

1885 to the Present

1885	Conference of Berlin. In negotiation with European Powers, Rwanda is given to the Germans as part of their empire.
1894	First German explorer, Count von Gotzen, arrives in Rwanda.
1895	Death of King Rwabugiri.
1896	Assassination of King Rutalindwa at Rucunshu. Enthronement of the young king Musinga.
1900	White fathers establish their first mission in Rwanda.
1907	Germany opens a Residence and assigns a military commander to Rwanda.
1916	Anglo Belgian troops defeat the Germans at Shangi.
1926	The League of Nations gives Belgium trusteeship of Rwanda.
1932	The King of Rwanda, Mwami Musinga, is deposed by the Belgians and replaced by his son, Rudahigwa, who is more susceptible to the influence of colonialists and the church.
1945	The United Nations gives Belgium trusteeship of Rwanda with the objective of moving Rwanda towards independence.
1952	Belgium appoints the first representative councils.
1957	The Hutu Manifesto, written by a group of Hutu intellectuals and supported by the Catholic Church, calls for Hutu emancipation from Tutsis and Belgians.
1959	Death of King Rudahigwa under mysterious circumstances while under the care of a Belgian doctor. Beginning of Rwandan "Social Revolution", with a peasant revolt that leaves 20000 Tutsis dead and thousands more refugees.
1961	The Republic is proclaimed by the PARMEHUTU party and the monarchy abolished.
1962	Rwanda becomes officially independent. Gregoire Kayibanda is elected as the first president of the Rwandan Republic.
1959-1965	Repeated attacks cause the flight of more than 200,000 Tutsis into exile in neighbouring countries. Small groups of Tutsi refugees stage minor attacks across the border of Rwanda in December 1963, provoking massive reprisals against the Tutsis still in Rwanda.
1963-1967	Continued cross-border attacks by Tutsi exiles provoke the anti-Tutsi programmes in Rwanda.
1973	Renewed anti-Tutsi persecution is organized by the government. The Army Chief of Staff, General Juvenal Habyarimana, overthrows president Kayibanda in a coup d'etat in July 1973. A system of ethnic and regional quotas is declared. Kayibanda and other leaders of the first Republic are imprisoned and many die under mysterious circumstances.
1978	A new constitution is adopted with a single party, the National Republican Movement for Development (MRND).
1979	The National Rwandan Union is created in Kenya. It later becomes the Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF).
1978, 1983, 1988	President Habyarimana is re-elected with 99% vote.

Chronology of Dates in Rwandan History

Oct 1990	RPF attacks from Uganda on 1 October. Massive arrests of up to 100,000 Tutsi and political opponents. Belgian and French forces intervene to evacuate their citizens and prop up the government. Massacre by the Rwandan Army of 500 to 1,000 Tutsi at Mutura and 400 Tutsi in Kibirira. RPF troops are stopped before they reach Kigali. The RPF falls back to the North and a guerrilla war begins. Belgium withdraws its troops, but French troops remain to support the Rwandan Army.
Jan 1991	The RPF attacks again from the north of the country. Ruhengeri prison is liberated by RPF troops. Beginning massacre of 500 to 1000 Bagogwe Tutsi near Ruhengeri.
June 1991	The Rwandan Constitution is modified to allow multi-party democracy and freedom of the press.
July 1991	Formation of opposition parties including the Democratic Republican Movement (MDR), the Liberal Party (PSD), and the Christian Democratic Party (PDC).
March 1992	Massacre of at least 300 Tutsi at Bugesera. Formation of the Hutu extremist party the Coalition for the Defence of the Republic (CDR).
May 1992	New offensive by the RPF in the north of the country with massive displacement of the population. Violent attacks against civilians by MRND militia.
July 1992	The RPF and the Government of Rwanda sign a ceasefire agreement in Arusha, Tanzania.
Aug 1992	Militia massacre large numbers of Tutsi in the Kibuye region.
Oct 1992	More violent demonstrations by MRND and CDR militia.
Dec 1992	Massacres of Tutsis and Hutu opposition members in the Gisenyi region
Jan 1993	Signing of the protocol of the Arusha Accord on a transitional government to include opposition parties on RPF. Militias continue to provoke violence and unrest throughout Rwanda. The International Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights Violations since 1st October 1990 visits Rwanda.
Feb 1993	The PRF launches a new offensive and threatens to take Kigali. France sends additional troops and weapons to stop the offensive. One million peasants flee in front of advancing RPF troops.
March 1993	A new cease-fire is negotiated in Dar-Es Salaam between the Rwandan Government and the RPF. The RPF withdraws to the North. The UN Security Council adopts Resolution 812 authorising an intervention force in Rwanda. The Intervention Commission of inquiry publishes its report citing grave human rights violations by the government which is described as genocide. Several donor countries threaten Rwanda with sanctions as a result of the report.
May/June 1993	New accords signed in Arusha concerning refugee repatriation and the unification of the armed force RPF. Emmanuel Gapyisi, leader of the MDR, is assassinated. Agathe Uwilingiyimana of the MDR is named as head of the new transition government.
Aug 1993	The comprehensive vision of the Arusha Accord is signed. These include the provision for the instalment of transitional government, including the RPF, the unification of the armies, demobilization and arrival of ANAMIR. Beginning of hate radio-broadcast on Radio-television Libre de Milles Collines (RTLML).
Oct 1993	The UN Security Council approves Resolution 875, which creates the UNAMR, a force of 2,500 soldiers from 23 countries.
Nov/Dec 1993	French troops leave Rwanda; UNAMIR troops deployed. A contingent of RPF troops arrives in Kigali on 28 countries.
Jan 1994	President Habyarimana takes an oath to office according to the provisions of the Arusha Accords. The swearing in of the rest of the transition government is repeatedly backed by the president and his "Hutu Power" allies.
Feb 1994	The two well-known political leaders, Felicien Gatabazi of the PSD and Martin Bucyana of the extremist CDR, are assassinated within days of each other. The perpetrators are neither identified nor punished. Violence escalates to Kigalo and around the country.

