

# *Ingando* Solidarity Camps: Reconciliation and Political Indoctrination in Post-Genocide Rwanda

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Chi Mgbako\*

The most important teaching I learned at *ingando* is that the Rwandan people are Rwanda's most important resource. Everything *ingando* gave us, we really wanted. Knowing that everyone is our brother—we really wanted this.<sup>1</sup>

*Ingando* . . . is about RPF political ideology and indoctrination.<sup>2</sup>

## I. INTRODUCTION

“It was as if all the demons from throughout the world came to Rwanda,” declared a Rwandan genocide survivor, ten years after the slaughter.<sup>3</sup> Yet, despite its unimaginable fury, the Rwandan genocide was not a spontaneous eruption of “demonic” internal forces, but a calculated plan of extermination carried out by political extremists. In April 1994, the Rwandan government, then dominated by Hutu Power extremists who feared sharing power with a rebel group—the Tutsi-dominated, Uganda-based Rwandan Patriotic Front (“RPF”)—organized a genocide of the Tutsi minority population and massacres of Hutu who opposed the genocide and refused to participate in the systematic killing of Tutsi.<sup>4</sup> Militia, government soldiers, the Presidential Guard, and ordinary citizens killed up to 800,000 Rwandan men, women, and children in one hundred days of rape and slaughter that spread to all corners of the country. The international community, which could have stopped the

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1. Interview with Ex-Soldier/Former *Ingando* Participant, in Kigali, Rwanda (Jan. 11, 2004).

2. Interview with Journalist/Former *Ingando* Participant, in Kigali, Rwanda (Jan. 7, 2004).

3. Interview with Genocide Survivor, in Kigali, Rwanda (Jan. 16, 2004).

4. ALISON DES FORGES, HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH, LEAVE NONE TO TELL THE STORY: GENOCIDE IN RWANDA 3–4 (1999), available at <http://www.hrw.org/reports/1999/rwanda/> (last visited Jan. 30, 2005).

genocide with little effort, watched indifferently<sup>5</sup> as the end of the world arrived in the “the land of a thousand hills.” In July 1994, the RPF defeated the genocidal regime and took revenge killings against Hutu civilians.<sup>6</sup>

In the immediate aftermath of the genocide, the infrastructure and social fabric of Rwanda lay in complete ruin. Although the government, remarkably, has restored the physical infrastructure of the country, post-genocide Rwanda continues to grapple with a desperate need for reconciliation. Reconciliation mechanisms designed to respond to atrocities such as genocide, however bold, are inevitably inadequate.<sup>7</sup> Nevertheless, despite these limitations, societies need to establish such mechanisms to come to terms with the legacies of mass atrocity.<sup>8</sup> The RPF-dominated government has employed *ingando*, or solidarity camps, both to plant the seeds of reconciliation, and to disseminate pro-RPF ideology through political indoctrination. The government encourages or requires Rwandan citizens from diverse walks of life—students, politicians, church leaders, prostitutes, ex-soldiers, ex-combatants, *genocidaires*, *gacaca* judges, and others—to attend *ingando* for periods ranging from days to several months, to study government programs, Rwandan history, and unity and reconciliation.

This Note, based primarily on interviews with *ingando* participants, government officials, journalists, and genocide survivors conducted in Rwanda in January 2004, evaluates the merits and limits of *ingando* as a means of fostering reconciliation in the complicated social landscape of post-genocide Rwanda. Focusing on *ingando* for ex-combatants, ex-soldiers, students, and released *genocidaires*, this Note argues that much of the *ingando* project is focused on the dissemination of pro-RPF ideology, a dangerous undertaking in a country in which political indoctrination and government-controlled information were essential in sparking and sustaining the genocide. Furthermore, a successful reconciliation program must take place in a society that values human rights; therefore, we cannot evaluate *ingando* in isolation from human rights developments in Rwanda. This Note argues that *ingando* will fail as a reconciliation mechanism so long as the Rwandan government continues to attack public spheres of independent thought and criticism.

Part II of this Note provides a brief history of the genocide and an overview of current political and human rights developments in Rwanda, arguing that the past ten years of RPF rule has been marked by attacks on political opposition, the independent press, and civil society. I then posit that the government may be attempting to legitimize the *ingando* project by “invent-

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5. *Id.* at 16–17.

6. Filip Reyntjens, *Rwanda, Ten Years On: From Genocide to Dictatorship*, 103 AFR. AFF. 171, 178 (2004).

7. MARTHA MINOW, BETWEEN VENGEANCE AND FORGIVENESS: FACING HISTORY AFTER GENOCIDE AND MASS VIOLENCE 5 (1998).

8. Sadako Ogata, *Foreword: Imagining Coexistence in Conflict Communities*, in IMAGINE COEXISTENCE: RESTORING HUMANITY AFTER VIOLENT ETHNIC CONFLICT xi, xii (Antonia Chayes & Martha Minow eds., 2003).

ing tradition”—situating *ingando*'s origins within Rwandan culture and thereby concealing its roots in the RPF's pre-war practices. Finally, Part II explores the initial aims and present activities of the *ingando* project.

Part III presents *ingando* as a central aspect of demobilization procedures for ex-soldiers and ex-combatants, as well as a clearinghouse for reintegration of ex-soldiers and ex-combatants into the current state army. Through interviews with ex-soldiers and ex-combatants at *ingandos*, I argue that *ingando* does not adequately prepare ex-combatants and ex-soldiers for the harsh realities of life post-demobilization. Additionally, I suggest that *ingando* presents a pro-RPF perspective and that the proclaimed governmental “loyalty” of ex-combatants recently returned from the Democratic Republic of Congo (“Congo”) may be a tradeoff for peaceful repatriation. Finally, I explore in this Part how government aid for demobilized ex-combatants upon completion of *ingando*, in light of minimal government aid for genocide survivors, has challenged the reconciliation process and fostered resentment. I argue that compensation for survivors, yet to be realized, may alleviate these tensions.

Part IV surveys *ingando* for post-secondary school/pre-university students, maintaining that *ingando* is creating a generation of RPF loyalists among Rwanda's future leaders. The “ethnicity question” within Rwanda dominates the *ingando* program for students, and I contend that the government's denial of ethnicity without enlightened and open discussions about history and historiography ignores an issue that bears critically on the prospects for reconciliation within Rwandan society.

Part V evaluates *ingando* for released *genocidaires*. I argue in this Part that accountability and the recognition of the victimization that has taken place at many levels of Rwandan society may spark reconciliation processes.

Finally, Part VI assesses *ingando*'s impact in terms of promoting reconciliation, positing that government officials have overstated its success and ignored the profound lack of reconciliation taking place in Rwanda. I argue that an *ingando*-like program that is free of pro-RPF spin and governmental bias, and that inspires an open and honest dialogue about history and historiography, should be integrated into the school curriculum. This Part concludes that for *ingando* to be a successful reconciliation mechanism, Rwanda must become an open society that values political pluralism, freedom of expression, and human rights.

## II. BACKGROUND

### A. *Brief Historical Overview*

In pre-colonial times, as today, three social groups existed in Rwanda—Hutu, Tutsi, and Twa—united by a common language, Kinyarwanda, com-

mon animist religion, and common cultural traditions.<sup>9</sup> Rwanda's population currently tops eight million: the majority Hutu comprise eighty-five percent of the population, the minority Tutsi comprise fourteen percent, and the indigenous Twa are less than one percent. Although in pre-colonial times the predominantly cattle-owning Tutsi were politically dominant over the predominantly agriculturalist Hutu and were sometimes distinguishable by their physical features, the difference between the two groups was more an issue of status than rigid and formal notions of ethnicity. Identities were of a more fluid nature, especially among the Hutu and Tutsi elite.<sup>10</sup> Pre-colonial Rwandan history was not idyllic, however, and although this time was not marked by anything resembling "inter-ethnic" clashes between the Hutu and Tutsi,<sup>11</sup> dissatisfaction with Tutsi feudal lords had taken shape.<sup>12</sup>

