



Alliance Linking Leaders in Education and the Services (ALLIES)



Joint Research Project  
Rwanda 2012

Initial Findings Report



**Cover Photograph (bottom of page): Amy Ouellette**

**Misty clouds hover over green hills in northwest Rwanda Musanze District, surrounding the Mutobo Demobilization and Reintegration Center where hundreds of ex-combatants reside. These Rwandans are returning to their home country after years spent as a part of armed faction groups in the neighboring eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. The reintegration services provided at this center are part of a national effort in Rwanda which began early in 1997 to reintegrate former armed actors into economic, social and military landscape of the country.**

---

# ALLIES

---

ALLIANCE LINKING LEADERS IN EDUCATION AND THE SERVICES

---

Joint Research Project Rwanda

Initial Findings Report

October 2012

ALLIES takes no institutional position on policy issues. All statements of fact and expressions of opinion contained in this publication are the sole responsibility of the authors.

The material in this report may not be reproduced in whole or in part in any form, without written permission from the author(s). For information, write the Alliance Linking Leaders in Education and the Services, c/o Tufts Institute for Global Leadership, 96 Packard Avenue, Medford, MA 02155.

<http://www.tuftsgloballeadership.org/programs/allies>

[alliesprograms@gmail.com](mailto:alliesprograms@gmail.com)

© 2012 by Alliance Linking Leaders in Education and the Services

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A special thank you our connector between these two worlds of the United States and Rwanda, Seth Karamage, for his dream and support at every point in the process. *Murakoze cyane.*

We could not have realized Joint Research Project Rwanda and this initial findings report without the support of many people. While we cannot list everyone to whom we owe the deep gratitude, we would like to name some of these people. To all who supported this ALLIES JRP in Rwanda, we express our sincere appreciation.

Lt. Col. Ben Paganelli, USAF, Ret.

Brig. Gen. Ferdinand Safari, RDF

Dr. Hugh Liebert

Sherman Teichman

Maj. James Golby, USA

Heather Barry

CDR Arthur Gibb, USN

Capt. Augustine, RDF

The Rwandan Ministry of Defense, in particular the J5 office.

The continued support of Tufts University's Institute for Global Leadership and the US Naval Academy Commandant's Operations Department.

The students in the ALLIES program, especially the ALLIES leadership team and Aparna Ramanan at Tufts University and Malik Harris at the US Naval Academy.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	<b>Abbreviations</b>	1
II.	<b>Kinyarwanda Words</b>	2
III.	<b>Introduction</b>	3
IV.	<b>Impact of the Rwanda Defense Force's Historical Narrative</b> <i>Taylor S. Allen, US Military Academy, 2014</i>	6
V.	<b>Civilian Perception of the Rwandan Military</b> <i>Emily McCarthy, US Military Academy, 2013</i>	9
VI.	<b>The Rwanda Defense Force and Economic Development</b> <i>Alex Dobyen, Tufts University, 2015</i>	12
VII.	<b>Peace Support Operations in the Context of Civil-Military Relations</b> <i>Eric Davids, US Naval Academy, 2014</i>	15
VIII.	<b>Balancing Order and Civil Liberties: The Inherent Challenge</b> <i>Jordan Rettie, US Naval Academy, 2014</i>	18
IX.	<b>Creative Arts in Civil-Military Relations</b> <i>Linda Zhang, Boston University, 2013</i>	22
X.	<b>Women's Roles in Civil-Military Relations</b> <i>Amy Ouellette, Tufts University 2012</i>	24
XI.	<b>Conclusion</b>	28
XII.	<b>Annex</b>	31

## ABBREVIATIONS

ALLIES: Alliance Linking Leaders in Education and the Services<sup>1</sup>

FDI: Foreign direct investment

GBV: Gender-based violence

GoR: Government of Rwanda

JRP: Joint Research Project<sup>2</sup>

NUR: National University of Rwanda

NURC: National Unity and Reconciliation Commission

PSO: Peace Support Operations

RNP: Rwanda National Police

RPA: Rwandan Patriotic Army

RPF: Rwandan Patriotic Front

RDF: Rwanda Defense Force

SOE: State-owned enterprise

---

<sup>1</sup> a student group launched by the Institute for Global Leadership at Tufts University which has since expanded to multiple civilian and military college campuses around the United States

<sup>2</sup> a program offered through ALLIES. A select group of students from civilian and military universities embark on the experience of living and working together in a foreign country for a set period of time, together conducting research on an issue of international importance.

## **KINYARWANDA WORDS**

*Ingando*: a program of civic education camp in which all rising college students spend three weeks in an army camp studying Rwandan history, civics, and patriotism while receiving rudimentary military training

*Inkotanyi*: a Kinyarwanda word used to reference the RPA

*Inyenzi*: a Kinyarwanda word which translates to cockroach; a term, often derogatory, used in connection to Tutsis or particular groups of Tutsis

*Itorero*: classes on Rwandan history for high school graduates

*Umuganda*: project mandating monthly community service days

## **I. Introduction**

The Alliance Linking Leaders In Education and the Service (ALLIES) was founded at Tufts University by the Institute of Global Leadership in 2006 to strengthen America's civil-military relations at a grassroots level. ALLIES provides a forum for undergraduate students to discuss current civil-military issues through a variety of initiatives involving chapters from the service academies and civilian institutions. The overall goal of ALLIES is to create a new generation of informed civilian and military leaders ready to tackle 21st century challenges in an integrated manner.

Joint Research Projects (JRPs) are one of ALLIES core inter-chapter initiatives. They are conducted annually by ALLIES members in order to provide participants the opportunity to investigate topics of shared interest in a civil-military setting. They align with the ALLIES mission and enhance the participants' understanding of both military and civilian perspectives and approaches, while also creating relationships which could prove useful in the participants' future careers.

The 2012 JRP to Rwanda was unique in its method of inception. Generally, the prospective participants choose a country that is of particular interest to them and subsequently plan and execute a research project, with the overall product being a report on the group's findings. The concept of this JRP was originally suggested by Rwandan citizens, as opposed to ALLIES students. The former Rwandan Defense Attaché, BGen Ferdinand Safari, and a former Institute for Global Leadership Tufts Initiative for Leadership and International Perspective (TILIP) EPIIC participant<sup>3</sup> and friend of ALLIES named Seth Karamage first envisioned the project. On 19 April 2012, BGen Safari published a memorandum officially inviting ALLIES to Rwanda to perform a collaborative JRP with the Defense and Education ministries of Rwanda. Seven ALLIES members decided to participate and developed a plan of action that aligned with BGEN Safari's vision.

---

<sup>3</sup> EPIIC stands for the Education for Public Inquiry and International Citizenship, a year-long course at Tufts University through the Institute for Global Leadership. During the second semester of the course, the class presents a symposium that is attended by an international delegation of students through the TILIP program.

The goal of this JRP was different from previous ALLIES trips because of the expectation for enhanced collaboration between Rwandans and the American participants and also because of the envisioned sustained relationship between Rwanda and ALLIES. This vision affected the research since the group received an unprecedented amount of support from the Rwandan Ministry of Defense on logistical issues such as transportation, lodging, and interview arrangements. The discussion of findings and writing of the paper, however, was performed solely among the ALLIES members. After sixteen days of meetings, the research group spent approximately 75 hours interviewing more than 60 Rwandans in 23 interviews. The group's time in country afforded them significant insight into the nature of Rwandan civil-military relations, allowing them to identify some essential aspects of those relations and suggest potential topics for further investigation.

Prior to the group's departure, each student participant identified a specific research focus relevant to civil-military relations and unique to their individual interests. The topics investigated during this research project and discussed in detail in this paper include: women's roles in shaping civil-military relations, the relationship between the creative arts and civil-military perceptions, the impact of Rwanda's historical narrative on relations between the military and civilian society, the Rwandan Defense Force's (RDF's) Peace Support Operations, the military's impact on economic development, civilian perception of the military, and the balance between order and civil liberties. The RDF J5 (Division of Civil-Military Relations) generously coordinated with various institutions in Rwanda to schedule meetings pertinent to each of the topics. Those interviewed represented both civilian and military sectors of Rwandan society. The majority of the interviews were attended by all student participants and advisors, as well as the J5 facilitator. The research questions intentionally fell under multiple disciplines; the success of this research group shows that the nature of civil-military relations can be explored effectively when discussed from an interdisciplinary mindset.

