

Proof of French support to 1994 genocidal Govt published

James Karuhanga

The New Times, January, 26 2020

In a statement highlighting proof of preparation of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi, the National Commission for the Fight against Genocide (CNLG) has shed more light on how the then French government supported the Genocidal regime.

It comes as the Commission continues to share with the media the key acts that marked the preparation of the Genocide.

Among others, it is noted that on January 22, 1992, Col Bernard Cussac, who was in charge of military cooperation between France and Rwanda, operating from France's embassy in Kigali, wrote an official letter designated to the Ministry of Defense in France, saying guns were distributed to Interahamwe militia, by Rwandan armed forces and local leaders who were members of the MRND.

From January 7-21, 1993, international experts including Jean Carbonare of France investigated killings then happening in Rwanda.

Later, when he arrived in France on January 24, 1993, Carbonare, the head of this delegation, was invited to the State-owned TV (France2) and declared that for the period of three weeks that they spent in Rwanda, they found mass graves into which killed

Tutsi were dumped.

The CNLG states that he confirmed that there were facts proving that there was a plan of genocide to exterminate the Tutsi and that those involved in that plan were top leaders spearheaded by President Juvénal Habyarimana himself and his wife Agathe Kanziga.

The Frenchman who died on January 18, 2009, aged 82, was the first person to state that the Genocide was being perpetrated in Rwanda.

“What struck us very much in Rwanda was the scale, the systematization, the organization, of these massacres! There is a mechanism that is set in motion. We have talked about ethnic cleansing, genocide, crimes against humanity... we insist very much on these words,” Carbonare is quoted saying, back then.

“Our country, which militarily and financially supports this system, has a responsibility. Our country can, if it wants, influence this situation. “

On January 23, 1991, Habyarimana requested France to send troops to help him counter the RPF soldiers and remove them from the town of Ruhengeri arguing that the invaders were from the Ugandan army.

Georges Martres, France's ambas-

sador to Rwanda at the time, accepted.

On the night of January 23 to 24, 1991, French soldiers in opération Noroit under the command of Col René Galinie arrived in Ruhengeri for a rescue mission on behalf of the then government of Rwanda.

Mitterrand warned the Tutsi

As revealed by two French writers, Gabriel Peries and David Servanay in their book: *Une guerre noire: enquête sur les origines du génocide rwandais (1959-1994)*, on January 23, 1991, president Mitterrand held a meeting with his closest advisors including Admiral Jacques Lanxande and Secretary-General Hubert Verdrine talking about RPF's attack on the town of Ruhengeri and security for French nationals in the town and what they called the role of Uganda in the war.

Mitterrand proclaimed that the war in Rwanda was between French and English speakers, which means that France had to fight to protect their language.

"We are on the edge of an Anglo-phone front. Uganda should not allow itself of anything. President Museveni must be told; it is not normal that the Tutsi minority seeks to impose its law on the majority," Mitterrand is quoted.

On January 30, 1991, Mitterrand wrote to Habyarimana informing him that French soldiers would uphold support to him as promised in October 1990.

"I decided ... to maintain temporarily and for a period of time-related to the development of the sit-

uation, the French military contingent sent to Kigali last October."

According to CNLG, this constant military support led Habyarimana into feeling that he was backed by a powerful country, and caused him to brush off any attempts to seek a peaceful solution.

France supplied weapons in breach of UN decision

After the signing of the peace agreement between the Government of Rwanda and RPF-Inkotanyi, the UN Security Council made the decision to halt the supply and distribution of weapons in order to facilitate the implantation of this agreement.

However, CNLG states, France breached this decision and continued to supply weapons and ammunition to the Government of Rwanda.

"The famous example is that during the night of 21st-22nd January 1994, when a French plane of model DC-8 landed secretly at Kigali International Airport.

UNAMIR checked it and found 90 boxes full of ammunition meant for Rwandan Armed Forces."

"The above activities show that the Genocide against the Tutsi was the result of a thorough plan by the government with support from some foreign countries. This reminds everyone of the responsibility to fight those who continue to deny and minimize the Genocide against the Tutsi as well as those who continue to alter its history for their own interests."

According to the Commission, this also reminds some countries that continue to shield its perpetrators that they should arraign them to their respective courts or extradite them to Rwanda in order to fight the culture of impunity and to promote human

rights.

jkaruhanga@newtimesrwanda.com