

CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS 1993-1998

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	Great Lakes	MSF
1993	Violence involving Rwandan-speaking minorities and local civilian militias in the Kivus - between 7,000-14,000 dead; hundreds of thousands displaced.	MSF Holland health of care assistance programmes operating in the Kivus.
1994	<p>April-July Genocide of Rwandan Tutsi and massacres of Rwandan Hutu opposed to the genocide; more than 1 million Rwandan Hutu flee to Tanzania, Zaire and Burundi.</p> <p>July RPF takes power in Rwanda; thousands of Banyamulenge from Zaire flee to Rwanda; some are already registered in the RPF army.</p>	<p>18 June MSF calls for armed international intervention to end the genocide against the Rwandan Tutsi.</p> <p>July-August All MSF sections respond to a cholera epidemic in Zaire's Rwandan refugee camps.</p> <p>November-December MSF France withdraws from Rwandan refugee camps in Zaire and Tanzania, issues a public explanation: refuses to help strengthen the power of those responsible for genocide by providing aid in the camps.</p>
1995	<p>April Zaire's High Council of the Republic (Parliament) passes a resolution forbidding refugees (including Banyamulenge) from acquiring Zairian citizenship.</p> <p>Autumn With material support from the US, the RPA intervenes in Zaire against the ex-FAR and militias from Idjwi (Lake Kivu) island.</p>	<p>March MSF submits its 'Diagnosis of the Situation in Rwandan Prisons' to Rwandan authorities.</p> <p>April-May MSF publicly condemns the RPA massacre of at least 4,000 displaced persons in Kibeho (Rwanda).</p> <p>July MSF publishes updated 'Diagnosis of the Situation in Rwandan Prisons'— MSF Belgium and MSF Holland decide to withdraw from Rwandan refugee camps in Zaire and Tanzania.</p> <p>December MSF France and MSF Switzerland expelled from Rwanda.</p>

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<p>1996</p> <p>June In the US, Paul Kagame, Rwanda's Vice President explained that Rwanda can remove the threat from the Zaire camps on its own.</p>	<p>13 February UNHCR repatriates 250,000 Rwandan refugees from the Kibumba and Kashusha camps in Zaire to Rwanda.</p> <p>12 May Massacre of Tutsi refugees in the Mokoto monastery.</p> <p>End of May Local and international organisations evacuate threatened individuals in Masisi.</p> <p>August Four movements opposed to the Mobutu government, including RPF come together within Laurent-Désiré Kabila's AFDL.</p> <p>9 September Residents of Uvira (South Kivu) demonstrate and Banyamulenge attack houses. They are ordered to leave the country.</p>	<p>January Several thousand Tutsi refugees gather at the Mokoto monastery and the village of Kitchanga (Zaire-Masisi), where MSF Holland manages the clinic.</p> <p>Mid-May MSF Holland evacuates some of the survivors of the Mokoto massacre. MSF pressure on UNHCR to evacuate the 3,000 others.</p> <p>21 May MSF Holland press release: <i>Three Thousand People Threatened in the Masisi Region – MSF Calls for Their Immediate Evacuation.</i></p> <p>23 July MSF Belgium press release: <i>Three Deaths During Forced Repatriation to Rwanda – Thousands Seek Refuge in the Burundian Hills.</i></p>

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<p>1996</p> <p>11 October UN report predicts explosion of violence in Eastern Zaire.</p> <p>27 October UNHCR commissioner calls for creation of 'humanitarian corridors.'</p>	<p>22 September Bukavu: Zairian and Rwandan soldiers exchange mortar fire.</p> <p>8 October South Kivu: local authorities accuse rebels of attacking Rwandan Hutu and Interahamwe; 200,000-500,000 given one week to leave the country.</p> <p>16 October Zairian Prime Minister anticipates closing Rwandan refugee camps before the May and July 1997 elections.</p> <p>18 October Official founding of the AFDL.</p> <p>20 October Fighting between Zairian Armed Forces (FAZ) and Rwandan army from the Uvira region - 110,000 refugees flee to Bukavu - AFDL attacks the area around the Katale camp (north Goma).</p> <p>22 October Fighting between Zairian forces and the AFDL extends into the entire Kivu region: 250,000-400,000 refugees flee. Rwandan and Burundian armies supporting the AFDL.</p> <p>24 October AFDL takes Uvira.</p> <p>25 October AFDL objective to overturn President Mobutu - state of emergency in the Kivu.</p> <p>26 and 27 October AFDL attacks Kibumba and Katale camps (North Kivu) - hundreds of thousands of refugees flee and gather in the Mugunga camp.</p> <p>28 October AFDL captures Bukavu - Rwandan President says Eastern Zaire previously belonged to Rwanda.</p>	<p>Mid-October MSF Holland Uvira mission converted into ET mission (emergency team-all MSF sections) coordinated by MSF Holland.</p> <p>28 October MSF teams begin treating refugees in the Mugunga camp.</p>

