the Benelux countries)
MONUC	UN Observation Mission in the Congo
MPD	Movement for Peace and Democracy
NEC	National Electoral Commission
Nation-Imbaga	Monarchist opposition movement
PL	Liberal Party, member of government coalition
PSD	Social Democrat Party, member of government coalition
PSR	Rwandan Socialist Party, member of government coalition

RCD	Congolese Rally for Democracy
RDR	Rally for the Return of Refugees and Democracy in Rwanda
RNF	Rwandan National Forum
RNLM	Rwandan National Liberation Movement, old Monarchist party
RPA	Rwandan Patriotic Army, armed wing of the RPF, the Rwandan National Army
RPF	Rwandan Patriotic Front
RPT	Rwanda Pour Tous (Rwanda For All)
TNA	Transitional National Assembly
UDR	Rwandan Democratic Union
UFDR	Union of Rwandese Democratic Forces
UNAR	National Union of Rwanda, old Monarchist party
URD	Rwandese Union for the Public and Democracy

Annex 2 Forming Movements and Alliances*

* Adapted from ICG: (November 2002), p.23



Annex 3

Executive Committees of the Movements in Exile

AMAHORO-People's Congress

(Ottawa, May 2002)

President: *Alexandre KIMENYI*

Vice-President: *Jeff NSENGIMANA*

Secretary-General: *Gratien RUDAKUBANA*

ARENA

(Ottawa, March 2001)

President: *Augustin KAMONGI*

First Vice-President: *Joseph NGARAMBE*

Second Vice-President: *Emmanuel KARIZIYA*

Secretary-General: *Gérard KARANGWA*

FDLR

(Nasho, May 2000)

President: *Ignace MURWANASHYAKA*

Vice-President: *Jean Marie Vianney HIGIRO*

Secretary-General: *Félicien KANYAMIBWA*

External Affairs Commissioner: *Christophe HAKIZABERA*

Inter-Rwandese Dialogue Commissioner: *Alexis NSHIMYIMANA*

Finance Commissioner: *Bonaventure HAKIZIMANA*

Spokesman: *Augustin DUKUZE*

FRD

(Brussels, March 1996)

President: *Eugène NDAHAYO*

First Vice-President: *Emmanuel MUHIRE*

Second Vice-President: *Dominique HABYAREMYE*

Secretary-General: *Jean de Dieu TULIKUMANA*

MCD

(Brussels, 2002)

President: *Evariste NDUNGUTSE*

Vice-President: *Alphonse NSHIMYIMANA*

Secretary-General: *Alain MANIRAGUHU*

Treasurer: *Eric HABINEZA*

MDR*

(Brussels, July 2003)

- President: *Jean Marie Vianney NKEZABERA*
- Vice-President: *Marie NATUZE*
- Spokesman: *Prospère CYIZA*

* The movement is still being organised. There is no Executive Committee yet, but a Committee of Co-ordination.

NATION-Imbaga Y'Inyabutatu Nyarwanda

(Brussels, February 2001)

- General Delegate: *Joseph NDAHIMANA*
- External Affairs Delegate: *Charles KAREMANO*
- Information Delegate: *Déogratias MUSHAYIDI*
- Finance Delegate: *François INGABIRE*
- Planning Delegate: *Didier KAREMERA*

RDR

(Mugunga, April 1995)

- President: *Victoire Ingabire UMUHOZA*
- First Vice-President: *Emmanuel NYEMERA*
- Second Vice-President: *Innocent NSENGIMANA*
- Spokesman: *Emmanuel NYEMERA*
- Political Affairs Commissioner: *Charles NDEREYEHE*
- Diplomatic Affairs & External Relations Commissioner:
Jean Napomescen NGAHURURU
- Finance Commissioner: *Claudia KANAMUGIRA*

Annex 4

Executive Committees of the Alliances

ADR-Isangano: CDA + MPD

(Brussels, 31st December 2001)

- President: *Dr. Jean Baptiste Mberabahizi* (CDA)
- First Vice-President: *Major Alphonse FURUMA* (MPD)
- Second Vice-President: *Dr. Nkiko NSENGIMANA* (CDA)
- Secretary-General: *Déo LUKYAMUZI* (CDA)
- Chairman of the Commission of Security of Persons & Property (PPS): *Major Gérard NTASHAMAJE* (former member of Nation-Imbaga)
- Chairman of the Commission of Planning (CP): *Dr. Dismas NSENGIYAREMYE* (CDA)
- Chairman of the Mobilisation Council (PC): *Captain Frank TEGA* (MPD)
- Spokesman: *Sixbert MUSANGAMFURA* (CDA)
- SPP Commissioner: *Major Frank BIZIMUNGU* (MPD)
- SPP Commissioner: *Major Michael MUPENDE* (MPD)

ADR-Ingihango: ARENA + FDLR + Nation-Imbaga

(Bad Honnef, March 2002)

- President: *Augustin KAMONGI* (ARENA)
- Vice-President & Defence Commissioner: *Félicien KANYAMIBWA* (FDLR)
- Secretary-General: *Joseph NDAHIMANA* (Nation-Imbaga)
- Deputy Secretary-General & Planning, Analysis and Strategy
- Commissioner: *Bonaventure HAKIZIMANA* (FDLR)
- Treasurer: *Gérard KARANGWA* (ARENA)
- Secretary of External Relations: *Christophe HAKIZABERA* (FDLR)
- Secretary of Political Mobilisation: *Deus KAGIRANEZA* (ARENA)
- Secretary of Information & Spokesman: *Déogratias MUSHAYIDI* (Nation-Imbaga)
- Secretary of Justice and National Reconciliation: *Marie Goretti ABAYIZIGIRA* (FDLR)

UFDR: FRD + RDR

(Brussels, September 1998)

- President: *Victoire Ingabire UMUHOZA* (RDR)*
- Vice-President: *Eugène NDAHAYO* (FRD)
- Secretary-General & Treasurer: *Jean de Dieu TULIKUMANA* (FRD)
- Deputy Secretary General: *Charles NDEREYEHE* (RDR)
- Treasurer: *Emmanuel MUHIRE* (FRD)
- Spokesman: *Emmanuel NYEMERA* (RDR)

* As President of the RDR, Victoire Ingabire Umuhoza was due to hold the position until 27th April 2004, but resigned from the Presidency of the UFDR on 25th August 2003 but not from that of the RDR. By the UFDR Collaboration Charter, the position of President and Vice-President rotates between the Presidents of the two movements.

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