

East, proposed what he called the Oasis Plan, that the necessary foundation for peace would have to be real economic development of the region. This involved especially major infrastructure—transportation and water systems, energy production, and so on. There were discussions with certain people in Israel who were interested in the idea, as were people in the Palestine Liberation Organization. When the Oslo agreement came out, LaRouche's reaction was to embrace the peace process, but to warn that unless real changes, real economic development took place, bettering the conditions of the Palestinian people, the peace process would be very fragile and would collapse. There has been no economic development. What money has come in has been for maintaining some services.

Hazboun: That's accurate.

EIR: So, you have growing despair, especially since the assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. What do you think of this idea of the Oasis Plan?

Hazboun: When Oslo came about, one of my children asked, "Why should we settle for Jericho and Gaza when all of Palestine is ours?" I said, "I think we're going to have to look for a peaceful solution." I convinced them that we are pursuing a peace of principles.

As a child, I used to think I would never see the Palestinian flag as a free flag, or it would never be a country again. I'm so glad I can see it, and I don't have to wait for my grandchildren to see it. So, at least this is happening, but it doesn't mean that this is leading to a viable solution, just to see a Palestinian flag that is free.

I think, that unless we do something about the economic situation for the people to survive—life is very expensive, and income is impossibly low. Unless this is solved, I think we will have some kind of explosion. I cannot foresee that not happening. I see that in a lot of people who come to the clinic. . . . I agree that something, economically, providing some decent existence for these human beings, would be an important aspect of the possibility of continued co-existence, and the political solutions will hopefully follow.

EIR: You've been speaking to a number of groups here in Los Angeles. What is the message you have been trying to convey?

Hazboun: I quoted an Israeli psychologist who had been a councillor to Rabin and [former Prime Minister Shimon] Peres throughout Oslo. He had said, "We celebrated the creation of the state of Israel, but the UN declaration at that time was for the creation of the state of Israel and the state of Palestine, and everyone seems to forget about the second part of that sentence." My message is that we do exist and although our pain is big, we are willing to contain the pain to find, and work for, a workable solution. . . . We have to work with the hope that human beings are greater than pain, and greater than loss and despair. As long as we are creative, we can find solutions.

Unity conference challenges silence on Rwanda

by Linda de Hoyos

Over Sept. 19-20, leaders of five organizations of opponents to the regime of the Rwandan Patriotic Front in Rwanda came together to form the Union of Rwandan Democratic Forces (URDF), with a program for restoring democracy in Rwanda and ending the reign of slaughter within the country, a reign which has been largely hidden under a shroud of silence in the international press. The aim of the URDF, among others, is to break that silence and bring the force of the international community to bear to restore peace to Rwanda, and contiguously, the Great Lakes region.

The groups represented included the Resistance Forces for Democracy of Faustin Twagiramungu; the Group for Initiative in Dialogue of former ministers; the Rally for the Return of Refugees and Democracy in Rwanda, a democratic group; the Rwandan National Liberation Movement of Rwandan exiles in Sweden; and the Rwandan National Union, a monarchist group.

The effort to forge unity among the different organizations and political orientations which all oppose the regime in Kigali had been the primary mission of former Rwandan Interior Minister Seth Sendashonga, before he was assassinated in Nairobi, Kenya, in June of this year. Sendashonga, along with Faustin Twagiramungu, the president of the newly formed URDF, had been part of the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) regime when it came to power in July 1994, but left the government in early 1995, charging that dictator Paul Kagame et al. were carrying out mass murder against the Hutu population.

Despite the assassination of Sendashonga, the unity conference did take place.

It is understood by those attending that pressure must be brought to bear on the international community to remove its total support for the regime in Kigali. The RPF government rests on not only a small minority of Tutsis in the country, less than 15% of the population, but documented reports now show that even within that minority, power is not shared equally, but resides within a small clique centered in Gahini in Kibungo Prefecture. Aside from the strength of its military, politically and financially, the only way in which the Kigali regime remains in power is by the consensus of support it receives from London, Washington, Paris, and Brussels.

One way in which that support is manifested is by the opprobrium that any Rwandan political leader who is not

a member of the Rwandan Patriotic Front, is *ipso facto* a “genocidalist,” that is, a conspirator and/or perpetrator of the mass killing that took place in spring-summer 1994 in the aftermath of the murder of President Juvenal Habyarimana. It is also assumed in the international media, that only Tutsis were murdered in that bloodletting, an assessment which multiple sources, both Rwandan and Western, indicate is not true. Yet, the United States, for instance, refuses to grant visas to many former Rwandan leaders, with the broad assertion that anyone in the Habyarimana regime is suspect, and therefore likely guilty.

