



17th July 2008

Today marks the 14th anniversary of the end of the Rwandan genocide. In 100 days in 1994 between 800,000 and 1, 071, 000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus were murdered simply for being 'different'.

On April 6th 1994 the plane carrying Rwanda's president was shot down. The Tutsis were accused of killing the president, and Hutu civilians were told, by radio and word of mouth, that it was their duty to wipe out the Tutsis. First, though, moderate Hutus who weren't anti-Tutsi should be killed. So should Tutsi wives or husbands. Although on a large scale, this genocide was carried out entirely by hand, often using machetes and clubs. The men who'd been trained to massacre were members of civilian death squads, the Interahamwe. The State provided supporting organisation – politicians, officials, intellectuals and professional soldiers incited the killers to do their work. Local officials assisted in rounding up victims and making suitable places available for slaughter.

General Dallaire, Head of the UN Peacekeeping mission in Rwanda at the time, was ordered to leave the scene of the genocide after the death of 10 United Nations Soldiers. He refused. Speaking at the 2006 commemoration of Holocaust Memorial Day (http://www.hmd.org.uk/press/general_romeo_dallaire_at_national_commemoration_2006/) , he remarked "We have a responsibility to protect, we do not have the right to assess and to establish a priority within humanity, for all humans are human and not one of us is more human than the other"

On the 14th anniversary of the end of the Rwandan genocide, HMDT urge you to take the time to remember the victims of the genocide, and survivors such as Clare (<http://www.hmd.org.uk/resources/item/93/>), Freddie Mutanguha (<http://www.hmd.org.uk/resources/item/77/>) and Beata Uwazaninka (<http://www.hmd.org.uk/resources/item/78/>)

Known and unknown are the children of Rwanda
Victims of war and genocide,
Though not with us now we know you're at peace,

We who survived will remember you.
Ten years onward our hearts still troubled
By lack of justice for survivors,
Help our leaders, bringing peace and hope,
Also preventing the same tragedies.

Will you join me now, remember lives lost,
Will you join me now, pleading to all,
To learn the lessons, that at any cost,
Genocide must end, forever more

Children of Rwanda - Reverend Francois Murenzi
<http://www.hmd.org.uk/resources/item/72/>

For more information on the genocide in Rwanda, see:

Rwandan timeline: <http://www.hmd.org.uk/resources/item/104/>

Holocaust Memorial Day 2004 Theme Paper: From the Holocaust to Rwanda <http://www.hmd.org.uk/resources/item/20/>

Case Study: Odette <http://www.hmd.org.uk/resources/item/102/>

Rwandan rescuers: Sula Karuhimbi
<http://www.hmd.org.uk/resources/item/39/> and Paul Rusesabagina
<http://www.hmd.org.uk/resources/item/47/>

External links

Survivors' Fund <http://www.survivors-fund.org.uk/>

Hope Survivors' Foundation <http://www.hope-survivors.org.uk/resources-the-genocide/>

http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/in_depth/africa/2004/rwanda/default.stm