Learning about Rwanda's civil-military relations through diverse lenses, the group identified four common findings. The broad observations about the state of civil-military relations are provided here as a starting point for the paper. The next piece of the document discusses the participants' specific areas of

interest. The paper concludes by an examination of the potential for a continued relationship between ALLIES and Rwandan students and an assessment of the implications of this particular JRP for future ALLIES work.

Despite the varied research topics, the group noted the recurrence of four common themes throughout their fieldwork. Each of the researchers' individual sections addresses these key findings, which are:

1. Rwanda's unique history plays a determining role in the current state of national unity.
2. The RDF, in conjunction with the government, champions "homegrown solutions" to issues of economic and social development.
3. A need for self-expression is often perceived to be less important than the need for national security.
4. The RDF presence pervades nearly every aspect of Rwandan society.

Any discussion about Rwanda's civil-military relations must include the role Rwanda's history plays in the current state of national unity. The Rwandan Patriotic Army (RPA) played a key role in the national reconciliation process immediately after genocide. Most civilians remember the RPA as heroes during the genocide, and this image has contributed to widespread civilian support of current military operations. In the current system, soldiers and civilians cooperate to create a sense of national unity through initiatives that range from economic development projects to the arts.

The Rwandan government approaches economic development challenges by instituting homegrown solutions that reflect traditional values. For example, *Ingando* and *Itorero*, classes on Rwandan history for high school graduates, were created to systematically educate youth about the nation's past. *Umuganda*, a project mandating monthly community service days, is another homegrown initiative which encourages domestic cooperation on community service projects. The RDF has also worked hard to improve women's rights and encourage women's education. As a result of these

programs, women now play a much greater role in all aspects of society and contribute to the country's workforce and the overall economic capacity.

The third finding deals with the role that media and the arts play in maintaining national stability. The general populace seems to recognize that the importance of national security supersedes the desire for self-expression. The power of the media is particularly fresh in peoples' memories, as the media was the primary transmitter of genocidal ideology in 1994. The current administration is attempting to balance free speech with their security concerns. For instance, newspapers and news outlets are in the process of privatizing, but the administration is still sensitive and careful of what gets published. Writers, artists, musicians are all aware of their impact and they use the media to promote themes of unity, peace, and community. They also consciously refrain from making art that may undermine the current state of order.

The group's final observation was of the overall importance of the RDF to civilian society. Domestically, the military participates in a plethora of civil society activities not related to war fighting, ranging from infrastructure to gender awareness. These non-traditional activities that the military participates in contribute to the positive civilian perception of the RDF. This positive perception allows the nation's military to pursue ambitious expeditionary goals without facing domestic opposition.

## **II. Impact of the Rwanda Defense Force's Historical Narrative**

*By Taylor S. Allen, US Military Academy, 2014*

The RDF enjoys a privileged position in Rwandan society as a result of the history of the "War of Liberation." This narrative has been popularly perpetuated by the common man. As memories of the genocide fade, the RDF and government are taking a more active role in managing the historic memory of the Rwandan people.

Most educated Rwandans share a uniform vision of their past. Pre-colonial Rwanda is identified as a nation in which the socio-economic classes of Tutsi, Hutu and Twa co-existed peacefully under the

leadership of the *mwami* (king). Rwanda is distinguished from surrounding countries because of its unity and militancy. It is often emphasized that no slave-trader ever trod within Rwanda, a particular point of pride for the present-day RDF who see themselves as descendants of the military men responsible for Rwanda's past security. The German colonial period is basically unremembered, so the "colonial period" in Rwandan memory extends from 1917 to 1994. The Belgian colonial period is remembered for the forced conversion of socioeconomic distinctions between Tutsis and Hutus to ethnic ones. The memory of the Congolese soldiers who controlled Rwanda on behalf of the Belgian government is also powerful. Independence is seen as an attempt by the Belgians to replace direct governance with governance by their "colonialist houseboys" in PARME-HUTU. The *Inyenzi* Tutsi opposition of the 1960's and the Rwandan Patriotic Front of the late 1980's and beyond are seen as anti-colonialist, rather than anti-government.

The popular memory is in line with academic accounts of Rwandan history until 1994. The academic (and Western) narrative of the 1994 Rwandan genocide is one of failure to manage the legacy of colonialism and failure to stop a humanitarian strategy. Western leaders such as former President Bill Clinton and former UNAMIR commander Lt. Gen. Romeo Dallaire imagine that they could have stopped the genocide and thus feel responsible for the tragedy. Rwandans, however, also remember the genocide as a component of the "War of Liberation" in which the Rwandan Patriotic Army (RPA) *Inkotanyi* stopped the killings. Rwandans generally downplay the "foreignness" of the RPA as Ugandan refugees. The notion that RPA did not emerge victorious from the conflict with perfectly clean hands has been well-established, but is inconsequential. The missteps of the *Inkotanyi* are overshadowed by their successes. The RPA first fought off the distinctly colonial, Belgian-trained-and-supplied *genocidaires* and then the French soldiers occupying Butare, dislodging the last "colonial" army in the country. The memory of the genocide in the minds of the Rwandan people is one of Western failure and RPA victory, and is the source of the immense respect and power enjoyed by the present RDF.

The national network of genocide commemoration museums are supported by foreign donors such as the US-based Aegis Trust and tell the tragic genocide narrative without the victorious elements.

Their displays blame the Belgians and do *mention* the RPA, but Paul Kagame (who Rwandans perceive as the leader who stopped the genocide), comes off as a minor figure compared to Romeo Dallaire (who did not stop the genocide). The tragic narrative is apparent at the Kigali Genocide Memorial. It is even more blatant at the Butare Genocide Memorial, where plaques mark where French soldiers played volleyball fifty meters from weeks-old mass graves during Operation Turquoise.

Preaching to the RDF about the successes of their predecessors is unnecessary. Almost all officers above the rank of captain served in the RPA, many as enlisted soldiers who were encouraged to join the officer corps starting in the late 1990's. Most senior non-commissioned officers are also RPA veterans. The RDF has no official relationship with the national museum network that commemorates the genocide. While it is not uncommon for soldiers to visit the genocide memorials scattered around the country, there is no special effort made to encourage them to do so. They must come on their own time and out of uniform. When one RPA veteran was asked to explain this, he said: "The soldiers do not visit because they prefer to hear the stories of their brother soldiers, who remember when there was still blood on the ground." Within the RDF tradition, oral history is far more powerful than any recorded narrative.

The memories of the people are of particular importance to both the RDF and the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) that governs the country because of how interlinked the genocide story is with their prestige and authority. In order to ensure that such important memories do not fade, the National Unity and Reconciliation Council (NURC) has since 1998 managed a program of civic education camp called *ingando* in which all rising college students spend three weeks in an army camp studying Rwandan history, civics, and patriotism while receiving rudimental military training. Two years of primary school social studies teaching are also devoted to Rwandan history and values. The Rwandans may firmly believe that "History has been overcome" in the twenty years since the genocide, but the history of how history was overcome will not soon be forgotten.

### III. Civilian Perception of the Rwandan Military

By Emily McCarthy, *US Military Academy*, 2013

Public opinion of the RDF seems to be overwhelmingly positive. National and international surveys indicate that the RDF in fact enjoys more support from civilian society than most militaries. In a recent Gallup Poll gauging citizens' perceptions of personal safety in their countries, Rwanda was ranked the most secure of 148 countries, with 92 percent of participants feeling secure enough to "walk alone at night."<sup>4</sup> According to the 2010 Rwanda Governance Scorecard, 97.4 percent of citizens polled "expressed high levels of trust in the RDF."<sup>5</sup> Interviewee testimony largely supported those statistics. Government officials, service members, students, and professors interviewed expressed largely the same sentiments when asked how they regarded the military: it is a trustworthy, admirable, and professional force. Apparent public support for the RDF seems largely to be a result of the country's unique historical narrative as well as the military's influence in all sectors of society.

Most Rwandese interviewed cited similar experiences when explaining their trust in the RDF. Multiple interviewees contrasted the Rwandan military with African forces from other nations. The difference seems to be their perception of personal security; in other countries, soldiers are regarded suspiciously and even feared when seen in public, whereas in Rwanda, according to a professor from the National University "the military means protection."<sup>6</sup> The RDF's role in combating gender-based violence (GBV) was also cited as evidence of the trustworthiness and professionalism of the force. According to members of the RDF Gender Desk, the Rwanda National Police (RNP) Gender Desk, the Gender Monitoring Office, and the Ministry of Gender, both military and the police forces in Rwanda are at the forefront of efforts to eradicate sex- and gender-based violence among the civilian community. That soldiers are seen as sources of support for victims of GBV rather than potential perpetrators (as is a

---

<sup>4</sup> Clancey Bertane, "Latin Americans Least Likely Worldwide to Feel Safe," *GallupPolls*, August 3, 2012, <http://www.gallup.com/poll/156236/Latin-Americans-Least-Likely-Worldwide-Feel-Safe.aspx?ref=more> (accessed August 7, 2012).