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<p>1996 29 October In agreement with the US and the UN, France proposes that the countries of the Great Lakes region hold a meeting.</p> <p>Late October Humanitarian organisations are primary information source for western media, which refer to a 'humanitarian crisis.'</p> <p>3 November European Union Commissioner for Humanitarian Action calls for emergency humanitarian action in Zaire; calls on Rwandan government to open humanitarian corridors to the Mugunga camp without delay.</p> <p>5 November ICRC and UNHCR raise the issue of armed international intervention. Security Council representatives of the nations in the Great Lakes region request deployment of a 'neutral force' (UN-OAU) in Zaire to set up corridors</p>	<p>30 October Rwandan army acknowledges engaging troops in Zaire - Kahindo camp attacked.</p> <p>31 October AFDL takes Goma - Laurent-Désiré Kabila declares himself President of the AFDL and Head of the Army for the Liberation of Congo.</p> <p>1 November Zairian government: forced and gradual return' of all Rwandan and Burundian refugees - rebels take Bukavu.</p> <p>2 November Rebels take international press on a guided tour of Bukavu.</p> <p>4 November AFDL announces 3-week ceasefire. Rwandan government claims it is not involved in the conflict underway in Zaire? AFDL takes international press on guided tour of Goma.</p> <p>5 November Goma is open to journalists but closed to NGOs.</p>	<p>31 October MSF France press release: <i>Médecins Sans Frontières Accuses Western Nations of Non-Assistance to Populations in Danger. MSF Calls for Creation of a Reception Area for Rwandan Refugees from Zaire.</i> MSF team evacuated from Mugunga, remains blocked in Goma. MSF teams evacuated from Uvira and Bukavu and gather in Cyangugu.</p> <p>1 November MSF International press release : <i>MSF Demands Creation of a Humanitarian Corridor. Humanitarian Aid Workers Still Blocked in Goma.</i> MSF Holland's report on ethnic cleansing in the Masisi is distributed.</p> <p>2 November All humanitarian organisations, including MSF, evacuated from Goma.</p> <p>4 November MSF International press conference in Gisenyi: <i>Médecins Sans Frontières Calls for Armed International Intervention to Create Safety Zones.</i> MSF USA press release: <i>The Crisis Worsens in Zaire: MSF Prepares for a Medical Disaster.</i></p> <p>5 November MSF France press release: Two Cargo Planes Bound for Zaire.</p>

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<p>1996</p> <p>6 November UN: Zaire favorable to the dispatching of an international force.</p> <p>7 November EU Cooperation Ministers, UNHCR and ICRC call on UN Security Council to authorise an urgent intervention in Kivu province.</p> <p>8 November ICRC is favorable to armed intervention in Zaire. UN Secretary General to Security Council recommends deployment of international force in eastern Zaire.</p> <p>9 November Interim UN Security Council resolution on the principle of a multinational force 'for humanitarian purposes,' intervention decision postponed.</p> <p>10 November EU Commissioner for Humanitarian Action says the Security Council's slow reaction is an international scandal.</p> <p>13 November US Department of State states that 'the US is ready to participate in an intervention in Zaire in a limited fashion (1,000 men)...</p>	<p>6 November Kigali refuses to allow a 'neutral force' on its territory.</p> <p>8 November Rwandan government: ready to accept an Afro-European force; calls for return of refugees.</p> <p>10 November Kabila announces the creation of humanitarian corridor and places conditions on NGOs to obtain access to Mugunga camp. Humanitarian organisations confined in the Goma stadium.</p>	<p>6 November Executive Directors and Operations Directors agree to call for armed intervention. Operations assigned to an ET coordinated by MSF Holland.</p> <p>7 November MSF announcement: Five evaluation teams blocked at the Rwandan, Burundian, Ugandan and Zairian borders. MSF sends letters to European and US political leaders asking for international intervention.</p> <p>8 November MSF France press release '13,600 Unimportant Deaths,' estimates the number of deaths likely if humanitarian agencies do not have access to the camps and calls for creation of safety zones and international military operation. MSF UK/OXFAM Press: <i>Military Intervention is Necessary to Save Lives and Ensure Peace and Justice in the Long Term.</i> MSF USA/InterAction Press: 'US Aid Organizations Call on the US to Take Action in Zaire.' MSF Holland press release: 'MSF Sends a Cargo Plane. Rwanda Authorizes Humanitarian Aid to Goma.'</p> <p>9 November MSF France press release: 'Burundians Repatriated To Conflict Zones Without Protection or Medical Aid.' MSF France press release: 'Each Day of Non-Assistance to Refugees Could Mean Death for 1,200 People.' . Open Letter from MSF UK and OXFAM in <i>The Times</i>: 'Dead Refugees Cannot Be Saved.'</p> <p>11 November MSF Executive Directors hold a teleconference and decide to continue to condemn inaccessibility.</p>

