



# Transitional Justice in Rwanda: Accountability for Atrocity

*Gerald Gahima*

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*Transitional Justice in Rwanda: Accountability for Atrocity* comprehensively analyzes the full range of the transitional justice processes undertaken for the Rwandan genocide. Drawing on the author's extensive professional experience as the principal justice policy maker and the leading law enforcement officer in Rwanda from 1996-2003, the book provides an in-depth analysis of the social, political and legal challenges faced by Rwanda in the aftermath of the genocide and the aspirations and legacy of transitional justice. The book explores the role played by the accountability processes not just in pursuing accountability but also in shaping the reconstruction of Rwanda's institutions of democratic governance and political reconciliation. Central to this exploration will be the examination of whether or not transitional justice in Rwanda has contributed to a foundational rule of law reform process.

While recognizing the necessity of pursuing accountability for mass atrocity, the book argues that a maximal approach to accountability for genocide may undermine the promotion of core objectives of transitional justice. Taking on one of the key questions facing practitioners and scholars of transitional justice today, the book suggests that the pursuit of mass accountability, particularly where socio-economic resources and legal capacity is limited, may destabilize the process of rule of law reform, endangering core human rights norms. Moreover, the book suggests that pursuing a strategy of mass accountability may undermine the process of democratic transition, particularly in a context where impunity for crimes committed by the victors of armed conflicts persists. Highlighting the ongoing democratic deficit in Rwanda and resulting political instability in the Great Lakes region, the book argues that the effectiveness of transitional justice ultimately hinges on the nature and success of political transition.

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