

UNITED NATIONS



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The Deputy Secretary-General

REMARKS ON THE SIXTEENTH COMMEMORATION OF THE GENOCIDE IN RWANDA

New York, 7 April 2010

**Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

To all the performers, welcome and thank you for your voice. I am deeply moved.

I am honoured to join you for this solemn event.

Today, we cherish the memory of more than 800,000 innocent people who lost their lives in Rwanda Sixteen years ago. Our thoughts are also with the survivors.

On behalf of the Secretary-General and the entire United Nations family, I want to express our profound gratitude to the survivors who are here with us.

Through the United Nations outreach programme on the Rwanda Genocide, we have worked with survivors and perpetrators of the crimes in Rwanda to tell their stories of life since the genocide.

I thank the Department of Public Information for leading this effort. It has contributed to the country's recovery, and brought lessons for our global campaign for human rights.

The United Nations is fully committed to securing justice for the victims of genocide. We are also fully committed to preventing future atrocities.

The work of the International Criminal Tribunal on Rwanda is just one manifestation of this commitment.

As you know, the Tribunal delivered the first-ever verdicts by an international court related to genocide. These, and similar actions, have helped send a clear message to the *genocidaires* and would-be *genocidaires*.

Simply put, their heinous crimes will not go unpunished. The international community is determined to deliver justice and ensure accountability wherever such crimes occur.

The countries of the Great Lakes Region have also made important progress with the historic Pact on Security, Stability and Development.

As we look forward, we can be encouraged by the General Assembly's response to the Secretary-General's report on implementing the Responsibility to Protect.

Debates on this issue will continue, but the international community stands firm and in solidarity against genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing.

On this commemoration, let us pledge again, each and every one of us, to do our utmost to prevent such gross crimes against humanity. That is the best way to remember those who lost their lives so tragically in Rwanda.

Thank you for coming together in this common cause.

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