<sup>5</sup>Rwanda Governance Advisory Council, *Rwanda Governance Scorecard* (Kigali, July 2010), 14.

<sup>6</sup>National University of Rwanda, Interview by JRP, Butare, August 6, 2012.

common problem internationally)<sup>7</sup>, is especially indicative of military professionalism. By far the most frequent explanation of trust in the military, however, involved memories of the RPA “saving” the country during and immediately following the 1994 genocide. Many interviewees seemed motivated primarily by efforts to avoid a recreation of the 1994 genocide. The director of the Rwanda Peace Academy, for example, reminded us that “you do not appreciate the importance of peace until you lose it.”<sup>8</sup> Similarly, the Executive Secretary of the Media High Council, in explaining government oversight of the media, professed that “we do not want to fall back into that same trap [of the genocide].”<sup>9</sup> The RDF presence in all sectors of society seems to be associated with public perception of safety and genocide avoidance. Even university students, who were between two and six years old in 1994, explained the RPA’s role in ending the genocide and rebuilding the country.

There was an element of discontinuity in some interviewees’ responses, however. One university student stated initially that “you cannot distinguish a military man from a civilian,” but later continued to say that the perception of soldiers is “good because of the role they played in stopping the genocide.”<sup>10</sup> The former statement implies that the soldier should not be considered either ‘good’ or ‘bad’ by virtue of his service alone; the latter professes the opposite, creating a distinction between the soldier and civilian. Similar sentiments were echoed by Rwandese civilians and soldiers alike. The cause of this inconsistency is uncertain. It is possible that both ideas were developed independently by the speakers, despite their apparent exclusivity. It is also possible that they were taught and internalized (perhaps at *ingando/itorero*). It is also important to note that an RDF officer was present at nearly every interview, which may have discouraged the open expression of negative sentiments. During many of our interviews, civilians looked to the RDF officer present for confirmation of their answers, and often directed

---

<sup>7</sup> Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion, Interview by JRP, Kigali, July 25, 2012.

<sup>8</sup> Rwandan Peace Academy, Interview by JRP, Kigali, July 24, 2012.

<sup>9</sup> Media High Council, Interview by JRP, Kigali, August 4, 2012.

<sup>10</sup> National University of Rwanda, Interview by JRP, Butare, August 6, 2012.

statements of thanks such as “I would like to appreciate the defense here”<sup>11</sup> and “these activities the university is running are because of the security we get from the RDF”<sup>12</sup> to the RDF officer.

Members of the international community were somewhat more open to questioning the RDF than were native Rwandese. Although attitudes toward the RDF among non-Rwandese living in Rwanda certainly varied, one non-profit organization’s employee expressed concern regarding the influence of the military in civilian sectors of society and the control of the government in general, particularly in regards to laws against corruption. He stated that the laws were “very harsh...sometimes, in my opinion, too harsh.”<sup>13</sup> Media watchdogs such as World Freedom House and Committee to Protect Journalists, though not specifically critical of the military, frequently chastise the Rwandan government for their perceived control of the media.<sup>14</sup> Polls gauging international opinion are also less optimistic than those gauging national opinion, especially regarding civil participation in government. Rwanda scored in the bottom 11<sup>th</sup> percentile in Transparency International’s measure of Voice and Accountability, which “captures perceptions of the extent to which a country’s citizens are able to participate in selecting their government, as well as freedom of expression, freedom of association, and a free media.”<sup>15</sup> Human Rights Watch’s World Report for Rwanda in 2012 stated that “members of opposition parties, journalists, and other perceived critics of the government were arrested, detained, and tried, some solely for expressing their views.”<sup>16</sup> These international opinions contradict the publicly expressed positive relationship between civilians and the military in Rwanda, especially in light of the circumstances under which our interviews were conducted.

Overall, the RDF appears to be a far more professional military than its neighboring counterparts. It plays a significant role in nearly all aspects of government, partnering with many institutions including

---

<sup>11</sup> Transparency International Rwanda, Interview by JRP, Kigali, August 2, 2012.

<sup>12</sup> Kigali Independent University, Interview by JRP, Kigali, July 31, 2012.

<sup>13</sup> Transparency International Rwanda, Interview by JRP, Kigali, August 2, 2012.

<sup>14</sup> Executive Secretary Media High Council, Interview by JRP, Kigali, August 3, 2012.

<sup>15</sup> “Rwanda,” *Transparency International*, 2012, <http://www.transparency.org/country#RWA> (accessed August 9, 2012).

<sup>16</sup> “World Report 2012: Rwanda,” *Human Rights Watch*, 2012, <http://www.hrw.org/world-report-2012/world-report-2012-rwanda> (accessed August 7, 2012).

the Ministries of Gender, Agriculture, Infrastructure, et cetera. Memory of the genocide seems to drive Rwandese perception of the military, although it is unclear whether the lack of discontent expressed accurately reflects honest national opinion or is a result of the circumstances of our interviews. International perception of the RDF is more skeptical than national perception, calling into question the honesty of the opinions relayed to us during our interviews.

#### **IV. The Rwanda Defense Force and Economic Development**

*By Alex Doby, Tufts University, 2015*

The Rwandan military's unusually large role in economic development has few parallels in other nations. There are two main ways in which the RDF contributes to economic development: participating in public works projects and contributing to Rwanda's high level of security. Another facet of their contributions is the military's management of state-owned enterprises (SOEs). These important contributions, which give the military a key role in economic development, are a unique, homegrown response that has its roots in the post-genocide reconstruction of Rwanda.

The RDF views itself as a cornerstone in Rwanda's economic development, with projects aiding the local population a central peacetime responsibility. According to RDF Historian Major Gerard Nyirimanzi, this practice dates to the period immediately following the genocide when it was necessary for the RPA to play the primary role in rebuilding the country.<sup>17</sup> It has since been enshrined in Article 173 of Rwanda's constitution as an obligation of the RDF.<sup>18</sup> Construction of schools, hospitals, roads, bridges, et cetera and participation in agricultural work are often cited as the primary avenues through which peace-building activity occurs. These activities can include assistance in major government initiatives; for example, the RDF participated in the Kagame government's drive to eradicate thatched-roof houses by

---

<sup>17</sup> Maj. Gerard Nyirimanzi, Historian, RDF, Interview by JRP, Kigali, July 26, 2012.

<sup>18</sup> Selection from Article 173, The Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda, 2003: "Rwanda Defense Forces"... has the following duties: ... (4) to contribute to the development of the country; (5) to participate in international peace keeping missions, humanitarian assistance and training."

constructing replacement housing projects. Alternatively, the RDF may provide technical assistance to private contractors working in construction. A major component of the RDF's peace-building work takes place during Army Week (which actually takes place over several weeks). During Army Week, the RDF embarks on a program of infrastructure developments as well as medical treatment aimed at genocide victims, using soldiers detached from the RDF's regiment of medics. Admiration for the uniquely Rwandan development activities of the RDF, in particular Army Week, was expressed by Rwandans at all levels. Many saw them as essential to understanding both the RDF and Rwanda's development, which reinforces the concept of the RDF as playing a vital role across various areas of Rwandan society.

These projects are overseen within the RDF by the J-5 at the ministry level, but S-5 officers exercise much authority at lower levels. S-5 officers at the battalion level serve as liaison officers to local governments in order to facilitate RDF participation in local development projects. Interestingly, the organizational hierarchy of the RDF more or less aligns with the local governmental structure of Rwanda, allowing CIMIC staff (also referred to in contexts outside of the RDF headquarters as Political Commissars) to serve as liaisons to their counterparts at corresponding levels, with battalion-level S-5 officers liaising with their district-level counterparts (with roughly one battalion per district, each S-5 officer coordinates projects with one or two district governments). The same applies to division-level CIMIC staff, who work with provincial governments (again, with roughly one S-5 officer per province). RDF construction work is in high demand; as Captain Geremi Rutayisire, the S-5 officer assigned to the 9<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion, remarked, "local governments want to use the RDF because it is much cheaper than hiring a construction company."<sup>19</sup> In order to determine which projects to undertake, the RDF consults with local governments to identify the greatest needs of the community.<sup>20</sup> This process of involving military staff officers in local governments is uncommon in other countries, but Rwandans remark that it is an effective use of RDF soldiers.

