



UBUNTU Swiss-Rwandan Organization  
WE CAN'T HELP EVERYONE, BUT EVERYONE CAN HELP SOMEONE

## Rwanda, the country and its story:

**Rwanda today:** More than 20 years after the genocide, Rwanda presents itself as a rather calm and peaceful African country. Compared to its size, Rwanda receives a relatively large amount of development aid, but is also making great efforts to modernize the country and improve its economic conditions.

However, some political developments in the country cloud the overall positive outlook. President Kagame rules with a firm hand, leaving little room for the opposition, as evidenced by the controversial election result of him of 93% in the 2010 elections. Human rights violations are repeatedly reported, especially with regard to the freedom of expression, freedom of the press and freedom of assembly. He is also accused of supporting parts of the rebels in neighboring Congo and thus being partly responsible for human rights violations in eastern Congo. On the other hand, President Kagame stands for political stability in a difficult environment and for enormous economic and structural-political successes.

In the 2013 parliamentary elections, the ruling presidential party (RPF; Rwandan Patriotic Front) won 76.2% of the vote. In the new parliament, 64% of the 80 members are women, making Rwanda one of the two countries in the world with a majority of female representatives. On August 5<sup>th</sup>, 2017, Paul Kagame was re-elected with 98.6% of the vote. Kagame thus began his third term in office. According to estimates by the electoral commission 97% of the 6.9 million Rwandans eligible to vote casted their ballots.

### TIMETABLE RWANDA

#### Early history:

700 BC	Rwanda is home to simple hunter-gatherers, the ancestors of today's Batwa.
As from 700 BC	Bantu peoples arrive from central Africa to Rwanda.
10 <sup>th</sup> – 14 <sup>th</sup> century	Immigration of cattle breeders, today's Batutsi.
11 <sup>th</sup> – 14 <sup>th</sup> century	Establishment of a "ruler and subject" relationship between the Batutsi and the Bahutu.
15 <sup>th</sup> century	The Kingdom of Rwanda is defeated by neighbors and deprived of its royal drum (Rwoga).
16 <sup>th</sup> century	With King Ruganzu II. Ndori (1520-1543) Rwanda gains back independency.
1853	King Kigeri IV. Rwabugiri becomes ruler of Rwanda (till 1895).

#### The German Time:

1884	The Berlin "Congo Conference" begins on November 15 <sup>th</sup> . The Kingdom of Rwanda is conceded to Germany.
1885	On February 27 <sup>th</sup> , Emperor Wilhelm I. issues a letter of protection legitimizing the occupation of East African territories. Carl Peters is appointed Reich Commissioner on May 27 <sup>th</sup> .
1891	As a German Crown Colony, German East Africa is placed under the control of the Foreign Ministry.



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- 1894 Graf von Götzen is the first German to undertake a journey to Rwanda.
- 1898 The Germans establish the first military station in Rwanda.
- 1906 Graf von Götzen re-divides the administration of Burundi-Rwanda.
- 1907 On November 15<sup>th</sup>, Richard Kandt becomes Imperial Resident in the Kingdom of Rwanda.
- 1908 Kigali officially becomes the seat of the German colonial administration for Rwanda.
- 1911 Signing of a border treaty with Belgium, in which the exact course of the border between Rwanda and Belgian Congo is defined.
- 1912 On April 22<sup>nd</sup>, Heinrich Albert Schnee becomes the last German Governor of German East Africa (until November 14<sup>th</sup>, 1918).

### **The Belgian Time:**

- 1916 On May 6<sup>th</sup>, Belgian troops march in in Kigali.
- 1920 According to the Treaty of Versailles, all German colonies are placed under the control of the League of Nations. German East Africa is divided up and the administrative mandate over Rwanda and Burundi is transferred to Belgium.
- 1925 On April 25<sup>th</sup>, Rwanda becomes administratively part of the colony of Belgian Congo.
- 1931 King Yuhi V. Musinga is deposed by the Belgians and replaced by his son Mutara III. Rudahigwa.
- 1932 Coffee cultivation begins.
- 1946 After the dissolution of the League of Nations, Rwanda becomes a trust territory of the United Nations (UN) under Belgian administration.
- 1959 King Rudahigwa dies on July 25<sup>th</sup> and is buried on July 28<sup>th</sup>.
- 1960 In the local elections between June 26<sup>th</sup> and July 31<sup>st</sup>, the Bahutu party PARMEHUTU wins 70.4% of the vote.