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<p>1996</p> <p>15 November Security Council resolution 1080 authorises deployment of a 10,000 to 15,000-strong multinational force in Eastern Zaire and the Great Lakes region to aid the refugees. Use of force authorised.</p> <p>22 November US aerial photos provide negative results (no refugees 'found' but insufficient overflights in the west, where refugees have been reported).</p> <p>23 November UNHCR says 700,000 Rwandans still in eastern Zaire.</p>	<p>15 November Rebels attack Mugunga camp: 400,000-700,000 refugees return to Rwanda between 15-18 November.</p> <p>16 November Rwandan Vice President assumes support for rebels and declares that NGOs should help Rwandans in Rwanda rather than as refugees in Zaire.</p> <p>17 November Rebels kill 320 refugees in Chimanga, south-west of Bukavu.</p> <p>18 November First news articles criticising NGOs for exaggerating refugee statistics.</p> <p>19 November UNHCR announces 500,000 refugees returned to Rwanda, 700,000 remain in Zaire. Rwandan authorities assert that all have returned.</p> <p>23 November Rwandan Vice President reveals to The Economist (UK) that there is a relationship between the refugees' return and preparations for the multinational force thus the Rwandan government: requests \$700 million in aid for the refugees' return.</p>	<p>14 November MSF conducts a 'sit in' at the Rwanda/Zaire border. MSF declaration: <i>'MSF Issues an Urgent Call for Action, as a Thousand People Die Every Day in Eastern Zaire, and Warns Against "Band Aid" Solutions in the Region.'</i></p> <p>15 November MSF France press release: <i>'Half-Measures Bear Heavy Consequences'</i> MSF France and MSF Holland press release: <i>Call for Immediate Intervention by an International Armed Force to Protect Civilians.</i></p> <p>16 November MSF Holland press release: <i>MSF Calls for Immediate Opening of Goma Airport.</i></p> <p>19 November Rwandan authorities close an MSF health station for refugees between Gisenyi and Ruhengeri.</p> <p>20 November Medical screening centre set up in Kisangani; MSF supports Upper Zaire general hospitals in Walikale and Lubutu.</p>

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<p>1996</p> <p>24 November UN is concerned about confrontation between Rwanda and Zaire and announce that the threat of the emergency is as serious as that of the 1994 genocide and exodus.</p> <p>27 November Canadian government proposes to parachute food supplies to refugees in eastern Zaire.</p> <p>28 November EU Commissioner for Humanitarian Action states that parachuting food supplies is 'shameful.'</p> <p>30 November International force formally constituted.</p> <p>5 December Canadian Defense Minister asks 'is an armed international intervention relevant?'</p>	<p>28 November Rwanda agrees to a 10-day humanitarian corridor. Zaire opposes parachuted food drops onto its territory. BBC, Reuters and Amnesty International report on the Chimanga massacre.</p> <p>4 December A 'human tide' along the Walikale-Kisangani road.</p>	<p>25 November MSF team exceeds the AFDL-authorized 30 km range around Bukavu. They are reprimanded and an AFDL facilitator is attached to MSF team.</p> <p>26 November MSF organises its response to press criticism regarding refugee numbers and their health status. MSF discovers survivors of the Chimanga massacre in Bukavu.</p> <p>1 December 5,000 refugees arrive in Bukavu - MSF, ICRC and UNHCR temporarily halt denunciation of AFDL for using humanitarian groups to lure refugees. Statements by survivors of the Chimanga massacre sent to MSF Holland headquarters.</p> <p>2 December MSF Holland delivers statements by survivors of Chimanga massacre to Amnesty International.</p>

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<p>1996 6 December Canada declares that given the return of 500,000 refugees to Rwanda, there is no reason for an international force.</p> <p>12 December The proposed international armed intervention force is abandoned.</p>	<p>6 December Thousands of refugees and displaced persons arrive in Lubutu.</p> <p>12 December 70,000 refugees congregate at the Tingi Tingi landing strip near Lubutu.</p> <p>17 December Mobutu's triumphant return to Kinshasa after four months' absence. UNHCR arrives to evaluate the situation in Kisangani, Walikale, and Lubutu.</p>	<p>15 December MSF responds in Tingi-Tingi. 38,000 refugees arrive in Shabunda. ICRC calls on MSF for help. MSF press release: <i>'There are Currently Hundreds of Thousands of People in Eastern Zaire Whose Fate is Unknown'</i> .</p> <p>MSF Letter to International Criminal Tribunal Prosecutor: Requests support of the call to expand the international force's mandate.</p> <p>18 December MSF Holland evaluation mission in Masisi (North Kivu).</p> <p>Late December MSF Holland fundraising director is misquoted, exaggerating the number of refugees: MSF faces credibility crisis in the Dutch media—MSF ET coordinator in Bukavu to MSF Holland executive director: Should we close the mission so that the AFDL can't use us as bait anymore?</p>
<p>1997 7 January UN claims 1.3 million refugees returned to Rwanda. UNHCR announces 120,000 refugees in Tingi-Tingi area, 60,000 in Amisi and 150,000 in Shabunda.</p>		<p>7 January Tingi Tingi mortality rate of 50% among children under 5.</p> <p>14 January Press conference: MSF France /UNICEF in Paris, supported by MSF Belgium and MSF UK: <i>'On Average, 20 People Die Every Day in the Tingi Tingi Camp in Upper Zaire.'</i></p>

