# A logo of a suit up AI-generated content may be incorrect.**CNIMUN’2025**

# **Historical Crisis Committee: 1994 Rwandan Genocide**

## **Letter from the Executive Board**

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the Historical Crisis Committee of CNIMUN 2025.

The Historical Crisis Committee is tasked with addressing the mass violence against the Tutsi minority and moderate Hutu in Rwanda as of April 6, 1994. They have limited knowledge of the past and are encouraged to use information available up to April 6, 1994. Their task is to work through crises and propose immediate solutions, such as protecting civilians, enforcing peace agreements, and dealing with international pressures. The committee hopes to maintain professionalism and diplomacy while immersing themselves in the urgent decision-making environment.

Sincerely,

**The Executive Board**

## **Introduction to the Committee**

The Historical Crisis Committee is a dynamic simulation of a real historical crisis, where delegates play fixed roles dealing with evolving events day by day. They receive scripted "crises" and are expected to respond quickly to crises. Chairs rewrite history as they go, and delegates must adapt to the situation. They should critically assess what could have happened in 1994 based on available information up to the freeze date, using 1994-era tools and diplomacy. Collaboration is encouraged, but urgency is required for many small crises. Success will come from combining disaster response with international politics diplomacy.

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## **Topic Overview**

Rwanda, a small landlocked country in Central Africa, has long been shaped by ethnic divisions between the Hutu majority and the Tutsi minority. Under colonial rule by Germany and then Belgium, Tutsis were privileged in governance and education, deepening resentment among Hutus. After independence in 1962, a Hutu-led government came to power, institutionalizing discrimination against Tutsis. A military coup in 1973 brought President Juvénal Habyarimana to power, continuing one-party Hutu dominance under the MRND. Waves of anti-Tutsi violence drove hundreds of thousands into exile across the region. In response, exiled Tutsis formed the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), which launched a military invasion in 1990. Though initially repelled, a ceasefire was reached in 1991, leading to negotiations that culminated in the UN-backed Arusha Peace Accords in August 1993. The accords outlined a power-sharing agreement, army integration, and a roadmap to elections, but they faced stiff opposition from Hutu hardliners.

Hutu extremists—especially within the presidential circle known as the Akazu—viewed the Arusha deal as a threat. They mobilized militias like the Interahamwe, armed youth, circulated anti-Tutsi propaganda, and prepared for mass violence. The extremist radio station RTLM spread hate speech, while targeted killings of moderate officials signaled the beginning of a larger plan. International players responded cautiously: Uganda and Tanzania supported peace, France and Belgium pursued their own strategic interests, and the UN maintained a limited peacekeeping mission, UNAMIR, with a mandate too weak to intervene decisively. By April 1994, the transitional government had yet to form, and violence was escalating. With refugee flows rising and extremists poised for action, the peace process stood on the brink of collapse. It is at this critical juncture—April 6, 1994—that your committee begins. What happens next is in your hands.

