

UNESCO MEDIA ADVISORY: Online panel on International Day of Reflection on the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda, 7 April 2021

'From hate speech to genocide. Lessons from the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda'

PARIS, 2 April 2021: Learn from the past to prevent genocides of the future. The International Day of Reflection on the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda honours the victims and survivors, raises awareness about its history, and teaches about its causes and consequences to prevent future atrocities. 7 April 1994 marks the beginning of the genocide perpetrated by the Hutu extremist-led government in Rwanda. Within the following 100 days, more than 1 million members of the Tutsi minority had been systematically murdered.

Hate speech and hate propaganda were identified as catalysts of the genocidal violence in Rwanda. The [United Nations Strategy and Plan of Action on Hate Speech](#) (2019) seeks to enhance the UN response to the global phenomenon of hate speech and places specific emphasis on the role of education as a tool for addressing and countering hate speech, while at the same time upholding legitimate freedom of expression and access to information.

On the International Day, UNESCO will organize a **Virtual Panel Discussion on 7 April 2021, 15:00 to 16:30 (CEST)** entitled “From hate speech to genocide: lessons from the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda” to mark the 27th anniversary of the start of the genocide.

The online event will begin with welcome remarks by **UNESCO Director-General Audrey Azoulay** and **H.E. Amb. François Xavier Ngarambe**, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Rwanda to UNESCO, followed by a conversation between **Mr. Freddy Mutanguha**, a survivor of the Genocide, and **Dr. Tali Nates**, Director of the Johannesburg Holocaust and Genocide Centre.

The subsequent panel discussion will include:

- **Ms. Susan Benesch** (USA), Director of the Dangerous Speech project
- **Mr. Marcel Kabanda** (France), Historian and former President of Ibuka France
- **Mr. Paul Rutayisire** (Rwanda), Historian

H.E. Amb. Silvia Fernandez de Gurmendi (Argentina), Chair of Global Action Against Mass Atrocity Crimes and former President of the International Criminal Court, will then deliver a video message.

Closing remarks will be delivered by **Ms. Alice Wairimu Nderitu**, United Nations Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide. The event will be moderated by **Dr. Stephen Smith**, UNESCO Chair on Genocide Education and Executive Director of the University of Southern California Shoah Foundation.

The panel discussion is organized in cooperation with the UNESCO Chair for Genocide Education at the USC Shoah Foundation, in partnership with the UN Department of Global Communications, and the Global Action Against Mass Atrocity Crimes (GAAMAC).

As the only UN agency with a mandate to promote the prevention of genocide through education, UNESCO is committed to promoting genocide remembrance and education to sensitize learners about the causes, dynamics and consequences of such crimes and to strengthen their resilience against all forms of discrimination.

For more information: <https://en.unesco.org/commemorations/tutsigenocide>

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