

**TITLE:** The Secretary-General in the Rwanda Crisis

**QUESTION:** How far do Sources A-E support the claim that Boutros Boutros-Ghali's ineffectiveness as the secretary-general guaranteed the failures of the United Nations in Rwanda?

**Unpacking hypothesis:**

- 1) In what sense were UN's 'failures' in Rwanda, and in what sense was BBG 'ineffective' as an SG? Tangible vs. intangible failure/ineffectiveness? In theory vs. in practice?
- 2) WHY was BBG effective or not effective? Inability to influence decisions and take concrete actions? Interference or lack of support from member states because of political/economic considerations? (note that the Charter sets BBG as an administrator as well as an initiator and political figure)

**Introduction:** Sources A, C and E support the hypothesis while Sources B and D challenge it.

**Source A supports the hypothesis** as it reveals Boutros-Ghali's acknowledgement of his inability to draw the appropriate attention to the SC regarding the significance of the developments in Rwanda. [role of SG in taking initiative to draw attention to SC any matters of importance]

<p><b>LIFT/INFER</b>  <i>(Be concise. Do not quote extensively. Must pick up on the key points – especially if this is a rich source)</i></p>	<p><b>EVALUATION OF CONTENT: CROSS-REFERENCES</b>  <i>(C-R must match the key source evidence that you have pulled out. CK must have key details. E.g. Data, Event, Year, Outcome)</i></p>	<p><b>EVALUATION OF PROVENANCE</b>  <i>(If the speaker/author does not have vested interest in the speech/extract, then it is likely to be reliable. Pay attention to dates and the occasion.)</i></p>	<p><b>CONCLUSION</b>  <b>(Based on reliability – Provenance; and utility – how useful on its own in helping you to understand the H</b></p>
<p>Considered Rwanda as 'one of [his] greatest failures' because:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Unable to 'convince the members of the SC to intervene'</li> <li>2. 'Not able to understand from the beginning' that a 'genocide' was happening.</li> </ol> <p>This suggests that his failure to bring to attention the genocide prevented concrete actions from being taken in Rwanda to prevent the escalation of violence.</p>	<p>BG's admonition of himself was justified when taking into consideration that despite being empowered to 'bring to the attention of the Security Council any matter which in his opinion may threaten the maintenance of international peace and security' (article 99), he was unable to utilise this power.</p> <p>This can be seen in Source B which shows his inability to convince the SC to take concrete actions quickly – despite asking the SC to consider 'forceful action to restore law and order and end the massacres' on April 29, it was only on May 17 that the SC was able to</p>	<p>While the interview which was held on 2004 could have attributed hindsight as 10 years had passed since the crisis, but the effects of genocide are not ones which can be erased easily.</p> <p>Hence, A's usefulness can be questioned as it overemphasises the emotional reflection of the SG on his own role. Taking a less personal view, one can argue that BG was being much too harsh on himself as the inability of the SC to take concrete actions arguably laid in US's national interests where 'US</p>	<p>While this source is reliable in demonstrating the role of the SG, it is far too emotional to provide a holistic and fair view of the situation.</p>

	<p>come to a consensus. Even then, it was merely a 'compromise plan'.</p> <p>However, his repeated use of 'failure' seems to highlight an obsessive self-condemnation which might reveal a long-term preoccupation of what he could have personally done to prevent the conflict from escalating. [see evaluation of provenance to further clarify this]</p>	<p>refusal to commit its own troops... reduced the prestige of the mission...'</p>	
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**Source C supports the hypothesis more than it challenges** as it claims that while Boutros-Ghali was an independent figure, he lacked the skills as 'communicator and diplomat' to ensure that his assertive nature brought about any concrete actions.

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<p>This resulted in the public being unconvinced by his plans and unable to 'understand the limits imposed on the UN' in cases which included Rwanda.</p> <p>The outline of his general failures, therefore, suggests that he was unable to ensure public (within and out of UN) support and hence unable to carry out what needed to be done in Rwanda.</p>	<p>True insofar as his assertions for the public to take action in Rwanda fell on deaf ears. D demonstrates how he 'expressed exasperation... at the refusal of most countries to send troops to Rwanda' even though 'he had done all he could to persuade African governments to supply the 5, 5000 troops he wants to send...'. Furthermore, he was unable to use the term 'genocide' until May 1994, but by then, mass killings had already 'skyrocketed' (B), demonstrating the negative implications of his imprecision in communication.</p>	<p>Although it was written in 1995, shortly after the failures of Rwanda, it is still a useful source. This is because it is rather balanced in acknowledging that Boutros-Ghali did have an important legacy – his 'assertion of independence of his office' – despite being in the immediate pessimistic aftermath of major disasters such as 'Bosnia, Somalia and Rwanda'.</p>	<p>A strong source as it is a fair critique of Boutros-Ghali's abilities as an SG.</p>

**However, source B challenges the hypothesis** as it shows how it was not Boutros-Ghali but the US who hindered UN efforts by refusing to provide adequate support. [lack of support from members states because of political considerations]

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<p>Boutros-Ghali's attempts to establish a peacekeeping force were sabotaged by 'US</p>	<p>True that the US were reluctant to commit because of their national interests after the end</p>	<p>However, the source is from a human rights organisation just a few years</p>	<p>This source is strong in terms of</p>

