



Photographs and commentary  
by Mike Goldwater

CONFLICT

THEY ARE TRAGIC. OR CURIOUS. TIRED, HOPEFUL — EVEN PLAYFUL. PHOTOGRAPHER MIKE GOLDWATER HAS CAPTURED MANY OF WAR'S FACES. SOME ARE FAMILIAR: THOSE OF THE WOUNDED OR DEAD. SOME ARE SURPRISING: HITCHHIKERS IN FORSAKEN PLACES, CHILDREN WITH UNLIKELY TOYS. STILL OTHERS AMAZING: FACES OF SURVIVORS. ALL ARE THOUGHT-PROVOKING AND DISCONCERTING.



# Faces of war

▲ **"I** stayed for a week with Gabremariam Goytem and his family in the highlands of Eritrea in May 1991 as the 30-year war was drawing to a close. The family had managed to survive the many years of conflict, but drought was a more formidable enemy. Helped by his sons and with an ox borrowed from a neighbour, he ploughed his fields in the hope of rain.

◀ **"G**abremariam's wife Lerenki'el with their sixth child. Habtom. She gave her husband the courage to continue despite their crippling poverty.

◀ **"I**n November 1993, while ethnic killings raged throughout Burundi, an ICRC doctor and delegate were supporting the local medical team at a hospital that had become a sanctuary for the affected population. This young Tutsi woman survived a machete attack by a Hutu mob. The sadness in her face stopped me in my tracks. Although other people in the hospital had worse injuries, she seemed to me to be the most alone.



IN BURUNDI: GUYOTTI / AP/WIDE WORLD





“**S**ukhumi, the regional capital of northern Georgia, fell to Abkhazian separatists after a long battle in October 1993. The neighbouring town of Ochamchira was in limbo and people were leaving by any means possible. In the midst of it all, a soldier was trying to amuse a child with the only thing he had: a live hand grenade.

▼ “**M**any thousands of Georgians, cut off by the Abkhazian advance, were forced to cross a 3,000-metre-high mountain pass with the few possessions they could carry. A blizzard on the pass two days before had killed dozens, and those arriving on the other side were exhausted, with another 20 kilometres to walk to safety. These refugees climbed aboard a Georgian tank in the forlorn hope of a lift, but the track ahead was a sea of mud clogged with abandoned vehicles, and the only way through was on foot.



◀ “**B**y August 1994, the outbreak of cholera in the Rwandan refugee camps in Goma had already peaked, but still people continued to die. Every morning bodies lay like refuse along the road to be collected for burial. When I saw this child, unwrapped and seemingly uninjured, I thought of her as a metaphor for the innocent victim.



▲ “**C**hildren have a remarkable capacity to play and, to some extent, they create their own world — wherever they are. The Rwandan refugees in this particular camp had come from the French zone and had been better provided for than those in the Goma camp.”