Following World War I, Belgium became the colonial power in Rwanda and codified the identities of Hutu and Tutsi into racial hierarchies.<sup>13</sup> What once could be fluid categorizations became fixed ethnic identities, reinforced by ethnic identity cards, favoritism of the Tutsi elite in colonial administration and education, and discrimination against Hutu, which strengthened the Hutu resentment of Tutsi that had developed in pre-colonial times.<sup>14</sup> In the years before Rwanda gained independence in 1961, the Belgians began to support a reversal of this hierarchy.<sup>15</sup> In 1959, there were a series of massacres of Tutsi, which drove thousands into exile in neighboring countries<sup>16</sup> such as Burundi, Congo, and Uganda. The period from 1959 to 1994 was marked by widespread discrimination against and sporadic massacres of the Tutsi minority in Rwanda.<sup>17</sup> Tutsi refugees, who remained marginalized in the neighboring countries where they had taken refuge, maintained a fervent desire to return to their homeland and formed the RPF rebel army in 1988.<sup>18</sup> The RPF attacked Rwanda from 1990 to 1993, prompting a 1993 power-sharing agreement between the RPF and the Rwandan government.<sup>19</sup>

After the signing of the Arusha Peace Accords in 1993, hard-line extremists within the Rwandan government, fearing that they were losing their grip on political power, undermined the peace agreement and orchestrated plans for genocide.<sup>20</sup> On April 6, 1994, a plane carrying Hutu President Juvenal

9. DES FORGES, *supra* note 4, at 31–34.

10. JOHAN POTTIER, RE-IMAGINING RWANDA: CONFLICT, SURVIVAL AND DISINFORMATION IN THE LATE TWENTIETH CENTURY 109–29 (2002); see also Wendy Lambourne, *Justice and Reconciliation: Post-conflict Peacebuilding in Cambodia and Rwanda*, in RECONCILIATION, JUSTICE AND COEXISTENCE: THEORY AND PRACTICE 322 (Mohammed Abu-Nimer ed., 2001).

11. Lambourne, *supra* note 10, at 322.

12. POTTIER, *supra* note 10, at 112.

13. Lambourne, *supra* note 10, at 322; see also POTTIER, *supra* note 10, at 112.

14. Lambourne, *supra* note 10, at 322.

15. DES FORGES, *supra* note 4, at 38.

16. Lambourne, *supra* note 10, at 322.

17. *Id.* at 322–23.

18. DES FORGES, *supra* note 4, at 48.

19. *Id.* at 59–64.

20. *Id.* at 125–29.

Habyarimana and the Burundian president was shot down over Rwanda's capital, providing the excuse the hardliners needed to carry out their plan of genocide against Tutsi within Rwanda and massacres of Hutu who opposed the genocide.<sup>21</sup> Despite the terror gripping the country, the United Nations drastically reduced its peacekeeping force in Rwanda and the international community refused even to admit that genocide was taking place.<sup>22</sup> In July 1994, the RPF finally gained control of the country, in the process committing crimes against humanity and war crimes against thousands of innocent Hutu.<sup>23</sup>

The RPF's defeat of the genocidal government prompted the flight of one to two million Hutu—innocents as well as *genocidaires*—to refugee camps in eastern Congo. At the same time, a massive influx of over 500,000 Tutsi returned to Rwanda.<sup>24</sup> The challenge of building peace in societies that have suffered from mass violence is increased when returnees return home and threaten to reignite the violence.<sup>25</sup> This risk was exacerbated in the Rwandan context, due to the tenuous relationship between genocide survivors and the Tutsi returnees, whose interests many survivors would eventually argue were being more seriously represented by the government.<sup>26</sup> Also, tensions increased after Tutsi returnees, who had remained refugees in Burundi, Congo, and Uganda for over four decades, demanded the return of lands they had lost following the 1959 massacres that drove them into exile. From 1994 to 1996, ex-Armed Forces of Rwanda ("FAR," the official military of the Habyarimana regime) and *interahamwe* (militia death squads), many of whom had participated in the genocide, formed a nucleus of Armed Groups that continued to attack Rwanda from eastern Congo.<sup>27</sup> In 1996, the RPF attacked the refugee camps in eastern Congo, killing thousands, in an attempt to disarm the militias and forcibly repatriate the Hutu refugees.<sup>28</sup> These attacks did not quell the insurgency and in 1997 and 1998, the militias revitalized their campaign and began to attack northwestern Rwanda.<sup>29</sup> For four years, from 1998 to 2002, Rwandan military forces occupied the Congo in a

21. *Id.* at 181.

22. *Id.* at 630–35; see also NIGEL ELTRINGHAM, ACCOUNTING FOR HORROR: POST-GENOCIDE DEBATES IN RWANDA 1–3 (2004).

23. Letter from Kenneth Roth, Executive Director, Human Rights Watch, to John Negroponte, U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, President of the Security Council (Aug. 9, 2002), available at <http://www.hrw.org/press/2002/08/rwanda-ltr0809.htm>; see also DES FORGES, *supra* note 4, at 701–02.

24. Reyntjens, *supra* note 6, at 178.

25. Antonia Chayes & Martha Minow, *Introduction to IMAGINE COEXISTENCE: RESTORING HUMANITY AFTER VIOLENT ETHNIC CONFLICT* xi (Antonia Chayes & Martha Minow eds., 2003).

26. Reyntjens, *supra* note 6, at 180.

27. INTERNATIONAL CRISIS GROUP, RWANDA AT THE END OF THE TRANSITION: A NECESSARY POLITICAL LIBERALIZATION 2 (2002), available at [http://www.icg.org/library/documents/report\\_archive/A400817\\_13112002.pdf](http://www.icg.org/library/documents/report_archive/A400817_13112002.pdf) (last visited Feb. 4, 2005).

28. HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH, LASTING WOUNDS: CONSEQUENCES OF GENOCIDE AND WAR FOR RWANDA'S CHILDREN 7 (2003), available at <http://hrw.org/reports/2003/rwanda0403/rwanda0403.pdf> (last visited Feb. 4, 2005).

29. INTERNATIONAL CRISIS GROUP, *supra* note 27, at 2.

bid to maintain security within Rwanda's borders<sup>30</sup> and to plunder the mineral-rich area of the Kivus.<sup>31</sup> In 2002, the Rwandan government announced the withdrawal of its forces from eastern Congo,<sup>32</sup> although reports of Rwandan military activity in the region have persisted.<sup>33</sup>

### B. RPF Authoritarian Rule, 1994–2004

Following the genocide, with the formation of the transitional government led by the RPF, there was hope that Rwanda would transform into a country that valued human rights and political pluralism.<sup>34</sup> Since 1994, however, the RPF has grown increasingly intolerant of criticism and has marginalized Hutu and Tutsi opponents, causing over forty Rwandan politicians to flee into exile.<sup>35</sup> The government has manipulated the genocide to legitimize its continued rule, using the accusations of "divisionism" and "genocidal ideology" to weaken and destroy opposition.<sup>36</sup> Under the cover of combating genocide, promoting unity and reconciliation, and protecting Rwandan citizens against discrimination, the Rwandan government has neutralized political opposition, weakened the human rights community, silenced journalists, and seriously undermined independent civil society.

Since 1994, the Rwandan government has suppressed peaceful political opposition by driving perceived challengers into exile and engaging in political assassinations and arbitrary arrests of political rivals.<sup>37</sup> It is widely suspected that the government orchestrated the May 1998 assassination of Seth Sendashonga, former RPF member and Minister of Interior, who had fled to Kenya and formed the opposition party Resistance Forces for Democracy.<sup>38</sup> In 2000, the government forced into exile former National Assembly President Joseph Sebarenzi, a representative of the Liberal Party, a political opposition party dominated by genocide survivors.<sup>39</sup> In 2001, the government arrested former President Pasteur Bizimungu and former Minister of Social Affairs Charles Ntakirutanka for threatening state security because they continued to operate the banned opposition party Democratic Party for

30. *Id.*

31. Press Release SC/7642, United Nations, Security Council Condemns Plunder of Democratic Republic of Congo's Resources, Requests New Six-Month Mandate for Investigative Panel (Jan. 24, 2003), available at <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2003/sc7642.doc.htm>.

32. INTERNATIONAL CRISIS GROUP, *supra* note 27, at 3.

33. HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH, D.R. CONGO: WAR CRIMES IN BUKAVU (2004), available at <http://hrw.org/english/docs/2004/06/11/congo8803.htm> (last visited Feb. 13, 2005); see also Michael Wines, *U.N. Reports a Possible Push into Congo by Rwandans*, N.Y. TIMES, Dec. 3, 2004, at A6.