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<p>1997</p> <p>22 January Mohamed Sahnoun, special OAU and UN envoy travels to the Great Lakes region.</p> <p>February 'Direct testimony' by a European priest circulates, telling of massacres committed by the AFDL in Eastern Zaire.</p>	<p>Night of 19-20 January Three Médecins du Monde volunteers killed in Ruhengeri, Rwanda.</p> <p>21 January 15 journalists in Tingi Tingi report starving refugees are hostile; 100 families describe killings in the forest. Counter-offensive underway carried out by Zairian government forces.</p> <p>30 January Zaire: Uganda and Rwanda deployed forces in eastern Zaire with AFDL. Zairian troops include mercenaries.</p>	<p>20 January MSF team in Tingi Tingi reduced for security reasons</p> <p>22 January MSF Belgium press release: <i>'Rwanda: MSF Condemns Murderous Mindset.'</i></p> <p>23 January MSF France press release: <i>'Situation Still Critical in Tingi-Tingi, Upper Zaire,' taken up by MSF US, 'Refugees Face Catastrophe in Tingi Tingi, Upper Zaire. Last month, 526 Refugees Died.'</i></p> <p>26 January Tingi Tingi: Daily death rate: 21 per 10,000.</p> <p>Late January MSF headquarters and field sites debate the objectives of an MSF presence in the Great Lakes region.</p> <p>January 30 to 1 February MSF Holland evaluation mission in the Saké region concludes that the nutritional situation is catastrophic.</p> <p>31 January MSF France and MSF Belgium press release: <i>Over Two Months, Tingi Tingi Refugees Have Received Less Than One-Third of Their Basic Food Needs.</i> Repeated by MSF USA: <i>175 additional Deaths in a Zairian Refugee Camp. Two Months of Food Shortages have Cost 719 Lives.</i> MSF Holland in Goma criticises headquarters for too much publicity on the refugees and not enough about Masisi.</p>

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<p>1997 1 and 2 February EU's Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid, in Zaire admits that some 200,000 refugees are still roaming in the forest.</p> <p>3 February Rwanda's ambassador to the UN declares there are no more Rwandan refugees in Zaire.</p> <p>5 February US Secretary of State asks Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi to stay out of the conflict.</p> <p>7 February UNHCR calls for opening of safe passage zones so that refugees can be repatriated to Rwanda.</p> <p>9 February UNHCR commissioner calls for refugees to return to Rwanda. 500 refugees call for her resignation.</p>	<p>Night of 4-5 February 30,000-40,000 refugees from Shabunda camps flee heading south-west ahead of AFDL troops' arrival. Four UN human rights observers killed in Rwanda.</p> <p>5 February Rebels take Shabunda and Bunia.</p> <p>8 February AFDL takes Amisi camp, forcing refugees to flee to Tingi Tingi.</p>	<p>1 and 2 February MSF has no access to Shabunda or Masisi.</p> <p>3 February MSF/ICRC meet refugees beyond authorized Walikale-Bukavu road. French Foreign Affairs Ministry official for Africa to MSF France notes that <i>'France believes Zaire is responsible for the presence of ex-FAR and Interahamwe.'</i></p> <p>4 February Refugees aided the night before they disappear: MSF Holland and ICRC suspend search and aid operations in the area. Letter from MSF to UNHCR and ambassadors of western nations in Zaire warning about the gravity of the situation in the Kivu.</p> <p>6 February Following the killing of UN observers, MSF Belgium withdraws from Cyangugu and Kibuyé 'prefectures' [Counties] (Rwanda).</p> <p>7 February MSF permanently ends presence in Tingi Tingi because front line draws near.</p> <p>10 and 11 February Operation directors from all sections decide MSF should remain in Rwanda.</p> <p>12 February MSF, OXFAM, and Care testify before the UN Security Council urging that <i>'humanitarian assistance cannot replace politi-</i></p>

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<p>1997</p> <p>18 February Security Council resolution 1097 adopts Mohamed Sahnoun's peace plan:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Cease hostilities, 2) foreign troops leave, 3) national sovereignty restored, 4) refugees and displaced persons receive protection, 5) international arbitration and dialogue to resolve the crisis. <p>19 February 'Direct testimony' of European priest regarding mass killings in Kivus delivered to Security Council.</p> <p>28 February Proposal from new UN Secretary General to reactivate the multinational force but the US and the UK oppose.</p>	<p>Mid-February AFDL attacks Shabunda refugees forcing 40,000 to flee: 30,000 to Angola and 10,000 into the Zaire forest.</p> <p>17 February Zairian government: bombs eastern cities held by AFDL.</p> <p>2 March Kabila announces that Tingi Tingi was taken, he promises 'security corridors' for repatriation to Rwanda. 160,000 refugees in flight.</p>	<p><i>cal initiatives.'</i> MSF France, MDM, ACF press release: <i>'ACF, MdM and MSF Say Rules of Humanitarian Law Must be Observed.'</i></p> <p>13 February MSF France press release: <i>Security Council Hears Statements From Médecins Sans Frontières, OXFAM and CARE on the Great Lakes Crisis.</i></p> <p>Mid-February ICRC declares to MSF Holland and UNHCR that it is ceasing its aid operations to refugees in the forest because they are used to lure refugees out. ICRC calls on MSF and UNHCR to do the same.</p> <p>17 February MSF Holland Announcement: <i>At Least 9 Dead and 37 Wounded in Goma Bombing.'</i> MSF France announcement: <i>Reduced Team Returns to Tingi-Tingi.</i></p> <p>28 February MSF France press release: <i>'MSF Calls for Immediate Transfer of Vulnerable Groups.'</i></p> <p>1 March All humanitarian organisations, including MSF, evacuate Kisangani.</p> <p>2 March MSF France press release: <i>'The 120,000 Tingi Tingi Refugees Abandoned Again.'</i> Debate over the 'numbers battle' resumes among MSF sections.</p>

