

# **CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS 1994-1995**

The main purpose of this chronology is to help the reader by reconstructing MSF's actions and public statements in regional and international news reports of the period. It is intended as a tool for this specific document, and not as an academic reference.

International	The Great Lakes	MSF
<p><b>1994</b></p> <p><b>18 June</b> France announces it will go to the United Nations Security Council to call for “humanitarian military intervention in Rwanda, to be called “Opération Turquoise” with or without the support of other countries”.</p> <p><b>22 June</b> Security Council Resolution 929 authorises «Operation Turquoise» under chapter 7 of the UN Charter: “protection of civilian populations and humanitarian aid.”</p> <p><b>3 July</b> UN authorises France to create “safe humanitarian zone” called the “zone Turquoise” in the south-west of Rwanda (Cyangugu, Gikongoro, Kibuye).</p>	<p><b>From 6 April</b> <b>Rwanda:</b> Genocide of Rwandan Tutsi and massacre of Rwandan Hutu opposed to the genocide.</p> <p><b>29 April</b> <b>Tanzania:</b> 170,000 Rwandans fleeing their country arrive in Tanzania and settle at the Benaco site.</p> <p><b>9 June</b> <b>Tanzania:</b> Manhunt openly witnessed by MSF staff at the Benaco camp.</p> <p><b>15 June</b> <b>Tanzania:</b> Refugee protest to stop the expulsion of Jean-Baptiste Gatete, known as one of the organisers of the genocide. UNHCR staff taken hostage – Humanitarian staff leave the camp.</p> <p><b>4 July</b> <b>Rwanda :</b> The Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) seizes control of Kigali and Butare – mass exodus of Hutu to the north-west (Ruhengeri, Gysenyi) where an interim government is situated.</p>	<p><b>17 June</b> <b>MSF France Press conference</b> in Paris: “you can’t stop genocide with doctors”. The Benaco refugee camp described as a “humanitarian façade” and a “sanctuary for genocide.”</p> <p><b>Early July</b> Resignation of MSF Holland’s emergency pool coordinator in Tanzania, Arjo Berkhout.</p> <p><b>4-10 July:</b> Exploratory mission led by MSF Belgium, MSF France, and MSF Holland in the Zone Turquoise, surrounding Gikongoro: joint MSF France/MSF Holland programme planned; MSF Holland later withdraws.</p>

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<p><b>1994</b></p> <p><b>20 July</b> The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) announces the arrival of 500,000 refugees at border posts in Bukavu and Kamanyola (south Kivu). Airlift set up near Goma.</p> <p><b>22 July</b> American president Bill Clinton declares it the «worst humanitarian crisis for a generation” and announces a “concrete plan of action.”</p>	<p><b>6 July</b> <b>Rwanda:</b> Government of national union created.</p> <p><b>13 July</b> <b>Zaire:</b> Thousands of refugees arrive in Goma.</p> <p><b>14 July</b> <b>Rwanda:</b> RPF seize control Ruhengeri - Rwandan intermediary government flee to zone Turquoise.</p> <p><b>14 - 17 July</b> <b>Zaire:</b> Between 500,000 and 800,000 Rwandans settle in and around Goma.</p> <p><b>16 July</b> <b>Zaire:</b> Withdrawal of Rwandan Armed Forces (FAR) to Goma.</p> <p><b>19 July</b> <b>Zaire:</b> First cases of cholera reported in Goma.</p> <p><b>22 July</b> <b>Rwanda:</b> the government calls for the return of the refugees: «those who didn't take part in the massacres have nothing to fear.”</p> <p><b>24 July</b> <b>Zaire:</b> 80,000 refugees arrive in Bukavu,</p>	<p><b>15 July</b> MSF Holland and MSF Belgium agree on a joint intervention in Goma - MSF France chooses to remain on standby for Bukavu.</p> <p><b>18 July</b> MSF Holland's humanitarian affairs department (HAD) sends message to the teams: “We should continue our activities in the camp but at the same time we should continue to press publicly for the perpetrators to be brought to justice.”</p> <p><b>19 July</b> <b>MSF Belgium Press conference:</b> Call for the refugees to return to Rwanda - MSF Holland takes the same position.</p> <p><b>22 July</b> <b>MSF Holland announces 10,000 cases of cholera and 800 deaths</b> in Goma – medical needs are covered.</p> <p><b>24 July</b> Part of the MSF France team based in</p>

