

# The Arusha Accords: A Genocidal Compromise

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Genocide and mass violence continues to be a pervasive issue in today's world. As was the case with the Rwandan Genocide, most conflicts result from tensions that manifested violently due to a lack of understanding, communication, and compromise. We chose the Rwandan Genocide as our topic because we sought to understand the political, economic and social motivations behind the egregious actions performed during the 100 days of slaughter. In our research, we discovered the role of failed compromise and international intervention in heightening tensions and creating irreconcilable differences between the two parties, as exemplified by the Arusha Peace Accords.

Because of the modernity of our topic, we conducted our research using sources in a multitude of mediums, representing many different perspectives. Documents such as radio transcripts, television clips and unclassified reports from the U.N. were important pieces of our research process because they allowed us to gain the perspective of key players in the events leading up to genocide. Additionally, the linguistic abilities of the members of our group gave us access to 19th century French and German primary texts with no English counterparts. The ability to explore these colonial Rwandan records greatly enhanced the quality of our research by providing us with a unique perspective on the dynamics of the Rwandan government. Lastly, we were fortunate enough to be in contact via email with several experts on Rwanda as well as survivors of the genocide and social workers living there now. We believe that our unique and diverse methods of investigating Rwandan history allowed us to discover the many different levels of conflict and compromise that occurred during this period of Rwandan history.

We chose the exhibit category because we felt powerful visuals and media would evoke the most engagement and emotion from viewers by allowing us to display an array of primary sources, including radio transcripts, documentaries, photographs and interviews, which effectively convey the tragic occurrences. In addition, we designed our exhibit to mimic the huts of colonial Rwanda, which indicate the beginning of ethnic tensions between the three ethnic groups, Hutus, Tutsis, and Twas, thus representing the very first conflict, which would be manipulated by politicians in future years and lead to one of the worst genocides that history has seen.

The Rwandan civil war and the Arusha Accords are the ultimate examples of a lack of thorough compromise resulting in disaster. Although ethnic tensions played a key role in fueling the genocide, it was ultimately the lack of compromise among political groups in Rwanda that led to the genocide of 1994. The Arusha Accords, attempting to bring peace to Rwanda by allowing for a multiparty government and army, were a compromise on paper. However, the strongest political parties in Rwanda had no incentive to share their power and therefore sacrificed peace and stability from a compromise to retain their personal power. In addition, the international community had no political incentive to intervene and therefore were unwilling to use force as a method of retaining peace.