

# ***THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF HUMANITIES & SOCIAL STUDIES***

## **Roles of States and Multilateral Institutions in Reducing Hutu-Tutsi Conflict in Rwanda: A Critical Appraisal**

**Oladimeji Talibu**

Ph. D. Candidate, School of International Studies, Universiti Utara Malaysia

**Dr. Mpawenimana Abdallah Saidi**

Vice Principal, Baseerah International School, Shah Alam, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

### ***Abstract:***

*The Hutu-Tutsi imbroglio is one of the current genocide debates in the international criminal court. The establishment of special courts for Rwanda genocidal case underscores the importance of this research. The late response of the international organisations in Burundi and Rwanda can be adjudged as one of the contributing factors that made over 800,000 lost their lives. Most scholarly works have not really appraised or examine the role multilateral organisations and some state actors played in quelling the tide of war in both Rwanda and Burundi. This article, therefore examines the role of multilateral organisations and state actors in curbing the Hutu/Tutsi conflict in East Africa. It is hoped this will contribute to intellectual debate on the efficacy of multilateral institutions in the maintenance of global peace and security. The work relies on existing published works and government documents with latent content analysis as the method of interpreting the text.*

***Keywords:*** Multilateral institutions, Burundi, Rwanda, Hutu, Tutsi, conflict

### **1. Introduction**

The age-long Hutu-Tutsi conflict can be understood in the context of state formation in Burundi and Rwanda. The role of international organisations in reducing the conflict cannot be exhaustively discussed in isolation of other actors. It needs to be maintained that the magnitude of the conflict was beyond the institutional capacity of the East African Community (EAC) to quell. In this way it is imperative on the part of the international community to intervene in order to salvage the region from the barbaric genocidal war. Although from the outset, some powers were reluctant to table the issue before the United Nations (UN) and this partly may be attributed to the fact that the conflict area did not pose any threat to global peace and interests of the great and superpowers. Neither oil nor gold is present in this part of the world of which the disruption of the supply might affect international trade.

Thus, in the course of reducing the conflict, different players, both internal (regional) and external, were engaged to suggest measures to reduce tension between the Hutus and Tutsis in Rwanda and Burundi. In this connection, the article will also discuss the role of other actors in relation to their action (and inaction) in the conflict. The actors' involvement became imperative because the conflict spreading beyond Rwandan and Burundian borders. Therefore, de-escalation of the conflict in Rwanda and Burundi cannot be understood without examining the efforts of actors outside the EAC sub-region.

#### ***1.1. The African Dilemma in the Hutu-Tutsi Conflict***

African countries have been known globally for lack of security of lives and property due to constant occurrence of conflicts and wars. The resultant effect of this incessant war is underdevelopment that has become a cankerworm in the African continent (Modi, 2011). It is the least developed of all continents of the world and most of the heinous crimes in the world have been committed in Africa. For example, civil war in Sudan, Congo conflict, and Chadian conflict just to mention a few. It is, therefore, not surprising that the political and social edifice left by the colonial masters become a source of dispute and conflict as the Hutu-Tutsi conflict in the east African region arguably stems from the unfortunate legacy of western colonialism.

The Hutu-Tutsi conflict in Africa is a major humanitarian disaster of the twentieth century. The conflict occurred at a time when the most powerful countries on the continent were groaning in one problem or the other. South Africa was still under the clutches of apartheid while Nigeria was battling with internal political problems arising from military rule. It is of interest to note that the Nigerian internal political stalemate did not stop it from intervening in Liberia and Sierra Leone possibly because of its status as the sole regional hegemony in the West African sub-region. The North African regional power, Egypt did not see the issue as its concern basically on the premise that it has little cultural and political attachment with most African states. It was preoccupied with what

happened in the larger Middle East than the unfolding events in sub-Saharan Africa. It regarded the issue as purely African in nature and did little to salvage the situation. The killings of a million of Rwandans by Hutu ethnic militia reveal the complex behaviour of human race and it was unfortunate that no country deemed it as a matter of duty to rescue the people from this genocide as early as it supposed to.