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<p><b>1994</b></p> <p><b>11 August</b> UN Security Council in favour of a “rapid” return of refugees and displaced people to Rwanda - UNHCR cancels the mass return planned for 16 August.</p>	<p>instead of the 200,000 the UNHCR expected.</p> <p><b>27 July</b> <b>Zaire:</b> 20,000 deaths from cholera in Goma.</p> <p><b>2 August</b> <b>Zaire:</b> Refugees settle in camps 50 km north of Goma.</p> <p><b>13 August</b> <b>Rwanda-Zaire:</b> Hutu flee zone turquoise towards Bukavu.</p> <p><b>15 - 23 August</b> <b>Zaire:</b> 120,000 refugees in Bukavu.</p>	<p>Bukavu joins MSF Belgium and MSF Holland in Goma.</p> <p><b>4 August</b> <b>MSF Press conference</b> in Goma: President of MSF France states the refugees are too weak and that there were too many risks for them to return to Rwanda.</p> <p><b>7 August</b> <b>MSF/Epicentre Press conference</b> in Goma: 80,000 refugees are thought to have died between 24 July and 3 August.</p> <p><b>8 August</b> Chimanga: MSF house taken over by ex-FAR soldiers.</p> <p><b>10 August</b> <b>MSF Belgium Press conference:</b> review of the operations and finances: «Call for human rights monitoring in Rwanda» – International council decide so lobby for more human rights observers in Rwanda and send MSF volunteers to gather information on human rights abuses in Rwanda, Zaire and Tanzania.</p> <p><b>11 August</b> <b>Article by the MSF Belgium president</b> in <i>Le Soir</i> newspaper: appeal to Human rights organisations - <b>article by MSF International’s Secretary-General</b> in the <i>International Herald Tribune</i>: «It is urgent to prevent a Cambodian Epilogue in Rwanda.”</p> <p><b>13 August</b> MSF evaluation mission in the region of Cyangugu (South-west Rwanda).</p> <p><b>17 August</b> <b>MSF Belgium and MSF France Press</b></p>

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<p><b>1994</b></p> <p><b>21 August</b> The last French soldiers leave Zone turquoise.</p> <p><b>25 August</b> UNHCR declares the camps in Zaire to be in a «virtual state of war» as a result of militia and FAR violence against the population, and threats against NGOs. UNHCR no longer supports voluntary repatriation to Rwanda from Goma.</p> <p><b>6 September</b> RPF begin deploying 2,000 combatants in the towns of Gikongoro, Kibuye and Cyangugu.</p> <p><b>7 September</b> Human Rights Watch report on Human rights abuses committed by RPF troops in June and July.</p> <p><b>16-17 September</b> UNAMIR declares more than two million people are displaced within Rwanda.</p>	<p><b>22 August</b> <b>Tanzania:</b> group of refugees attacked in Benako who were candidates to return to Rwanda.</p> <p><b>23 August</b> <b>Zaire:</b> Militiamen attack 200 refugees from the Kibumba camp as they prepared to return.</p> <p><b>2 September</b> <b>Zaire:</b> Zairian authorities declare they no longer support the ex-Rwandan authorities, and that Rwandan refugees in Zaire have to leave by 30 September. Riots break out in several camps in Zaire.</p>	<p><b>release:</b> “Rwanda: 3rd exodus confirmed.”</p> <p><b>19 August</b> <b>MSF Belgium and MSF France Press release:</b> “French troops withdraw from Rwanda leaving chaos behind them.”</p> <p><b>Early September</b> Desk managers visiting the field confirmed that MSF France wanted to limit operations to emergency refugee care - MSF France and UNHCR sign a memorandum of understanding until 31 October.</p> <p><b>Mid-September</b> MSF France starts running the Kamanyola camp (Zaire- Burundi border) but later evacuates it for security reasons.</p>

