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The Fifteenth Commemoration of the 1994 Tutsi Genocide in Rwanda

On April 7, 2009, the Embassy of the Republic of Rwanda in Washington D.C., Survivor Corps and members of the Rwandan Diaspora will commemorate the fifteenth anniversary of the 1994 Tutsi Genocide. A memorial event and reception will be held at the Rayburn House Building on Independence Avenue and South Capitol Streets in downtown Washington D.C.

His Excellency Ambassador Kimonyo describes the commemoration as *“a time for all Rwandans and the world to reflect and learn from the 1994 tragedy. Let us remember innocent lives that perished while denouncing genocide deniers and recommitting ourselves to rebuilding a new country where hate, greed, and divisions shall have no place.”*

In April of 1994, an estimated one million Tutsis and moderate Hutus were murdered in a spasm of ethnic violence that is today recognized as the 1994 Rwandan genocide. Fifteen years later, in a collaborative effort to bring awareness of this tragedy and visibility to Rwanda, genocide survivors and organizations, friends of Rwanda, and other Rwandans throughout the Diaspora will host similar memorial events in observance of the continual reconstruction efforts, the remarkable turnaround the country of Rwanda has made, and honor the lives that were lost during those 100 days.

“Rwanda can be a paradise again, but it will take the love of the entire world to heal my homeland. And that’s as it should be, for what happened in Rwanda happened to us all—humanity was wounded by the genocide. The love of a single heart can make a world of difference. I believe that we can heal Rwanda—and our world—by healing one heart at a time,” Immaculee Ilibagiza says.

The commemoration ceremony will be marked by testimonies from Rwandan genocide survivors including Immaculee Iribagiza, renowned author of the New York Times best selling book *Left to Tell*, and Edourd Kayihura a survivor from Hotel des Mille Collines. Remarks will be made by His Excellency James Kimonyo, Rwandan Ambassador to the U.S., Her Excellency Amina Salum Ali, African Union Permanent Representative to the U.S., Honorable Congressman Donald M. Payne and Mr. Jerry White, Executive Director and founder of Survivor Corps. A representative from the US Department of State will also make a statement.

A reception and a screening of a documentary on the genocide will take place immediately following the presentation of speakers.

The event will also serve as an opportunity to launch the One Dollar Campaign project that will run for duration of 100 days. This fundraising initiative is being implemented by the Rwanda Diaspora worldwide with a goal of raising money to help build shelters for genocide survivors.

Survivor Corps is also presently working with individuals and institutions in Rwanda to help survivors recover from the trauma of war and rebuild their communities.

“If survivors speak up and not only provide their testimony but also provide solutions to rebuilding, the needs of the people who need the most help will be addressed and there will be an opportunity for lasting peace. I believe that those who have survived war are the ones most invested in building peace,” says Jerry White, Survivor Corps Executive Director.

The Fifteenth Commemoration of the Tutsi genocide is one step closer to creating a peaceful, united and prosperous Rwanda.

For more information, call the Embassy of Rwanda at (202)232-2882 or send an email to info@rwandaembassy.org