Although it may be said that the scale of the conflict prevented many nations from taking unnecessary risks, it is the moral obligation and duty of the neighbouring countries to ensure the timely quelling of the genocidal war. Instead, Uganda and Democratic Republic of Congo became training grounds for these heinous perpetrators. Rwanda and Burundi would have been lucky if Nigeria and South Africa were politically stable at the time and incidentally there was no structural mechanism in the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) to address such large scale ethnic conflict. Also, the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of member countries was deeply entrenched in the OAU Charter which provided the legal barriers to intervention. Since the continental organisation was powerless to put an end to the conflict, the sub-regional communities also faced the same dilemma. Rwanda was therefore left to its own fate and the massacre continued unabated until close to a million of people lost their lives. Had there been prompt intervention by the international community, the genocide would have been averted. At a point in the history of the conflict, some countries which unilaterally intervened were forced to withdraw their assistance because of the recalcitrant nature of the warmongers. For example, the Belgian forces and humanitarian assistance were withdrawn after the killing of twenty Belgians.

It was on record that a Senegalese driver saved over 50,000 lives and countries like Netherlands, Ghana and Canada were also helpful. After the war the American president at the time, Bill Clinton regretted its action of nonchalant attitude in the conflict (Adrian, 2010). But the scenario was understandable from a political perspective. Most powers did not want to sow where they would not reap. Rwanda as a country, for example, is of little significance to the power politics calculation and it does not have any resources that will attract the attention of global powers. The Clinton Administration might not foresee the scale of the war. Had the US known it would have intervened immediately to avert the genocide in the east African region. It is therefore unfortunate that the genocide occurred at a time when African powers such as South Africa and Nigeria were battling with internal political issues which gave no room for them to intervene quickly to avert the ugly situation. It was only after the ugly situation that South Africa and some members of OAU were able to intervene to fashion out a modus operandi for keeping lasting peace between both parties in the conflict.

### *1.2. The Role of Organization of African Unity/African Union*

The formation of OAU as a continental organisation in 1963 was a compromise between three opposing ideological camps, i.e. Monrovia Group, Casablanca Group and Brazzaville Group. The most important factor for the establishment of OAU was to free the continent from the shackles of imperial powers and to ensure that the African continent speak with a common voice in global politics. The realisation of the institutional weakness of OAU impelled the continental leaders to embark on an ambitious project of making it relevant to the contemporary happenings in the global arena.

OAU was therefore structurally incapacitated to intervene in the Hutu-Tutsi conflict. Normally, such a continental organisation would have been in the best position to provide timely preventive measures to avert the conflict but most of the countries that were supposed to champion the cause were themselves facing domestic problems. Incidentally, the conflict occurred at a time when Liberia and Sierra Leone were enmeshed in a political imbroglio that was to last for several years. This diverted the attentions of a regional actor like Nigeria and most West African countries from the happenings in the East African region. This partly explains why some political observers on Africa regarded the period as the African debacle.

Nevertheless, many state and non-state actors played different roles and in varied capacities in the process of reducing tensions and conflicts between Hutus and Tutsis in East Africa. As EAC expressed concern about the threat posed by the Hutu-Tutsi conflict to the region, other players also persuaded the conflicting parties to de-emphasise their differences and embrace peace and stability. Players sought solution to the tragedy and they were more concerned about peace-building in order to address the far-reaching effects of the conflict in the East African sub-region. Mpangala (2004) noted that the transnational effects of the conflict in Burundi necessitated regional player intervention and the international community. He argues that the consequences of the escalation of the conflict in the region, particularly the genocide in Rwanda, necessitated cross-border alliance by different players to prevent a relapse of the ugly catastrophic conflict that claimed many lives in both Rwanda and Burundi. OAU (now African Union) summits of 1995 and 1996 in Cairo and Tunis respectively focused on finding a solution to the conflict. These summits attracted leaders such as Toumani Toure of Mali, Archbishop Desmond Tutu from South Africa, Presidents Mwalimu Julius Nyerere of Tanzania and Jimmy Carter of the United States of America. These leaders expressed concern regarding the spill-over effects of the Hutu-Tutsi conflict on other countries in the east African region and canvassed a regional strategic approach to bring long-lasting peace and security. Most of the leaders that participated in the conflict resolution exercise lacked the political and financial will to actualise their objectives in resolving the conflict but they had huge moral capital. The absence of continental leaders like South Africa, Nigeria, Egypt and Zaire testified to the impending failure of their action.