34. Carina Tertsakian, *Postscript: What Future for the Defence of Human Rights in Rwanda?*, in ANDRÉ SIBOMANA, HOPE FOR RWANDA: CONVERSATIONS WITH LAURE GUILBERT AND HERVE DEGUINE 168 (1999).

35. INTERNATIONAL CRISIS GROUP, *supra* note 27, at i.

36. *Id.*

37. Tertsakian, *supra* note 34, at 169.

38. *Id.*

39. INTERNATIONAL CRISIS GROUP, *supra* note 27, at 10.

Renewal.<sup>40</sup> The government has also abused, harassed, and arrested independent journalists from newspapers such as the now-defunct *Le Partisan*, and *Umuseso*,<sup>41</sup> Rwanda's only independent newspaper, which remains a constant target of government attacks.<sup>42</sup>

During the 2003 presidential elections, the government dissolved the Democratic Republican Movement ("MDR"), the only party that could have successfully challenged the RPF, branding them as harbingers of "genocidal ideology."<sup>43</sup> Some MDR leaders fled the country while others were arrested or "disappeared."<sup>44</sup> The European election observer mission questioned the legitimacy of the 2003 presidential and legislative elections, noting that the "RPF and its candidate Paul Kagame dominated the two electoral campaigns which were marked by a climate of intimidation, questionings, and arrests."<sup>45</sup>

Although the Republic of Rwanda is comprised of executive, legislative, and judicial branches that ideally should operate independently of one another, one government official privately noted that "the parliamentary commission is not independent of the Executive."<sup>46</sup> Thus, it was not surprising when, in 2004, the Rwandan Parliament accepted the findings of a parliamentary commission report rife with unsubstantiated allegations, and requested that the government dissolve several civil society organizations for disseminating "genocidal ideology," including the respected League for the Promotion and Defense of Human Rights (*Ligue Rwandaise pour la Promotion et la Défense des Droits de l'Homme*, or "LIPRODHOR"), the most independent human rights organization in the country.<sup>47</sup> In addition, the parliamentary commission report accused religious institutions, secondary schools, a forum of farmers' organizations, the national university, and national and international organizations of disseminating "genocidal ideology."<sup>48</sup>

40. Reyntjens, *supra* note 6, at 193.

41. INTERNATIONAL CRISIS GROUP, *supra* note 27, at 15.

42. Press Release, Amnesty International, Rwanda: Government Should Honour its Commitment to Respect Press Freedom (Nov. 22, 2004), available at <http://news.amnesty.org/index/ENGAFR470152004>.

43. HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH, RWANDA: PREPARING FOR ELECTIONS: TIGHTENING CONTROL IN THE NAME OF UNITY 1 (2003), available at <http://www.hrw.org/background/africa/rwanda0503bck.pdf> (last visited Feb. 4, 2005); see also Press Release, Amnesty International, Rwanda: Deeper into the Abyss—Waging War on Civil Society (July 6, 2004), available at <http://web.amnesty.org/library/index/ENGAFR470132004>.

44. HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH, *supra* note 43, at 1.

45. MISSION D'OBSERVATION ELECTORALE DE L'UNION EUROPEENNE, RWANDA, ELECTION PRESIDENTIELLE 25 AOÛT 2003, ELECTIONS LEGISLATIVES 29 ET 30 SEPTEMBRE, 2 OCTOBRE 2003, RAPPORT FINAL 4 (2003), available at [http://europa.eu.int/comm/external\\_relations/human\\_rights/eu\\_election\\_ass\\_observ/rwanda/moe\\_ue\\_final\\_2003.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/human_rights/eu_election_ass_observ/rwanda/moe_ue_final_2003.pdf) (last visited Feb. 12, 2005) (translated by author).

46. Interview with Rwandan Government Official (Oct. 2004).

47. Press Release, Amnesty International, *supra* note 43.

48. *Id.*

### C. Ingando: An Invented Tradition

The government claims that *ingando* is simply an updated version of a Rwandan tradition. Although indigenous practices certainly provide fertile ground from which reconciliation processes may bloom,<sup>49</sup> *ingando* in its present form appears to be a modern RPF political creation that serves to consolidate the RPF's power. Like many other governments, the RPF has an interest in "inventing traditions" that legitimize current forms of social control or practice.<sup>50</sup> Additionally, the government's appeal to culture may be an attempt to deemphasize the political utility of *ingando* as a mechanism of pro-RPF ideological indoctrination.

The government claims that the idea of using *ingando* to cultivate reconciliation in Rwanda was born of meetings at Urugwiro State House in the years following the genocide.<sup>51</sup> According to Alex Rusagara, then program officer of advocacy and current provincial coordinator for the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission ("NURC"), *ingando* derives from the Kinyarwanda verb *kuganika*, which refers to a process in which the elders of a community would leave the distractions of their daily lives and retreat to places of isolation to solve problems of national concern such as war, famine, drought, and the expansion of the nation's borders.<sup>52</sup> While the practice of elders gathering together to address challenges facing the community is present in Rwandan culture, there is little indication that this practice was ever called "*ingando*."<sup>53</sup> *Ingando* is more likely a pre-war RPF creation aimed at grassroots mobilization for RPF campaigns. From 1990 to 1993, the RPF installed participants in *ingandos* or "RPF schools" for three weeks, after which participants would be expected to return to their villages and disseminate pro-RPF ideology.<sup>54</sup> This RPF practice may have occurred in Uganda and the RPF-controlled territories in Rwanda. In addition, the RPF, whose ideological mentor is Yoweri Museveni of Uganda, may have modeled *ingando* on solidarity camps in Uganda.<sup>55</sup>

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49. Mohammed Abu-Nimer, Abdul Aziz Said & Lakshitha S. Prelis, *Conclusion: The Long Road to Reconciliation*, in RECONCILIATION, JUSTICE, AND COEXISTENCE: THEORY AND PRACTICE 343 (Mohammed Abu-Nimer ed., 2001).

50. See generally THE INVENTION OF TRADITION (Eric Hobsbawm & Terence Ranger eds., Cambridge University Press 1992) (1983).

51. Interview with Alex Rusagara, Program Officer of Advocacy, National Unity and Reconciliation Commission, in Kigali, Rwanda (Jan. 8, 2004).

52. *Id.*

53. Interview with Journalist, in Kigali, Rwanda (Jan. 7, 2004).

54. *Id.* Rusagara also conceded that the RPF practice of installing community members in camps for the purpose of disseminating RPF ideology indeed took place before the civil war and genocide in 1994. However, he claimed he has no knowledge of this practice being specifically referred to as "*ingando*." Interview with Rusagara, *supra* note 51.

55. For a brief description of solidarity camps in Uganda, see HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH, HOSTILE TO DEMOCRACY: THE MOVEMENT SYSTEM AND POLITICAL REPRESSION IN UGANDA 130-42 (1999), available at <http://www.hrw.org/reports/1999/uganda/index.htm#TopOfPage> (last visited Feb. 13, 2005).



#### D. Aims and Activities of the Ingando Project

In 1996, *ingando* began in earnest. The program was originally administered by the Ministry of Youth, Culture, and Sports.<sup>56</sup> The official goal of *ingando*, in its infant stages, was the integration of Tutsi returnees who had been separated from their homeland for years by events beyond their control.<sup>57</sup> The government began the *ingando* process for Tutsi returnees in order to foster a sense of nationalism among the returnee populations from Congo, Burundi, Uganda, Europe, and elsewhere. Rusagara notes that “we thought that if we could remove these people from their daily lives and bring them together to share from a common dish—to eat and sleep together—this would build confidence in the diverse population of repatriated Rwandans, confidence that we could in fact live together.”<sup>58</sup> In addition, the government was also determined to have the returnees embrace a pro-RPF ideology that legitimized the political power structure.<sup>59</sup>

In 1999, the NURC took over the management of solidarity camps throughout the country.<sup>60</sup> Since the initial *ingandos* for Tutsi returnees, there have been separate government-run solidarity camps for politicians, church leaders, community leaders, ex-combatants, ex-soldiers, students, prostitutes, *gacaca* judges, *genocidaires*, and women’s associations. The NURC National Plan is for every Rwandan of majority age to attend *ingando* at some point during his or her life.<sup>61</sup> *Ingandos* run from several days to several months, and although the syllabus is adapted depending on the group participating, there are similarities across the curricula of all *ingandos*, including lessons on unity and reconciliation, history classes that highlight the defects of the genocidal regime, and lessons on present government programs and policies that stress the “democratic” elements of the current government.