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<p><b>1994</b></p> <p><b>19 September</b> UNHCR declares there are 2.1 million Rwandan refugees abroad: 270,000 in Burundi, 500,000 in Tanzania, 1.33 million in Zaire (850,000 in the region of Goma, 450,000 in the region of Bukavu, 30,000 in the region of Uvira).</p> <p><b>23 September</b> UNHCR states it does not encourage Rwandan refugees to return home “based on the reports of violence there” (Gersony report, unreleased) – the United Nations Secretary-General calls for a further enquiry.</p> <p><b>24 September</b> UNAMIR denies having information on the RPF massacres.</p> <p><b>27 September</b> the United Nations Secretary-General demands a halt on all communications on the risks faced by refugees returning to Rwanda.</p> <p><b>29 September</b> UNHCR and the United Nations call for Zairian authorities to restore order in Rwandan refugee camps.</p>	<p><b>24 September</b> Operation “Homeward” to repatriate displaced people in Gikongoro, overseen by UNAMIR.</p>	<p><b>23 et 24 September</b> The various MSF section coordinators meet in Kigali to analyse the situation in the camps and review MSF’s position.</p> <p><b>Late September</b> MSF France starts running the Kabira (Bukavu) camp - MSF France coordinator in Goma call to headquarters: the team was disgusted with the situation in the camps.</p> <p><b>30 September</b> Katale (Goma) camp: scouts assassinated by militiamen – threats against expatriate staff and evacuation of aid organisations (including MSF Holland) at the request of UNHCR - President of MSF France declares at Board meeting “we are going to have to take a position on our presence in the Goma camps.”</p>

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<p><b>1994</b></p> <p><b>3 October</b> United Nations Security Council adopts the UN experts Commission, which established that a genocide was committed against Rwandan Tutsi.</p> <p><b>21 October</b> In a Press release UNHCR speaks of its concerns regarding the deteriorating security conditions in refugee camps and denounces the FAR's threatening presence, the leaders grip on the population and the terror inflicted upon refugees preparing to repatriate.</p> <p><b>24 October</b> Three-way agreement signed by UNHCR, Zaire, and Rwanda on the repatriation of refugees.</p>	<p><b>6 October</b> <b>Rwanda:</b> Rwandan authorities seize total control of former safe humanitarian zone in south-west Rwanda.</p>	<p><b>5 October</b> The MSF operations directors decide to send a three-person team, <i>'the Troika'</i>, to evaluate the situation in Rwanda, Zaire and Tanzania.</p> <p><b>7 - 16 October</b> <i>The Troika</i> from MSF's International council visits the field.</p> <p><b>11 October</b> MSF Holland's Humanitarian Affairs department sends a memo to the teams: arguments in favour of continuing operations; should MSF publish a report?</p> <p><b>14 October</b> <i>The Troika</i> and field coordinators meet and decide to reassess the situation in six weeks time, after continued lobbying in the international community.</p> <p><b>28 October</b> MSF France Board votes for the withdrawal of the French section from all refugee camps in Rwanda, Zaire and Tanzania, within one month.</p>