## **Timeline of Major Events**

* **1959–1962:** The “Hutu Revolution” overthrows the Tutsi monarchy. Rwanda became independent (1962) with a Hutu-led government. Tutsi elites are purged; hundreds of thousands flee into exile.
* **1973:** Hutu army officers (led by Juvénal Habyarimana) stage a coup. Habyarimana becomes president and establishes the MRND one-party state, continuing Hutu dominance.
* **1987:** Exiled Tutsis in Uganda form the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) to press for the right of return and power-sharing.
* **1 Oct 1990:** The RPF (about 6,000 guerrillas) invades northern Rwanda from Uganda, starting the Rwandan Civil War. The Rwandan Army (FAR) and allied foreign troops halt the advance.
* **1991–92:** After months of intermittent fighting, the RPF and Rwandan government negotiate a ceasefire (formally agreed in March 1992). Peace talks (often mediated by Tanzania) begin but make slow progress.
* **Aug 1993:** The **Arusha Peace Accords** are signed (4 Aug). They establish a cease-fire, a broad-based transitional government including the RPF, and the merging of armies. A weapons-free zone is created in Kigali. (The first and only vice-president will be RPF leader Fred Kanyarengwe.) Hutu moderates hail this as a landmark agreement, but it enrages extremists. Immediately thereafter, secret Hutu militias begin arming and testing plans for mass violence. Radio Télévision Libre des Mille Collines (RTLM) begins broadcasting extremist propaganda.
* **Dec 1993:** As stipulated by Arusha, about 28,600 RPF soldiers and political representatives moved to Kigali to join the interim structures. Interim leaders (Agathe Uwilingiyimana as prime minister) try to form government bodies. In practice, hard-liners in the Hutu establishment resist fully empowering these institutions.
* **5 Oct 1993:** The UN Security Council adopts **Resolution 872**, establishing the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR). UNAMIR (under Brig.-Gen. Roméo Dallaire of Canada) is tasked with overseeing Arusha’s implementation. It deploys under a Chapter VI mandate (consent of the parties). Initial troop contributions come from Bangladesh, Ghana, Nigeria, Belgium, and others, but the force is under-resourced.
* **Jan 1994:** A shaky new government is finally inaugurated, but President Habyarimana delays appointing deputies (as required by Arusha). Interahamwe militia staged violent demonstrations in Kigali. On 11 January, UNAMIR’s Dallaire receives a report (“Genocide Fax”) warning that extremists have lists of 1,000 people to kill and caches of weapons. He urgently requests authorization to raid arms caches and deploy more troops, but UN headquarters instead instructs him to channel concerns through the Rwandan cabinet (run by some of the very extremists).
* **21 Feb 1994:** Hutu hardliners assassinate Cabinet Minister Félicien Gatabazi (a moderate Hutu). In revenge, an extremist Hutu politician (Martin Bucyana) is lynched. Mutual distrust deepens. Formation of the national unity government (scheduled for late February) is postponed *sine die*.
* **Early 1994:** General Dallaire reports to the UN Secretary-General that dozens of death-squads are active and weapons are being distributed to militias. The UN publishes a report calling recent killings of Tutsis a *genocide* under the UN Convention (Aug 1992). Hutu Radio and local leaders ramp up the hate rhetoric. The Hutu government (especially military hardliners) tightens control. UNAMIR peacekeepers, lacking reinforcements, largely maintain the status quo but fail to disarm militias.
* **4 Apr 1994:** The Security Council unanimously adopts **Resolution 909**. It renews UNAMIR’s mandate for six more weeks but warns that if the parties do not implement Arusha, the UN will withdraw its mission. The Council privately signals frustration at the lack of progress. (France is known to push Rwanda to implement Arusha; the US focuses on regional containment; Belgium promises safe evacuation of its troops.)
* **6 Apr 1994:** **FREEZE DATE** – At 8:30 pm, President Juvénal Habyarimana’s plane is shot down as it prepares to land in Kigali. Also killed is Burundi’s President Cyprien Ntaryamira (on a flight from Tanzania). Within minutes, extreme Hutu leaders implement their “Final Solution.” **Curfews are declared. Roads are blockaded.** The presidential guard and Interahamwe militias begin killing Tutsi civilians and moderate Hutus. Radio RTLM blares coded messages (e.g. “cut down the tall trees” – a reference to killing Tutsis). By day’s end, rampage has started in Kigali neighborhoods; elsewhere, villagers await orders. **This is the point at which your committee begins.** Delegates must now address the crisis as it erupts on the night of 6 April.

## **Previous UN Involvement**

* **UN Security Council (Mar 1993):** In **Resolution 812 (12 Mar 1993)** the Council demanded that all parties cease hostilities and reiterated support for a negotiated settlement (the Arusha talks).
* **June 1993 – UNOMUR Established:** With conflict still unsettled, **Resolution 846 (22 June 1993)** created the **United Nations Observer Mission Uganda–Rwanda (UNOMUR)**. UNOMUR’s job was to monitor the Uganda–Rwanda border to prevent arms shipments to the rebels. (Brig.-Gen. Roméo Dallaire was the first chief observer of UNOMUR.)
* **Oct 1993 – UNAMIR Deployed:** On **5 Oct 1993**, the Council adopted **Resolution 872**, establishing the **United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR)**. UNAMIR’s mandate was to help implement the Arusha Peace Accords. In practice, this meant overseeing the ceasefire, facilitating the transitional government’s formation, and creating conditions for elections. UNAMIR was authorized for six months with a force of ~2,500; it was nominally allowed to use force to defend civilians under attack In reality, the mandate was strictly interpreted as non‑interventionist, and the mission lacked heavy weaponry.
* **On-the-Ground Reports:** Throughout late 1993 and early 1994, UN officials repeatedly warned New York about the deteriorating situation. Brig.-Gen. Dallaire famously sent a cable on **11 January 1994** alerting UN headquarters to intercepted communications and a list of targets. However, the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations balked at his requests for authority to seize arms or increase troops. (Instead, Dallaire was told only to report developments and leave enforcement to the parties.) The US and other Security Council members, preoccupied by other crises, did not push for a stronger mandate.
* **Humanitarian Efforts:** Alongside peacekeeping, the UN humanitarian agencies (UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP, etc.) and NGOs have been active in the region. Since late 1993, there has been a massive influx of refugees from Burundi (after the assassination of Burundi’s President in Oct 1993) as well as cross-border movements into Rwanda. UNHCR and NGOs have set up camps and delivered aid, but resources are overstretched. (By April 1994, there were already about 500,000 Burundian refugees inside Rwanda and tens of thousands of Rwandan refugees in neighboring Zaire and Tanzania from earlier fighting.)
* **4 Apr 1994 – Res. 909:** Just two days before the freeze date, the Council passed **Resolution 909**. This renewed UNAMIR’s mandate only until early July, pending implementation of the Arusha. Crucially, 909 authorized no new troops and implicitly threatened to pull UNAMIR out if peace did not hold. (Behind the scenes, the Rwandan government had complained that UNAMIR was not focusing on “priority needs,” and some countries were reluctant to commit more forces.) As of 6 April 1994, UNAMIR remains in place but with no fresh capabilities to intervene in internal Rwandan affairs.