### III. INGANDO FOR EX-SOLDIERS AND EX-COMBATANTS

#### A. The Demobilization Procedure

It is presently compulsory for ex-RPF,<sup>62</sup> ex-FAR who did not flee to Congo, and ex-combatants who fought in Congo (ex-Armed Groups) to attend *ingando* camps as a pre-demobilization, pre-discharge orientation program.<sup>63</sup> Repatriated ex-FAR who originally fled to Congo have also attended *ingando*.<sup>64</sup>

56. Interview with Rusagara, *supra* note 51.

57. *Id.*

58. *Id.*

59. Interview with Journalist, *supra* note 53.

60. *Id.*

61. *Id.*

62. Ex-RPF are also referred to as ex-RPA (“Rwandan Patriotic Army,” the military wing of the RPF) and ex-RDF (“Rwandan Defense Forces,” newly introduced term referring to ex-RPF and ex-FAR who joined the RPF).

63. Interview with John Zigira, Commissioner, Rwandan Demobilization and Reintegration Commission, in Kigali, Rwanda (Jan. 8, 2004).

64. *Id.*

Following the official end of the conflict in eastern Congo, the Rwandan government is encouraging all Rwandan rebels/ex-Armed Groups (both *genocidaires* and non-*genocidaires*) to return to Rwanda.<sup>65</sup> The government is offering a chance at reintegration and economic aid to all rebels, fearing that if it does not assist these rebels in peaceful resettlement they will revitalize the insurgency. Although many rebels remain in the forests of eastern Congo, thousands of others, weary of war, have returned to their homeland, citing horrible medical conditions in the bush, the currently stable situation in Rwanda, the impact of appeals to return broadcast over the radio by government representatives and ex-rebels, and pressure to repatriate from Congolese villagers and government officials.<sup>66</sup> "It was my will to return to Rwanda," a Mutobo *ingando* participant noted after almost a decade of fighting in Congo. "I must also stress that I want no more war in Rwanda and that is one of the reasons I came back."<sup>67</sup> The men and women of the armed rebellion, who comprise the current wave of returnees to Rwanda, are put through a demobilization process carried out by the Rwandan Demobilization and Reintegration Commission ("RDRC"). The heart of this process is a two-month stay at *ingando*.

Ex-RPF, ex-FAR, and ex-Armed Groups have attended demobilization *ingandos* such as Mutobo *Ingando* in Ruhengeri province, Duha/Muhazi *Ingando* in Kibungo province, and Maryohe *Ingando* in Gikongoro province.<sup>68</sup> A total of 12,258 ex-FAR and almost 5000 ex-Armed Groups had attended demobilization *ingandos* as of January 2004.<sup>69</sup> *Ingando* for ex-Armed Groups is a two-month program, and for ex-FAR and ex-RPF it is a two-week program.<sup>70</sup> Topics at demobilization *ingandos* include civic education, unity and reconciliation, government programs, psychological demilitarization, reintegration into civilian life, and HIV/AIDS.<sup>71</sup> Upon completion of *ingando* and the demobilization process, ex-FAR, ex-Armed Groups, and ex-RPF are given aid packages.<sup>72</sup> The World Bank finances forty-seven percent of the benefit

65. *Id.*; Interviews with Ex-Soldiers at Kinyinya *Ingando*, in Kigali, Rwanda (Jan. 11, 2004); Interviews with Ex-Combatants at Mutobo *Ingando*, in Ruhengeri, Rwanda (Jan. 10, 2004).

66. Interviews with Ex-Combatants at Mutobo *Ingando*, *supra* note 65.

67. Interview with Ex-Combatant at Mutobo *Ingando*, in Ruhengeri, Rwanda (Jan. 10, 2004).

68. Interview with Zigira, *supra* note 63; Interviews with Ex-Soldiers at Kinyinya *Ingando*, *supra* note 65; Interviews with Ex-Combatants at Mutobo *Ingando*, *supra* note 65; Interview with Fidel (last name withheld), Assistant Coordinator, National Unity and Reconciliation Commission, in Kigali, Rwanda (Jan. 7, 2004).

69. Interview with Zigira, *supra* note 63.

70. *Id.*

71. Telephone Interview with Frank Musonera, Camp Manager, at Mutobo *Ingando*, in Ruhengeri, Rwanda (Jan. 13, 2004); Interview with Zigira, *supra* note 63; Interview with Kigali Veterans' Association Representative, in Kigali, Rwanda (Jan. 7, 2004).

72. Ex-RPF and ex-Armed Groups are given a Basic Needs Kit immediately upon exiting *ingando*. It contains items worth less than U.S. \$100, including transport home, a food stipend for three months, and basic household supplies. Ex-FAR and ex-RPF are given a Recognition of Service Allowance. The amount awarded is based on military rank. Six months after completion of *ingando*, ex-RPF and ex-Armed Groups receive a one-time only Reintegration Grant worth U.S. \$181. Medical Rehabilitation is granted for all groups who were physically harmed during the civil war and war in eastern Congo. Ex-

program for ex-soldiers and ex-combatants, while the Rwandan government contributes fifty-three percent.<sup>73</sup> Follow-up services for ex-FAR, ex-Armed Groups, and ex-RPF upon completion of *ingando* are rare. Unemployment and difficulty reintegrating into civilian life remain chronic problems for ex-soldiers and ex-combatants.<sup>74</sup>

In addition to demobilization, a former RPF soldier and representative of a Rwandan veterans association maintained that "*ingando* has been used . . . to change the ideologies of ex-FAR . . . who would be integrated into RDF . . . so *ingando* has not just been used for demobilization purposes."<sup>75</sup> Other ex-soldiers who had attended *ingandos* at Duha/Muhazi and Maryohe confirmed this observation.<sup>76</sup> "I am ex-FAR and returned from Congo in 1995," stated an ex-soldier participating in his second solidarity camp at Kinyinya *Ingando* in Kigali province. "I went to a previous *ingando*. . . . At Maryohe, they gave us a choice of whether to join RDF or demobilize. I chose to demobilize at the time because I had a wife. If not, I would have wanted to join RDF. This was in 1998. There were only ex-FAR at Maryohe *Ingando* and some later became RDF."<sup>77</sup> Although the government denies they have used *ingando* as a means of integrating ex-FAR into the current government army,<sup>78</sup> a prominent Rwandan journalist argued that the military encouraged and in some cases may have forced ex-FAR who were participating in *ingando* and who were thought to possess superior technical and military skills to integrate into the RDF.<sup>79</sup> This journalist further emphasized that this practice has kept the most talented soldiers of the former opposition in the current government's military, thereby guaranteeing government control over the soldiers' activities and neutralizing their potential opposition.<sup>80</sup>

### B. The Mutobo Ingando and Kinyinya Ingando Interviews

In January 2004, I conducted a series of interviews with ex-combatants at Mutobo *Ingando* and ex-soldiers at Kinyinya *Ingando*. These interviews reveal that political indoctrination is a dominant part of the *ingando* experience. The RDRC-managed Mutobo *Ingando* housed 554 ex-Armed Groups in January 2004.<sup>81</sup> The vast majority of these ex-combatants returned to Rwanda from

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combatants and ex-soldiers who are HIV-positive or suffering from AIDS are not treated for HIV/AIDS. In demobilization centers, RDRC manages a program for voluntary counseling and testing for AIDS. The Vulnerability Support Window is for those individuals within all groups who find it especially difficult to reintegrate into civilian life. This, however, does not include financial assistance. Interview with Zigira, *supra* note 63.