It should be stressed here that the conflict escalated in Burundi after an attempted coup and assassination of the President in 1994. The whole world strongly condemned the act and called for the restoration of law and order to avoid further ethnic clashes. This led to the development of peace initiatives after discussing the strategies at the Tunis and Cairo summits. The UN and OAU appointed envoys, i.e. Leondre Basole and Ahmedou Ould Abdallah, respectively to broker peace in the conflict (UN Security Council Report, 1994; Human Right Watch, 1997). The OAU actively pursued peace and security as its agenda to resolve the conflict. The OAU involvement was necessitated by failure of the UN to provide immediate security in Rwanda and Burundi as other African countries also embroiled in conflicts. International personalities such as Nelson Mandela played a central role in mobilising and designing a mechanism to resolve the conflict particularly in Burundi. He took over as the lead mediator in 2002 after President Nyerere of

Tanzania on the recommendations of the AU. In 2002-2006, a number of ceasefire agreements were reached on Burundi, most notable of which was the Pretoria Protocol, which dwelt on the selection of persons to join forces as well as disarmament (Pretoria Protocol, 2003). In 2003, the African Mission in Burundi (AMIB), in collaboration with the United Nations, provided support to the peace process and took control of the fragile security situation in Burundi. The AMIB provided a total of 3,335 armed personnel, including 43 observers, to help reduce the tension, which was boiling in the country as each group, i.e. Hutus and Tutsis, were determined to eliminate each other. These peace-keeping mission personnel were mainly from South Africa, Ethiopia and Mozambique. There were also some observer missions from Tunisia, Mali Gabon, Burkina Faso and Togo (Seifat, 2012). However, the deployment of the AMIB force did not stop attacks on government forces. This compelled the UN Security Council to increase the UN armed personnel to 5,650 to mount enough pressure, reduce and de-escalate the conflict in the country (Kara, 2010). The efforts of South Africa and the AU, which continued to express concern about the conflict, resulted in the signing of an Agreement of Principles Towards Lasting Peace, Security and Stability in the country in 2006. This agreement demanded an immediate ceasefire and disarmament of an estimated 3,000 Rwanda faction fighters ([www.news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/5332644.stm](http://www.news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/5332644.stm)).

The repeated clashes between the Hutus and Tutsis resulted in the Arusha Accord and the Ceasefire Agreement in 2000. The Arusha Accord mainly focused on the distribution of power between the conflicting parties. It spelled out very clearly how socio-economic and political power would be equitably shared. Specifically, the Arusha Accord provided for the following:

- i. A transition led by an interim government to culminate in democratic elections;
- ii. The creation of a Senate and amendments to the composition of the National Assembly;
- iii. Judicial reform to decrease Tutsi domination;
- iv. Military reforms to decrease Tutsi domination and facilitate the integration of rebel forces into the national army;
- v. The establishment of a Truth and Reconciliation Committee;
- vi. An international military force to assist in the management of the transition; and
- vii. An independent investigation into alleged crimes of genocide (Boshoff et al., 2010: 8).

The ceasefire agreement centred on how to integrate former rebels into the society to prevent further escalation of the conflict (Boshoff et al., 2010). In this regard, the AMIB's main objective was to oversee the implementation of the ceasefire agreement; to reinforce the disarmament and demobilisation process and integration of former rebels; and to help restore political and economic stability that had been eroded in Burundi.

The objectives were pursued through tracking tasks and monitoring activities of the concerned parties, establishment of national security forces and facilitation of safe delivery of humanitarian assistance. The AMIB played its role effectively and some scholars describe its success as "one of the AU's biggest success story" (Boshoff et al., 2010: 69). This view was shared by the officials of the EAC who were interviewed. They emphasised that the AMIB succeeded in quelling the Hutu-Tutsi conflict in Burundi when it peaked. The AMIB managed to contain the conflict from further escalation and advocated the creation of a conducive security environment. In addition, the AMIB invested a lot of resources to secure the return of refugees and internally displaced persons in the country.

### *1.3. UN's Contribution towards Reducing Hutu-Tutsi Conflict*

In the history of global multilateral institutions, the most essential rationale behind its establishment is maintenance of peace and order. UN was formed at the end of the Second World War in 1945 to ensure global peace and security. The history of UN is replete with the maintenance of world peace in all corners of the world. The cold war period was a challenge for the existence of the UN. This was because of the influence of the two world powers on its operation. The U.S. and the USSR competed for the control of the UN during the cold war period and this made it difficult for the organisation to maintain neutral ground on the issue relating to global politics. It should also be said that the five permanent members of the Security Council have also dictated the direction of the UN in the global politics and this has made it difficult for the developing countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America to have their voices heard on issues of global concern. The first attempt by the UN to maintain peace in Africa was in the Congo in 1961 (Oliver & Atmore, 1972). The country shortly after independence was engulfed by civil strife that lasted until 1963. It was the UN contingent that quelled the conflict and the country was restored back to the pre-war period of political tranquillity.

