



DO NOT STAND IDLY BY

## Genocide

6<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> graders

Appropriate for Public School, Private School, or Day School Environments

1. Sample Teacher Letter to explain curriculum
2. **Session #1 Genocide Lesson Plan**
  - a. *Definition of Genocide* handout
  - b. Other definitions of genocide handout
3. **Session #2 Have You Ever? Lesson Plan**
  - a. *Have You Ever...* handout
  - b. From a Whisper to a Threat – a case study... Handout
4. **Session #3 Pyramid of Hate Lesson Plan**
  - a. *Pyramid of Hate* handout
  - b. *Definition of Genocide* overhead transparency
  - c. **Armenian Genocide historical background**
  - d. **Holocaust historical background**
  - e. **Darfur, Sudan historical background**
  - f. **Rwanda historical background**

Jewish World Watch has prepared this curriculum with the input of teachers and administrators who work in Conservative and Reform Hebrew/Religious Schools, Community Day Schools, Public Schools, and Jewish Summer Camps. Special thanks to: Malka Tasoff (Los Angeles Unified School District and Valley Beth Shalom Jewish World Watch Committee), Beverley Kamenir (Camp Ramah, Ojai, CA. and New Community Jewish High School, West Hills, CA), and Jackie Simons (Temple Israel of Hollywood, CA.). For more information contact Janice Kamenir-Reznik, at [info@jewishworldwatch.org](mailto:info@jewishworldwatch.org).

May 3, 2006



## **Lesson Plan: Genocide**

Sample introductory letter to send to teachers

Dear Teachers:

On (*date*), we will have a school wide assembly that will feature a program designed to educate our students about a genocide that is occurring in the Darfur region of Sudan today. This presentation is sponsored by the Jewish World Watch, a coalition of synagogues that seeks to monitor genocide around the world in order to give meaning to the words: “Never again.” During this event, we will view an age-appropriate power point presentation which will expose the students to the genocide taking place in Darfur, Sudan. The objective of this power point is threefold: (1) to educate students about the genocide in Darfur; (2) to demonstrate to students the horrible consequences of hate and intolerance; and (3) to motivate students to do their part to prevent future genocides, hate crimes and the like.

To help prepare our students for this unique opportunity, 30-minute lesson plans are attached. These lesson plans are short and will work well in several homeroom periods.

This is a powerful teaching opportunity that can translate into increased respect for self, and our community. We hope by providing these experiences for our students we are helping them give meaning to the refrain “Never again.” This is an opportunity to extend our students’ personal experience of intolerance to the larger world – Darfur, Sudan, where men, women and children are driven from their homes, raped, and murdered daily. This program sends a clear message that we all have a chance to do something really meaningful that can help save lives and can guide our students to be pro-active citizens in seeking and achieving tolerance.

Sincerely,

School Administration

NOTE: This letter was used in a public school setting in which the Administration was using the example of the genocide in Darfur as part of the “Teaching Tolerance” unit. In the particular school there were significant ethnic gang-related problems. The entire school participated in the entirety of this curriculum.

## Introduction to Genocide

### Student Objectives:

1. To identify and use structural features of a public document to locate and examine the definition of genocide as defined by the Genocide Convention
2. To explore the possibilities for misinterpretation of the definition by clarifying the main ideas and connecting it with other sources

### Materials:

“Genocide” **handouts** for each student  
Poster board, chart paper or butcher paper  
Chart markers  
*Definition of Genocide* handout (for teacher)

### In the Classroom – Brainstorming

1. “The Wall”—Begin the class by writing the word “genocide” in the center of the blackboard or on a large piece of paper and distribute individual copies of the “Genocide” handout to students. Read the handout together and answer students’ questions related to the United Nation’s definition. Give students 5-10 minutes to write whatever comes to mind when they think of genocide around the word —statements, words, questions, countries, etc. – on their handouts. Encourage students to approach the board and add their ideas to a class-generated list.
2. After everyone has had an opportunity to approach the board, ask students to explain the connection to the word they chose or to respond to another student’s word choice.
3. Discuss and determine a class definition of genocide. It is important to reach a consensus with the language.