73. *Id.*

74. Interview with Kigali Veterans' Association Representative, *supra* note 71.

75. *Id.*

76. Interviews with Ex-Soldiers at Kinyinya *Ingando*, *supra* note 65.

77. Interview with Ex-Soldier at Kinyinya *Ingando*, in Kigali, Rwanda (Jan. 11, 2004).

78. Interview with Zigira, *supra* note 63.

79. Interview with Journalist, in Kigali, Rwanda (Jan. 6, 2004).

80. *Id.*

81. Interview with Zigira, *supra* note 63.

Congo, with a small percentage of returnees having arrived from Zambia, Malawi, Cameroon, Tanzania, and Uganda.<sup>82</sup> Mutobo participants consisted of both men and women, as well as fifty-six child soldiers who were scheduled to be transferred to another rehabilitation center on January 14, 2004.<sup>83</sup> The ex-combatants remained at Mutobo for two and a half months. The NURC operated *Kinyinya Ingando*, which was located in Kigali City and consisted of 2000 demobilized soldiers (ex-RPF, ex-FAR, and ex-FAR who had joined the RDF) from the Kigali Veterans Association ("KVA").<sup>84</sup> The camp commenced on January 3, 2004, and lasted for approximately two weeks.<sup>85</sup> The NURC and the KVA organized *Kinyinya Ingando* in order to address the reintegration and employment challenges that these men and women have faced since their demobilization.<sup>86</sup>

Many of the demobilized soldiers who attended *Kinyinya Ingando* had also previously attended *ingandos* at Mutobo, Duha, or Maryohe for the purpose of reintegration into the RDF or demobilization.<sup>87</sup> *Kinyinya Ingando* was therefore a follow-up procedure in the reintegration process for demobilized soldiers. *Kinyinya Ingando* was the first post-demobilization *ingando* set up for ex-soldiers.<sup>88</sup> The NURC is planning to set up similar *ingandos* for demobilized soldiers in all thirteen provinces.<sup>89</sup>

A typical day for the men and women at both Mutobo and *Kinyinya* involved playing sports, fetching water, singing songs, and listening to lectures from government officials, including representatives from the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Finance, NURC, RDRC, Ministry of Local Government, and Ministry of Defense.

### 1. *Hopes and Harsh Realities*

Many of the ex-combatants at Mutobo *Ingando* expressed optimism regarding their futures and listed home support, education, and the freedom to "live as other Rwandans" among their future hopes.<sup>90</sup> *Ingando* leaders planted and nurtured this optimism. "I know my community will welcome me because I have no problem," an ex-combatant who returned from Congo in 2004 confidently stated. "It has been a long time—ten years—so they will welcome me. In the country, maybe some Rwandans will fear me as an outsider. But so far the people I have met with [at *ingando*] are saying that

82. *Id.*

83. *Id.*

84. Interview with Fidel, *supra* note 68.

85. *Id.*

86. *Id.*; Interview with Kigali Veterans' Association Representative, *supra* note 71.

87. Interview with Fidel, *supra* note 68; Interview with Kigali Veterans' Association Representative, *supra* note 71; Interviews with Ex-Soldiers at *Kinyinya Ingando*, *supra* note 65.

88. Interview with Fidel, *supra* note 68.

89. *Id.*

90. Interviews with Ex-Combatants at Mutobo *Ingando*, *supra* note 65.

there are no problems.”<sup>91</sup> The optimism that *ingando* may have instilled in some ex-combatants, however commendable, is in many ways misleading. Mutobo’s ex-combatants often seemed ignorant of the difficulties they will face when they leave *ingando* and its safe environs. Interviews of ex-soldiers and ex-combatants at Kinyinya *Ingando*, who in some cases had been demobilized for years, revealed that the harsh realities of unemployment and difficulty adjusting to civilian life continue to haunt demobilized soldiers. A representative of the KVA, an organization that represents 20,000 ex-soldiers and ex-combatants, related the challenges that many members of KVA experience:

We started the association because many veterans were having a difficult time adjusting to civilian life, and we knew that these problems could not be solved on an individual level. There is strength in numbers . . . [H]ow do we get jobs, take care of our families? Most of the veterans [here at Kinyinya *Ingando*] have been through other *ingandos* like Mutobo and Duha. Most of the veterans are peasants, people who are uneducated, unversed in the trappings of modern life, people of the bush. Many have had difficulties adjusting to modern life. We want to truly live in society because many of us have never lived in society. So, three months ago we requested that NURC set up this camp to help our veterans who are having a difficult time.<sup>92</sup>

“I demobilized three years ago,” noted a female ex-soldier and KVA member at Kinyinya. “I have not had work since I was demobilized.”<sup>93</sup> Indeed, I did not speak to a single ex-soldier at Kinyinya *Ingando* who was currently employed. A NURC representative at Kinyinya noted that “although we attempt to teach them [the soldiers] how to live as civilians, when they leave Mutobo and other *ingandos*, many still have the spirit of soldiers.”<sup>94</sup> For *ingando* to serve as a successful catalyst into civilian life, *ingando* leaders must avoid simply nurturing blind optimism and, instead, must honestly address the difficulties that demobilized soldiers will and do encounter and must attempt to provide ex-soldiers and ex-combatants with the tools they will need to face these problems.

## 2. Pledging Allegiance: A Trade-Off for Peaceful Reintegration

At both Mutobo and Kinyinya, as at most *ingandos*, lecturers were comprised solely or overwhelmingly of government representatives, while voices critical of government policies or their implementation were generally absent. This strengthens this Note’s contention that ideology remains a central

91. Interview with Ex-Combatant at Mutobo *Ingando*, in Ruhengeri, Rwanda (Jan. 10, 2004).

92. Interview with Kigali Veterans’ Association Representative, *supra* note 71.

93. Interview with Ex-Soldier at Kinyinya *Ingando*, in Kigali, Rwanda (Jan. 11, 2004).

94. Interview with Fidel, *supra* note 68.

tenet of the *ingando* project. The government counters that they invite a diverse assortment of speakers to *ingandos*, including civil society organizations.<sup>95</sup> Rusagara indicated that the NURC generally approaches organizations and individuals outside of the government to speak at *ingando* and that the NURC is open to requests by NGOs and individuals who want to take advantage of the unique opportunity to make presentations to targeted audiences converged at *ingando*.<sup>96</sup> Rusagara claimed that the only requests the NURC would deny would be those from individuals or organizations that support “genocidal ideologies.”<sup>97</sup>

Overt criticism of the *ingando* process was virtually non-existent during my interviews of ex-soldiers and ex-combatants at Mutobo and Kinyinya. Almost all complained of the monotonous cuisine of beans and maize served at the camps,<sup>98</sup> and one interviewee at Kinyinya, where the physical infrastructure consists of tents held up by sticks of wood, suggested that the government could improve their sleeping conditions,<sup>99</sup> but even these benign criticisms rarely dominated the interviews. The vast majority of the interviewees repeatedly hailed the current government and stressed the importance of understanding the government’s achievements—responses that seemed like recitations of what they had heard during *ingando* lessons. A Mutobo *Ingando* participant proclaimed that “the lesson of government programs is most important. They show us how this government is good. There is democracy here, freedom of speech, no segregation in education. They tell us that our mentality was wrong, that our leaders were wrong and that’s why we were wrong.”<sup>100</sup> Another Mutobo *Ingando* participant concurred, stating that “they teach us that this is a government of democracy. The rebel group I was from was a strong group that wanted to come and take over the government. They try and change our bad mentalities toward the government.”<sup>101</sup> “*Ingando* helps us speak the same language,” argued an ex-soldier at Kinyinya *Ingando*.<sup>102</sup> For another Mutobo interviewee, *ingando* served as a necessary transition mechanism from ten years of fighting in Congo: “They’re trying to upgrade us to the level of the local people. If you come from the bush and go directly to the people you don’t know their mentality. *Ingando* teaches you this.”<sup>103</sup>

The *ingando* participants and ex-soldiers at Kinyinya seemed to have genuinely internalized an overwhelmingly positive view of the RPF-led government, but the same cannot be said for the ex-combatants at Mutobo, who

95. Interview with Rusagara, *supra* note 51.

96. *Id.*

97. *Id.*

98. Interviews with Ex-Combatants at Mutobo *Ingando*, *supra* note 65; Interviews with Ex-Soldiers at Kinyinya *Ingando*, *supra* note 65.

