



REPUBLIC OF RWANDA

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND COOPERATION

SPEECH BY HON LOUISE MUSHIKIWABO, MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC OF RWANDA, AT THE 19TH COMMEMORATION OF THE GENOCIDE AGAINST TUTSI

AFRICAN UNION, ADDIS ABABA, 7 APRIL 2013

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✚ ***Your Excellency Tedros Adhanom, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and dear friend;***

✚ ***Your Excellency Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, Chairperson of the African Union Commission;***

✚ ***Excellencies Colleague Ministers***

✚ ***Excellencies Ambassadors;***

✚ ***Deputy Chairperson of the African Union Commission***

✚ ***Chairman of the Interim Board of the AUHRM***

✚ ***Religious leaders***

✚ ***Members of the Rwandan Community in Ethiopia and this region***

✚ ***Friends;***

✚ ***Distinguished gathering,***

I would like to begin by thanking all of you for having set aside this precious time to come and commemorate with us the 19th anniversary of the Genocide against the Tutsi of Rwanda. Your solidarity means a lot to us as we remember our loved ones who perished in 1994.

We gather here today, to remember the innocent men, women and, children, whose lives were cut short by ideologically bankrupt leaders and man's inhumanity to man. Their horror and agony have been subject to detailed accounts on paper, in film and otherwise. But to Rwanda, this tragedy, as well as the history that led to it, has influenced our way of life.

We remember because we owe it to the departed, we remember because it's part of our duty to humanity and, we remember so we don't forget how we got here.

For genocide to take place, conditions must be ripe and one of those conditions is the absence of external voices or the lack of intention to speak out. This "Conspiracy of Silence" existed in 1994 Genocide, and so we remember today to say no to this conspiracy.

✚ ***Excellencies;***

Looking back to 1993-1994, my country Rwanda was sitting at the UN Security Council. It was then a country that killed and covered up its crimes with the help of many. Today again, in 2013-2014, Rwanda is back at the same seat and it is a deeply changed country; a country that

guards and protects the lives of its citizens; a country that has brought its people hope and prosperity.

It is heartwarming to have Africa stand by Rwanda's side every year on this date since 2004. At 50 years, our Union should reject unnecessary loss of life. Equally we should remain vigilant to trivializing and denying Genocide.

 ***Distinguished guests;***

The theme for this year's remembrance is "Commemorating the Rwandan Genocide against the Tutsi while Striving for Self-Reliance", which brings me to the other reason why we must remember: to look inward and rebuild lives and nations. Therefore, this time is also a period of reflection.

This self reliance fits within the current African Union ideals of Pan Africanism and African Renaissance. We are talking of re-birth of a Nation that mirrors that of the continent. The African rebirth should be based on strong values of tenacity and resilience that leads to strength and solutions. The rebirth lies in the firm commitment to put our citizens first and improve both our economic and political governance. We should develop Early Warning Systems and put them to use so as not to allow similar crimes to occur on our continent again.

We therefore stand to reflect on the measures we have taken and the institutions we have established as the African Union, to overcome the deficiencies that allowed this genocide to take place.

 ***Excellencies;***

I wish to take this moment to thank the young people who spoke to us moments ago, they represent the new generation of Africans taking responsibility for Africa. You give us pride and hope.

 ***Friends;***

This 19th year mark puts us on alert vis a vis the important 20th anniversary next year and I wish to leave you with the following thoughts:

1. 20 years after Rwanda, will we be a continent better prepared to avert conflict and violence?
2. 20 years after Rwanda, are the young generations on this continent truly part of the peaceful future we envision?

Looking at Rwanda 19 years on, and many other countries that have emerged from extreme adversity, I have every reason to be optimistic.

Thank you for your kind attention.