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**LIFE AFTER DEATH**  
**Rebuilding Genocide Survivors' Lives: Challenges and**  
**Opportunities**  
**An International Conference of Survivors**  
**Kigali, Rwanda (November 25-30, 2001)<sup>1</sup>**

A. Background and justification

Six years ago, genocide was planned and executed in Rwanda by the then Government with the objective of exterminating Tutsis and destroying Hutus, other Rwandans, and foreigners opposed to this end. Today, six years later, serious challenges continue to face the survivors and the Rwandan society as a whole.

While other societies and groups have experienced genocide, the case of Rwanda is unique in several respects:

- (1) Hutu, Tutsi and Twa peoples have lived and continue to live together as neighbors with almost the same culture, language, and living standards;
- (2) despite the fact that the genocide was committed by neighbors, even within families and among in-laws, they nevertheless must live together; and,
- (3) a large segment of the population either directly or indirectly perpetrated genocidal acts, thereby complicating initiatives at reconciliation as well as processes for securing justice.

Managing the post-genocide era in Rwanda and building a stable society, one not permanently exposed to potential internal conflicts, will have to take into account this particular situation. The large number of people suspected of committing acts of genocide should be brought to court. Many of these people and their family members must still live together with genocide survivors. Therefore, Rwanda has to be prepared to undertake efforts to build mechanisms that will allow a peaceful life for different groups in the same neighborhoods or hill communities. And the country must have considerable external support if these efforts are to be successful.

The consequences of genocide are suffered not only by the targeted society but by humanity as a whole. Because genocide has enormously devastating consequences at all levels of the affected society, that society cannot rebuild itself alone and the management of these consequences must go beyond the borders of the territory where the genocide was committed. It must involve the solidarity of

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<sup>1</sup> Convened by IBUKA, the coalition of the Rwandese associations of genocide survivors in collaboration with the Group Project for Holocaust Survivors and Their Children, 345 East 80<sup>th</sup> Street (31-J) New York, NY USA  
Phone (212)737-8524; Fax (212)628-2086; Email: yaeld@aol.com

other peoples, especially of survivors who have suffered similar experiences. To that end, Rwanda survivors' associations have been seeking to establish working relationships with other survivors and survivors' organizations in order to learn from their experiences and build common ground to (1) contribute to rebuilding, and developing a new normalcy in, the survivors' lives, (2) commemorate those who perished during genocide, and (3) advocate in different ways to prevent any such horrible events from being repeated anywhere in the world.

Emboldened by the world's indifference to the Armenian genocide, Hitler proceeded with the systematic attempt to annihilate the Jewish people. In 1945, after the Nazi Holocaust, when more than 6 million Jews had been exterminated by the Nazis, the world declared that "never again" would such crimes be committed. But, tragically, genocide did happen again, and again.

Six years after the genocide, Rwanda seems to have returned to a semblance of normality. But even though the overall social and economic situation has improved, we should keep in mind that the 1994 genocide claimed the lives of more than one million people, destroyed much property, and left among the living an overwhelmingly large number of people affected (widows, orphans, raped and assaulted women, and the physically handicapped). Moreover, psychological trauma resulting from genocide cannot be easily or quickly overcome.

In spite of the commitment to prevent and fight genocide wherever it occurs, as reflected in the 1948 Convention for the Prevention and Suppression of the Crime of Genocide, the world continues to experience genocide and attempts to exterminate a whole or a part of a population due to, among others, ethnicity, religion or race.

The United Nations witnessed the preparation and execution of the genocide in Rwanda without taking any meaningful steps to stop it, thus ignoring the lessons of previous experiences, the United Nations Charter, and the Convention signed by the majority of its member states. States and regional organizations also failed to prevent or stop the slaughter of the Rwandan people.

#### B. Purpose of the conference

This conference is intended to bring Holocaust survivors, Armenians, Cambodians, Gypsies, or their children, and other genocide survivors together with Rwandan survivors in order to share their experiences, commemorate the victims, seek **ways to improve the lives of survivors after the genocide, and coordinate their efforts to help ensure that there will be no such crimes against humanity in the future.**

This conference, the first of its kind, will discuss, highlight, and investigate the effects of genocide in the daily lives of its survivors. These survivors, many of whom saw their family members murdered in front of their eyes, continue to suffer the trauma of such memories. In Rwanda, many survivors ask themselves whether it makes sense to invest in the future when one's past has been totally

destroyed. They ask themselves whether the youngest child should attend school when the oldest was brutally killed just at the time when he or she was to graduate. They cannot forget that the genocide in Rwanda was a result of the mass mobilization and participation of most of the people. In spite of the enormous challenges, the Rwandan society has to be rebuilt, different communities will have to live together, and the entire population must commit itself to respect human lives.