99. Interview with Ex-Soldier at Kinyinya *Ingando*, in Kigali, Rwanda (Jan. 11, 2004).

100. Interview with Ex-Combatant at Mutobo *Ingando*, in Ruhengeri, Rwanda (Jan. 10, 2004).

101. Interview with Ex-Combatant at Mutobo *Ingando*, in Ruhengeri, Rwanda (Jan. 10, 2004).

102. Interview with Ex-Soldier at Kinyinya *Ingando*, in Kigali, Rwanda (Jan. 11, 2004).

103. Interview with Ex-Soldier at Kinyinya *Ingando*, in Kigali, Rwanda (Jan. 11, 2004).

also presented themselves as current government loyalists. The proclaimed "allegiance" that returning rebels proclaim to the present government appears to be their end in a bargain for reintegration. The government has invited the rebels to return from eastern Congo, and in exchange for peaceful reintegration the ex-combatants give lip service to the ideas of "unity and reconciliation" and the "democratic achievements" of the present government. Although several ex-Armed Groups trumpeted the need to change "bad mentalities" and reorient mindsets and outlooks toward the present government, they rarely claimed these "bad mentalities" as their own. One ex-combatant spoke of the need for returning rebels to change their "bad mentalities" toward the RPF, and in the same contradictory breath, hailed the "victory" of his rebel group over the present government and their immunity from punishment.<sup>104</sup> Ex-combatants may well fear for their safety if they do not praise the current government. The rebels, along with many of their family members, are housed and fed by the government for months at *ingando* camps, and are therefore in highly vulnerable positions, susceptible to attempts at political indoctrination. In addition, ex-combatants receive government and World Bank-financed aid packages after successful completion of the *ingando* and demobilization process, a factor that may further encourage them to proclaim "allegiance" to the government.

C. "After the War, I Did Not Even Receive a Saucepan": Government Benefits for Ex-Combatants Versus Government Benefits for Genocide Survivors

The process of providing government aid to ex-combatants on completion of *ingando* is a source of tension and debate within Rwandan society. The fact that ex-combatants receive aid packages, while few genocide survivors receive government assistance, is bound to have great implications for the process of reconciliation in Rwanda. However, the Rwandan demobilization program is unfair in the way that any demobilization program is unfair. In order to seduce combatants into putting down their arms permanently, governments must provide them with financial assistance and viable alternatives to violence. The demobilization and socioeconomic reintegration of ex-combatants are essential aspects of peace-building. If compensation for all survivors became a reality, this would alleviate the feeling on the part of some survivors that they have become invisible in post-genocide Rwanda. Survivor organizations have met with government officials for the past ten years to discuss the possibility of compensation, to no avail.<sup>105</sup>

Survivors have no socioeconomic or political clout in Rwanda, and it is understandably impossible for survivors to understand that pragmatically, the government must also cater to Hutu ex-combatants. "When you say militia, the government stands up," a representative of genocide survivors la-

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104. Interview with Ex-Combatant at Mutobo *Ingando*, in Ruhengeri, Rwanda (Jan. 10, 2004).

105. Interview with Genocide Survivor Representative, in Kigali, Rwanda (Jan. 13, 2004).

mented. "When you say survivors, orphans, those who were infected with AIDS by these militia, no one stands up."<sup>106</sup> Another survivor noted that "the government is concentrating on *interahamwe*. After the war I did not even receive a saucepan. I am surprised to see what the *interahamwe* are getting now that they have returned."<sup>107</sup> Yet, it is important to note that it would be incorrect to characterize all ex-combatants emerging from the forests of Congo as *genocidaires*. Some were simply innocents, caught in the fog of war. As a rebel noted,

Some people outside [in Congo] were wrong. There were some leaders who were outside who were wrong. But not all [the rebels] were wrong. There are those who left in 1994 that did wrong, but not all who left did wrong. Wrongdoers should be punished by the government. The problem is that wrongdoers and innocents can be called together and then all are called wrongdoers.<sup>108</sup>

It must also be noted that ex-Armed Groups who receive government aid packages continue to suffer from the same problems of poverty and unemployment that plague the majority of Rwandans, despite the government aid they receive following successful completion of *ingando* and demobilization procedure.

Although there is a government system in place to aid genocide survivors in need, it remains chronically under-funded and reaches only a small percentage of survivors. The Fund for Assistance to Genocide Survivors ("FARG") is a quasi-governmental organization that caters to the health, education, and housing needs of impoverished survivors.<sup>109</sup> The annual budget of FARG is five percent of the government's budget, roughly U.S. \$10,000,000.<sup>110</sup> Although FARG has made strides in providing some survivors with education and basic housing and living needs, it simply does not have sufficient funds to cater to the needs of the tens of thousands of survivors, who like most of their Rwandan brethren, live in poverty. However, it is not solely a lack of funding that provides challenges to an efficient, fair, and responsible distribution of the fund. Interviews with genocide survivors in Kigali revealed that survivors who received benefits had to seek out these benefits actively. One survivor received support from FARG for school fees, mattresses, bed sheets, and health services, but conceded that "I had to go out and look for these benefits. No one came to see what I needed. I sought out help because I had a child to provide for."<sup>111</sup> Those who did not hustle for FARG benefits seemed to go without the benefits the fund provides, despite

106. *Id.*

107. Interview with Genocide Survivor, in Kigali, Rwanda (Jan. 17, 2004).

108. Interview with Ex-Combatant at Mutobo *Ingando*, in Ruhengeri, Rwanda (Jan. 10, 2004).

109. Interview with FARG Representative, in Kigali, Rwanda (Jan. 16, 2004).

110. *Id.*

111. Interview with Genocide Survivor, in Kigali, Rwanda (Jan. 17, 2004).



need. Elderly survivors are particularly susceptible to falling through the cracks. There have also been reports that FARG suffers from corruption.<sup>112</sup> The challenges that FARG faces in terms of lack of funding, difficulties identifying those in need, and corruption further compounds the feeling of many survivors that they have been forgotten.

#### IV. INGANDO FOR STUDENTS

##### A. Creating a Generation of RPF Loyalists

*Ingando* for Rwandan students is the most prevalent form of *ingando*. Rwandan students who complete secondary school attend *ingando* before they commence their university studies. Students spend an average of two months in *ingando* camps studying the "Achievements of the Government," "The Dignity of the Banyarwanda," history, the "ethnicity question," unity and reconciliation, Western and Eastern philosophy, and economic and technological concerns facing the country.<sup>113</sup> There are three phases of the *ingando* process for students. Students spend the first two weeks engaging in activities that encourage independent thought and critical analysis.<sup>114</sup> During the second phase, the students are encouraged to identify political, economic, and social struggles facing the nation.<sup>115</sup> In the final phase, the students break up into smaller groups and debate and discuss possible solutions to these national challenges.<sup>116</sup>

Rwandan university students are the future leaders of Rwandan society, and the vast majority have attended government-run *ingando* camps. Hence, the *ingando* process provides the government with the opportunity to mold the opinions of young students and orient them toward the RPF-led government, helping to create a generation of RPF loyalists. An interview with a student who attended Murobo *Ingando* (which, in addition to ex-combatants, also houses student attendees at different times of the year) revealed that *ingando* is centered on the praise of the present RPF-led government:

Our teachers characterized the past governments as solely wanting to hold onto power, and this was contrasted with the current government. The current government was characterized as caring primarily about reconciliation and not necessarily about holding onto power. They stressed that this government had held parliamentary, presidential, and local elections, and that refugees were returning. We were given the right to criticize the government, but I found nothing to criticize, and students at the *ingando* I attended never

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112. AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL, "MARKED FOR DEATH": RAPE SURVIVORS LIVING WITH HIV/AIDS IN RWANDA (2004), available at <http://web.amnesty.org/library/index/engaf470072004> (last visited Feb. 19, 2004).

113. Interview with Former *Ingando* Student, in Kigali, Rwanda (Jan. 5, 2004).

114. Interview with Rusagara, *supra* note 51.

115. *Id.*

116. *Id.*

criticized the tactics of the government. I found that most students were impressed by the achievements of the current government.<sup>117</sup>

When asked to provide suggestions for improvements to the *ingando* system, students often seemed perplexed by the question and were often unable or unwilling to offer any constructive criticism. Only one student provided a proposal for improvement, recommending that the government provide *ingando* students with better clothing and bedding and that it raise the sanitation and health standards at the camps.<sup>118</sup>

### B. Erasing "Myths of Ethnic Difference"

The Rwandan government is a minority regime with roots in Marxism/Leninism that is trying to survive by dissolving the idea of ethnicity.<sup>119</sup> Thus, it is unsurprising that the *ingando* syllabus for pre-university students, likely to become the country's future leaders, emphasizes erasing "myths of ethnic difference" in Rwanda without confronting the role that political constructions and utilizations of ethnicity continue to play in post-genocide Rwanda. Reeducation regarding the ethnicity question in Rwanda is at the heart of the *ingando* program for students.<sup>120</sup> Students learn about Rwanda as a nation before colonialism, the damaging effects of colonialism, and the creation of "myths of difference"—the "myth of the oppressors," "myth of the oppressed," and "myth of ethnicity."<sup>121</sup> "At *ingando*, they taught us . . . the idea of ethnicity within Rwanda was a colonial concoction," noted a former *ingando* student.