“The very fact that these people [at the Brussels unity conference] could sit down together at the same table shows that there are no criminals among them,” said one knowledgeable source in the United States. “Because by their presence they give legitimacy to the other.”

As the URDF declaration notes (see *Documentation*), “all signatory organizations reaffirm their condemnation of the genocide committed under the former regime in 1994,” however, unlike the international community, they also “condemn crimes committed under the RPF regime.” This includes the mass murder, now confirmed by the United Nations investigation, against Rwandan Hutu refugees during the 1996-97 Zaire war, and slaughter inside Rwanda since 1994, which first came to light with the murder of 8,000 men, women, and children at the Kibeho camp in southwestern Rwanda in April 1995.

War within Rwanda

Since May 1997, war has been raging inside Rwanda. Although the reason stated by Rwandan Defense Minister Paul Kagame for the Rwandan invasion of Zaire in 1996 was to dismantle the refugee camps of Rwandan Hutus inside Zaire, disperse the Hutu Interhamwe militias, and to secure Rwanda’s western border, the strategy did not succeed. Instead, by September 1997, following the mass repatriation of Rwandan Hutu survivors of the war, the fighting only moved inside the Rwandan borders. In the northern districts of the country, where Hutus are the vast majority of residents, the Tutsi military of Kagame’s Rwandan Patriotic Front launched a merciless war on civilians and suspected militiamen alike. But, this campaign did not have the intended effect. As one Rwandan opponent of Kagame commented, “The Hutus realize that they are slated for death, and they say to themselves, since that is the case, then I would rather die fighting.”

This fighting has so far only taken the form of resistance to the Kagame regime, but has been intense enough that Kagame, along with forces deployed by his mentor, Ugandan dictator Yoweri Museveni, has declared again that Rwanda is entering the Democratic Republic of Congo (formerly Zaire), in order to secure its borders against the activities of Congo-harbored insurgents.

In January 1998, the Rwandan military cordoned off the provinces of Ruhengeri, Gisenye, Kibuye, and parts of Gitarama, and Kagame personally went to Ruhengeri to deliver a

threat to the population that it either cease aiding the “infiltrators,” or it would be starved out. “The first consequence [of support],” Kagame said, “is the lack of subsistence for life. You will have nothing to eat.”

Human rights organizations tend to substantiate claims from the Rwandan opposition that accounts of the murder of Rwandan civilians by the Hutu rebels, as reported by the Rwandan news agency, are in fact, reports of murders carried out by Kagame’s troops.

Typical is the Amnesty International report, “Rwanda: Ending the Silence,” issued by Amnesty International on Sept. 25, 1997: During May 9-11, 1997, the Rwandan Patriotic Army killed 1,430 civilians in Ruhengeri, and another 423 in Nyamutera commune. On May 23, another 170 were killed in Ruhengeri. “From mid-May to mid-June 1997, hundreds of killings were reported from Cyabingo, Ruhengeri. More than 300 people are believed to have been killed by RPA soldiers. On June 6, 1997, in Muramba sector, more than 115 people were reportedly killed by unidentified assailants. A week later, on June 13, fifteen children under the age of 15 were reportedly shot dead and others burned alive by RPA soldiers. Scores of unarmed civilians have been killed in churches.”

The Amnesty report continued to detail massacre after massacre, not just limited to the northwest, of civilians in Rwanda by Kagame’s army.

In addition, there are the targetted murders of individuals, *and usually their families*, suspected of killings during the spring-summer 1994, or suspected of political support for Hutu insurgency.

Despite the silence in the press, there is no reason to think that such killing has stopped, as reports come through every day from the Kigali radio news of tens of people being killed by “Hutu rebels” or the “Interhamwe.” But an inchoate war against the RPF is a losing battle without a political strategy and leadership.

There is little, if any, communication between the resistance forces on the ground in Rwanda and the political exiles in Europe. The URDF intends to pressure the Western powers involved in the region—the United States, Britain, France, and Belgium—to sponsor a roundtable conference of political forces in Rwanda, which would include the Rwandan Patriotic Front, to forge a power-sharing agreement that would end the slaughter within the country. The Arusha accords, which were hammered out between the Habyarimana government, the RPF, and various democratic parties in Rwanda in 1993-94, still stand, said one URDF organizer. By this agreement, a government of national unity was forged, and the military officer corps was divided 40-60 between the RPF and the Habyarimana government, respectively. “We are seeking a power-sharing arrangement,” said this organizer, “but unless the international community comes behind that idea, we know that Kagame will never agree to it.”

