

Rwanda: a test case for Boutros-Ghali

by Linda de Hoyos

United Nations Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has seized upon the horrific slaughters in Rwanda since mid-April to pressure the U.N. Security Council to use military force to bring peace to the small African country. The secretary general's ultimate aim is to force through the blueprint of his U.N. Agenda plan, presented in 1992, which includes provisions for a standing army under U.N. command. This would be a major step in establishing the U.N. bureaucracy as the administration for a one-world dictatorship, ending the sovereignty of nation-states.

In a letter to the Security Council April 29, Boutros-Ghali demanded authorization for a "large military force" to halt the killing in Rwanda. Recalling the Security Council's unanimous decision to reduce the previous U.N. "peacekeeping" force of 2,700 to only 270 on April 21, Boutros-Ghali wrote: "I urge the Security Council to reexamine the decisions which it took . . . and to consider again what action, including forceful action, it could take, or could authorize member-states to take, in order to restore law and order and end the massacres." Reporting that up to 200,000 people had been killed in Rwanda over the span of three weeks, Boutros-Ghali wrote, "I am convinced that the scale of human suffering in Rwanda and its implications for the stability of neighboring countries leave the Security Council with no alternative but to examine this possibility."

The Security Council answered with only a statement condemning the "slaughter of innocent civilians" and calling for an international arms embargo on Rwanda. China, and non-aligned states, including Nigeria, prohibited the inclusion of the word "genocide" in the statement.

Speaking on ABC's "Nightline" television show on May 4, Boutros-Ghali expressed his confidence that the Security Council would eventually accede to his demands, and derided the permanent members for failing to commit their forces to U.N. command.

In this regard, Boutros-Ghali, whose grandfather signed Egypt over to the British in 1899, is following in the footsteps of the British Foreign Office of the 19th century, which repeatedly used the pretext of "humanitarian intervention" to extend its imperial geopolitical control. Ghali was accordingly joined in his demand for U.N. intervention by various humanitarian agencies, particularly those headquartered in London. Oxfam director David Bryer contended that a small force of foreign troops would scare the gangs who allegedly

carried out most of the slaughter of Hutu oppositionists and Tutsis in Rwanda, saying on May 3 that without action by the U.N., "we fear there is at least half a million of the Tutsi minority who are now at very, very grave risk." Amnesty International has also blamed the lack of U.N. intervention for the slaughters.

The slaughter in Rwanda has also prompted debate in the U.S. press on the powers of the United Nations. On April 26, the lead editorial in the *New York Times* concluded that the "horrors in Kigali show the need for considering whether a mobile, quick-response force under U.N. aegis is needed to deal with such calamities. Absent such a force, the world has little choice but to stand aside and hope for the best."

'Development is the new name for peace'

Under conditions of economic devolution, which have hit nearly every African country over the last decade, it is not difficult to set desperate people at each other's throats. Anybody who claims to want to bring peace, without addressing the issue of economic development and the end to International Monetary Fund conditionalities, should not be given a shred of credibility.

Even now, with the Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF), composed primarily of Tutsi expatriates, having gained control of two-thirds of the country, and with refugees streaming out of Rwanda, it remains to be seen exactly what a U.N. or other international or regional force would do. In the meantime, the neighboring country of Tanzania has taken the lead in attempting to bring the dispersed leadership of the interim Hutu government and leadership of the RPF to the negotiating table in Arusha. The RPF issued a statement on May 3 rejecting any U.N. intervention on the grounds that given U.N. inaction when tens of thousands were being killed in Rwanda, U.N. intervention now would only serve as an "attempt to manipulate the U.N. process and machinery to protect and support the murderers who constitute the provisional government."

The United States has said that it would help fund a regional peacekeeping force composed of troops from the member-states of the Organization of African Unity. The United States has sent Assistant Secretary of State for Humanitarian Affairs John Shattuck and Ambassador David Rawson to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, to help work out details of an OAU peacekeeping force, in discussions with OAU Secretary General Salim Ahmed Salim. But U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Madeleine Albright categorically ruled out the dispatching of U.S. ground troops to Rwanda.

This follows the prescription for Somalia of Henry Kissinger, who had demanded that OAU, not U.N., troops be sent in to end the conflict there. Legalists of international peacekeeping also point out that Chapter 8 of the U.N. Charter specifically instructs regional organizations to preserve peace in their region, before referring disputes to the Security Council.