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Research exercise: Human Rights Violations, Genocide, and Other Current Issues in Africa: UN Involvement Then and Now

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Human Rights Violations, Genocide, and Other Current Issues in Africa: UN Involvement Then and Now

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Introduction

Throughout the last century, African nations have struggled to become fully independent and successful countries. Their lack of democracy and governmental stability have led to several violent uprisings and the oppression of innocent peoples throughout Africa. The United Nations has played an integral role in helping to resolve these conflicts and help guide these nations to peaceful prosperity. Two specific times in which the UN intervened in these issues were the Rwandan genocide of 1994 and the Second Ivorian Civil War which occurred in Cote d’Ivoire following their 2010 presidential elections. UN involvement in these two cases differed greatly, and I looked into why this was the case.

Rwandan Genocide

Beginning on April 7, 1994 and lasting over 100 days, the Rwandan genocide saw the Hutu peoples ruthlessly slaughter approximately 800,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus. The genocide occurred during a period of ongoing conflict that began in 1990, and it resulted in the elimination of nearly half of the population of Rwanda.

Second Ivorian Civil War

The Second Ivorian War occurred following their 2010 presidential elections and continued into 2011. Alassane Ouattara beat incumbent president Laurent Gbagbo. However, Gbagbo refused to relinquish the presidency, claiming that he had won. The dispute resulted in Gbagbo turning violent towards the supporters of Ouattara, resulting in deaths of nearly 3,000 people. Gbagbo would eventually be arrested by UN forces and the war came to an end on April 11, 2011.

Effects of the Creation of the ICC

• Created in July of 2002 by the Rome Statute
• Was not in effect for the Rwandan genocide
  • Main reason that UNAMIR failed to do its job
• UNOCI
• Cote d’Ivoire is a member but Rwanda is not
• Helped to quickly and effectively end the crisis in Cote d’Ivoire
• Help in aftermath

Current State of Rwanda and Cote d’Ivoire

Unfortunately, Rwanda remains volatile to this day. Several other uprisings and violent events have taken place since the 1994 genocide. It has been difficult for the Tutsi and Hutu peoples to reconcile their differences following the brutal and violent actions that occurred during the genocide. It seems that Rwanda and several of its neighboring nations are on the brink of more civil wars. Cote d’Ivoire is also struggling to gain stability and peace; however, the ICC is playing a large role in helping them. Although, Cote d’Ivoire is still struggling, a peaceful outcome looks much more possible when compared to Rwanda. Despite the continuing unrest of both nations, their economies have improved drastically in recent time. Hopefully the improved economies of Rwanda and Cote d’Ivoire will only help to alleviate the tension within these two struggling nations.