

A Genocide Trial in France

by J.B.Gerald

Some twenty years after Paul Kagame's U.S. supported invasion of Rwanda resulted in genocide, the UN's International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) with 95 indictments (exclusively of Black Africans) since 1994, is being phased out. On February 4th France under its laws of universal jurisdiction charged Pascal Simbikangwa with complicity in genocide. Referred to in press accounts as Rwanda's intelligence chief during the genocide, the plaintiff denies the charges against him.

The trial has the public approval of Rwanda's Minister of Justice who finds "history being made" (*AFP*). *The Guardian* (U.K.) suggests that the two months of expected proceedings will reveal the Mitterrand government's complicity in the Rwandan genocide. Press accounts concerning Rwanda consistently fail to note that Kagame's minority Tutsi military takeover of France's former colony led to foreseeable military and popular resistance by the country's Hutu majority, and mass murders of Rwandan Tutsis.

Trials focusing on the interface of individual perpetrators of hatred and horror deflect attention from the dynamics of an international military takeover with predictable results. They also allow the courts to focus publicly and exclusively on the guilt of Africans, introduced to the concept of genocide by Europe's colonialism.

What was identified by UN General Dallaire's accounts as a "third force," both alien to the conflict's norms and crucial to understanding the genocide, remains omitted in global media accounts. Also omitted and denied official recognition are the Hutu population groups slaughtered in genocidal proportions during the Kagame invasion ([previous](#)). Kagame is also considered responsible for a huge number of deaths among Hutu exiled in the Congo ([previous](#)).

When American attorney Peter Erlinger clarified an equivalent genocide of Hutu peoples (ie. [previous](#)) he was arrested and imprisoned by the Kagame government, released on compassionate grounds to return to the U.S. under threat of extradition and prosecution. [Victoire Ingabire](#), attempting to stand as a presidential candidate, was arrested, tried, convicted, after asking equivalent respect for Hutu deaths denied their country's recognition. She serves 15 years in prison.

Within a pattern of murdered political opposition President Kagame's former intelligence chief Patrick Karegeya who accused Kagame of ordering the Rwanda's President Juvenal Habyarimana's plane be shot down ([previous](#) and see also [Dr. Theogene Rudasingwa](#)) - the triggering of Rwanda's bloodshed - was found murdered in Johannesburg exile, Jan.1, 2014.

The *AP* notes 27 other possible cases concerned with the genocide in Rwanda awaiting trial under French law. In 2014 France provides an ambiguous venue, with

its government vulnerable to the Convention on Genocide domestically for its ongoing treatment of [Roma peoples](#), and equally vulnerable for its foreign policy/actions in [Cote d'Ivoire](#), [Libya](#), [Syria](#), [Central African Republic](#). Unlike the ICTR cases which remained largely unknown to the general public, a genocide "show trial" of a black foreigner preceding French elections in the Spring (36,000 mayors), raises questions of political favour in votes from increasingly racist, xenophobic corporate populism. Historically, the need for this trial may be understood as a distress call.

Partial sources online: "France to open Rwanda genocide trial," Feb. 4, 2014, *Al Jazeera*; "France holds up mirror in Rwanda genocide trial," Jamey Keaton, Feb. 3, 2014, *BloombergBusinessweek*; "France holds up mirror in Rwanda genocide trial," AP, Feb. 4, 2014, *Omaha.com*; "France's role in Rwandan genocide exposed in trial," Linda Melvern (*Guardian News Service*), Feb. 6, 2014, *The Hindu*; "Ex-Rwandan spy 'was on hit list'," Alexander Joe (*AFP*), Jan. 6, 2014, *The Daily Telegraph*; "Landmark Rwandan genocide trial opens in France," *Agence France-Press*, Feb. 4, 2014, *The Raw Story*.

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First posted at nightslantern.ca
February 6, 2014