

# Rwanda-Backed Report Alleges France's Role in 1994 Genocide

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New York Times, December 13, 2017

KIGALI, Rwanda – A new report commissioned by Rwanda's government accuses France of supplying weapons and protection to the perpetrators of its 1994 genocide in which over 800,000 people were killed, deepening a feud between the East African country and its former benefactor.

The report by U.S. law firm Cunningham Levy Muse cites evidence that purportedly shows French complicity before, during and after the genocide by ethnic Hutu extremists against ethnic Tutsi and some Hutu moderates.

French officials provided safe sanctuary to some genocide suspects and have obstructed attempts to bring them to justice, the report says.

The report is "a damning summary of conduct by French officials" at the time of the genocide, Rwandan Foreign Minister Louise Mushikiwabo said in the report.

In a statement to The Associated Press, the French foreign ministry said it has "taken note" of the report provided by the law firm "at the request of the Rwandan authorities."

The statement said France is "fully committed to prosecuting those who

took part" in the Rwandan genocide. It said the French legal system has already convicted several people and was examining several more cases.

The new report underscores the increasingly strained relations between France and Rwandan President Paul Kagame's government, which recently recalled its ambassador.

Last year Rwanda published a list of 22 French senior military officers it accused of helping plan and carry out the genocide, including Gen. Jacques Lanxade, France's army chief of staff from April 1991 to Sept. 1995.

The publication of the list came after French investigators reopened an inquiry into the plane crash that killed Rwanda's president and sparked the genocide. Militants from the Hutu majority blamed minority Tutsis for the death of President Juvenal Habyarimana, an ethnic Hutu, sparking the slaughter.

The cause of the crash has been a contentious issue. The plane had a French crew.

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Associated Press writer Philippe Sotto in Paris contributed.