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6 April 1994	Returning from the summit meeting at Dar-Es-Salaam, the plane carrying the president of Rwanda and Burundi, Juvelal, Habyariamana and Cyprien Ntaryamira, is shot on approach to Kigali airport. The perpetrator remains unknown to this day. Within moments of the crash, systematic massacres of opposition leaders of the PSD, MDR and PL begin. Military and Militia road blocks go up all over Kigali.
7 April 1994	Assassination of Prime Minister Agathe Uwinyimana and ten Belgian UNAMIR soldiers. RPF troops in Kigali leave their garrison. Coordinated and extensive massacres are carried out by the Rwandan Army and Militia group in Kigali and in the countryside.
9 April 1994	French and Belgian paratroopers evacuate expatriates.
12 April 1994	RPF reinforcements reach Kigali; the battle of Kigali begins. The massacre of Tutsi continues throughout Rwanda.
19 April 1994	Massacres begin in Butare which has previously been spared the worst of the violence. The Prefect of Butare, who had opposed massacres is arrested and killed along with his whole family. A hard-line extremist takes his place.
21 April 1994	The Security Council votes on Resolution 912 to redefine UNAMIR's mandate and reduce the number of UN troops and observer from 2700 to 450.
22 May 1994	The RPF captures the airport in Kigali.
25 May 1994	The UN High Commission of Human Rights sends Rene` Degni-Sengui to investigate grave violation of the international Human Rights Law in Rwanda.
27 May 1994	UN forces evacuate the first refugee from the Milles Collines Hotel.
8 June 1994	The RPF announces that three bishops and ten priests were killed by RPF soldiers.
10 June 1994	Massacre of 170 refugees from Saint André` Church.
11 June 1994	French alliance announces intention to intervene in Rwanda.
22 June 1994	The UN security forces authorize armed humanitarian intervention in Rwanda at the request of the French.
23 June 1994	French troops arrive in Rwanda with operation Turquoise.
28 June 1994	A report issued by the special reporter of the UN Commission on Human Rights states that the murder of the Tutsis in Rwanda is genocide and calls for an international tribunal to bring the organizers of genocide to justice.
1 July 1994	The UN Security Council votes on Resolution 935 calling for the establishment of a commission of experts to examine evidence of "possible acts of genocide".
4 July 1994	Kigali and Butare are captured by RPF. France creates a "safe humanitarian zone" in the southwest of Rwanda.
13 July 1994	The RPF takes Ruhengeri in northern Rwanda prompting a mass exodus of Rwandans in the direction of Goma, Zaire.
15 July 1994	The US government withdraw its recognition of the former government of Rwanda.
17 July 1994	The RPF takes the last government stronghold in Gisenyi and declares the end of war.
19 July 1994	A government of national unity is formed in Kigali with Pasteur Bizimungu as President and Faustin Twangiramungu as Prime Minister. Members of the MRND and CDR are excluded from the new government. Cholera is first diagnosed among refugees in Goma.
22 July 1994	The US Government announces a massive relief operation for Rwanda.
29 July 1994	France begins the withdrawal of its Operation Turquoise troops.
31 July 1994	As part of the operation Support Hope, the first contingent of the US Military arrives in Kigali to deliver humanitarian assistance.
22 Aug 1994	Departure of the last operation Turquoise French troops. Major refugee movements towards the south of Rwanda and Bukavu, in Zaire.