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<p data-bbox="150 293 212 327"><b>1994</b></p> <p data-bbox="245 1379 387 1413"><b>8 November</b></p> <p data-bbox="245 1415 638 1599">UN Security Council vote Resolution 955 on creating an international criminal tribunal for Rwanda and a special force to re-establish security in the camps in Zaire and Tanzania, recommended by the United Nations Secretary-General.</p>		<p data-bbox="1102 327 1243 356"><b>2 November</b></p> <p data-bbox="1102 358 1493 640">In a common <b>Press release</b> in Goma <b>15 NGOs (including MSF Belgium, MSF France and MSF Holland)</b> announced their support for UNHCR, and their deep concern over deteriorating security conditions. They threatened to withdraw from the camps if security did not improve for expatriates and refugees.</p> <p data-bbox="1102 678 1243 707"><b>5 November</b></p> <p data-bbox="1102 710 1493 864">MSF Belgium volunteers in camps in Zaire write to the Board about their disgust with the situation They suggest the withdrawal of MSF from certain camps.</p> <p data-bbox="1102 902 1243 931"><b>6 November</b></p> <p data-bbox="1102 934 1493 1025">MSF Belgium’s coordinator in Goma writes to the Board opposing the withdrawal of MSF from the camps</p> <p data-bbox="1102 1064 1243 1093"><b>7 November</b></p> <p data-bbox="1102 1095 1493 1346">In a <b>Press release, MSF United States</b> «calls on the United Nations Security Council to take immediate action in the Rwandan refugee camps.» The president of MSF France announces the decision to withdraw from Rwandan refugee camps, in the daily newspaper <i>Ouest France</i>.</p> <p data-bbox="1102 1384 1243 1413"><b>8 November</b></p> <p data-bbox="1102 1415 1493 1632">MSF Belgium Board decides “to leave the door open on a possible withdrawal” of its own section from the Zaire camps - MSF France ceases programmes in the Goma region - Agence France Presse announces that MSF is willing to stay in the camps on certain conditions.</p> <p data-bbox="1102 1671 1256 1700"><b>10 November</b></p> <p data-bbox="1102 1702 1493 1823">10 November: <b>MSF Holland publishes the report “Breaking the cycle”</b> describing the situation in the camps in Zaire and Tanzania.</p> <p data-bbox="1102 1861 1256 1890"><b>14 November</b></p> <p data-bbox="1102 1892 1493 1984"><b>Press release MSF international, MSF US and MSF UK:</b> “MSF withdraws from camps in Bukavu, as a sign of protest.”</p>



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<p data-bbox="148 293 209 327"><b>1994</b></p> <p data-bbox="244 1447 400 1473"><b>30 November</b></p> <p data-bbox="244 1480 638 1888">UNHCR announces a flood of several thousand refugees in the region of Bukavu, fleeing RPF soldiers emptying the camps in the former safe humanitarian zones (prefectures of Kibuye and Cyangugu) – The United Nations Security Council condemns the military and militia action in the Zaire refugee camps; UNAMIR mandate is extended for 6 months and postpones indefinitely the Secretary-General’s proposal to create an international force in the camps.</p>	<p data-bbox="675 327 831 353"><b>15 November</b></p> <p data-bbox="675 360 1066 450">14 people killed by RPF soldiers during refugee camp closure in the former safe humanitarian zone.</p>	<p data-bbox="1099 488 1256 515"><b>16 November</b></p> <p data-bbox="1099 521 1493 611">In <i>Le Soir</i> MSF Belgium’s operations director supports MSF France’s decision to leave the Bukavu camps.</p> <p data-bbox="1099 647 1256 674"><b>18 November</b></p> <p data-bbox="1099 680 1493 741">Effective withdrawal of MSF France from the Bukavu camps.</p> <p data-bbox="1099 777 1256 804"><b>24 November</b></p> <p data-bbox="1099 810 1493 1093">Inter-section meeting in Amsterdam on Kigali: MSF Belgium and MSF Holland decide to stay in the camps; MSF Holland willing to take up MSF France programmes in Tanzania - <b>MSF Belgium Press release:</b> “Médecins Sans Frontières questions Boutros Ghazi’s proposals”; MSF France: “Médecins Sans Frontières critics Boutros Ghali’s proposals.”</p> <p data-bbox="1099 1128 1256 1155"><b>25 November</b></p> <p data-bbox="1099 1162 1493 1413"><b>MSF Belgium Press release</b> reports violent incidents in the Goma camps and calls for an international force to guarantee refugee safety - <b>MSF international and Oxfam Press release:</b> “Aid agencies criticise France for blocking aid from the European’ Union for Rwandan Reconstruction.’</p> <p data-bbox="1099 1449 1278 1476"><b>Late November</b></p> <p data-bbox="1099 1482 1493 1603"><b>MSF France</b> mounts an <b>information campaign</b> to explain its withdrawal from the Zaire and Tanzania camps to the press and donors.</p> <p data-bbox="1099 1924 1240 1951"><b>7 December</b></p> <p data-bbox="1099 1957 1493 2078">MSF Belgium Board affirms that the section’s strategy was to continue working in the camps, monitoring the situation and press for improvements.</p>