### C. Specific objectives

#### **Objective No. 1: Sharing among the survivors' groups experiences of genocide and of coping with post-genocide life**

For the majority of the victims and the survivors in Rwanda, genocide occurred almost unexpectedly: no one realized how systematic was the planning, nor the nature and the extent of the atrocities people would suffer. Articulating their genocide experiences, for multiple reasons, is extremely difficult for survivors.

Experience sharing will contribute to exploring ways of (a) articulating their genocide experiences, and (b) help the survivors rebuild their lives while maintaining continuity with their past and with those who were murdered.

#### **Objective No. 2: Commemorating the genocide victims**

Remembering the victims of genocide not only serves to honor and mourn them, but can also be a way of resisting future genocide. It is vital, therefore, that those who suffered and lost their lives must be remembered in a way that contributes to the healing of the survivors as well as their society.

#### **Objective No. 3: Peace building among different communities in Rwanda**

It is impossible to assume that the genocide in Rwanda is past if we do not build a peaceful and stable society. The people of Rwanda have no choice but to live together. The experience of recent years demonstrates that no one benefited from the genocide. The commitment of every Rwandan is necessary to have peace and prevent further genocide.

#### **Objective No. 4: Exploring effective ways to meet the survivors' entitlements to truth, justice, reparations, including restitution, compensation and rehabilitation.**

#### **Objective No. 5: Preventing genocide from happening again and rebuilding genocide-torn societies to prevent the perpetuation of life-long and multigenerational effects.**

One of the profound desires of survivors is to not see it ever happen again. More than anyone, survivors know the worst human beings can experience: their humanity denied, being subjected to unspeakable suffering imposed in most cases by those whose responsibility it is to protect citizens. The agony and the terrible consequences of the genocide do not end when the actual acts of genocide cease. Instead,

their destructive impact on individuals, families and society continues for lifetimes, and down through the generations.

#### D. Organizing process

The conference will be organized in three phases

##### **Phase one:**

- Contact different persons and organizations who will co-sponsor and participate in the conference;
- Finalize the structure and program of the conference and the list of guests (speakers and participants);
- Inform and advocate to all stakeholders, including Government institutions and human rights organizations: and,
- Prepare the budget and explore potential sources of funding

This phase should be completed by the end of January.

##### **Phase two:**

A two-month campaign using media and mail will be organized from November to December in order to:

- give visibility to and show the importance of and the opportunities presented by the conference;
- inform all concerned parties to seek their interest and support;
- give the opportunity to the public to make their contribution; and
- finalize the organizational structure of the conference

During phase two, both the local and the international organizing committees will conduct interviews with national and international media (radio and TV) focusing on the objectives of the conference, and hold press conferences in Rwanda, Brussels, Paris, Berlin, Rome, London, New York, Yale University and California. They will also prepare working documents.

##### **Phase three: The Conference**

Given the importance of the conference, it will take place over the course of four or 5 days and include plenary sessions, lectures, seminars and workshops. The first day will be devoted to visiting genocide sites and memorials.

#### E. Anticipated results

The continuing consequences of the Tutsi genocide will be globally publicized to ensure that appropriate programs for survivors are undertaken.

Rwandans will have learned how other people live in the aftermath of genocide and will use these lessons to take initiatives to overcome the consequences of their own genocide.

Having clarified the living conditions of survivors in post-genocide society, solutions will be proposed.

Strategies will be formulated to mobilize people to address the issues of the welfare of survivors, justice, and the collective memory of genocide victims.

Hopefully, a worldwide network of victim/survivors of genocide will be founded.

#### F. Organizational structure and responsibility

To ensure that the conference will achieve both its immediate and long-term objectives, it is necessary to involve all partners and reach a broad range of experienced persons: survivors of genocide and the Holocaust, those who have worked closely with survivors and their children in an effort to help them overcome the consequences of torture and mass extermination, those who have been seeking solutions for rebuilding peaceful and long-lasting societies after genocide and those who have denounced and are committed to the prevention of genocide.

The idea of this conference emerged from discussions among a small group of Rwandans and their friends who survived Holocaust and genocide during different times and in other parts of the world. The common concerns shared by this group of people are at least two-fold: those who suffered the atrocities of genocide have to be economically and psychologically reintegrated into society, and experience such as genocide should never happen anywhere in the world.

Beyond the organizations whose objectives are integrally related to these concerns, others are also essential to the management of post-genocide societies and can contribute to the success of the conference and the achievement of its overall objectives.