The East African crisis of 1994 could be said to be the test on the capacity of the UN to respond promptly to the conflict situation in any part of the globe. The reluctance on the part of the UN to intervene in the internecine war showed the danger of over-reliance of UN on the U.S (Adrian, 2010). It was the attitude of the US to the war that also dictated the response of the global institution. Had US promptly acted the UN would have been called upon to salvage the situation. One needs to ask a question here: why are UN activities inextricably intertwined with the U.S? The lingering question needs to be answered by looking at the nature of global politics in the contemporary international system. The US is the only surviving global hegemon with the demise of the USSR and in this case whatever would happen in the UN needs the US blessing before it will come to pass. Also, the financial capacity and contribution of the US towards the maintenance of the organisation is equal to none. The US contributes the largest financial commitment to the operation and upkeep of the UN. The corollary of this is that the voting capacity of the US is the largest in the UN.

Before the Hutu-Tutsi conflict peaked in Rwanda in 1994, a joint Hutu-Tutsi power sharing government was formed in June 1993 in order to reduce tension between them. This did not have much impact because when the wave of genocide was sweeping around Rwanda, the UN initially could not stop the killing of the people. But, later, under its United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR), it deployed 5,500 troops to provide security and protection for displaced persons (UNAMIR) (Bhavnani, 1999). This was after the UN Security Council had resolved to deploy a military group to observe the Uganda-Rwanda border which provided passage for RPF troops to Rwanda. These troops were charged with the responsibility of monitoring the ceasefire process and facilitating the

creation of conditions that would allow for an acceptable government to take-over as well as provide humanitarian relief (Dupont, 1997). Under the umbrella of the Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), the UN encouraged and supported regional cooperation in Africa including EAC to address problems peculiar to their region. For instance, the Hutu-Tutsi conflict largely created political turmoil in both Rwanda and Burundi and peace and security inevitably became concerns of the world community. This was because the conflict became a serious threat to human security not only in Rwanda and Burundi but in the entire east African sub-region. The UN was engrossed in searching for means of restoring peace and security in Rwanda and Burundi and much of its donor support was directed at the promotion of democracy. In addition, when the tenure of the AMIB expired in 2004, it was replaced by UN troops popularly known as UN Operation in Burundi (ONUB). In fact, most of the AMIB troops remained under the umbrella of the UN mission. Efforts were made to provide opportunities to internally displaced persons, returning refugees and ex-combatants to access economic resources while fighting rebels were disarmed and demobilized. This measure greatly eased the tension.

#### *1.4. US and Rwanda Conflict*

It is at times very difficult to intervene in a foreign country's conflict especially like the one happened in Rwanda. This is because of the fear of loss of both human and capital resources as was the case with the US in Somalia—a war where over one million people were killed and two million refugees are located in the neighbouring countries (Lerhe, (2005). To assist such a country requires sincere effort and huge financial and personnel commitment. The neighbouring countries could not provide any meaningful financial assistance because of the nature of the region's economy which is basically subsistence in nature. The genesis of meaningful intervention of the US in the Rwanda conflict can be traced to the 1995 post-conflict period when a team from Centre for Development Information and Evaluation of USAID visited Rwanda for a firsthand assessment of any possible assistance to the war torn country. In collaboration with the UN, USAID embarked on an ambitious programme of reconstruction and rehabilitation of the country after the devastating civil war (Meddleton, 2006). The first notable step was to ensure that perpetrators of the war crimes were brought to book. To achieve this, a criminal tribunal was established in Arusha, Tanzania. Also, the legal system was restored and financed largely by the US to ensure a peaceful climate in Rwanda. The neighbouring countries which harboured refugees were also assisted to cater for the influx of the refugees and its attendant problems. It is estimated that over half of the money committed to Rwanda rehabilitation was spent on refugees in the neighbouring countries (USAID, 1996).