Chronology of Dates in Rwandan History

1995	Militarisation of refugee camps in Congo, then Zaire, with the blessing of the Mobutu regime. More than two hundred thousand Interahamwe and X-FAR undergo training retraining and re-arm.
March 1996	Ethnic cleansing of Congolese Tutsis by Interahamwe and X-FAR begins in North Kivu. About 15000 Congolese Tutsis are slaughtered in Masisi and Rutshuru zones.
Oct 1996	Pulumuligation of the genocide in 1996 that categorize the genocide suspects into four categories.
Oct 1996	Massacre of hundreds of Banyamurene in Ruzizi Valley. Congolese Tutsis given seven days to leave Congo.
Oct 1996	The revolt of the Banyamurenge sparks a war against Interahamwe EX-FAR and the Congo government troops.
Oct 1996	Rwandese involvement in the Congo to pre-empt the pending FAR and the Congolese troops.
1997	Mobutu regime is toppled and the Alliance of Democratic Forces for Liberation of Congo (AFDL)
1997	Kabila proclaims himself the president and renames Zaire the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). He undermines the AFDL values and state institutions and introduces the politics of exclusion and nepotism.
1997	Former Kabila allies in the AFDL launch an armed opposition against him in what is called now the Congolese Rally for Democracy (CRD).
1997	Kabila regroupes, retrains and re arms former Rwandese soldiers and militia. This increases insurgence in all provinces of Rwanda bordering the Congo.
1998	Rwanda and Uganda join in the second Congolese war on the side of CRD while Angola, Zimbabwe, Namibia, Sudan and Chad joined on the war escalated.
1999	Cease-fire negotiations start in Lusaka, Zambia.
1999	A fifteen (15) kilometre demilitarised Zone was created between the warring forces.
2000	The Security Councils voted to send UN peace monitoring team to Congo
2000	Rwanda makes a unilateral offer to withdraw its forces 200km front line.
2000	Grassroots elections held in all districts of Rwanda.
2000	President Pasteur Bizimungu resigns as the president of the Republic of Rwanda on 23rd March after 56 out of 56 members of the parliament voted for his resignation.
22 April 2000	President Paul Kagame (Major General) is inaugurated as the president of Rwanda replacing former president Bizimungu who had resigned a month earlier.
March 2001	Local Elections were held and 95% of the population participated to elect their leader at the levels.
Sep 2001	Rwandese elected 256,300 Gacaca magistrates who are going to serve in 9000 cells, 1550 sectors, and 106 districts of the 13 provinces.
October 2001	Voting to elect members of traditional "gacaca" courts begins. The courts - in which ordinary Rwandans judge their peers - aims to clear the backlog of 1994 genocide cases.
Dec 2001	A new flag and national anthem are unveiled to try to promote national unity and reconciliation.
April 2002	Former president Pasteur Bizimungu is arrested and faces trial on charges of illegal political activity and threats to state security
July 2002	Rwanda, DR Congo sign peace deal under which Rwanda will pull troops out of DR Congo and DR Congo will help disarm Rwandan Hutu gunmen blamed for killing Tutsi minority in 1994 genocide.
October 2002	Rwanda says it has pulled the last of its troops out of DR Congo, four years after they went in to support Congolese rebels against the Kabila government.

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May 2003	Voters back a draft constitution which bans the incitement of ethnic hatred.
August 2003	Paul Kagame receives 95.1% of the vote in the first national presidential elections since the genocide. The voter turnout is 96.55%.
October 2003	First multi-party parliamentary elections; President Kagame's Rwandan Patriotic Front wins absolute majority, with 73.8% of the popular vote.
Dec 2003	Three former media directors found guilty of inciting Hutus to kill Tutsis during 1994 genocide and receive lengthy jail sentences.
April 2004	10th Anniversary of the genocide marked with commemorations worldwide. Former President Bill Clinton returns to Rwanda and apologises for not intervening to stop the genocide.
June 2004	Former president, Pasteur Bizimungu, is sentenced to 15 years in jail for embezzlement, inciting violence and associating with criminals.
January 2005	Department for International Development (a department within the British government) announces a grant of £4.25 million to SURF/PACFA to support 2500 women survivors raped and deliberately infected with HIV/AIDS on antiretroviral treatment.
March 2005	Main Hutu rebel group, FDLR, says it is ending its armed struggle. FDLR is one of several groups accused of creating instability in DR Congo; many of its members are accused of taking part in 1994 genocide.
July 2005	Government begins the mass release of 36,000 prisoners. Most of them have confessed to involvement in the 1994 genocide. It is the third phase of releases since 2003 - part of an attempt to ease overcrowding of the prisons.
January 2006	Rwanda's 12 provinces are replaced by a smaller number of regions with the aim of creating ethnically-diverse administrative areas.
April 2006	SURF reports reprisal killings of survivors who are giving evidence against those involved in the genocide at gacaca courts. Many more survivors are reported to be targeted by released prisoners.
Nov 2006	SURF launches campaign for a witness protection programme to provide security for vulnerable survivors under threat due to release of prisoners.