It is in this context that the organizational structure and its composition have been put in place:

##### A. The local organizing committee

1. The Executive Committee of IBUKA, represented by the Chairperson, Mr. Antoine Mugesera;
2. The Ministry of Culture, represented by the Minister, HE Francois Ngarambe;
3. The Ministry of Social Affairs, represented by HE Dr. Odette Nyiramilimo, Secretary of State;
4. The Ministry of Health;
5. The Ministry of Education;
6. The Ministry of Gender;
7. The Ministry of Justice, represented by the Minister, HE Jean de Dieu Mucyo;
8. The National Unity and Reconciliation Commission, represented by Mrs. Aloysia Inyumba, Executive Secretary;
9. The National Commission for Human Rights, represented by Mr. Gasana Ndobwa, President;
10. Dr. Emmanuel Ndahiro, the Office of the President;

11. Dr. Muligande Charles, Secretary General of RPF;
12. Mr. Frederic Mutagwera, Lawyer, Former President of IBUKA;
13. Mr. Francois Regis Rukundakuvuga, Executive Secretary of IBUKA;

B. The international organizing committee (in formation)

1. Dr. Yael Danieli, Director, Group Project for Holocaust Survivors and their Children, New York, NY, USA
2. Prof. Alexandre Kimenyi, USA
3. Mr. Kagame Faustin, Switzerland
4. Mrs. Mukagasana Yolande, Author, Belgium
5. Prof. Jose Kagabo, France
6. Mrs. Lorna Touryan-Miller, USA
7. Representation of the Cambodian community
8. Representation of the Roma community
9. Dr. Chris Mato Nunpa, Wahpeton Dakota, representing the North American Indigenous Community
10. Dr. Irfanka Pasagic, Bosnia and Herzegovina

G. Targeted participants to be invited to attend the conference

In addition to the organizing committees and the international participants, the seminar will seek to involve the decision makers and a broad range of participants representing the civil society and professional organizations. These includes:

- The Government of Rwanda;
- The Parliament;
- The Supreme Court;
- The National University and private higher education institutions;
- The churches;
- The civil society;
- Human rights organizations;
- Representatives of women's associations
- NGO umbrella organizations
- Local NGOs

Tentative Program:

<b>Saturday, November 24<sup>th</sup>, 2001:</b>		<b><u>Arrival of participants</u></b>	
<b>Sunday, 25 Nov:</b>		<b><i>Opening and sharing genocide experiences</i></b>	
11:00 – 12:30	Official opening		<b>Various survivors' testi</b> Hedi Fried, Holocaust Lea Balint , Holocaust Ervin Staub, Holocaust Robert Melson, Holocaus Lorna Touryan Miller, An
12:30 – 15:00	Lunch/break		
15:00 – 18:00	Sharing among the survivors' groups experiences of genocide – Survivors'		
19:30	Evening reception		

	<p>Irfanka Pasagic, Federatic          Jakob Finci, Holocaust ar          Herzegovina, BiH          Christian Mato Numpa, I          Lorraine Peeters, Australi          Carlos Figueroa, Guatem          Bonaventure NIYIBIZI, I</p>
<p><b>Monday, 26 Nov:</b>      <b><i>Coping and Dealing with the aftermath of genocide</i></b></p> <p>08:00 – 10:30            <i>Singularity, history, causes and typology of genocide (1)</i></p> <p>10:30 – 10:45            Tea break</p> <p>10:45 – 12:30            Living conditions and coping with post-genocide life (2)</p> <p>12:30 – 14:30            Lunch</p> <p>14:30 – 15:30            Assistance to the survivors in general and the group with special          need          (such as the ill, handicapped, traumatized, orphans, elderly,          woman) (3)</p> <p>15:30 – 16:00            Tea break</p> <p>16:00 – 18:00            The Healing Experience (4)</p>	<p>(1) <b>Modérateur : Dr Jos</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• William Miles : « ;</li> <li>• Donald Miller: “<i>T</i></li> <li>• Eric Markusen: “<i>;</i></li> <li>• <i>A Preliminary Com</i></li> <li>• Christian Mato N</li> <li>• <i>of North America”;</i></li> <li>• Robert Melson: ‘</li> <li>• Yves Ternon</li> </ul> <p>(2) <b>Modérateur à cherc</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yael Danieli “<i>Life</i></li> <li>• <i>Holocaust and genu</i></li> <li>• Lea Balint “<i>60 ye</i></li> <li>• <i>trauma of identity l</i></li> <li>• Ngarambe Franç</li> <li>• <i>des rescapés rwana</i></li> </ul> <p>(3) <b>Modérateur à cherc</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Janvier Kanyama</li> <li>• Dr Odette Nyiran</li> </ul> <p><b>(Panelist)</b></p> <p>(4)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hedi Fried: Café</li> <li>• Sweden</li> <li>• Rashida Mangoo:</li> <li>• Mr Ezechias Rwa</li> <li>• Lorraine Peeters:</li> <li>• <i>of the Stolen Gener</i></li> <li>• Simon Gasibirege</li> <li>• Marie Odile God</li> </ul>
<p><b>Tuesday, 27 Nov:</b>      <b><i>Explore effective ways to meet the survivors’ entitlements to truth, justice, reparations including restitution, compensation and rehabilitation.</i></b></p> <p>08:00 – 10:00            The Experience of the international community including the commissions, regarding the issues of reparation (5)</p>	<p>(5)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yael Danieli: <i>The</i></li> <li>• <i>for survivors</i></li> <li>• Carla Ferstman, I</li> <li>• <i>Overview</i></li> </ul>