Developmental projects were also embarked upon with the assistance of IMF. Most of the farmers were provided with farming tools and financial assistance in order to re-establish themselves in their country. By 1995, it was estimated that over 700,000 refugees have returned to Rwanda with the help and finance from the US (Melvern, 2009). Measures were also taken in health and education sectors. Hospitals and schools were built in order to help the young ones go back to school. It must also be acknowledged that health problems became a very serious issue arising from the outbreak of cholera, tuberculosis, malaria and HIV/AIDS. Health officers were sent to various parts of the country and refugee camps to ensure people got better treatment. The new government led by Tutsi was also financially helped to run the administration of the country. It may be ironical to see that the US which failed to intervene and stop the massacres suddenly became an apostle of reformation in Rwanda. The fact is that the US did not want to involve itself in another costly humanitarian intervention that will lead to loss of lives. The US had spent a lot in the campaign against Iraq in 1991 which resulted in loss of many US soldiers. Whatever the argument, the US became the single largest donor in the reconstruction and rehabilitation of Rwanda.

#### *1.5. European Union's Support to Quell Hutu-Tutsi Conflict*

The EU as a regional organisation in Europe is not formed to respond to the problems outside the continent. NATO is the natural collaborator in all issues concerning Europe. The rationale behind the formation of the EU is to proffer solution to economic, social and political problems bedevilling the countries of Europe. With the expansion of the membership in the 21<sup>st</sup> century it becomes imperative on the part of the richer members to cater for the needs of their poorer ones. The corollary of this is that EU is naturally attending to European problems. So by the time the Hutu-Tutsi conflict reared its ugly head in east Africa, the EU did not see the issue as part of its institutional responsibility. Major European powers such as France, Belgium, and UK responded unilaterally towards the conflict. Lately, the EU responded with limited capability in place which explains the failure of the global powers' intervention in the east African region.

Arguably, the most important contribution to reduce the Hutu-Tutsi conflict in Burundi through the AMIB operation was the logistical and financial support from the European Union (EU) and the UN peacekeeping force, which successfully influenced the conflicting parties to settle their differences (Mpangala, 2004). EU assistance was crucial as the EAC states could not effectively provide adequate force to quell the dangerous wave of the Hutu-Tutsi conflict that threatened to tear the region apart. The assistance was a welcome relief to facilitate troop deployment and coordination. EU has been instrumental in supporting not only EAC institutions and its initiatives, but also similar regional organisations, to build capacity to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), especially the reduction of poverty, which is the primary source of conflict in the region. The diagram below provides a summary of interventions by world actors. The table below shows each actor's contribution.

Organisation/Country	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
UN	547	442	380	611	940	124
EU	15	16	233	31	412	499
OAU	129	180	180	294	457	529
BELGIUM	692	824	767	984	989	1763
FRANCE	-	-	3	1	-	-
UK	52	81	46	21	51	728
NORWAY	430	527	470	568	522	600
USAID	231	211	237	380	400	368
SOUTH AFRICA	7	5	11	14	16	67

*Table 1: UN Peacekeeping and Intervention Report in East Africa (in US Dollar)*

*Source: UN Peacekeeping and Intervention Report in East Africa, 2000-2005*

### 1.6. The Failure of International Bodies

The formation of UN in 1945 was greeted with enthusiasm by many states in the international system. It was a mechanism that was fashioned out after the destructive World War II that ravaged many parts of the globe. It was an attempt to forestall further occurrence of such large scale war that warranted the formation of the world body. Since the League of Nations was powerless to avert the Second World War the UN becomes its offshoot. By the time the UN was formed most African nations were still under the clutches of colonial domination. Only Liberia, Egypt, South Africa, and Ethiopia participated in its formation. By the 1960s most African countries had become independent and active members of the UN. They thus abide by the rules and regulations of the UN after gaining independence.

One of the cardinal functions of the UN is to ensure peace and order in all corners of the globe, regardless of culture, race and ethnic foundations. If this is true, then the UN has failed woefully to avert the most brutal conflict of the twentieth century. The reluctance and the disinterest of the US greatly affected the performance and response of the UN in the conflict. Therefore, those who are of the view that the US has been sitting behind the UN as a sentinel are completely right in this regard. The mere fact that the US was not interested in the conflict affected the outcome of UN response in the conflict and this should not surprise anyone. The activities of UNAMIR were so passive that most of the contingents were of Belgian origin, which indicated that most European countries were reluctant to contribute troops to the quelling of the conflict. In the Rwandan case the issue of non-interference was strictly adhered to by the UN, whereas the issue at hand in the Rwandan case was genocide. How then can one define the activities of the UN in Rwanda? Was it because of the fear of losing troops? The activity of the UN in Rwanda was therefore a colossal failure and it tended to make Africa leaders and elites suspect the UN reluctance towards developments in the continent.