---

<sup>19</sup> Cptn. Geremi Rutayisire, Interview by JRP, Kigali, July 31, 2012.

<sup>20</sup> Ministry of Infrastructure, Interview by JRP, August 7, 2012.

The Ministry of Defense also owns a number of SOEs in a variety of sectors. Horizon Construction Ltd. is a major Ministry of Defense-owned construction business, first founded under the auspices of the RDF Engineering Regiment,<sup>21</sup> which was Rwanda's first domestic builder of asphalt roads. The construction firm is part of Horizon Group, a Ministry of Defense-owned holding company which also includes Horizon Logistics, a company supporting Rwandan peacekeeping operations, and SOPYRWA, which operates Rwanda's only pyrethrum processing plant.<sup>22</sup> Another SOE, Agro Processing Industries Ltd., oversees the military's agriculture business.<sup>23</sup> However, information on the number of SOEs the Ministry of Defense oversees and on their size remains unclear. RDF officials referred to the Office of the Auditor General as a source of information on SOEs; while the Auditor General's annual reports do refer to audits of SOEs, there is no exhaustive list of those that are owned by the Ministry of Defense. It should be noted that while military involvement in SOEs is a prime example of the diverse economic interests of the RDF, several ministries in Rwanda also oversee SOEs in other sectors.

Additionally, a number of government officials cited Rwanda's strong internal security as a major factor in attracting foreign investment in Rwanda. As Rwanda's Gross Domestic Product grew by an average of 7.3 percent between 2007 and 2011,<sup>24</sup> with Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflows soaring from \$4.7 million in 2003 to \$118.7 million,<sup>25</sup> the economy has seen a huge surge in recent years. The Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Infrastructure, James Kamanzi, linked Rwanda's long-term stability to investment, saying, "we have seen much more property investment, long-term investment rather than short-term investment. People have a lot of confidence; therefore they can make decisions that

---

<sup>21</sup> Gertrude Majyambere, "Horizon Group urged to focus on capacity building," *The New Times*, December 31, 2010. <http://www.newtimes.co.rw/news/index.php?i=14491&a=37058> (accessed September 1, 2012).

<sup>22</sup> Alex Rutareka, "Horizon Group exhibits its activities," *The Rwanda Focus*, September 19, 2011. <http://focus.rw/wp/2011/09/horizon-group-exhibits-its-activities/> (accessed September 1, 2012).

<sup>23</sup> James Karuhanga, "Rwanda: RDF Expects Over 15,000 Tonnes of Cassava Harvest," *The New Times*, March 29, 2011. <http://allafrica.com/stories/201103290166.html>.

<sup>24</sup> World Bank, "GDP Growth (annual %)." Last modified 2012. Accessed September 1, 2012. <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/>.

<sup>25</sup> World Bank, "Foreign direct investment, net inflows (BoP, current US\$)," Last modified 2012, Accessed September 2, 2012, <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/>.

are long-term rather than short term.”<sup>26</sup> Prof. Shyaka Anastase, Executive Secretary of the Rwanda Governance Board, also saw a link to tourism: “it’s one of the fastest-growing sectors here, so there is a lot of connection and correlation between development and security”.<sup>27</sup> Together with other factors like the ease of doing business in Rwanda, internal security is an important way in which the RDF aids economic development in Rwanda.

The RDF’s role in economic development encompasses a variety of areas, from participating in infrastructure projects to management and ownership of large firms to attracting investment by providing for Rwanda’s stability. These internal activities are not often undertaken by the militaries of other nations, but the RDF’s mandate to play such a large economic role is drawn heavily by Rwanda’s singular history and form a distinctively Rwandan solution to the question of economic development.

## **V. Peace Support Operations in the Context of Civil-Military Relations**

*By Eric Davids, US Naval Academy, 2014*

The RDF has participated in an exceptional amount of peace-building initiatives since the genocide. These Peace Support Operations (PSOs) have boosted the military’s public image and are a major contributor to the current state of civil-military relations in the country. The RDF’s emphasis on PSOs supports the JRPs major findings because the operations are a function of the country’s unique history, a method of implementing homegrown solutions abroad, and a means of sustaining a large military force despite a lack of significant conflict.

Rwanda’s high prioritization of PSOs is influenced by the genocide and subsequent liberation. After assuming control of the devastated country in 1994, Paul Kagame and his former RPA leadership corps used the newly formed RDF to help develop a relatively stable nation, free of public internal conflict and divisionism. In 2003, the Rwandan government enhanced the country’s commitment to

---

<sup>26</sup> James Kamanzi, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Infrastructure, Kigali, Interview by JRP, August 7, 2012.

<sup>27</sup> Anastase Shyaka, Executive Secretary, Rwanda Governance Board, Interview by JRP, Kigali, August 2, 2012.

promote peace and the military's role in "soft" operations by including participation in "international peace keeping missions, humanitarian assistance and training" as one of the five key duties of the RDF prescribed in Article 173 of the Constitution.<sup>28</sup> Although peace-related operations are the fifth priority of the RDF, Article 173 offers the government considerable flexibility and has been exercised liberally over the past decade. The RDF has contributed 26,255 military personnel to African Union (AU) and UN missions, and presently have over 4,000 peacekeepers deployed.<sup>29</sup> The sizeable force is indicative of the government's commitment to PSOs.

The vast majority of people that the team interviewed perceive the military's primary role to be that of a peacekeeping force, rather than that of a more conventional, territorial defense army. This view of the military is informed by RDF soldiers' historic function as internal peacekeepers and also by a multitude of recent highly publicized peacekeeping initiatives since Rwanda's first major PSO to Sudan in 2004, an area where Rwandan troops continue to in operate today. Lt Col Marizamunda, Director of the PSO Office, emphasized that the desire to assist in Darfur was influenced by the nation's past, saying, "We struggled ourselves, and made a commitment to not observe but to actively mitigate outbreaks of violence. Every nation was saying it was time to stop atrocities but no nation was ready to move, so Rwanda decided to take the first step." Military and civilian citizens alike are proud that Rwanda was the first nation to volunteer troops to the region at the request of the AU. The RDF's sustained focus on peacekeeping missions aligns military operations and image with public interest, which contributes to the overwhelming confidence rating of 97.5 percent that the military receives from the populace.<sup>30</sup>

This notion that the RDF is exclusively a peacekeeping force may be over-publicized for political purposes, but the RDF's ability to efficiently execute specialized peace-related missions is universally acknowledged. Foreign contractors and US officials alike described how Rwandan soldiers' high performance in these operations separates Rwandan peacekeepers from other nations' personnel

---

<sup>28</sup> Article 173, The Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda, 2003.

<sup>29</sup> Rwanda Ministry of Defense, Interview by JRP, Kigali, July 26, 2012.

<sup>30</sup> Office of Good Governance, Interview by JRP, Kigali, August 4, 2012.

contributions to AU and UN initiatives.<sup>31</sup> The Director of the newly founded Rwanda Peace Academy noted the uniqueness of the RDF, saying, “We do not have an army that waits for war, rather it is active in many parts of society. It builds schools and plants trees. It contributes in all sectors.”<sup>32</sup> Through initiatives such as *umuganda* – a monthly community service day mandated and conducted by the RDF – and Army Week, the RDF participates in internal peace building which prepares the military for similar operations abroad. This collaboration between civilians and soldiers in community projects was witnessed at the 9<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion, where troops were observed constructing a guardhouse with the help of local technical experts. This activity has wide-reaching benefits because it enhances civil-military interaction, prepares troops for similar projects abroad, and is an efficient use of expertise and manpower.

There is a potential drawback to these homegrown solutions involving a high level of RDF involvement in the civilian sector. These operations may constrain the country’s long-term development because they limit the responsibility expected of civilian institutions. The pervasive integration of the military in diverse spheres of the rapidly developing country may yield an unsustainable dependence on the military for economic and social development. A large proportion of the Rwandan men we met who held positions of authority are either current or former RDF soldiers, a distinction which in itself holds marginal importance. As Rwanda continues its trajectory towards becoming a major player in the global economy, especially relative to its neighboring East African nations, the current state of the civil-military relationship will be stressed and forced to adapt. High positions in government and industry will be filled by students who graduate from Rwanda’s expanding university system as opposed to veterans of the RDF, which could produce a previously nonexistent civil-military gap. In the meantime, however, the military’s high involvement in civil affairs facilitates the preparedness of the troops for PSOs.