## GENOCIDE

**Genocide** as defined by the United Nations in 1948 means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national ethnic, racial, or religious group, including:

- Killing members of the group
- Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group
- Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part
- Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group
- Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group

Today, rather than serving as a catalyst for effective action to halt atrocities, the debate surrounding the declaration of genocide has served as a tool for delaying or avoiding action. The preference for terms such as "acts of genocide" and "killings of mass scale" were used in Rwanda and more

recently in Darfur, Sudan, to avoid taking  
meaningful action and saving countless lives.

## Session #1 Other Definitions of Genocide Handout

### Genocide

The systematic and planned extermination of an entire national, racial, political, or ethnic group

The deliberate and systematic destruction of a racial, political or cultural group

#### **3 entries found for genocide.**

**Main Entry:** ethnic cleansing

**Part of Speech:** *noun*

**Definition:** mass killing of an ethnic group

**Synonyms:** final solution, **genocide**, holocaust, mass destruction, mass extermination, mass murder, pogrom, race extermination, race murder, Roman holiday, ruthless clearance of populace, wholesale murder

**Source:** *Roget's New Millennium™ Thesaurus, First Edition (v 1.1.1)*

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**Main Entry:** mass murder

**Part of Speech:** *noun*

**Definition:** mass killing

**Synonyms:** bloodbath, butchering, carnage, ethnic cleansing, extermination, final solution, **genocide**, holocaust, massacre, mass destruction, mass execution, mass extermination, race extermination, race-murder, Roman holiday, slaughter, wholesale murder

**Source:** *Roget's New Millennium™ Thesaurus, First Edition (v 1.1.1)*

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**Main Entry:** massacre

**Part of Speech:** *noun*

**Definition:** killing

**Synonyms:** annihilation, assassination, bloodbath, bloodshed, butchery, carnage, decimation, extermination, **genocide**, internecine, murder, slaughter, slaying

**Source:** *Roget's New Millennium™ Thesaurus, First Edition (v 1.1.1)*

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## Session #2 Have You Ever?

### Have You Ever? (for grades 6 and older)

#### Student Objective:

1. To explore the possibilities for misinterpretation of the definition by clarifying the main ideas and connecting it with personal experiences

#### Materials:

*Have You Ever?* – handout for each student  
From a Whisper to a Threat – a case study

#### In the Classroom – Personal response

1. Distribute the “*Have You Ever?*” handout to each student. Tell students that they are to answer yes or no to each of the questions.
2. Lead a discussion using some or all of the questions listed below. List students’ responses on the board.
  - Why do you think people tell ethnic jokes about other groups, insult others, or exclude them socially? (A possible response might be “others” are different.)
  - Why would these differences cause a person to “put down” someone else? (Possible responses might be: It makes them feel superior or more important or they are afraid of the “other”, failure to understand another’s culture.)
  - Where do people learn to disrespect people who seem different? (Responses may include home, school, friends, or the media–newspapers, television, movies, music.)
  - Can you give examples of a prejudice you have learned through the media?
3. Explain to the class that you are going to read a case study to them. A case study is a symbolic story that provides details and lends itself to a rich discussion. This particular case study describes a situation where everyday insults lead to a dangerous situation. (This story can be adjusted for younger students).
4. Read the case study aloud.
5. Ask students if something similar to this could happen at their school? How do they think a situation like this could affect the entire school? What could have been done to stop the situation from escalating? Who should have stopped it?

## **HAVE YOU EVER...?**

**Answer yes or no to each of the following questions.**

**Answer truthfully. It is for your eyes only!**

### **Have you ever:**

1. Overheard a joke that made fun of a person of a different ethnic background, race, religion, or sexual orientation?
2. Been the target of name calling because of your ethnic group, race, religion, gender or sexual orientation?
3. Made fun of someone different than you?
4. Left someone out of an activity because they are different than you?
5. Not been invited to attend an activity or social function because many of the people there are different from you/
6. Engaged in stereotyping (lumping together all people of a particular race, religion, or sexual orientation? (Ex. White men can't jump.)
7. Been threatened by someone different from you because of your difference?
8. Committed an act of violence against someone because that person is different from you?

## From a Whisper to a Threat A case study

In one school, a group of four boys began whispering and laughing about another boy in their school that they thought was gay. They began making comments when they walked by him in the hall. Soon, they started calling the boy insulting anti-gay slurs. By the end of the month, they had taken their harassment to another level, tripping him when he walked by and pushing him into a locker while they yelled slurs. Some time during the next month, they increased the seriousness of their conduct – they surrounded him and two boys, held his arms while the others hit and kicked him. Eventually, one of the boys threatened to bring his father's gun into school the next day to kill the boy. At this point another student overheard the threat and the police were notified.