On the part of EAC and OAU, both organisations lacked institutional capacity to avert the danger of genocide in Rwanda. EAC would have been a viable instrument in that regard but most of the members were also grossly involved in the political processes that led to the large scale killings. The activity of the EAC in this regard would be suspicious to parties to the conflict because it will be assumed that nobody was neutral to the conflict. Nevertheless, because of the political terrain of the region, which is well known to the member of the EAC, it would have been easier to quell the conflict at an early stage. The EAC as a sub-regional grouping did not have the provision for dealing with such a large scale conflict and it was beyond the institutional capacity of the organisation. On the part of OAU, the inaction of strong members like Ethiopia, Nigeria, Egypt and Zaire crippled the institutional capacity of the OAU to provide necessary assistance to quell the conflict. Instructively, OAU was completely incapacitated by lack of leadership and finance to provide any meaningful assistance to the warring parties.

### 1.7. EAC and other Regional Bodies

Since its formation, EAC has been making efforts to ensure that the east African region became a model to other regional bodies. The institutionalisation of peace and security mechanisms as panacea to development is a laudable achievement for the community. The community through a network of actions has been able to curtail the conflict that can undermine the corporate existence of the countries in the region. The warring parties have been integrated in the union and the possibility of such barbaric attitude has been forestalled by various measures. The free movement of people has been a great achievement in this respect and the Rwandans can trade with any members of the community without any form of distress. With what is available to the union at present, the prospect of becoming a federation is feasible provided all hands are on deck. Although there are many encumbrances on the part of EAC in achieving most of the goals and objectives especially in relation to political integration, this is not peculiar to EAC only. Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), North American Free Trade Area (NAFTA), Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), Southern Common Market in Latin America (MERCOSOR) and the EU face similar challenges. For example, despite free movement of people across borders in the West African sub-region it has been very difficult for countries in the ECOWAS to achieve any form of political federation and it is a dream that may not be achieved in a century because of the complexity of the sub-region (Okeke, 2007). Most countries for example fear the domination of the largest and the most powerful country in the region, Nigeria. The influence of France is a powerful factor that undermines political federation in that part of Africa. Of all fifteen countries that comprise the membership of ECOWAS, ten of them are francophone while the remaining five are Anglophone. It is therefore very difficult to forge any meaningful political federation in such a region (Emily, 2010). Also, as advanced as EU is, it still faces the problem of political integration among its members. Despite the fact that most economic and some aspects of political relations have been integrated among its members, the EU still faces the political federation challenges as most

countries found it difficult to surrender their sovereignty to the regional body. The bailing out of Greece from the debt crisis testifies to this. Citizens of Germany, France and Great Britain are apprehensive of poverty-stricken and resource-dearth countries of Eastern Europe. The growth of nationalism is therefore very strong in EU which is normally a reference point in functional theory of integration. If EU can surmount this problem in the foreseeable future it is expected that EAC can also achieve the same. It is only a matter of time.

### *1.8. Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Rehabilitation in Rwanda*

The widespread destruction caused by the conflict immediately became apparent after the war. Most of the infrastructure, government buildings, schools, and other properties were severely affected. By the end of the war the state was heading towards collapse and immediately labelled a failed state. The savage and crude nature with which people were massacred opened Africa to much critical comments from outside the continent. However, it can be said that such barbaric attitude replicated itself in the Second World War in Germany and former Yugoslavia (Kegley and Shannon, 2012). The killing of over 6 million Jews by Nazi Germany which was later labelled as holocaust, is the gravest inhuman offence ever committed in history. But this should not be an excuse on the part of Rwandans to think that the war was right. The Nazi massacre of Jews clearly discredits the Eurocentric notion that African people are still living in savagery. A continuous reappraisal of the genocide in the east African region poses many unanswered questions: Why was it so difficult to stop the cruel behaviour before it went out of hand and were they hoodwinked with lofty gains coming to them by the end of the war? The deed had been done already and the large scale destruction and carnage caused will no doubt take decades to restore. Moreover, despite some EAC initiatives to avert such future occurrence of large scale killings, the possibility of their recurrence is very high because of those who might have lost their relatives and may possibly think of revenge.