Ultimately, this unparalleled integration of the military in the civilian sector is possible because Rwanda maintains a large peacetime force. Military members, government officials, and the general populace all seem to perceive the military as the foundational pillar that brought peace in the midst of the

---

<sup>31</sup> Referring to discussions with officials in the Defense Attaché’s office at the US Embassy in Rwanda and contractors from Africa Contingency Operations Training & Assistance (ACOTA).

<sup>32</sup> Rwandan Peace Academy, Interview by JRP, Kigali, July 24, 2012.

genocide, enabled rapid economic and social growth after the genocide, and currently preserves Rwanda's security and prosperity. MGen Musemakweli, the head of Rwanda's J5, expressed, "It was and is our duty to rebuild the nation. The military offers values of efficiency, organization, focus, and spirit to the civilian sector."<sup>33</sup> This sentiment, which is shared by many civilians and military members, substantiates the benefit of maintaining a large military force. Although there have been major efforts to demobilize troops since Rwanda's major conflicts ceased towards the beginning of the millennium, the government is keen to preserve a sizeable force that is capable of defending the country's borders when a threat arises and able to act as an expeditionary arm of foreign policy when President Kagame desires. The country is not technically in combat, so participation in PSOs is a logical means of maintaining this military prowess because PSOs are low stress operations which help preserve the military's operational capabilities and foreign funding.

The PSOs are clearly valuable to the RDF for historic, moral, and strategic purposes. They enhance the RDF's image, both to the international community and the Rwandan populace. The national value of peace building, which is a result of the genocide, is empowered through these operations which align civil and military interests. PSOs also perpetuate and validate the military's high level of involvement in the civilian sector. With consideration of the present state of Rwanda's security and development, maintaining an influential military force by means of PSOs is a viable short-term solution, but could face issues if the relationship between the civilian sector and the powerful military is not critically analyzed by internal leaders in the context of Rwanda's rapidly changing state.

## **VI. Balancing Order and Civil Liberties: The Inherent Challenge**

*By Jordan Rettie, US Naval Academy, 2014*

Balancing civil liberties and the maintenance of order is a continuous challenge faced by every nation. This inherent conflict persists because while the security of the state and individual freedoms such

---

<sup>33</sup>J5 Office, Rwandan Ministry of Defense, Interview by JRP, Kigali, July 24, 2012.

as free speech are universal values,<sup>34</sup> they do not always coincide. Understanding how the Government of Rwanda (GoR) and its people approach this issue and its current state were the focus of this field research. The first key finding is that the GoR's vision of free speech and order supports the JRP's assessment that national stability plays an important role in public expression. The second finding, that there is a dichotomy in the way Rwandans understand freedom of speech, demonstrates another of the team's evaluations that Rwanda's history continues to impact its national unity.

The GoR's vision of freedom of speech is that it be exercised with a significant responsibility to public order. Acting Executive Secretary of the Media High Council, Rwanda's independent organization constitutionally charged with regulating the media, explained the dynamics of free speech in Rwanda by saying, "Nation building is the ultimate result; freedom of speech is a means."<sup>35</sup> This statement reveals the preeminent value placed on national stability, a theme found throughout the GoR's policies on free speech. For instance, Article 34 of Rwanda's Constitution and Article 17 of the 2009 Media Law describe the priority of public order over freedom of speech.<sup>36</sup> When asked about this relationship, Professor Shyaka Anastase, Executive Secretary of Rwanda's Office of Good Governance stated, "My liberty and freedom is also about keeping the order of the community. It is a realistic approach of managing security and sustaining it."<sup>37</sup> The GoR must agree, considering that it promotes the same ideology at its annual *Ingando* Camp, a three week long course designed to familiarize every secondary school graduate to Rwanda's historical narrative.<sup>38</sup> "They told us you have the right to speak and write what you want," says a former *Ingando* student, "but that you have to see the consequences-there is no interest in dividing people."<sup>39</sup> This concept helps explain the team's finding that national stability plays an important role in

---

<sup>34</sup> Both freedom of speech and one's right to security are stated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as adopted by United Nations General Assembly, 1948. See Preamble and Article 3, respectively.

<sup>35</sup> Emmanuel Mugisha, Acting Executive Secretary, Media High Council, Interview by JRP, Kigali, August 3, 2012.

<sup>36</sup> Article 34, The Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda, 2003: "Freedom of speech and freedom of information shall not prejudice public order and good morals." Article 17, Rwanda's Media Law, 2009, "The freedom to express one's opinions and be informed should not jeopardize the peace of the general public and good morals."

<sup>37</sup> Shyaka Anastase, Executive Secretary, Rwanda Governance Advisory Council, Interview by JRP, Kigali, August 2, 2012.

<sup>38</sup> Intent of *Ingando* described by Maj. Gerard Nyirimanzi, Historian, RDF, Interview by JRP, Kigali, July 26, 2012.

<sup>39</sup> Anonymous university student, Interview by JRP, Butare Province, Rwanda, August 1, 2012.

public expression because the ideology promoted by the GoR places national stability over freedom of speech. Yet research also indicates that there is a difference in the way Rwandans understand this dynamic.

The dichotomy of perspectives on the balance between freedom of speech and the maintenance of order in Rwanda lies in the way Rwandans use history to form their opinions. Many Rwandans believe that exercising freedom of speech with a higher responsibility to public order can be explained by the media's role in the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi. Multiple sources, including the leaders of the Rwandan Peace Academy,<sup>40</sup> the Media High Council,<sup>41</sup> and university students<sup>42</sup> believe the media abused its freedoms by spreading the genocidal ideology which facilitated the mass killings of 1994. To ensure a similar tragedy does not occur in the future, they argue, the balance between free speech and order should favor order to regulate the media and ensure the stability of the state. However, other sources, including the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission<sup>43</sup> and Ministry of Youth<sup>44</sup> reason that it was instead the suppression of free speech that contributed to the spread of genocidal ideology: those who spoke against the anti-Tutsi propaganda were suppressed. They believe, therefore, that free speech and a "culture of questioning" should be promoted among Rwandans.<sup>45</sup> Determining whether or not these ideas are reconcilable or investigating the viability of each historical claim lies outside the scope of this report, but remain important areas for further research. What can be determined from these

---

<sup>40</sup> When asked about free speech and order in Rwanda the Director of Rwandan Peace Academy stated, "Why are they in conflict? Because when press, free speech, begins to harm order, their freedom is not freedom, it is a weapon." Interview by JRP, Kigali, July 24, 2012.

<sup>41</sup> Emmanuel Mugisha, Acting Executive Secretary, Media High Council stated, "Some of the media organs were created to insight and promote genocide ideology. We restrict it so it doesn't come again...instead of limiting freedom of expression, you are protecting society." Interview by JRP, Kigali, August 3, 2012.

<sup>42</sup> During a group interview of students at the National University of Rwanda, an anonymous university student used the media's historical role in the genocide to explain today's restrictions on the media. Other students affirmed their colleague. Interview by JRP, Butare Province, Rwanda, August 1, 2012.

<sup>43</sup> Richard Kananga, the Director of Peace Building and Conflict Management at the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission stated, "When you deny people to speak what they think, at the end of the day they will fear, they will keep quiet, and they don't question....We ask why my neighbor would come and kill. The answer we have found is that part of that denial, and a culture of fear, when the leader will come and tell them, people don't ask why. How can we change this mindset?" Interview by JRP, Kigali, August 2, 2012.

<sup>44</sup> Emmanuel Habumuremyi, Advisor to the Minister of Youth, Interview by JRP, Kigali, August 7, 2012.

<sup>45</sup> Richard Kananga, Director of Peace Building and Conflict Management, National Unity and Reconciliation Commission, Interview by JRP, Kigali, August 2, 2012.

findings is that Rwanda's unique history continues to play a role in the balance between freedom of speech and order. This finding is demonstrative of the team's larger claim that history continues to impact national unity because it is through a historical lens that many evaluate the balance between freedom of speech and the maintenance of order.

While research has upheld two of the JRP's key assessments, the extent to which the GoR regulates free speech is difficult to determine because the observations of this research support different conclusions. In favor of free speech, the GoR recently passed the Whistle Blower Protection Law<sup>46</sup> and plans to privatize all remaining government-run media organizations.<sup>47</sup> At the same time, research indicating the GoR's high level of influence on the media,<sup>48</sup> and an uncommonly high support of the government and military,<sup>49</sup> may indicate the balance between free speech and order weighs heavily toward order. What these different findings do reveal is that, despite not observing open debate about free speech and order in Rwanda, the nation continues to deal with the inherent conflict between these two ideals. In fact, the absence of open debate may itself be a data point to consider.