(From *Sticks and Stones* by Stephen L. Wessler)

## Session #3 Pyramid of Hate

### Pyramid of Hate

#### Student Objective:

1. To explore the extent of reputed cases of genocide around the world now and in the past

#### Materials:

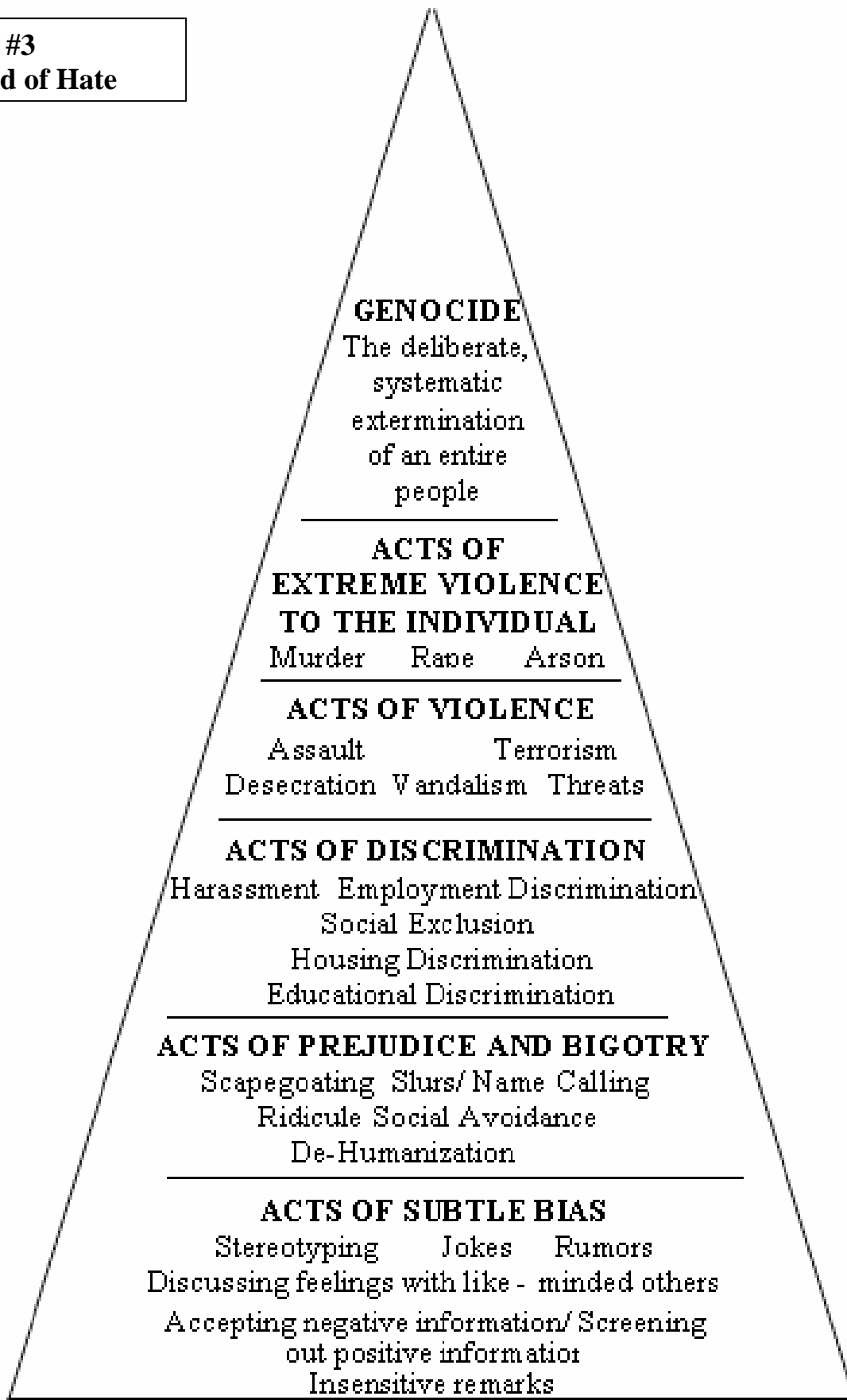
Pyramid of Hate – handout for each student  
*Definition of Genocide* copy for each student