10:00 – 10:30	Tea break	<p><i>Overview</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jakob Finci: <i>The</i></li> <li>• Ms. Alice Kareke</li> </ul> <p>(6)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• , ICTR ???</li> <li>• Ngoga Martin, IC</li> </ul> <p>(7)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mr Jean de Dieu</li> <li>• Frédéric Mutagw</li> </ul> <p>(8)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mlle Bernadette C</li> </ul> <p>Supreme Court and</p>
10:30 – 12:30	The international tribunals experience (6)	
12:30 – 14:30	Lunch	
14:30 – 15:30	Challenges of the Rwandan judiciary (7)	
15:30 – 16:00	Tea break	
16:00 – 18:00	Gacaca (8)	
Evening:	<b>Cultural program</b>	
<p><b>Wednesday, 28 Nov: <i>Visit Murambi and National University genocide sites, and the Center for Conflict Management at the National University.</i></b></p>		
07:30	Departure from Kigali	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A genocide surviv</li> <li>• A genocide surviv</li> <li>• Researchers of th</li> </ul>
11:00	Arrival at Murambi genocide site	
12:30	Stop over Butare University upon return from Murambi <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Visit genocide site at the University</li> <li>- Visit the Center for Conflict Management</li> </ul>	
14:00	Lunch in Butare	
15:00	Leave Butare	
19:00	Super	
<p><b>Thursday, 29 Nov: <i>Commemoration, prevention and peacebuilding</i></b></p>		
08:00 – 10:00	Commemorating the genocide victims (9)	<p>(9)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hon. Kalisa (IBU</li> <li>• Stephen Smith, B</li> <li>• Clifford Chanin: T</li> <li>• Mr François Ngai</li> </ul> <p>Sports (Paneliste)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mr. Pierre Célesti</li> </ul>
10:00 – 10:30	Tea break	
10:30 – 12:30	Peacebuilding among different communities (10)	
12:30 – 14:30	Lunch	<p>(10)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Irfanka Pasagic: <i>I</i></li> <li>• <i>Hands of Broken Sc</i></li> <li>• Herzegovina, B&amp;H ;</li> <li>• Nada Golubovic,</li> <li>• <i>Hands of Broken Sc</i></li> <li>• Lorna Touryan M</li> <li>• Mme Aloysie Iny</li> <li>• Commission.</li> <li>• Mr Ndobu Gasan</li> </ul> <p>for Human Rights</p>

14:30 – 15:30 genocide-torn	Preventing genocide from happening again and rebuilding societies (11)	for Human Rights
15:30 – 16:00	Tea break	(11)
16:00 – 18:00 genocide-torn	Preventing genocide from happening again and rebuilding societies (continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jerry Fowler, Uni</li> <li>• Shimon T. Samue</li> <li>• Ervin Staub: "<i>The avenues to preventi</i></li> <li>• Reva Adler: <i>Genu Approach</i></li> <li>• Donald Miller, "<i>I preventive aspects</i></li> <li>• José Kagabo: "<i>Les pays du Nord</i>"</li> <li>• Tom Ndahiro "<i>Ki</i></li> </ul>
Evening:	Official diner	
<b><i>Friday, 30 Nov: Future plans and recommendations</i></b>		
08:00 – 10:00	Identification of future projects (group discussion)	
10:00 – 10:30	Tea break	
10:30 – 12:30	Identification of future projects (continued)	
12:30 – 14:30	Lunch	
14:30 – 15:30	Final recommendations of the conference (plenary)	
15:30 – 16:00	Tea break	
16:00 – 18:00	Closing session	
<b><i>Saturday, 1 Dec: Departure of International participants</i></b>		

Conference venue: Hôtel des Mille Collines

Tel: +250-76530

Fax: +250-76541/77059

e-mail:

Rate: 75 USD per night, 100 USD including meals

All taxes included

N.B. This rate is offered only for the conference participants as agreed with organizers (IBUKA)

Transport from/to airport is available free of charge after reception of flight details and approximate time of arrival.