An inability to determine conclusively the current balance between freedom of speech and the maintenance of order in Rwanda supports continued research into this inherent challenge. This research team does not yet understand fully how Rwanda balances freedom and order. Nonetheless, the research

---

<sup>46</sup> Apollinaire Mupiganyi, Executive Secretary, Transparency International Rwanda, expressed his opinion that the Whistle Blower Protection Law will assist those wishing to report corruption in Rwanda. Interview by JRP, Kigali, August 2, 2012.

<sup>47</sup> Emmanuel Mugisha, Acting Executive Secretary, Media High Council, stated, "There is a media reform process. The state run TV and radio is being privatized, in the next few months there will be no state media, it will all be public." Interview by JRP, Kigali, August 3, 2012.

<sup>48</sup> An anonymous source stated, "the general newspapers, most of the time they are controlled by the government." Interview by JRP, Butare, Rwanda, August 1, 2012. Permanent Secretary Julienne Munyaneza, Ministry of Gender and Family told interviews that TV, radio, and newspapers are used to sensitize the Rwandan population about gender. Interview by JRP, Kigali, July 25, 2012. According to Maj. Gerard Nyirimanzi, Historian, RDF, the GoR restricts and approves what history is taught in Rwandan schools. Interview by JRP, Kigali, July 26, 2012.

<sup>49</sup> When asked if there were any anti-military groups in Rwanda, Major General Musemakweli, Director, J5 Office, RDF, stated there were no such groups. Interview by JRP, Kigali, July 24, 2012. In response to a question asking whether there was debate in Rwanda about peacekeeping operations, Lt Col Juvenal Marizamunda, Department of Peace Support Operations said, "It is in the Constitution, so there is no debate...no negative reaction from the population." Interview by JRP, Kigali, July 25, 2012. Professor Manasse Mbonye, Vice Rector, National University of Rwanda, stated there is no criticism of the government or RDF among university students, attributing it to the memory of the RPA saving the nation. Interview by JRP, Butare, Rwanda, August 21, 2012.

conducted does indicate that the GoR's vision of free speech and the dichotomy of historical perspectives on the balance between free speech and order does support two of the JRP's key findings: national stability plays an important role in public expression and that history continues to impact national unity. It is through these findings Rwanda's civilian-military relations appear in proper context.

## **VII. Creative Arts in Rwandan Civilian Military Relations**

*By Linda Zhang, Boston University, 2013*

A major obstacle to stronger civilian military relations in all countries is the differences in culture between the civilian and military sectors. This difference in culture is oftentimes reflected in the country's artist community. On one hand, the vision of the artist is to create works of the highest technical quality. However, artists must also strive to find a balance between free expression and political usage, as one cannot ignore the functional use of creative art. In Rwanda, the artists are particularly affected by the history of the 1994 genocide. Performers and musicians work together to provide a sense of unity and comradeship through communication of the nation's shared experiences and, through their talents, help the civilian and military sectors form understanding, respect, and compassion. A better understanding of the connection of art within civil-military relations in Rwanda will help facilitate future interactions between the two spheres.

The trends in popular music follow historical trends in Rwandan society. In the pre-colonial period, music and dance served as a function of worship. Farmers and cattle herders alike praised the gods with dance and song in order to ensure a good harvest, which can be seen in the movements of the traditional dancers: hands pointing towards the sky symbolize the prosperity of successful cow herding, while more circular hand motions symbolized the fruitfulness of a successful harvest.<sup>50</sup> Musicians of this period were also regarded as historians because they passed down stories of the traditional kings (*mwami*)

---

<sup>50</sup> Gloria Magambo, National University of Rwanda, Interview by JRP, Butare, Rwanda, August 6, 2012.

through song.<sup>51</sup> During the colonial period, Christian music and values were introduced and became incorporated into the local arts, such as with traditional lyrics being replaced by Christian-themed lyrics. Western instruments were also introduced.<sup>52</sup> This combination of tradition and western art prevailed through the Rwandan genocide, and was used extensively throughout the RPA's 1994 invasion of the country. Soldiers sang songs as they maneuvered through the jungle, despite tactically drawing attention to themselves and giving away their position.<sup>53</sup> After the genocide, music became a tool of reconciliation and therapy for the people of Rwanda.<sup>54</sup> As Rwandans enter the 21<sup>st</sup> century with optimism, their music is shifting from darker themes to songs about love, happiness, community, and celebration.<sup>55</sup>

The musicians and performers in Rwanda share an equal responsibility towards maintaining stability and promoting peace through their art, regardless of whether they are civilian or military artists. The RDF has been very supportive of the performing arts community in Rwanda as long as they maintain the messages of unification and stability. The RDF's seemingly excellent relations with the population of Rwanda are in part due to a strong cultural tie to traditional values. These values are evident in RDF writings and public statements, but are further emphasized in the artistic initiatives that the army is taking. Popular artists are often active duty RDF or civilians who work closely with RDF artists.<sup>56</sup> At the same time, art produced in the civilian world helps provide the soldiers with a continued attachment to those whom they are protecting. Although community music is technically banned in barracks, soldiers have access to personal radios. Both soldiers and civilians play an active role in the arts and are very conscious of the functionality of their creations.

The Media High Council is the body responsible for monitoring the content and music that is broadcast to the Rwandan audience.<sup>57</sup> Acting Secretary Emmanuel Mushiga provided an example of a case that would be censored: if a radio station plays a song that has pro-Hutu or pro-divisionism

---

<sup>51</sup> Maj. Gerard Nyirimanzi, Historian, RDF, Interview by JRP, Kigali, July 26, 2012.

<sup>52</sup> Julius Adekunle, *Culture and Customs of Rwanda*, Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2007, 140.

<sup>53</sup> Maj. Gerard Nyirimanzi, Historian, RDF, Interview by JRP, Kigali, July 26, 2012.

<sup>54</sup> Jean Baptiste Habyalimana, Interview by JRP, Kigali, July 26, 2012.

<sup>55</sup> Robert Kabera, Interview by JRP, Kigali, August 7, 2012.

<sup>56</sup> Mani Martin, Musician, Interview by JRP, Kigali, August 7, 2012.

<sup>57</sup> Emmanuel Mugisha, Acting Executive Secretary, Media High Council, Interview by JRP, Kigali, August 3, 2012.

implications, the High Council will call and request the song to not be played. Because of how pervasive radio is in Rwanda, the music broadcasted reaches rural areas where television and other media will not have the same impact.<sup>58</sup> This type of censorship is tolerated and understood by artists and musicians, who recognize that the need to maintain social harmony triumphs over needs for artistic and individual expression.

In Rwandan civilian military relations, the roles of the performance arts help unify the actions of the military with the support of the people. The arts create a connection from pre-colonial Rwandan society to the current pursuit of development with the modern, professional army. The Rwandan vision is to create a modern state that still stays true to traditional principles, and the popularity of music, arts, and dance that supports this theme reflects the will of the Rwandan people to work with the RDF in achieving this goal.

Rwandan musicians and performers are not merely pursuing goals of artistic perfection. Instead, their music is meant to protect and serve the community through different channels such as harvest, reconciliation, or preserving history. Further research should be done on the military's role in the ethnomusicological evolution of different musical genres. In addition, the growing impact of visual arts needs to be acknowledged, as visual arts, film, and photography become more prominent in Rwanda media and culture.

## **VIII. Women's Roles in Civil-Military Relations**

*By Amy Ouellette, Tufts University, 2012*

Rwanda has made a clear effort towards involving women in government, mitigating gender-based violence (GBV) and including women in the military and police services. As a result of the legal, institutional and normative actions towards women's empowerment, Rwanda has made strides towards including women in numbers but also substantive ways in some facets of peace and security areas more

---

<sup>58</sup> Emmanuel Mugisha, Acting Executive Secretary, Media High Council, Interview by JRP, Kigali, August 3, 2012.

than others. This women's empowerment and inclusion effort in Rwanda supports the JRP's major findings because the current role of women is a product of the history of Rwanda and Rwanda's wider goal of promoting national unity, and some of the ways that women are participating are examples of homegrown solutions to challenges faced by Rwanda.