The colonialists brought these ideas so that they could strengthen their politics . . . . I knew that we spoke the same language and had the same culture so I didn't understand when people spoke of different ethnic groups in Rwanda. What difference does it make if you have a thin nose or a flat nose? . . . [A]fter *ingando* I identify only as Rwandan.<sup>122</sup>

There are two sharply divided camps within Rwandan society concerning the thorny issue of ethnicity. Some believe that there is no ethnic distinction between Tutsi and Hutu, and any attempt to ethnically differentiate between the two groups is an appeal to the colonial strategy of divide-and-rule.<sup>123</sup>

117. Interview with Former *Ingando* Student, in Kigali, Rwanda (Jan. 5, 2004).

118. *Id.*

119. In contrast, the government of Burundi, which has a similar ethnic make-up to Rwanda, acknowledges ethnicity and creates structures to address it.

120. Interview with Former *Ingando* Student, *supra* note 117.

121. Interview with Former *Ingando* Student, in Kigali, Rwanda (Jan. 15, 2004).

122. Interview with Former *Ingando* Student, in Kigali, Rwanda (Jan. 15, 2004).

123. Interview with Journalist, *supra* note 53; see also NIGEL ELTRINGHAM, ACCOUNTING FOR HORROR: POST-GENOCIDE DEBATES IN RWANDA 1-33 (2004).

Others contend that there is an ethnic distinction,<sup>124</sup> and by denying it *ingando* forces Rwandans to forget their origins.<sup>125</sup> For the second camp, *ingando* is dangerous because instead of teaching tolerance for “difference,” it leads to an obliteration of “difference” that lies about history and the “truth” of origins for the sake of peace and reconciliation.<sup>126</sup> One Rwandan journalist believes that this aspect of *ingando* is tantamount to “brainwashing.”<sup>127</sup> “[I]t is often important for people to put nation over ethnic identity,” noted another Rwandan journalist who has written extensively on *ingando*,

But it is wrong to tell people not to identify as what they are. To say that a Hutu should not identify as a Hutu, that her Rwandaness obliterates her Hutu identity is wrong. In the past people have used ethnic identities as political tools and to do so is wrong but that does not mean we should destroy and erase these identities altogether for the sake of the nation.<sup>128</sup>

Critics contend that *ingando* negatively results in an “obliteration of difference” by attempting to destroy the idea of Tutsi, Hutu, and Twa as ethnic distinctions in Rwanda.<sup>129</sup> Speaking on behalf of the NURC, Rusagara asserted:

The government is determined to strengthen national mechanisms and create a society in which one’s access to health services, the market, education, and all other social services is dependent on the fact that they are a Rwandan national, regardless of whether they identify as Hutu, Tutsi, or Twa. We [the NURC] have no problem with people choosing to identify as Hutu, Tutsi, or Twa so long as this identification, this ethnic conviction, does not deprive anyone else of their rights. Our aim is not to destroy these identities because they have been used as political ammunition. Even within the NURC, there is an informal debate regarding the issue of ethnicity. We are not telling *ingando* participants not to identify as Hutu, Tutsi, or Twa, but we are aiming to create a society in which these identities have no real meaning because they impart no privileges.<sup>130</sup>

Rusagara’s sophisticated argument that ethnic identification, although permissible, should not become the basis for invidious differences and distinctions, runs counter to most of the government discourse on ethnicity. The government claims that there is no such thing as ethnicity in Rwanda and

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124. ELTRINGHAM, *supra* note 123, at 1–33.

125. Interview with Journalist, *supra* note 79.

126. *Id.*

127. *Id.*

128. Interview with Journalist, *supra* note 53.

129. Interview with Journalist, *supra* note 79.

130. Interview with Rusagara, *supra* note 51.

has all but outlawed ethnic identification of any kind.<sup>131</sup> Although the government allegedly aims to erase ethnicity, it still appeals to ethnicity when doing so suits its political goals.<sup>132</sup>

The government's determination to erase ethnicity for the purpose of political survival is an understandable strategy, but it will not be successful. What the government fails to acknowledge, and what the *ingando* project fails to explore, is that Rwanda remains a society in which many (if not most) Rwandans still cling to the idea of ethnicity, despite the havoc and destruction that this concept has wreaked. Ethnicity is a powerful idea; it cannot simply be talked out of existence. The Rwandan government has gone to the extreme of all but outlawing references to ethnicity within the national discourse<sup>133</sup> and has romanticized pre-colonial Rwandan history.<sup>134</sup> The government will do a disservice to its people by ignoring the ethnic stereotypes that continue to flourish behind closed doors. After all, "limiting talk about ethnicity does not eradicate its potency. It might just send it underground."<sup>135</sup>

### C. *The Need for Historical and Historiographical Education*

Both the *ingando* program and general public discourse in Rwanda must involve enlightened discussions about history and historiography that uncover the political and social nature of ethnicity. The desire for a nuanced understanding of Rwandan history was evident in interviews with students who had attended *ingando*. "When I was younger," noted a former *ingando* student,

I remember hearing stories about how the Tutsis had come from Abyssinia. But I always wondered, if this was true, why is there no trace of Amharic words in Kinyarwanda? At *ingando*, the history lessons took hours because there were many who had similar questions . . . I realized that many students, like me, had grown up questioning.<sup>136</sup>

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131. Mark Lacey, *A Decade After Massacres, Rwanda Outlaws Ethnicity*, N.Y. TIMES, Apr. 9, 2004, at A3.

132. For instance, the government has refused to grant legal personality to CAURWA (Community of Indigenous People of Rwanda), a Twa organization that advocates for affirmative action on behalf of Rwanda's long suffering and marginalized indigenous community. The government has labeled CAURWA's activities, which include creating income-generating activities for the Twa, unconstitutional because it is organized along ethnic lines. Interview with CAURWA Representative, in Kigali, Rwanda (Oct. 25, 2004).

133. Lacey, *supra* note 131, at A3.

134. POTTIER, *supra* note 10, at 109–29.

135. Marc Sommers & Elizabeth McClintock, *On Hidden Ground: One Coexistence Strategy in Central Africa*, in *IMAGINE COEXISTENCE: RESTORING HUMANITY AFTER VIOLENT ETHNIC CONFLICT* 35, 41 (Antonia Chayes & Martha Minow eds., 2003).

136. Interview with Former *Ingando* Student, in Kigali, Rwanda (Jan. 15, 2004).

*Ingando* is apparently the only forum in which history is currently taught in Rwanda. "In secondary school we didn't learn about history," said another former *ingando* student who no longer subscribes to the idea of ethnicity in Rwanda.<sup>137</sup> The government is not teaching history in Rwandan schools because the RPF does not know how it wants to present history. This is a mistake. There are those who seek to rewrite Rwandan history by either denying the genocide of the Tutsi minority or by arguing that RPF massacres of Hutu amounted to a double genocide.<sup>138</sup> These ideas present dangerous and vicious untruths, and by failing to teach history, the government leaves a vacuum that such revisionism may occupy. Programs of education that confront the past can help shape collective memory.<sup>139</sup> Thus, the government must teach historiography and explore the competing versions of history, helping Rwandans to think creatively about history.

The government probably will not succeed in forcing the RPF's version of history onto people who grew up under the Habyarimana regime. A one-sided, pro-RPF interpretation of history will inspire resentment and will be too easy for people to dismiss as propaganda. They may mouth government rhetoric, but they will not necessarily reorient themselves. A curriculum that explores history should be integrated into the school curriculum, and should be free of pro-RPF spin, so that honest and open reeducation becomes an ongoing aspect of people's lives.

#### V. *INGANDO* FOR RELEASED *GENOCIDAIRES*: THE POLITICS OF VICTIMIZATION

Reconciliation within Rwanda partly depends on accountability and recognition of the many levels of victimization that have occurred within Rwandan society. The need for accountability was underscored following the first mass release of prisoners at the end of 2002 and the beginning of 2003. In 2003, the Rwandan government carried out a mass release of 23,000 prisoners accused of genocide.<sup>140</sup> The released *genocidaires* included those who had participated in the government confession program, those who were children during the time of the genocide (ages fourteen and below), the elderly, the terminally ill, and accused *genocidaires* who had no information in their case

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137. Interview with Former *Ingando* Student, in Kigali, Rwanda (Jan. 15, 2004).