It is understood by many opponents of the RPF that the reason the Arusha accords were cast aside, with the April 6,

1994 assassination of President Habyarimana and the subsequent blitzkrieg of the RPF to Kigali, is not for reasons of power inside Rwanda, but for the requirement by British Commonwealth and other interests, to use Rwanda as a springboard against Mobutu's Zaire. Now that war continues, in its second phase, with RPF troops openly deployed with Congolese "rebels" in eastern Congo and running a military occupation of the Kivu provinces of eastern Congo. Hence, the issue of "power-sharing" in Rwanda—the search for peace in Rwanda—is a direct challenge to Western policy toward all of the Great Lakes region. That is what the URDF has come together to do.

Documentation

Here is the Common Declaration of the Rwandan Democratic Opposition:

We, Rwandan democrats, assembled here in Brussels on the 19th and 20th September 1998, as representatives of the following political organizations:

- Resistance Forces for Democracy (RFD)
- Group for Initiative in Dialogue (GID)
- Rally for the Return of Refugees and Democracy in Rwanda (RDR)
- Rwanda National Liberation Movement (RNLM)
- Rwandan National Union (RNU);

Convinced that Rwandan monarchists, republicans, and other political tendencies must live together in peace, with respect for fundamental liberties of each citizen, and that, after a transitional period, Rwandans must sovereignly decide about the nature of a regime to be set up by means of a referendum;

Noting that all signatory organizations reaffirm their condemnation of the genocide committed under the former regime in 1994, as they condemn crimes committed under the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) regime, and reiterate their disposition to contribute to the bringing to justice of all presumed genocidalists;

Taking note of the break-up of the social fabric that the Rwandan population faces, the total disintegration and the deepening gap between different ethnic components because of mutual exclusions, massacres of the civilian population, assassinations of democrats, war crimes, the genocide committed under the former government in 1994, and large-scale massacres perpetrated under the RPF government, particularly those of Rwandan refugees in former Zaire in 1996-97 that the United Nations Commission of Inquiry has already qualified to be acts of genocide and for which it has requested a thorough inquiry;

Considering that the responsibility of the RPF regime is heavily involved in this endless tragedy, in which its sole concern is to establish an absolute tyranny over the Rwandan

population and to extend it to the people of neighboring countries;

Considering that an army of terror, sham institutions, the choking of the democratic process, a summary and hasty justice, and a systematic looting of the country's meager resources are the attributes of the ruling powers in Kigali;

Conscious of the deep desire of Rwandan people to evolve a political system based on peace, unity, rule of law, justice, equality, and national reconciliation;

Committed to putting an end to the totalitarian power of the RPF government and to ease the pain of the Rwandan people;

We have decided and solemnly declared the setting up of a common platform for change in Rwanda, hereafter named: Union of Rwandan Democratic Forces.

The main objectives of the Union of Rwandan Democratic Forces reads as follows:

1. To mobilize the Rwandan people for national unity, reconciliation, and peace;
2. To put an effective end to ethnic, regional, and tribal discrimination, as well as to any other discriminatory policy;
3. To set up genuine democratic institutions suitable for all components of the Rwandan society, based on the rule of law, equality, public liberties, pluralism, separation of powers, and human rights;
4. To set up a fair and impartial justice;
5. To hunt for the truth about the Rwandan tragedy in order to help justice establish responsibility, and to punish the real criminals for the misfortunes which have plunged, and still plunge, the Rwandan people into mourning, irregardless of the author or the victim, but according to the actual nature of each crime;
6. To institute and guarantee security for people and their goods;
7. To fight against social injustice and to protect vulnerable groups, and, in particular, survivors of the genocide and massacres, repatriated people whose property has been squatted in, widows, orphans, and victims of sexual cruelties;
8. To protect basic economic and social rights;
9. To rebuild the national economy, to clean up public management, to banish corruption, embezzlement of public funds, money laundering, and other economic crimes;
10. To develop and diversify relations of solidarity, brotherhood, and reciprocity with other nations, and to work for peace and regional security.

The Union of Rwandan Democratic Forces is empowered to engage, in fields under its competence, member organizations, and to define appropriate strategies in order to reach its goals.

The Executive Committee of the Union of Rwandan Democratic Forces is the following: Faustin Twagiramungu, president; Claude Rukeba, first vice president; Charles Ndereyehe, second vice president; Emmanuel Ndagijimana, general secretary; Rwanda National Liberation Movement, deputy general secretary