Long ago in Rwanda before the period of colonial rule, the King of Rwanda ruled in close consultation with his mother. The king represented the man while the "queen mother" represented the woman. Both advised and challenged each other. This relationship was cited as a historical capacity in which women played an important role in security and governance.<sup>59</sup> This example of the "queen mother" is given as evidence of decision making authority positions that women held dating back centuries ago. On the whole, Rwandan culture has stigmatized women working in the military and in equal positions as men in the government. However, the mindset is changing and women are increasingly involved in all facets of society, although currently in some sectors more than others.

Another historical memory that shaped the current gender policy was the widespread perpetration of gender-based violence (GBV) during the genocide. Following this trauma, Rwanda developed a strong program for training, sensitizing the population and handling cases of GBV. Rwanda has generated a plan to strengthen women's empowerment and reduce GBV prevalence. At the same time, Rwanda acknowledges the ongoing cultural and societal challenges to achieving the goal of zero episodes of gender-based violence.

The role of women in governance, peace building and security in Rwanda today stems in large part from the gender dynamics that emerged after the war from 1990 - 1994. The historical legacy of the genocide serves as a determinate of many policies that have been implemented since the genocide, including the policies on gender. Considering demographics, Rwanda was left with a disproportionately large population of women after 1994, since men were more likely to be both victims and perpetrators during the genocide; after 1994, Rwanda was left with more than 500,000 widows and a large population

---

<sup>59</sup> Maj. Gerard Nyirimanzi, Historian, RDF, Interview by JRP, Kigali, July 26, 2012.

of jailed men. The disproportionately large population of women following the genocide which has since equalized population (approximately 51 percent of population is female, as of 2011)<sup>60</sup> shapes the gender dynamics of society in Rwanda. President Paul Kagame said that a good leader can never ignore this percentage of the population. Following the genocide, policies designed to build national unity and reconciliation promoted the idea that peace and security is of utmost importance; whomever has the capacity to contribute, women included, should do so.<sup>61</sup> This mentality is reflected in the constitution<sup>62</sup> and public speeches made by President Kagame such as his recent public address at Rwanda Day 2012 in Boston, Massachusetts in which he repeated the refrain that all Rwandans, men and women, should play a role in furthering Rwanda's progress. The national government under Paul Kagame's leadership has constructed a vision for gender equality and women's empowerment in Rwanda.

Women are involved in governance and security in many capacities. The constitution mandates that 30 percent of posts in decision-making organs be held by women.<sup>63</sup> Some organs, such as the parliament and judicial institutions, are in fact exceeding this threshold. One statistic of proof commonly repeated by many whom we interviewed is that over the majority of women in Rwanda's parliament are women. Also, women are represented in positions of government ministers such as the influential position of Foreign Affairs Minister, currently as of September 2012 held by a woman, Louise Mushikiwabo.

Yet other decision-making organs in sectors like the military and higher educational institutions struggle to meet the requirement. For example, women are much less represented at the infantry level of the military or in teaching positions at the military academy. Out of between 80 and 90 instructors at the Rwanda Military Academy in Gako, four are women.<sup>64</sup> The RDF, the Gender Desk in particular, is

---

<sup>60</sup> "Gender Statistics." World Data Bank. The World Bank, <http://databank.worldbank.org/Data/Views/Reports/TableView.aspx>.

<sup>61</sup> Interview conducted on July 24, 2012. Interview conducted in the Kigali office of the Rwandan Peace Academy, Rwanda.

<sup>62</sup> Provisions in The Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda which promote women's involvement in governance include the Preamble; Article 9, 52, 54, 76, 82, 187. See Annex to view the text of these provisions.

<sup>63</sup> Article 9, The Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda, 2003.

<sup>64</sup> Rwanda Military Academy, Rwanda Military Academy at Gako, Rwanda, Interview by JRP, July 27, 2012.

designing strategies to mobilize and recruit women to join the military to increase female representation.<sup>65</sup> The One Stop Center operated by the RNP provides holistic care for victims of GBV is led by a woman and most of the staff members are female. One Stop Centers are an example of a homegrown solution created based on the drive to end GBV in Rwanda that is unique to Rwanda and a manifestation of the country's positive progress since the genocide. Also, women partake in local level monthly meetings to talk about security issues.

Women also play an important, often informal, role in reintegration and demobilization. Women in many cases convince husbands to return from refugee status, or help encourage their husbands to ask for forgiveness in the judicial process. Around one third of the men participating in the Mutobo demobilization and reintegration program in Ruhengeri in early August 2012 agreed with the statement that their wives and/or mothers played a key role in their decision and process of leaving the rebel fighting force in the Congo and returning to Rwanda after more than a decade away. There seems to be a dominance of male representation in the military and police forces, with the exception of gender desks which women work in disproportionately large numbers compared to female representation in other departments of military and police forces.

Not only does President Kagame envision women's empowerment at home in Rwanda, but he also sets a goal of contributing to greater women's empowerment on a global scale.<sup>66</sup> Women in the RDF and the RNP serve abroad in peace keeping operations in places such as Sudan's Darfur region and South Sudan. The soldiers and police women bring attitudes and strategies to countries that spread understanding for gender dynamics and women's empowerment. Rwanda has developed many institutions to promote gender equality and women's empowerment within its borders including the Gender Monitoring Office, the Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion, and the Gender Desks in both the

---

<sup>65</sup> Gender Desk, RDF, Kigali, Interview by JRP, July 25, 2012.

<sup>66</sup> See this quote stated by Paul Kagame in May 2010, presented at the RDF Gender Desk interview on July 25, 2012: "I want to challenge us all as leaders and people of influence to find new and innovative ways to sustain and accelerate progress towards gender equality and women's empowerment *around the world*." [emphasis added]

military and police forces. Also, Rwanda passed a National Action Plan (NAP) based on the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 from October 2000, the aim of which is to promote world-wide policymaking specifically involving women in decisionmaking concerning peace and security. The Gender Monitoring Office at the time when the interview was conducted stated their intention to begin evaluating the implementation of the NAP since its time-bound period ends in 2012.<sup>67</sup> The security sector is one of the more challenging areas to integrate women into at both the lower- and decision-making levels due largely to historical and cultural legacy of male domination in this sector.

## **IX. Conclusion**

As each individual section demonstrates, Rwanda's civil-military construct has a significant role in many spheres of Rwandan society. Findings in the seven areas of research were clearly affected by legacy of the Rwandan genocide. The Rwandan people were able to quickly overcome the 1994 genocide due to a strong sense of unity reinforced by the government of Rwanda, and particularly the RDF. Themes of resilience and perseverance resound through the nation's economic and social progress. Some methods, such as media censorship, have been criticized by western government and media but are accepted by the majority of interview participants as necessary for maintaining peace and order. Other initiatives are met with international acclaim, such as the conscientious effort to include women in roles of leadership and the RDF's high prioritization of peacekeeping operations.

As a new, educated, generation emerges and memories of the genocide fade, the RDF must decide how to readjust its current policies. The military faces a new set of challenges if it chooses to adopt a more passive role in government and society. The following questions will need to be answered by the nations' new generation of leaders:

---

<sup>67</sup> Gender Monitoring Office, Interview by JRP, Kigali, August 3, 2012. Republic of Rwanda, "National Action Plan 2009-2012: The United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325/2000 on Women, Peace and Security," May 2010.

1. Is the prevalence of military in so many aspects of society beneficial or disadvantageous to Rwanda's long term development?
2. Is it essential for the RDF to continue to maintain the current historical narrative by emphasizing its role in ending the genocide? Can the RDF continue to lead in social changes, such as gender roles, without this narrative?
3. Will there become more of a distinction between the RDF and the RNP? Is there still a viable threat to domestic security, and if so, how is responsibility divided between the two institutions?
4. Is it in Rwanda's interest to continue sustaining peacekeeping missions and a strong regional presence while simultaneously downsizing the RDF?
5. As industries and media privatize, how will their relationship with the RDF change? How will this affect the political dynamics of the country?

This JRP itself was unique for several reasons. Primarily, this trip is the first research trip where ALLIES attempted to establish long term cooperation in the host country. The hope is for ALLIES to maintain lasting relationships with the ministries and universities that the group visited. The group's visit to the National University of Rwanda (NUR) in Butare indicated that there is a shared interest in establishing this relationship. ALLIES will continue to pursue this opportunity, with the hope that Rwandan students will be able to research with ALLIES on future projects and possibly participate in ALLIES events in the United States. This JRP made progress towards its objective of establishing a solid foundation and network for future contact between Rwandan students and ALLIES.