## **Major Stakeholders and Their Interests**

* **Rwandan Government (Habyarimana regime, MRND/CNDD-FDD):** President Habyarimana’s government is split between moderates, led by Prime Minister Uwilingiyimana, who want to honor Arusha, and hard-line Akazu extremists backing the Interahamwe militia to eliminate Tutsis. This rivalry renders the administration paralyzed and unable to enforce the peace accord.
* **Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF):** The RPF, led by Captain Paul Kagame, comprises primarily Tutsi exiles and some moderate Hutus, and seeks a negotiated return under Arusha—insisting on a ceasefire, guarantees against genocide, and integration into the national army—while warning it will resume hostilities if talks fail (backed quietly but fully by Uganda).
* **Interahamwe / Hutu Extremist Groups:** Extremist MRND/CDR-backed militias like the Interahamwe operate as secret terror squads, spreading propaganda (e.g. branding Tutsis “cockroaches”) and carrying out coordinated mass killings to exterminate Tutsis and eliminate moderates. They ignore peace offers and violently resist any international interference.
* **Organization of African Unity (OAU) / Tanzania:** The OAU and the Arusha hosts (Tanzania) have an interest in regional stability. They back the peace process as the best hope to avert collapse. OAU diplomats may urge restraint and dialogue, pushing both sides to compromise. However, their leverage is limited.
* **France:** France, allied with the Francophone Habyarimana regime, deployed troops under Operation Noroît in late 1993 to protect its nationals and bolster the government. Paris aims to prevent an RPF victory that could diminish Francophone influence, while avoiding a regional civil war. To date, France has urged both sides to uphold Arusha but could soon expand peacekeeping efforts or prioritize evacuations.
* **Belgium:** Belgium’s main interest is the safety of its remaining personnel. It has only ~10 peacekeepers in Kigali (UNAMIR) and its embassy. After the suicide of ten Belgian soldiers in 1993 (decapitated by an amnesty zone gunman), Brussels is nervous. Belgium will likely insist on a clear UN withdrawal plan if things worsen, but also feels a moral responsibility for Rwanda (the former colony).
* **United States:** The US public is largely unaware of Rwanda, and Congress has been reluctant to fund new peacekeeping. The Clinton Administration is focused on Somalia and Haiti. Its interest is to avoid getting bogged down, but it also does not want a massive humanitarian atrocity on its record. The US may support symbolic UN actions (like Resolution 909) but is unwilling to send significant forces unless mandated by a strong Chapter VII resolution (which it likely won’t allow without clear objectives).
* **Neighboring States:** Uganda (RPF sponsor) wants orderly repatriation of Tutsi refugees and a stable border. Zaire (to the west) has hosted 800,000 Rwandan refugees since the 1960s; some of these camps (e.g. in Goma) contain armed elements and are breeding grounds for incursions. Tanzania, Burundi, and other neighbors worry about violence spilling across borders. Burundi’s own crisis (Hutu killing of Tutsi president in Oct 1993) has sent waves of Burundian refugees to Rwanda and Zaire, feeding tensions. These governments mainly call for containment of war and humanitarian aid.  
  eventing destabilization. They may pressure the UN to protect humanitarian operations.