### **Independent Rwanda:**

- 1961 On January 15<sup>th</sup>, Rwanda is granted internal autonomy, and on January 25<sup>th</sup>, power is handed over to the provisional government.
- 1962 Rwanda gains full independence on July 1<sup>st</sup>.
- 1973 In a military coup, President Kayibanda is deposed by Major General Habyarimana.
- 1979 Foundation of the RRW (Rwandan Refugee Welfare Foundation) by Batutsi in exile.
- 1983/1988 In the elections, Habyarimana is confirmed in office unopposed.
- 1990 The RPF invades Rwanda from Uganda. Their leader Rwigema is killed in the process.
- 1993 Agreement between the United Nations and the President of Rwanda in which the government commits to implementing various reforms within 37 days. On October 5<sup>th</sup>, the UN mission UNAMIR is deployed in Rwanda as an observation force.



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- 1994 On April 6<sup>th</sup>, the Rwandan and Burundian presidents are killed when their plane is shot down. On the same day, the genocide begins. Until mid-July, about 800'000 Rwandans die in a bestial way. After the murder of ten Belgian soldiers, Belgium withdraws its blue helmets on April 13<sup>th</sup>. On July 4<sup>th</sup>, the RPF takes Kigali and declares the "war" as over on July 18<sup>th</sup>. In November, the UN decides to set up a criminal court on the subject of Rwanda. The transitional government already agreed on in the "Arusha Agreement" is established in December.
- 1996 In March the UN troops leave the country.
- 2000 Interim President Bizimungu steps down in March and Paul Kagame becomes his successor.
- 2002 Due to the large number of suspects awaiting trial in prisons, a new form of justice is introduced: the Cacaca courts at village level, following the old traditions.
- 2003 A new constitution is adopted in July, and Paul Kagame wins the presidential elections in August with 95.05% of the vote.
- 2004 French Foreign Minister Michel Barnier ends his visit to Rwanda prematurely in April after allegations of French involvement in the genocide are made.
- 2005 Diplomatic tensions arise between Germany and Rwanda, after Rose Kabuye, President Kagame's chief of protocol, is arrested in Frankfurt.
- 2010 In August, Paul Kagame is re-elected with 93.08% of the vote in elections that the UN and the opposition rank as not fair.
- 2012 A French investigation concludes that the missile fired at the plane of then-President Juvénal Habyarimana in 1994 was fired on behalf of members of the presidential guard. President Kagame is held partly responsible for the increasing destabilization of eastern Congo.
- 2013 In parliamentary elections, the ruling party of the President (RPF) achieves 76.2 % of the vote. In the new parliament, 64 % of the 80 members of parliament are women.
- 2014 Rwanda's President is facing increasing international criticism for disregarding human rights, repression of the opposition and freedom of the press.
- 2015 In December, a former mayor from Rwanda is sentenced to life imprisonment in a German court for his involvement in the Kiziguro church massacre during the Rwandan genocide.
- In a constitutional referendum, 98.4% of voters officially vote in favor of changing the president's term limits. The extension to five terms allows Paul Kagame to run again in 2017.
- 2016 After the outbreak of politically motivated violence in neighboring Burundi at the end of 2015, several thousand refugees arrive in Rwanda. In June, Rwanda is accused of spreading propaganda against the Burundian president among Burundian refugees living in the country. At the same time, the first peace talks on Burundi begin in Arusha, Tanzania.
- 2017 On August 5<sup>th</sup>, Paul Kagame is re-elected with 98.6% of the vote. Kagame begins his third term in office. According to estimates by the electoral commission 97% of the 6.9 million Rwandans eligible to vote, cast their ballots.