#### In the Classroom – Levels of Hate

1. Remind students that previously they discussed a situation that started out as “whispering and laughing” and became more intense, escalating to threats of violence. A visual way of describing this type of progression is called a Pyramid of Hate.
2. Distribute the *Pyramid of Hate* handout or draw a Pyramid on the board. Briefly review each level of the Pyramid starting with Level 1, the bottom level. Ask students to provide one or two examples **for** each level.
3. Based on the case study, ask students the following questions:
  - a. Where would you place “whispering and laughing” on the Pyramid? (level 1)
  - b. Why do you think that what seemed harmless initially progressed into violence? (Answers might include: nobody stopped it, the perpetrators gained confidence that they could continue without interference or consequences, the victim did not seek help, etc.)
  - c. Even if it seemed harmless to the perpetrators and bystanders, do you think it felt harmless to the victim? How do you think he felt?
  - d. At what level of the pyramid do you think it would be easiest for someone to intervene? What would be some possible ways to intervene?
4. Ask students if they can think of examples of genocide to which groups were subjected based on their race, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, etc. (e.g., Armenians, Native Americans, Aboriginals of Australia, enslaved Africans, Rwandans, Muslim Bosnians, and Jews in Nazi-occupied Europe, Sudanese) Chart their responses.
5. Present the United Nation’s definition of “genocide” by using the *Genocide* transparency. Discuss the significance of the year, 1948? Which countries were/are represented in the United Nations?
6. Ask students what they have heard about the Armenian genocide and the Holocaust and list their responses on the board. (Make sure the students are aware that the genocide was the deliberate and systematic murder of millions of people based upon their religion or cultural identity, as well as the death of thousands of political dissidents, Polish intellectuals, people with disabilities, homosexuals and other targeted groups.) Additional background information available and provided.

7. Tell them that right now genocide is occurring in the western part of the Sudan, called Darfur. Innocent men, women and children are dying because they belong to a certain ethnic group that the government doesn't like. Tell them that at the assembly they will attend, they will learn more about the genocide and they will see a power point which includes photographs of the people who were directly touched by this genocide.

**Session #3**  
**Pyramid of Hate**



## **Session #3 Handout**

### **Armenian Genocide**

The **Armenian Genocide** (also known as **Armenian Massacre**) is the deportations and related deaths of **Armenians** during the government of the **Young Turks** in 1915–1917. Several facts in connection with the Armenian Genocide are currently causing dispute between parts of the international community and **Turkey**. There is an agreement about the occurrence of the event, but Turkey denies that it was a state-sponsored extermination plan, hence **genocide**.

Most Armenian, many Western, and some Turkish scholars believe that the Armenian deaths were the result of a state-sponsored extermination plan. Most Western sources maintain that there were at least one million deaths. What is referred to as the Armenian Genocide is the second-most studied case of what is called genocide, and often draws comparison with **the Holocaust**.

[www.armenian-genocide.org/genocidfaq.html](http://www.armenian-genocide.org/genocidfaq.html)

**Frequently Asked Questions about the Armenian Genocide**

[www.theforgotten.org/intro.html](http://www.theforgotten.org/intro.html)

**The Armenian Genocide – history does not fade away.**

[www.umd.umic.edu/dept/armenian/facts/genocide.html](http://www.umd.umic.edu/dept/armenian/facts/genocide.html)

**Fact sheet: Armenian Genocide**

## Session #3 Handout-Holocaust

### AN INTRODUCTION TO THE HOLOCAUST

Ben S. Austin

Hitler and the Nazi Party gained power in Germany in 1933 and lost power in 1945 -- only 12 years. And yet, by the end of the Hitler regime, the world had been plunged into a global world war, Europe was in shambles and nearly 30 million died. Among the dead were over 6 million Jews -- men, women and children -- who were systematically and efficiently slaughtered for no other reason than that they were Jews.

Additionally, an estimated 5.5 million non-Jews, including hundreds of thousands of Romani (Gypsies), Polish nationals, homosexuals, Jehovah's Witnesses, political criminals and others, were systematically murdered. While many of these might, perhaps, be classified as executions of criminals and enemies of the state on political or military grounds, this was clearly not the case for Jews and Romani who were classified by the Nazi regime as "racially" inferior and, therefore, as "life unworthy of life."