The Hutu-Tutsi conflict in Rwanda generated a humanitarian crisis that was difficult to settle after the war. It has been estimated that 60 per cent of the entire population were displaced and formed the refugee population in the neighbouring countries in Uganda, Zaire, Burundi, and Tanzania. The refugee problem created a humanitarian crisis that was difficult to resolve by the neighbouring countries. Millions of people were uprooted from their homes and became refugees in foreign lands. After the conflict, the international governmental organisations and international non-governmental organisations came on stage to restore the country to normalcy and to forestall future occurrence of such an ugly situation. Many health and environmental crises were created by the conflict and most of these led to additional death tolls in the neighbouring countries where the refugees resided. Cholera, dysentery, famine and HIV/AIDS were prominent diseases that ravaged the country after the war. According to one estimate, about 1, 174,000 lives were lost in the conflict and this figure is very close to the holocaust that was perpetrated by Nazi Germany against the Jews. After the war, EAC and UN collaborated to provide necessary assistance to the tattered nation. Although, it must be said that the International Criminal Court for Rwanda (ICTR) was created to prosecute all those involved in the genocide especially the gender-targeted crimes, most of these warmongers have escaped to neighbouring countries. Only a few of them were caught for trial.

An Ad hoc criminal tribunal was opened for trial of criminals in the Rwanda genocide. The establishment of this tribunal preceded the establishment of the International Criminal Court (ICC). This shows the commitment of the members of UN to bring to book the perpetrators of genocide in Rwanda. The tribunal was established by resolution of the UN Security Council as a reaction to the bloody conflict on the territory of Rwanda (Mwakikagile, 2012). It must be said that such a tribunal is not peculiar to Rwanda alone; former Yugoslavia also had a share in which criminals of genocidal war were put on trial. The tribunal was thus responsible to try those who have been found committing the most serious crimes against humanity, war crimes and acts of genocide. The scale and gravity of the criminal acts perpetrated during the conflict led to the belief of the international community that the persons guilty of such serious offences should under no circumstances go unpunished. Bringing the perpetrators to justice was considered a necessary precondition for the reconciliation process in Rwanda and thus serves as a key element for the re-establishment of the rule of law. Based on this conviction, the swift adoption of the relevant Security Council resolutions did not cause any major problems. It was discovered from investigation after the conflict that HIV/AIDS, mutilation of reproductive capabilities and gender-targeted crimes were committed and those responsible were prosecuted in the ICTR. The huge number of lives with ensuing humanitarian crisis caused civil war in neighbouring countries. Democratic Republic of Congo was the most affected of all the neighbouring countries. It is on record that HIV/AIDS was used by men as a weapon of war and genital mutilations were also noted. This barbarity might have been averted had there been a timely intervention on the part of the UN.

## **2. Conclusion**

The impact of some multilateral organizations like EAC in forestalling the Hutu-Tutsi conflict has been great and laudable. Since joining EAC, both Rwanda and Burundi have been making steady progress in terms of politics, economics and socialization. The magnitude of the conflict and the loss of lives may not be easily forgotten by the surviving families, but it will be a reference point to the unborn generations of the need to embrace a pacifist approach in conflict resolution. The EAC has been doing a wonderful job in forestalling the re-occurrence of such an ugly situation because it is very difficult to put an end to any conflict that involves the mass killing of people. The memory of such killing normally haunts the surviving families and the vicious cycle of revenge may occur which may complicate the protracted conflict. Such a situation has happened in Liberia and it was a timely intervention of UN and ECOWAS that stopped the carnage. It is therefore a work well done on the part of EAC and other multilateral bodies to achieve such a task. The prospect of moving towards political federation looks good if all prevailing problems are surmounted.