Another unique feature of this JRP was the diverse research focus, which was intentionally arranged to span across a wide variety of academic fields. The ALLIES program brought together military and civilian students from many different backgrounds, and they each brought a variety of different interests and skillsets. The students are majoring in fields of history, women's studies, economics, music,

and ocean engineering. Their research topics were as diverse as their academic studies. The process of attending most of the meetings as an entire group helped each researcher attain a more complex view of Rwanda and a better understanding of the country as a whole while also broadening personal horizons. The ocean engineer, for example, remarked that his most memorable experience from the trip was the meeting with Rwandan hip-hop artists and hearing about the profound impact that the genocide had on their motivation to produce music. Although each individual only had a few interviews that were entirely specific to their topic, everyone benefited from the broad spectrum of meetings.

Overall, the JRP was a test of the ALLIES concept of “bridging the civilian-military gap.” The JRP to Rwanda was an extraordinary example of civil military cooperation. The research group demonstrated that, despite different backgrounds, students in civilian and military sectors can live together, work together, and conduct research across diverse academic disciplines. Through this paper and through ALLIES’ continued relationship with Rwanda, ALLIES hopes to encourage students in both the United States and Rwanda to better understand their civilian or military counterparts in order to become into more proficient leaders.

## ANNEX

### Articles Referenced from The Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda, 2003

#### Preamble:

We, the People of Rwanda,

1° In the wake of the genocide that was organised and supervised by unworthy leaders and other perpetrators and that decimated more than a million sons and daughters of Rwanda;

2° Resolved to fight the ideology of genocide and all its manifestations and to eradicate ethnic, regional and any other form of divisions;

3° Determined to fight dictatorship by putting in place democratic institutions and leaders freely elected by ourselves;

4° Emphasizing the necessity to strengthen and promote national unity and reconciliation which were seriously shaken by the genocide and its consequences;

5° Conscious that peace and unity of Rwandans constitute the essential basis for national economic development and social progress;

6° Resolved to build a State governed by the rule of law, based on respect for fundamental human rights, pluralistic democracy, equitable power sharing, tolerance and resolution of issues through dialogue;

7° Considering that we enjoy the privilege of having one country, a common language, a common culture and a long shared history which ought to lead to a common vision of our destiny;

8° Considering that it is necessary to draw from our centuries-old history the positive values which characterized our ancestors that must be the basis for the existence and flourishing of our Nation;

9° Reaffirming our adherence to the principles of human rights enshrined in the United Nations Charter of 26 June 1945, the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the crime of Genocide of 9 December 1948, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 10 December 1948, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination of 21 December 1965, the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights of 19 December 1966, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of 19 December 1966, the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women of 1 May 1980, the African Charter of Human and Peoples' Rights of 27 June 1981 and the Convention on the Rights of the Child of 20 November 1989 ;

10° Committed to ensuring equal rights between Rwandans and between women and men without prejudice to the principles of gender equality and complementarity in national development;

11° Determined to develop human resources, to fight ignorance, to promote technological advancement and the social welfare of the people of Rwanda;

12° Considering that after the Transition period, Rwanda shall be governed by a Constitution comprising ideas expressed by Rwandans themselves;

Now hereby adopt, by referendum, this Constitution as the supreme law of the Republic of Rwanda

Article 9: The State of Rwanda commits itself to conform to the following fundamental principles and to promote and enforce the respect thereof:

- 1° fighting the ideology of genocide and all its manifestations;
- 2° eradication of ethnic, regional and other divisions and promotion of national unity;
- 3° equitable sharing of power;
- 4° building a state governed by the rule of law, a pluralistic democratic government, equality of all Rwandans and between women and men reflected by ensuring that women are granted at least thirty per cent of posts in decision making organs;
- 5° building a State committed to promoting social welfare and establishing appropriate mechanisms for ensuring social justice;
- 6° the constant quest for solutions through dialogue and consensus.

Article 34: Freedom of the press and freedom of information are recognized and guaranteed by the State. Freedom of speech and freedom of information shall not prejudice public order and good morals, the right of every citizen to honour, good reputation and the privacy of personal and family life. It is also guaranteed so long as it does not prejudice the protection of the youth and minors.

The conditions for exercising such freedoms are determined by law.

There is hereby established an independent institution known as the “High Council of the Press”.

The law shall determine its functions, organization and operation.

Article 52: A multi-party system of government is recognized.

Political organizations fulfilling the conditions required by law are permitted to be formed and to operate freely; they must abide by the Constitution and other laws as well as democratic principles and they should not destabilise national unity, territorial integrity and security of the nation.

Political organizations participate in the education of citizens on politics based on democracy and elections and operate in such a manner as to ensure that women and men have equal access to elective offices.

The leadership organs of political organizations shall only maintain offices at the national, provincial and Kigali City levels.

Article 54: Political organizations are prohibited from basing themselves on race, ethnic group, tribe, clan, region, sex, religion or any other division which may give rise to discrimination.

Political organizations must constantly reflect the unity of the people of Rwanda and gender equality and complementarity, whether in the recruitment of members, putting in place organs of leadership and in their operations and activities.

Article 76: The Chamber of deputies shall be composed of 80 members as follows :

- 1° fifty three (53) are elected in accordance with the provisions of article 77 of this Constitution;
- 2° twenty four (24) women; that is : two from each Province and the City of Kigali. These shall be elected by a joint assembly composed of members of the respective District, Municipality, Town or Kigali City Councils and members of the Executive Committees of women’s organizations at the Province, Kigali City, District, Municipalities, Towns and Sector levels;
- 3° two (2) members elected by the National Youth Council;
- 4° one (1) member elected by the Federation of the Associations of the Disabled.

Article 82: The Senate shall be composed of twenty six (26) members serving for a term of eight years (8) and at least thirty per cent (30 %) of whom are women. In addition, former Heads of State become members of the Senate upon their request as provided for in paragraph 4 of this article.

Those twenty six (26) members are elected or appointed as follows :

1° twelve (12) members representing each Province and the City of Kigali elected through secret ballot by members of the Executive Committees of Sectors and District, Municipality, Town or City Councils of each Province and the City of Kigali;

2° eight (8) members appointed by the President of the Republic who shall ensure the representation of historically marginalized communities;

3° four (4) members designated by the Forum of Political organizations’;

4° one (1) university lecturer of at least the rank of Associate Professor or a researcher elected by the academic and research staff of public universities and institutions of higher learning;

5° one (1) university lecturer of at least the rank of Associate Professor or researcher elected by the academic and research staff of private universities and institutions of higher learning.

The organs responsible for the nomination of Senators shall take into account national unity and equal representation of both sexes.

Article 173: National defence is the responsibility of a professional army known as the "Rwanda Defence Forces". It has the following duties :

1° to defend the territorial integrity and national sovereignty of the Republic;

2° to collaborate with other security organs in safeguarding public order and enforcement of the law;

3° to participate in humanitarian activities in case of disasters;

4° to contribute to the development of the country;

5° to participate in international peace keeping missions, humanitarian assistance and training.

A law determines the organization and powers of the Rwanda Defence Forces.

Article 187: There is hereby established a National Council of Women.

The law shall determine its organization, functions, operation and its relations with other State organs.

## **Other Legal Texts Referenced**

### **Universal Declaration of Human Rights**

#### Preamble:

Whereas recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world,

Whereas disregard and contempt for human rights have resulted in barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind, and the advent of a world in which human beings shall enjoy freedom of speech and belief and freedom from fear and want has been proclaimed as the highest aspiration of the common people,

Whereas it is essential, if man is not to be compelled to have recourse, as a last resort, to rebellion against tyranny and oppression, that human rights should be protected by the rule of law,

Whereas it is essential to promote the development of friendly relations between nations,

Whereas the peoples of the United Nations have in the Charter reaffirmed their faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person and in the equal rights of men and women and have determined to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom,

Whereas Member States have pledged themselves to achieve, in co-operation with the United Nations, the promotion of universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms,

Whereas a common understanding of these rights and freedoms is of the greatest importance for the full realization of this pledge,

Now, Therefore THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY proclaims THIS UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations, to the end that every individual and every organ of society, keeping this Declaration constantly in mind, shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms and by progressive measures, national and international, to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance, both among the peoples of Member States themselves and among the peoples of territories under their jurisdiction.

Article 3: Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.

# ALLIES

ALLIANCE LINKING LEADERS IN EDUCATION  
AND THE SERVICES

2012