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<p>1997</p> <p>7 March Security Council calls on Kabila to accept UN peace plan referring to "allegations concerning international human rights violations" in the rebel zone.</p> <p>10 March <i>The New York Times (USA): 'UN Searches for Rwandan Refugees Lost in the Zairian Jungle (Tingi Tingi).'</i> <i>Libération (France): 'Zaire: "A Witness Describes Massacres.'</i></p> <p>21 March 200 US soldiers in Zaire to evacuate their nationals.</p>	<p>13 March 1,000 refugees in Tingi Tingi and 10,000-20,000 refugees in Ubundu.</p> <p>15 March AFDL takes Kisangani.</p> <p>18 March Kabila authorises humanitarian organizations to travel for one week in a radius of 20 km around Kisangani. Zairian Prime Minister dismissed by Mobutu.</p> <p>21 March President Mobutu back in Kinshasa after several months in France.</p> <p>26 March UNHCR announces 18,000 refugees in Lula (7 km from Kisangani). Access to city denied.</p>	<p>4 March MSF USA Director urges no political declarations from MSF to the press, only medical information.</p> <p>6 March MSF France issues warning on the fate of refugees and obstacles to providing aid.</p> <p>14-22 March Death rate at Tingi Tingi is between 12% and 18%. - MSF negotiates to evacuate refugees to Goma.</p> <p>18 March MSF Holland's nutritional surveys begin north of Goma.</p> <p>20 - 23 March MSF Holland evaluation mission in Masisi. Villagers describe AFDL abuses and show the teams mass graves.</p> <p>26 March MSF Holland's ex-coordinator in Bukavu debriefs Amnesty International.</p> <p>26 March-3 April MSF Holland evaluation mission along the Bukavu-Shabunda corridor (South Kivu) confirms AFDL's use of aid organisations as bait.</p> <p>27 March MSF Holland Goma meets with Roberto Garreton in Goma. MSF Holland Coordinator on the first</p>

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<p>1997</p> <p>30 March UNHCR plan to repatriate Rwandan refugees in two to three months.</p>	<p>30 March AFDL refuses to allow refugees to transit through Kisangani and turns back Lula refugees.</p> <p>1 April WFP says more than 100,000 refugees are 150 km from Kisangani.</p> <p>4 April Rebels take Mbuji Mayi, capital of Eastern Kasai.</p> <p>7 April Kabila agrees to repatriate 100,000 refugees south of Kisangani. UNHCR predicts they can repatriate 1,500-2,000/day over three months</p>	<p>Kisangani-Ubundu train reveals that tens of thousands of refugees in terrible states all along the railroad line.</p> <p>28 March Aid operations begin in Obilo, Kasese, and Biaro. - MSF press release: 'Aid Activities Set Up.' MSF Holland informs other sections of its silent lobbying campaign to gain access to refugees.</p> <p>29 March MSF Holland's Masisi evaluation team evacuated from Zaire.</p> <p>31 March MSF Belgium press release: 'Exhausted and Underfed: Rwandan Refugees' Situation is Tragic. MSF Sends Reinforcements to Kisangani.' MSF France press release: 'Zaire Emergency-Rwandan Refugees in Eastern Zaire Are Exhausted and Starving.'</p> <p>3 and 4 April Masisi evaluation team debriefs in Amsterdam, writing of report begins.</p> <p>6 April Shabunda evaluation team debriefs in Bukavu. MSF Belgium Medical Coordinator in Kisangani tells press <i>that given the refugees' health status, they cannot be repatriated for several weeks.</i></p>

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<p>1997</p>	<p>8 April AFDL agrees to allow the Kisangani airport to be used for refugee repatriation.</p> <p>9 April Kisangani-Ubundu train blocked after 100 dead on arrival in Obilo. Rebels take Lubumbashi (Shaba capital).</p> <p>15 April Death rate of 16 per 10,000/day among refugees south of Kisangani. 200 cholera cases (15% deaths) in Kasese.</p> <p>16 April AFDL agrees to repatriate Rwandan refugees. Rwandan Vice President prepared to cooperate with the UNHCR on repatriation.</p> <p>18 April AFDL indefinitely delays Rwandan refugees' repatriation because of cholera.</p> <p>Nights of 19-20 April Villagers attack train carrying WFP food supplies.</p>	<p>9 April press conference with MSF Belgium Executive Director who returned from Biaro and Kasese: <i>'it's a real death house. 20,000 refugees need a month's treatment before being repatriated.'</i></p> <p>10 April 25 MSF volunteers in Kisangani, 17 in Bukavu and 20 in Goma. First cholera cases in Kisangani camps.</p> <p>11-14 April <i>'Shabunda evaluation'</i> team debriefs in Amsterdam and report is written.</p> <p>14 April MSF Holland to other sections' Communications Directors declares that the advocacy plan is confidential and therefore not to be distributed. Later, MSF Holland Emergency Desk visits Zaire where teams agree to public distribution of Shabunda report.</p> <p>16-18 April Former MSF Holland Coordinator from Goma in New York (UN) and Washington, DC but does not deliver Shabunda report.</p> <p>17 April MSF Holland informs other MSF Communications Departments that the <i>"media lobbying strategy was accepted. Information to be strictly controlled. Those who will be involved in this action have been informed."</i></p> <p>18 April MSF Belgium Director of Operations vetoes all public distribution of the Shabunda report.</p>