This event has come to be called THE HOLOCAUST. In the view of this writer, the term "Holocaust" must be reserved for this specific time and set of events. Certainly there have been numerous atrocities against humankind throughout history, horrible cases of genocide directed against innocent people -- 10-20 million black Africans who died during the 200 years of the international slave trade, the decimation of nearly 12 million Native American Indians in North America between 1600 and 1850, and the more recent events in Bosnia and Rwanda.

It is not the intent of this essay to lessen the horror of any of these instances of "man's inhumanity to man." However, there has been ONLY ONE HOLOCAUST. The event described in these pages stands alone in human history for several reasons:

1. The motivations for it were entirely racial. There was little, if any, economic net gain; in fact, one suspects that the Holocaust brought economic loss to Germany. The victims presented no threat to the German nation, or to the Nazi regime. Neither national security nor territorial expansion was served by it, though Hitler used the ideology of "racial purity" as a rationale for both.
2. The rational nature of its methodology -- its efficiency, calculability, predictability and control - are unparalleled in human history.
3. Its ferocious intensity. The systematic slaughter of between 11 and 12 million human beings did not begin until late 1938 and ended in 1945.

The unanswered questions regarding the Holocaust far outnumber those for which we have answers and the gap between them grows. The facts are relatively easy to obtain -- millions of pieces of documentary (much of it as yet unanalyzed) have produced a virtual flood of scholarly historical works documenting every aspect of the Holocaust. But, the more we study it, the more we know about it, the less comprehensible it becomes. We still seek an answer to the most important questions: Why did it happen? How could it have happened? How could it happen in an advanced, civilized modern nation? Can it happen again? How can its recurrence be prevented? The material presented in these pages is disgusting, brutal, offensive, and shocking. But it is all true and it is the one truth in modern history that the world cannot afford to forget!

[www.ushmm.org](http://www.ushmm.org)

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

[www.holocaust-history.org/](http://www.holocaust-history.org/)

The Holocaust History Project

[www.historyplace.com/worldwar2/holocaust/timeline.html](http://www.historyplace.com/worldwar2/holocaust/timeline.html)

The History Place™ Holocaust Timeline 1938-1945

## **Session #3 Darfur Handout**

### **The Crime of Our New Century...**

**The Sudanese Government, using Arab "Janjaweed" militias, its air force, and organized starvation, is systematically killing the black Sudanese of Darfur.**

Over the last two years, the Sudanese government and government-supported militias have undertaken a systematic campaign of violence and displacement, targeting civilians of the non-Arab ethnic communities in the Darfur region. Despite three U.N. resolutions, and a ceasefire, an estimated 15,000 people are dying each month. The Sudanese government remains defiant, and the violence, the genocide goes on. Within Darfur, observers suggest that almost every village in the conflict region has now been burnt and depopulated. In much of Darfur, the Janjaweed are now occupying the rural areas; they have set up bases in some of the burnt-out villages, are harassing internally displaced people on the edges of towns, and have raped women who venture to collect water outside the camps. The deteriorating humanitarian situation in Darfur is being compounded by the administrative delays imposed by the Sudanese authorities on international humanitarian organizations and the ensuing logistic difficulties caused by the rainy season. Meanwhile men, women and children are dying.

[www.jewishworldwatch.org](http://www.jewishworldwatch.org)

**Jewish World Watch**

[www.Savedarfur.org](http://www.Savedarfur.org)

**Save Darfur**

[www.ajws.org](http://www.ajws.org)

**American Jewish World Service**

# **Rwanda**

This year Rwanda observed the 11th anniversary of the 1994 genocide, one of the worst humanitarian disasters of recent times. Although more than a decade has passed, the economically ravaged and socially divided country is still struggling. Each day, Rwandans stare at their own faces in their mirrors, and look into the faces of their former enemies, and refuse to retreat to the years of hatred and suspicion that led to the horrors of genocide.

Almost unbelievably, in post-conflict Rwanda change and hope are being created by the very people who were most deeply impacted by the violence. And while the challenge remains overwhelming, Rwanda has emerged as a leader in the process of reconstruction after the trauma of conflict, internal war, and genocide.