**3. References**

- i. Adrian, J. Reyes. (ed) (2010). "Weak and Failing States-Security Threats and U.S. Policy" Global Political Studies.
- ii. Bhavnani, R. (1999). *Localised Ethnic Conflict and Genocide: Accounting for Differences*. Curry and UNESCO, University of California Press.
- iii. Boshoff, H., Vrey, W., & Rautenbach, G. (2010). *The Burundi peace process: from civil war to conditional peace*. Institute for Security Studies Monographs, (171), 1-134
- iv. Boshoff, H., Gasana, M., Cornwell, R. (2010). *Burundi: the end of the tunnel?ISS Situation Report* (Pretoria, South Africa: Institute of Security Studies, 2009)
- v. *Burundi Rebels to lay down arms*. [www.news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/5332644.stm](http://www.news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/5332644.stm) Retrieved from 10/12/2012.
- vi. Dupont, P. (1997). "The Sub-Regional Context of the Crisis in Rwanda and Burundi." In Fortman, Bas de Gaay and Veldhuis, Marijke (Eds.) *Internal Conflicts, Security and Development: RAWOO Lectures and Seminar Vol. 14*. The Hague: RAWOO.
- vii. Emily, Meirding (2010). "IR theory as politics, international politics as theory: a Nigerian case study", *African nebula*, Issue 2.
- viii. Human Right Watch, *Human Rights Development in Burundi 1997*: [www.hrw.org/reports/1997/WR97/AFRICA.02.htm](http://www.hrw.org/reports/1997/WR97/AFRICA.02.htm) Retrieved on 7/12/2012
- ix. Kara, Hoofnagle. (2010). "Burundi: A History of Conflict and State Crime." In Rothe, L. Dawn and Mullins, W. Christopher (Eds.). *State Crime: Current Perspectives*. Joyce Kilmer Avenue: Rutgers University Press.
- x. Kegley, C., and Blanton, L. (Eds) (2012). *World Politics-Trends and Transformation*. Boston: Wadsworth
- xi. Lerhe, E. (2005). "The 1994 Rwandan Genocide: The Role of Nationalism in the Rwandan Genocide of 1994." In Thomson M. Susan and J. Zoe Wilson (Eds.). *Rwanda and the Great Lakes Region: Ten Years on From Genocide*. Nova Scotia: International Insights Society at Dalhousie University
- xii. Modi, R. (ed) (2011). *South-South Cooperation-Africa on the Centre Stage*. UK: Palgrave Macmillan.
- xiii. Meddleton, John. (2006). *Rwanda: Pre-genocide*. [www.rwandancoffeeclub.org/pregenocide.htm](http://www.rwandancoffeeclub.org/pregenocide.htm) retrieved on 3/11/2012.
- xiv. Melvern, Linda. (2009). *A People Betrayed: The Role of the West in Rwanda's Genocide*. London: Zed Books.
- xv. Mpangala, G. P. (2004, February). *Origins of political conflicts and peace building in the Great Lakes Region*. In symposium "Ramifications of Instability in the Great Lakes Zones", organized by the Command and Staff College, Arusha.
- xvi. Mwakikagile, G., (2012). *Identity Politics and Ethnic Conflicts in Rwanda and Burundi: A Comparative Study*, First Edition. Dar-es-Salaam: New Africa Press.
- xvii. Okeke, V.O. (2007). "Path to African Security under the 21st Century Nuclear Regime," *African Journal of Political Science and International Relations* Vol. 2(1)
- xviii. Oliver, R. and Atmore, A. (1972). *Africa since 1800*. London: Cambridge University Press.
- xix. *Pretoria Protocol on Outstanding Political, Defence and Security Power Sharing Issues in Burundi*, 2 November, 2003. Retrieved at [http://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/Burundi\\_Protocol%20on%20Outstanding%20Issues\\_2003.pdf](http://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/Burundi_Protocol%20on%20Outstanding%20Issues_2003.pdf)
- xx. *Outstanding%20Issues\_2003.pdf*
- xxi. *Rwanda (UNAMIR), 1993 - 1996* Accessed at [www.awm.gov.au/units/unit\\_15687.asp](http://www.awm.gov.au/units/unit_15687.asp) on 25/12/2012
- xxii. Seifat, C. (2012). "The Conflict of Rwanda: Hutu & Tutsi." Accessed at [www.scribd.com/doc/29621665/ The-conflict-of-Rwanda-Hutu-Tutsi](http://www.scribd.com/doc/29621665/The-conflict-of-Rwanda-Hutu-Tutsi). on 6/6/2012
- xxiii. *UN Security Council Mission to Burundi on 13 and 14 August, 1994*. Report No. s/1994/1039, 9 September, 1994.
- xxiv. *USAID/Rwanda Civil Society in Rwanda: Assessment and Options* retrieved on 24/ 6/ 2014 [http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf\\_docs/PNACM181.pdf](http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PNACM181.pdf)