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<p>1997</p> <p>21 April UNHCR and UN secretary general call on AFDL to immediately authorise an airlift to repatriate Rwandan refugees.</p> <p>22 April UN decision: To send a commission of inquiry to Eastern Zaire in May to investigate 'alleged massacres.</p> <p>23 April UN Secretary General accuses AFDL of killing by starving and demands access for humanitarian organisations to refugees. US Department of State calls on AFDL to authorise humanitarian organisations' access to refugees.</p> <p>24 April <i>The New York Times</i> publishes extracts of Shabunda report without quoting MSF.</p> <p>25 April UNHCR declares thousands of dead refu-</p>	<p>21 April A train carrying provisions and a WFP warehouse are looted. Confrontations occur among villagers, refugees, and AFDL soldiers around the camps.</p> <p>21-23 April AFDL suspends humanitarian organisations' access to camps. AFDL attacks Kasese 1 and 2 camps, refugees killed.</p> <p>24 April UNHCR and journalists, supervised by AFDL, go to camp sites and find that the 55,000 refugees from the Kasese and Biaro camps are gone.</p> <p>25 April Humanitarian organisations go to Biaro</p>	<p>22 April MSF France's Executive Director proposes a concise report to political leaders and selected journalists with commitment not to quote MSF. Report writing is assigned to an inter-section workinggroup coordinated by MSF Holland with the aim of getting an agreement on the text by 28 April.</p> <p>23 April MSF Kisangani driver sees 500 bodies near Kasese. He informs Kisangani team which leads to intersection teleconference and two options: 1) speak out publicly regarding refusal of access to Kisangani the same day or; 2) speak out more strongly later if massacres are confirmed. MSF Holland Director of Operations vetoes warning period for teams.</p> <p>24 April MSF Holland Communications Department announces to other sections that no press release is to be made but broader and stronger message on human rights violations are needed. MSF Belgium, MSF Holland, UNHCR, ICRC, and OXFAM meeting with the EU Commissioner for Humanitarian Action 4 p.m.: MSF France legal advisor to all sections: <i>Security veto has been lifted on the new version of the Shabunda report, which may be distributed to journalists in MSF's name.</i> 8 p.m.: MSF H Communications Department to other sections approves MSF France's version of the Shabunda report to be distributed to a selected group of media representatives (cleared by MSF Holland) and under conditions of strict confidentiality.</p> <p>25 April Morning : <i>El Pais</i> (Spain) and AFP</p>

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<p>1997 gees around Biaro and Kasese. UN Secretary General announces that AFDL is conducting a policy of "slow extermination" of Rwandan refugees and that the international community is "indifferent."</p> <p>28 April Human Rights Watch calls for inquiry into the massacres in Zaire. OAU warns the AFDL to observe international laws. UNHCR Commissioner to UN Security Council states "<i>when camp security or the right to asylum cannot be guaranteed to refugees because of armed conflict, they may be repatriated against their will and without security guarantees upon arrival.</i>"</p> <p>29 April EU Commissioner for Humanitarian Action declares that "<i>the rebels are making it impossible to carry out any humanitarian efforts; 400,000 refugees cannot be located.</i>" UNHCR denounces the slaughter of refugees and the AFDL-imposed obstacles to providing assistance.</p>	<p>camp to find that 30,000 refugees have disappeared.</p> <p>26 April Around 45,000 refugees located in Equator Province (Western Zaire).</p> <p>27 April Kabila gives UNHCR 60 days to repatriate Rwandan refugees.</p> <p>28 April AFDL begins forced repatriation of thousands of refugees to Rwanda.</p> <p>29 April Rwandan President condemns MSF's statements regarding insecurity in his country.</p>	<p>Geneva quote MSF's accusations of rebels in refugee massacres. MSF Holland Desk tells sections that the Shabunda report may be distributed to all journalists without restriction. MSF Holland version of the Shabunda report posted on MSF Holland's website.</p> <p>Afternoon: Press conferences in Brussels and Amsterdam. MSF Belgium press release: '<i>MSF Sounds the Alarm: "Where are the Kasese Refugees?"</i>'</p> <p>Evening: MSF France board of directors vote to remove the veto right and replaced it with a 24-hour advance warning requirement.</p> <p>26 April MSF France press release: '<i>Three Proposals to End the Policy of Extermination of Rwandan Refugees in Zaire.</i>'</p> <p>27 April MSF Belgium decides to withhold further information on information regarding Great Lakes from MSF France.</p> <p>28 April MSF, UNHCR, journalists, and the EU go to Biaro and Kasese and witness devastated sites, a smell of death, and bodies. MSF resumes assistance to the 5,000-10,000 survivors.</p> <p>29 April AFDL threatens MSF in Kisangani: MSF will be forbidden to travel unless it withdraws statements on killings. Executive Directors hold teleconference and agree on MSF's public position on repatriation, impunity, and keeping a low profile on political statements. MSF France Executive Director interviewed on Radio France International.</p>