## **Issues at Stake**

* **Humanitarian Catastrophe:** The mass slaughter of civilians in Rwanda is a critical issue, with hundreds of thousands potentially killed within weeks. Refugees are flooding borders, causing crises in Zaire, Tanzania, and Burundi. Delegates must consider emergency measures, including force use, evacuation, humanitarian corridors, and international aid mobilization.
* **Peace Accords vs. Total War:** The Arusha Peace Agreement is at risk due to the president's assassination and subsequent violence. Delegates must decide whether to reinforce the peace agreement, such as demanding disarmament of militias or forming a transitional government, or pivot to crisis mode, accepting genocide may be underway and focusing on immediate protection. Options include urging a cease-fire, pressuring President Habyarimana's interim government against killers, or supporting the RPF in disarming militias..
* **Domestic vs. International Action:** There is a **moral and legal question** about sovereignty. Rwanda’s government officially consents to UNAMIR, but now extremist elements in the government (especially in the military and security services) are instigating violence. Is it legal to intervene in a country where the government is complicit in genocide? How should the world respond without violating international law? Options include establishing an arms embargo (as some members will soon propose in Res. 918), sanctioning officials, or forging African Union/UN unity to step in. Delegates must weigh respect for Rwanda’s sovereignty against the imperative to protect endangered populations.
* **Military Strategies:** Militarily, the FAR (army) and Interahamwe control most of the country’s checkpoints and arms. The RPF is still largely positioned in Kigali and has not fired a shot as a unit. Delegates should consider how to deploy limited forces: e.g., should UNAMIR try to secure strategic points (airports, radio stations, the presidential palace) or set up safe zones for civilians? Could negotiations with the military be possible (e.g. through Kingpin negotiators) to curb the worst violence? The danger is that the FAR may attack UNAMIR if seen as siding with RPF. Use of external forces (French troops, for instance) is also an open question: France has limited its troops to evacuations, but might the crisis prompt a larger intervention (like a narrowly defined humanitarian operation)?
* **Refugees and Neighboring States:** With war imminent, refugees and refugee camps must be addressed. The massacres will drive hundreds of thousands of Rwandans into Zaire and Tanzania. Delegates should plan for this humanitarian fallout: negotiating access with neighboring countries, preventing further ethnic conflicts in camps, and handling diplomatic fallout (e.g., Burundian Hutu militias might exploit chaos). The safety of foreign nationals also arises: Belgium, France and the US will start evacuating their citizens imminently. How will this affect local populations and UNAMIR’s resources?
* **Media and Propaganda:** The role of propaganda is pivotal. RTLM and extremist newspapers are already urging Hutus to kill Tutsis (using hate labels). As a delegate, consider how to counter this: can radio stations be protected or shut down? Can neutral media or the UN broadcast messages? Controlling information flow could save lives (e.g., early warning broadcasts for Tutsis to go into hiding). Delegates should discuss public messaging strategies and public awareness campaigns in a crisis.

## **Questions to Consider for Delegates**

1. **Protecting Civilians:** Given UNAMIR’s mandate, what can be done to **save lives immediately**? Should UNAMIR troops be authorized (perhaps by the Council or by ad hoc agreement) to set up refugee camps or safe zones? If militias threaten civilians, can peacekeepers intervene? What about evacuating foreign nationals (e.g., Rwandan dignitaries) or endangered minorities out of Kigali?
2. **Implementing or Suspending Arusha:** Does the committee push to keep the Arusha Peace Accords alive, or declare them moot? Could you enforce parts of Arusha (like the weapons-free zone in Kigali) to contain violence? If extremists refuse to honor Arusha, should the UN hold them accountable? Alternatively, is it time to negotiate a revised framework (for instance, an interim power-sharing arrangement including international oversight)?
3. **Handling Extremists:** Can we legally disarm or detain Rwandan soldiers and militiamen who are inciting genocide? Should delegates demand an arms embargo (as was done on 17 May, but that’s after the freeze)? What about cutting off hate propaganda (e.g., attacking radio stations) – is that feasible?
4. **Regional Coordination:** How should the UN and Rwanda's neighbors respond to the refugee flows and cross-border threats? Should delegates negotiate with the governments of Zaire or Tanzania to secure refugees? Is there a role for the OAU or an African military force?
5. **International Response:** The UN and major powers have historically prioritized their own citizens’ safety. Will delegates advocate for a **multi-national intervention** (French, Belgian, others) to protect civilians, or insist that Rwanda handle its own security? How to balance neutrality with moral obligation

## **Suggested Readings**

* United Nations, *Resolution S/RES/872 (1993)* (5 Oct 1993) – establishing UNAMIR (text of the Security Council decision).
* United Nations, *Resolution S/RES/909 (1994)* (5 Apr 1994) – renewing UNAMIR with conditions (Council debates to examine).
* United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations – UNAMIR press releases and background (archives).
* Online Archives**:** Testimony and documents from the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum *Prevent Genocide* program and the National Security Archive (e.g. “Genocide Fax”). These include Dallaire’s cables and declassified reports that illuminate the situation.