The Tutsi refugees in Uganda formed a movement called the Rwandan Patriotic Front which aimed to end Tutsi persecution by removing the Habyarimana regime.

Before Rwanda was colonised in the late 19th century it had a monarchy. Rwanda was colonised by the Germans and then the Belgians.

The Rwandan people consisted of three different groups: the Hutus, the Tutsis and the Twa. The Hutus made up around 80-85% of the population, the Tutsis around 15-18% and the Twa 1%.

The Belgian colonists used the Tutsi ruling elites to govern the country which generated resentment amongst the Hutu majority.

By 1959 Belgium knew that it would soon leave Rwanda and decided to give power to the Hutu majority. This immediately led to large killings against the Tutsis across Rwanda. Many Tutsi fled to neighbouring Uganda.

In 1973 Juvenal Habyarimana took power in Rwanda and the persecution of the Tutsi minority increased. Hutu power developed which sought the extermination of the Tutsi people.

During the Belgian colonisation, a national census fixed the Rwandan people’s ethnicity to Hutu, Tutsi or Twa. This was based on physical features and everyone had to carry an identity card with them.

Under Habyarimana the Rwandan economy suffered and anti-Tutsi propaganda and persecution increased. Civilian militia called the *Interhamwe* were equipped and trained with the support of the French.