International	Great Lakes	MSF
<p>1997</p> <p>30 April International press publishes description of killings in Kasese and Biaro.</p> <p>5 May UN admonishes that the AFDL treats livestock better than the refugees.</p> <p>6 May EU Commissioner for Humanitarian Action declares that Kabila has turned Eastern Zaire into a slaughterhouse.</p>	<p>4 May 91 refugees die in train heading from the camps to Kisangani.</p>	<p>1 May International Board restricts MSF in Zaire with a priority to advocate on aid in Zaire. Executive Directors must implement a communications strategy.</p> <p>2 May MSF France press release: MSF Information Update. 'Zaire Emergency: Situation as of 1 May: Frank and open conversations among the Coordinator, MSF Belgium Desk and AFDL in Kisangani.</p> <p>3 May Kisangani and Goma teams react negatively to the International Board's decision. MSF France condemns the AFDL's 'media operation' in the press and questions whether repatriating refugees to Rwanda is still relevant.</p> <p>5 May MSF Kisangani press release: 'Zaire Emergency: Under Current Circumstances, MSF Calls for the Immediate Suspension of Repatriation: MSF Belgium assumes coordination of communications and of all MSF sections' communications on Zaire. MSF Belgium does not adopt the MSF France position.</p> <p>6 May MSF UK prepares a statistical analysis of the refugee exodus.</p> <p>7 May MSF France press Release: 'Zaire Emergency: Under Current Circumstances, MSF Calls for the Immediate Suspension of Repatriation: MSF Belgium assumes coordination of communications of all MSF sections on Zaire. MSF Belgium does not adopt the MSF F position.</p> <p>8 May MSF calls on UNHCR to negotiate with the AFDL for access to refugees and for their protection.</p>

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<p data-bbox="140 297 201 331">1997</p> <p data-bbox="252 1193 644 1283">13 May French government condemns the rebels' massacres of refugees.</p>	<p data-bbox="679 427 1070 613">10 May AFDL authorises humanitarian groups to travel to km 82, between Kisangani and Ubundu. They are given a 10-day deadline to evacuate Biaro refugees to Kisangani.</p> <p data-bbox="679 904 1070 1155">12 May Biaro: 25 deaths per 10,000 per day. 10% cannot be transported, 20% children severely malnourished. 400 patients in the Lola transit centre (km 11), 6,600 refugees at km 82 and the situation remains tense for humanitarian groups in Goma.</p> <p data-bbox="679 1193 1070 1283">13 May AFDL takes Mbandaka and 400 refugees killed. Survivors flee to Congo (Brazzaville).</p> <p data-bbox="679 1321 1070 1411">14 May AFDL publicly criticises MSF for using Rwandan refugees to discredit the AFDL.</p>	<p data-bbox="1102 297 1493 387">MSF France press release: <i>Rwandan Refugees in the Biaro Camp Remain in a Desperate Situation</i></p> <p data-bbox="1102 651 1493 869">11 May MSF Belgium, MSF France and MSF USA press release 'MSF Condemns the Inhumane Conditions in which Rwandan Refugees are Being Evacuated. MSF Opposes the 10-day Deadline Imposed by the AFDL for Evacuating Biaro.'</p> <p data-bbox="1102 1451 1493 1697">15 May Two MSF volunteers return from Zaire to testify before UN and US authorities. Executive Directors' teleconference on the '<i>Forced Flight</i>' report agree to: 1) Remove the death estimates. 2) Distribute to political officials and a limited, targeted, number of journalists.</p> <p data-bbox="1102 1738 1493 2018">16 May Morning : Communications Directors say "<i>we're moving forward</i>" 7 p.m. MSF Belgium tells Communications Departments that "<i>distribution is for a selected group of people and targeted journalists; MSF may not be cited as source.</i>" MSF France provides '<i>Forced Flight</i>' to <i>Libération</i> and to <i>Le Monde</i>.</p>

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<p data-bbox="140 297 201 331">1997</p> <p data-bbox="252 904 331 931">1 June Report from Lutheran churches and the international press condemn violence against Rwandan refugees in former Zaire.</p> <p data-bbox="252 1099 331 1126">2 June UN Undersecretary for Humanitarian Affairs in the <i>Herald Tribune</i> claims that “<i>the killing continues</i>” in the former Zaire.</p> <p data-bbox="252 1608 644 1697">8 and 11 June <i>Washington Post</i>: publishes articles recounting the AFDL’s killings.</p>	<p data-bbox="678 1099 1070 1256">2 June Airlift transport of refugees between Loukolela and Brazzaville begins. Kabila announces that accusations of refugee killings are irresponsible.</p> <p data-bbox="678 1451 1070 1574">7 June Kabila agrees in principle to UN Commission of Inquiry into the killings in Eastern Zaire.</p> <p data-bbox="678 1989 1070 2112">13 June Rwanda Minister of Foreign Affairs names the six people responsible for the refugees’ fate. Kabila is not among them.</p>	<p data-bbox="1102 297 1495 454">28 May–4 June MSF Belgium tries to cancel MSF France’s participation in a televised debate on the Congo to be broadcast on a French TV network.</p> <p data-bbox="1102 495 1495 869">29 May MSF Belgium Executive Director declares to MSF France counterpart: - Information on the Great Lakes will not be provided to the French section - MSF Belgium may publicly dissociate from MSF France positions - Procedures underway to accredit French section will be halted - No joint representation with the French section in any activities regarding the Great Lakes.</p> <p data-bbox="1102 1290 1495 1413">5 June Fighting begins in Brazzaville and 13 MSF volunteers blocked without access to Bilolo refugees.</p> <p data-bbox="1102 1608 1495 1798">11 June Draft version of a report with new statements (from Mbandaka) circulates among sections. MSF Belgium Zaire opposes all public communication involving the Mbandaka team.</p> <p data-bbox="1102 1832 1495 1955">12 June MSF France evacuates Brazzaville. MSF Belgium desk refuses to provide MSF France with information on Mbandaka.</p> <p data-bbox="1102 1989 1495 2112">13 June MSF Belgium, MSF France, and MSF Spain approve contents and distribution methods for summary report but MSF</p>