## **WHAT HAPPENED IN RWANDA?**

Following the April 1994 plane crash that killed Hutu President Habyarimana, ethnic tensions that had erupted sporadically since the end of the colonial period boiled over and extremists in the Rwandan government took control of the country. Through the media and the army, they instigated a campaign of mass murder against the country's Tutsi minority. It took only one hundred days in 1994 for over 800,000 Rwandans, about 11 percent of the entire population, to be massacred. In United States terms, the equivalent percentage in numbers would be around 32 million, approximately the entire population of California. The majority of those slaughtered came from ethnic Tutsi backgrounds, but people of Hutu origin - Rwanda's ethnic majority - were also killed in the violence or as a result of their refusal to participate in the murder of their fellow citizens, and in some cases, family members.

However, the genocidaires didn't just kill: they also raped an estimated 250,000 women and girls. HIV infection was used deliberately as a weapon of genocidal "slow poison"; over 50 percent of those who were raped are estimated to have become HIV-positive. With the death toll rising; the international community kept its back turned. It was only after human rights, media, and diplomatic reports of the massacre escalated that international intervention finally occurred. But it was opposition forces, the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), who finally took back control of Kigali, the country's capital. During the conflict, up to two million Rwandans fled across national borders. The resulting physical and psychological effects of the bloodbath and social dislocation were devastating, yet in the two years following the genocide close to 500,000 scared and penniless refugees returned to their homeland from neighboring Zaire, Tanzania, Burundi and Uganda.

## **INITIAL STAGE OF RECOVERY**

For the first several years after the genocide, Rwanda struggled with how to turn the Arusha Accords that had been signed in 1993 prior to the genocide into an effective tool to help rebuild Rwandan society. These protocols provided for power sharing between Hutus and Tutsis. The Rwandan leadership understood that they had to build on the protocols and create formal and informal mechanisms, first for recovery and then justice. For the next several years, the country participated in the formation of a new constitution that was eventually adopted by referendum in May 2003, while grassroots organizations took on the task of rebuilding civil society.

## **POST-CONFLICT RWANDA**

2003 marked the end of the transition period established in the Arusha Accords. Remarkably, Rwanda's new constitution set aside 24 of 80 seats in the Chamber of Deputies, the lower house of Parliament, for women. Following elections in the fall of 2003, 39 women took their places in the Chamber. Today, women hold nearly 49 percent of the seats; according to the Geneva-based Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) this represents a greater proportion than any other parliament worldwide. The IPU, which advised Rwandans on how to write a "gender sensitive" constitution, reports that women in Rwanda also hold 30 percent of Senate seats. In their words, Rwanda has "come the closest to reaching parity between men and women of any national parliament." This is an incredible achievement.

AJWS is committed to supporting Rwanda's post-conflict peace-building and self-determination. Specifically, much of AJWS' work addresses the ramifications of the gender-based violence that was perpetrated during the genocide. In response to the need to address the high rate of HIV-infection among Rwandan women and as a matter of justice (given the fact that many of the rapists were receiving antiretroviral treatment while in prison) AJWS began partnering with Women's Equity in Access to Care and Treatment (WE-ACTx), which seeks to increase access to care for HIV-infected women who have survived genocidal conflicts. AJWS also supports the Rwanda Women's Network in promoting and improving the socioeconomic welfare of women through the provision of health care and psycho-social support, as well as through education and awareness programs, including human and legal rights training, advocacy, and economic empowerment.

Few nations have been forced to confront a situation similar to that of Rwanda. The magnitude and gravity of human rights abuses, the level of civilian participation in these heinous acts, the massive dislocation of the population, and the nearly complete destruction of the country's infrastructure are virtually unparalleled in human history. So how have Rwandans been able to move forward, learn from the past, and regenerate not only their own lives but also their country?

The answers exist in many places and in many forms: the culture of forgiveness; the political sensitivity of the country's new leadership; the profound human need for self-preservation; and also in the strength and determination of Rwandan women who survived tremendous violence and abuse. In the words of one woman from the Gahini district of Rwanda: "We are going to live together again. We are going to reconcile. We are going to like each other again because we don't know politics. We lived together, we liked each other before, and now we are going to live together and like each other again." The Rwandan people are doing just that. .

[www.hrw.org/reports/1999/rwanda/](http://www.hrw.org/reports/1999/rwanda/)

**Human Rights Watch – Leave None to Tell the Story: Genocide in Rwanda**

[www.news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/Africa/1288230.stm](http://www.news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/Africa/1288230.stm)

**BBC News UK Version**

**Rwanda: How the genocide happened**