138. INTERNATIONAL CRISIS GROUP, *supra* note 27.

139. MINOW, *supra* note 7, at 144–45.

140. The government decision regarding the mass release of *genocidaires* was conceived by a mix of players from both the judiciary and political branch. The Ministry of Justice was suffering from chronic problems with investigations and prosecutions. The judiciary was decimated by the genocide, and the Ministry of Justice found it incredibly challenging to gather sufficient evidence for genocide prosecutions. Perhaps most pressingly, the prisons were overflowing with accused *genocidaires*, and the releases served as a way to get the numbers in the prisons down. The releases also happened as a way to spur *gacaca*. In 1999, the government initiated a confession program through which it encouraged genocide suspects to confess to the whole of their crimes in exchange for substantial reductions in their sentences. The government instituted mass releases as rewards for confession.

files to support the charge of genocide.<sup>141</sup> A task force comprised of a cross section of actors from the Ministry of Justice, Human Rights Commission, Ministry of Finance, police, local governments, and Office of the President decided that it was essential that as many of the released *genocidaires* as possible complete *ingando*.<sup>142</sup> The released prisoners, excluding the terminally ill and elderly, went straight from pre-trial detention to a three month stint at *ingando*. The government also hoped that *ingando* would provide an opportunity to gain valuable information from the *genocidaires* regarding how they became involved in the genocide, what they expected to gain from participating in the genocide, and what they feared would happen to them if they did not participate in the genocide.<sup>143</sup> The NURC installed *ingandos* in all thirteen provinces, and thousands of *genocidaires* attended. Many now await *gacaca*, an alternative form of “community justice” with the stated purpose of delivering justice for crimes committed during the genocide, and are living back in their communities.<sup>144</sup>

The politics of “victimization”—defining who is a “victim” in Rwanda and therefore who should be treated as such—is a central theme of the debate regarding reconciliation within Rwandan society. Is it accurate to characterize everyone who lived under the genocidal regime, including the *genocidaires* themselves, as victims? According to Johnston Busingye, Secretary General of the Ministry of Justice, if one thinks of *genocidaires* as not simply criminals but victims in their own right, then the concept of rehabilitation through *ingando* is not only conceivable but also invaluable:

We found that the released prisoners were very confused and questioned how and why they became involved in the genocide. They realized that those who were the architects of the genocide had fled to the U.S., Kenya, and elsewhere, while they were left to rot in prison, while their children remained out of school, and their wives lived for years without husbands. . . . We must believe in rehabilitation for these people because they, too, were victims. We must interrogate history and look closely at what happened from 1959 to 1994. The major culprits of the genocide were those who managed the politics of the state, not the people who pushed the wheelbarrows in town. These people were born into a system that used genocide as a political tool. Genocide is not possible without the support of the state, and therefore this generation, both those who

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141. Press Release, Amnesty International, Rwanda: Provisional Release of Genocide Prisoners—Priority Should Be Accorded to the “Sans-Dossiers” (Mar. 3, 2004), available at <http://web.amnesty.org/library/Index/ENGAFR470012004?open&of=ENG-2F2>.

142. Interview with Johnston Busingye, Secretary-General of the Ministry of Justice, in Kigali, Rwanda (Jan. 6, 2004).

143. *Id.*

144. *Id.* This is a provisional release. If after *gacaca* the released prisoners are found guilty of greater crimes than those to which they confessed, they will be sent back to prison.

survived the genocide and those who participated in it, were victims of a system that went viciously off course.<sup>145</sup>

There is no doubt that the genocide, far from an explosion of “ancient tribal hatred,” was politically planned and premeditated;<sup>146</sup> in that sense, this generation was indeed manipulated by the genocidal aspirations of a modern political elite. But is the only path towards reconciliation the “just affirmation of the humanity of the victim and the perpetrator”?<sup>147</sup> Some Rwandans argue that the only way to move forward is to view all Rwandans as victims who need to be made whole, as long as they are willing to work in partnership with their fellow Rwandans in this quest. But the danger of engaging in the politics of victimization, in which everyone, including the perpetrators of mass atrocity, are deemed victims, is that it leads to an undermining of personal accountability. Reconciliation without accountability is neither possible nor desirable.

True reconciliation in Rwanda is also impossible if the government continues to refuse to acknowledge the crimes committed against innocent Hutu following the genocide. The government has done everything in its power to prevent the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda from prosecuting RPF crimes, has tried and convicted only one RPF senior officer for massacres committed in 1994, and has refused to allow accountability for RPF crimes in the *gacaca* courts.<sup>148</sup> Although the government assigns victim status to “moderate Hutu,” those killed by the FAR, *interahamwe*, and Presidential Guard during the genocide, its refusal to assign victim status to Hutu killed by the RPF undermines the process of reconciliation in Rwanda. In addition, the assignment of collective guilt for the genocide to all Hutu, as opposed to the assignment of individual responsibility, undermines the recognition and prosecution of genocide.<sup>149</sup> In contrast, assigning individual guilt and acknowledging that victimization took place on many levels during and following the genocide would affirm the humanity of all Rwandans.

## VI. CONCLUSION

Government officials have exaggerated the success of *ingando* as a reconciliation mechanism. The government will do a disservice to its population and the process of reconciliation by overstating the claim of reconciliation through *ingando* without acknowledging the difficult road ahead. According to the NURC, there are many indications of the success of *ingando*. Rusagara contends that at first “it was war” to convince Rwandans to attend *ingando*.<sup>150</sup>

145. *Id.*

146. See generally DES FORGES, *supra* note 4.

147. Donald Shriver, *When and Where in Political Life is Justice Served by Forgiveness?*, in BURYING THE PAST: MAKING PEACE AND DOING JUSTICE AFTER CIVIL CONFLICT 35 (Nigel Biggar ed., 2001).

148. Letter from Kenneth Roth to John Negroponte, *supra* note 23.

149. ELTRINGHAM, *supra* note 123, at 69–79.

150. Interview with Rusagara, *supra* note 51.

These initial difficulties have dissipated, he argues, and non-governmental and civil society organizations approach the NURC with relative frequency to set up government-run *ingandos* for their constituents or to seek government funding for privately run *ingandos*.<sup>151</sup> The NURC believes this shift is an indication of the mainstream status *ingando* currently enjoys in Rwandan society. In addition, in both private and public universities, former students of *ingando* have set up chapters of the Students Club for Unity and Reconciliation in an attempt to disseminate the central tenets of *ingando* outside the formal *ingando* setting.<sup>152</sup> Urumuri ("Light") is a group comprised of ex-FAR who have attended *ingando* and encourage other ex-FAR to return and reconcile with society.<sup>153</sup> According to Rusagara, *ingando*'s future as a catalyst for reconciliation is limitless:

There is a harmonious cohesion within the social fabric of Rwandan society. Look at the peaceful streets of Kigali and the peaceful national elections. Orphanages are closing down in large numbers because people are opening up their homes to orphans regardless of whether these children are Hutu or Tutsi. Ex-FAR and RPA have merged into the RDF—people who once fought each other in the past are now working well together. *Genocidaires* who went through *ingando* are now living peacefully next to survivors. There are no powerful antagonisms. *Ingando* is bearing fruit.<sup>154</sup>

This brand of government spin purposefully conceals the reality that animosities still exist and even flourish in Rwandan society. Although there are some Rwandans who may agree that the seeds of reconciliation have indeed been planted and are bearing fruit, there are still many others who speak of bitterness, a simmering, a country at times waiting to explode.

*Ingando*, in principle, is a creative attempt to foster reconciliation and grapple with the past within post-genocide Rwanda, but the time period spent within *ingando* is simply too short for it to have a deep and lasting impact. The success of *ingando* depends on its participants living out the concepts of unity and reconciliation imparted at *ingando* in their daily lives, long after they have left the solidarity camp. The focus on political indoctrination also severely undermines *ingando* as a reconciliation mechanism. Moreover, the government's continued attacks on civil society and perceived political opposition threaten to undermine reconciliation programs like *ingando*. If *ingando* is absorbed into the school setting and if the leaders of *ingando* create a curriculum that includes honest critiques of the current administration and open discussions about history, *ingando* can be a worthy and creative take on the difficult business of societal healing.

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151. *Id.*

152. *Id.*

153. *Id.*

154. *Id.*