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<p>1997</p> <p>19 June <i>Washington Post</i>: claims that 'Kabila gave instructions to obstruct mission of inquiry into killings in eastern former Zaire – US Department of State reminds Kabila of his promise to cooperate.'</p> <p>Early July UNHCR announces that 230,000 refugees have not been located.</p> <p>9 July <i>Washington Post</i>: declares that "the Rwandans led the revolt in the Congo. According to the minister of defence, weapons and troops were supplied to the anti-Mobutu uprising."</p> <p>11 July Report from the UN Human Rights Commission (Garreton) urges that killings committed in Eastern Zaire deserve to be called 'crimes against humanity' and recommends that there should be an investigation on the possibility they were planned.</p>	<p>20 June On Zairian television, Kabila denies refugee massacres.</p> <p>Early July One-quarter of those repatriated to Rwanda and hospitalised have died, half of them within 48 hours of their arrival (source UNHCR).</p> <p>5 July At Kabila's request, Roberto Garreton is taken off the UN Commission of Inquiry on the killings. Kabila further demands that the inquiry also cover Mobutu's crimes.</p>	<p>Holland blocks it. Discussion over public statements among the MSF Belgium and MSF France boards of directors.</p> <p>16 June No agreement among Executive Directors regarding distribution of summary report so the decision is postponed until 20 June.</p> <p>17 June Desks, Directors of Operations and Directors of Communication meet to discuss MSF's public statements on the Great Lakes.</p> <p>11 July MSF Belgium press conference and press release: 'Refugees' Basic Rights Flouted: No Protection, No Right to Asylum and the Issue of Impunity Remains Unresolved.'</p>

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<p data-bbox="140 297 201 331">1997</p> <p data-bbox="252 712 341 745">16 July Physicians for Human Rights testifies before the US Congress and in a report that the US army provided technical assistance to the Rwandan army, which supported Kabila.</p> <p data-bbox="252 1227 373 1261">19 August PHR information (16 July) included in a chronology the Pentagon provides to the US House of Representatives.</p> <p data-bbox="252 1641 405 1675">4 September Congolese authorities impose obstacles to the UN Commission of Inquiry.</p>	<p data-bbox="678 521 767 555">15 July Kisangani declares that the Lula transit camp will close despite the fact that 2,000 people, including many who are ill, are still there. No UNHCR response.</p> <p data-bbox="678 1384 799 1417">26 August UN Commission investigation begins.</p>	<p data-bbox="1102 297 1192 331">12 July <i>Le Monde</i> (France) publishes accounts from Njundu refugees gathered by MSF France and an MdM volunteer but reported as 'based on a Médecins du Monde (MdM) source.</p> <p data-bbox="1102 936 1230 969">17-20 July Epicentre conducts an epidemiological investigation for MSF on Rwandan refugees in Njundu (Congo-Brazzaville).</p> <p data-bbox="1102 1093 1192 1126">30 July Report on MSF activities in Central Africa and intersection dialogue re-established.</p> <p data-bbox="1102 1485 1294 1518">Early September Retrospective mortality report (Njundu report) concluded. Some sections challenge its reliability, thus distribution is suspended.</p> <p data-bbox="1102 1798 1256 1832">5 September MSF Belgium press release: Yesterday, More than 600 Rwandan and Burundian Refugees were Expelled from the Kisangani Camp, Forced to Board Several Planes, and Flown to Kigali. These People were Under UNHCR Protection.</p>

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<p>1997</p> <p>8 October HRW and FIDH reports include statements on abuses committed by the AFDL, Rwandan, and state Ugandan soldiers, and that the UN authorities had been informed.</p> <p>9 October US government rejects HRW and FIDH accusations.</p>	<p>Early October UNHCR expelled from Eastern Zaire.</p>	<p>12 September Boards of directors of MSF Belgium, MSF France, and MSF Holland meet to discuss the Movement's public positions.</p> <p>Early October <i>The Lancet (UK): Article by Epicentre/MSF France based on Njundu study.</i></p> <p>13 October Executive Directors and Operational Directors of MSF operational sections agree to: 1) A response to Congolese authorities regarding UNHCR expulsion 2) Publication of Njundu report the following week.</p> <p>5 November Former MSF Holland coordinator in Goma testifies before the Foreign Affairs Committee of the US Congress. Public distribution of the Njundu epidemiological report.</p> <p>6 November <i>Libération (France): Quotes the Njundu epidemiological report reporting. The Former Zaire: MSF Quantifies the Scope of the Killings.</i></p>
<p>1998</p> <p>17 April UN Secretary General abandons inquiry into killings in Eastern Zaire.</p> <p>30 June Inquiry mission delivers its report to the UN Security Council, which releases it publicly declaring that <i>the killings committed by the AFDL and its allies, including elements of the RPF, constitute crimes against humanity.</i></p>		