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<p><b>1994</b></p>	<p><b>17 December</b> Paul Kagame, Rwandan Defence Minister, calls for the peacekeepers to be sent to the Rwandan refugee camps in Zaire.</p>	<p><b>First 2 weeks of December</b> MSF France prepares to leave camps in Tanzania -16 cases of cholera in the Benaco camp.</p> <p><b>20 December</b> <b>MSF Press conference</b> in Nairobi announcing the withdrawal of MSF France from the camps in Tanzania.</p> <p><b>22 December</b> On the <i>BBC</i> and in <i>The Guardian</i>, a <b>UNHCR spokesman accuses MSF</b> of leaving camps to spend the Christmas holidays at home.</p> <p><b>31 December</b> Effective withdrawal of MSF France from the Rwandan refugee camps in Tanzania.</p>
<p><b>1995</b></p>	<p><b>18 - 25 April</b> At least 4,000 displaced people massacred in Kibeho, south-west Rwanda by RPF soldiers.</p>	<p><b>24 January</b> In conjunction with the publication of "<b>Populations en danger</b>", MSF denounces the impunity enjoyed by those who committed genocide against the Rwandan Tutsi.</p> <p><b>7 February</b> <b>MSF Belgium announces</b> its withdrawal from the camp in Kibumba for security reasons, threats to expatriates and fraud during Rwandan refugee census - MSF Holland affirms general improvement in camps where their teams are working.</p> <p><b>9 February</b> <b>MSF International's Secretary-General publishes article in <i>New York Times</i>:</b> "Médecins Sans Frontières is leaving Rwandan refugee camps."</p> <p><b>3 - 4 March</b> MSF regional inter-sections meeting in Kigali on the different positions held by MSF regarding refugee repatriation.</p> <p><b>23 March</b> <b>Common Press release by 18 NGOs, including MSF</b>, announcing the urgent need for food in refugee camps in Zaire.</p> <p><b>Late April</b> MSF Holland programme manager visits teams in Zaire camps, opposed to the withdrawal</p>

**International****The Great Lakes****MSF****1995****17 May**

At an International Great Lakes programme manager meeting, MSF Belgium confirms it did not anticipate withdrawing from the camps in the near future.

**22 June**

The operations directors and the MSF Great Lakes programme managers discussed the possibility of leaving the camps. They concluded that each section should make its own decision - The MSF Belgium Board discusses a possible withdrawal from the camps.

**5 July**

MSF Belgium Board would leave the decision to withdraw from the camps up to the Project Committee.

**18 July**

The MSF Belgium project committee asks the Board for approval to leave the camp in Kahindo.

**27 July**

**MSF Holland publishes the report "Deadlock in the Rwandan refugee crisis"** on the situation in the Rwandan refugee camps in Zaire and Tanzania.

**2 August**

MSF Belgium Board decides to withdraw the Belgian section from the camp in Kahindo in four months.

**9 August**

MSF Holland Board votes for the withdrawal of MSF Holland from the camps in Tanzania and Zaire (except for Uvira).

**28 August**

MSF Holland's departure announced after the news was leaked by a journalist in Nairobi.

**December**

MSF Holland withdraws from the Katale camp in Zaire and Ngara in Tanzania, and MSF Belgium withdraws from the Kahindo camp in Zaire.