

**Commemorative event on the occasion of the fifteenth
anniversary of the Rwanda genocide**

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

**Statement by
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Permanent Representative**

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Ambassador Nsengimana,
Deputy-Secretary-General Migiro,
Under-Secretary-General Akasaka,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,
Friends,

It is both a tremendous honor and a solemn duty to stand before you. As an Israeli, I am all too familiar with the tragedy and legacy of genocide. As an Israeli, I am keenly aware of the responsibility we have to the victims and survivors of genocide.

Time has distanced us from the Holocaust — a horrific event that gave rise, in part, to this United Nations. But the passage of time has not diminished the lessons we sought to learn in the aftermath of such tragedy.

Today, as we commemorate the 15th anniversary of the Rwandan genocide, we gather to remind ourselves that such lessons have not been realized. Today, we recall the lasting scars that affect not only the victims and survivors of such slaughter, but the outlook of generations to come. Today, we gather to mark the horrors of the Rwandan genocide.

Today we must recall those who struggled, those who perished, and those who survived. We must remember and honor; we must not forget.

Israel is honored to sponsor the exhibit *Intended Consequences* by Jonathan Torgovnik as part of this commemoration. It is a silent, powerful reminder of the individual stories of genocide. It is no coincidence that as an Israeli and given his national heritage, Jonathan was drawn to cover the aftermath of the Rwandan genocide. He witnessed the consequences of unimaginable suffering and he sought to share such stories with the world. His work ensures that the victims will not be forgotten.

All too often, victims of genocide — both living and dead — become facts and statistics. But these photographs remind us all that the victims in Rwanda are not a number or a figure — they are humans who witnessed the darkest side of the human spirit.

We look at these photos — we peer into these women's lives — and we see more than simply faces and names; we see stories. We see the children born of rape; we see mothers left with the deadly legacy of HIV.

It is our hope that these photos will leave a lasting impression on us all so that we may teach future generations what has happened, and what must never be allowed to happen again.

As these photos recall Rwanda's darkest hour, they also remind us of the future. As we remember the past, we admire the strength and the will of these women — and all Rwandans — who pursue the future.