<p>refusal to commit its own troops' as well as US's 'alternative plan'. Even when a 'compromise plan' was agreed upon, it was still subjected to US's interests where the 'mandate of the force not be expanded' and with Pentagon 'successfully block[ing] even the provision of vehicles and equipment'.</p> <p>This resulted in a severe lack of a strong UN presence which could have made a difference to the escalation of violence in Rwanda.</p>	<p>of the CW, where the US became increasingly more selective in their military interventions. [insert details of previous problems esp in Somalia as well as the increasing hesitance in the US regarding US's continued role as 'world police']</p>	<p>after the crisis. Bearing in mind that this was presented at a US congressional testimony, it could be a plea from the organisation to get congress to review its foreign policy in order to prevent future humanitarian rights abuses.</p> <p>As such, the source's overemphasis on the role of the US and to overstate Boutros-Ghali's ineffectiveness dilutes B's usefulness. This is because it is arguable that the reason for US refusal to lend its support was due to Boutros-Ghali's inability to communicate the severity of the developments in Rwanda – as E pointed out, '[a]s late as April 29... Boutros-Ghali was still insisting that Rwanda was a tragedy' and not a 'genocide.'</p>	<p>its reliability of US's role in hindering UN efforts, but not completely useful on its own.</p>
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**Source D challenges the hypothesis** as it suggests that it was the international community, and not the SG alone, who caused the failures of the UN in Rwanda.

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<p>The SG said that 'it is a failure for the international community' who was 'still discussing what ought to be done.' On the other hand, he had 'done all he could to persuade African governments to supply... troops.'</p> <p>This suggests that despite SG's efforts, it was the international community who had failed to take any concrete actions to stop the massacre.</p>	<p>Reliable that the international community was unable to act speedily as revealed in Source B where the 'African force never materialised' and the US refused to 'commit its own troops.'</p> <p>However, the usefulness of D is questionable as it focuses only on the later part of the crisis when the mass killings had already 'skyrocketed' as revealed in B. This meant that the source is downplaying the role of the SG in the earlier part of the crisis, where he had</p>	<p>Decreased in reliability because it was published on 26 May 1994, which was just a month after the mass killings increased exponentially in April. As such, there might be an agenda to exaggerate the failures of the international community to guilt them into action. Hence Boutros-Ghali's exasperated plea had been highlighted.</p>	<p>Not a strong source as it is both not very reliable nor very useful in answering the question.</p>

	<p>failed to get the international community to respond quickly, as seen in Source E which reveals that even 'as late as April 29', Boutros-Ghali 'did not begin using the term "genocide"'. This reveals Boutros-Ghali as rather hypocritical.</p> <p>Furthermore, Boutros-Ghali's self-righteous tone in condemning the international community which is 'still discussing what ought to be' is unjustified when he himself was 'not able to understand from the beginning the importance of what was going on.' (Source A)</p>		
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**Source E challenges the hypothesis** as it suggests that Boutros-Ghali was to blame for the slowness of UN efforts because his failure to use the term 'genocide' led to the UN's inability to extend its mandate appropriately.

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<p>The failure resulted in the UN necessarily bound to 'impartiality' towards both Tutsi and Hutu.</p> <p>This meant that there could be no forceful action to end the slaughter.</p>	<p>True that peacekeeping principles, under Chapter 6 ½ required peacekeepers to be impartial in order to gain trust from the parties involved. Boutros-Ghali's lateness in using the term 'genocide' could also be the cause for US refusal to support him in May, as pointed out in B.</p> <p>Nonetheless, it can also be argued that regardless of the terms that Boutros-Ghali used, the UN was still not a significant player. As noted in D, despite already using the term 'genocide' in May, Boutros-Ghali was still unable to get the military support he wanted.</p> <p>Furthermore, the usefulness of the arguments of this source is questionable considering its tentative tone of the possible impact of</p>	<p>It is possible that the American foreign policy analyst could be overly critical. This is when we consider that the US state had a clear bias against Boutros-Ghali as an SG, resulting in a veto against his re-election as UN secretary-general. The analyst might be justifying American foreign policy and placing more blame on Boutros-Ghali, which is further demonstrated by his condemning tone of the SG's method of 'hand-wringing' and 'reproaches towards an international community' which reveals a dislike for Boutros-Ghali's seeming patronising attitude.</p>	<p>Though this source is reliable in highlighting Boutros-Ghali's lack of use of 'genocide', the source is not highly reliable because of the possible agenda against the former SG in favour of the US foreign policy.</p>

	Boutros-Ghali's actions. The source highlighted 'if more "peacekeepers" were dispatched', revealing mere speculation.		
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## Conclusion

Comparative judgement:  
 [not a preferable method]

Modified hypothesis:

None of the sources are preferred as all reveal useful perspectives regarding the role of Boutros-Ghali in the Rwanda crisis.

Sources which support (A, C, E) reveal that Boutros-Ghali was indeed unable to communicate the severity of the situation to the member states, and thus was unable to convince the latter to take concrete actions in Rwanda. Sources which challenge (B and D) demonstrate how the success of Boutros-Ghali's efforts depended on the national interests of member states as they were the ones with the resources to take concrete action.

Hence, the hypothesis can be modified as follows:

While Boutros-Ghali's ineffectiveness as the secretary-general in terms of his poor communication skills delayed the member states' involvement, it was ultimately the member states' refusal to commit to peacekeeping which guaranteed the failures of the United Nations in Rwanda.