



REPUBLIKA Y'U RWANDA

National Commission for the Fight against Genocide
Commission Nationale de Lutte contre le Génocide
Komisiyo y'Igihugu yo Kurwanya Jenoside
-CNLG-



PRESS RELEASE

**71ST COMMEMORATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON
PREVENTION AND PUNISHMENT OF THE CRIME OF GENOCIDE**

During the Second World War, which lasted from 1939 to 1945, more than six million (6,000,000) Jews were killed by a faction of Nazis led by Adolf Hitler on grounds because they were born Jews. In 1944, American lawyer Raphael LEMKIN, observed these massacres and consequently coined the word “genocide”, building it from a Greek word *genos* which means race and the Latin word *caedere* which means to kill. His intention was to explain that the crime of massacre committed against the Jews is different from other crimes against humanity based on the aim of these massacres being the extermination of all Jews.

On 21st December 1947, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted that “*genocide*” is an international crime that should be prosecuted at both national and international levels, albeit typically being carried out by individuals or States. The General Assembly also adopted the International Convention on Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide in its Resolution 260 A (III) of 9th December 1948, which came into effect from 12th January 1951.

Rwanda ratified the International Convention on Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide on 16th April 1975 within its second republic, but then later refused to ratify article 9 of this Convention. This article stated that a country may be sued by the International Court of the United Nations in the case that it is found not abiding to the provisions of this Convention or if genocide and related crimes are observed within this country. This refusal of article 9 indicates that the former leaders of Rwanda were aware that they could be held accountable for crimes committed against the Tutsi beginning in 1959, which could be considered as genocide. Additionally, it verifies that Rwanda did not want to shun its policies of discrimination and segregation. These incendiary policies are what culminated into the 1994 Genocide perpetrated against the Tutsi, which claimed more than one million lives. The Genocide against the Tutsi is an international crime recognized by the United Nations, which led to the establishment of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) that closed on 31st December 2015 after trying 75 genocide fugitives who had sought refuge abroad.

On 16th June 2006, ICTR resolved that the Genocide against the Tutsi is a fact of public notoriety which is not to be subjected to any sort of denial. On 28th June 2011, ICTR took the first decision to transfer to Rwanda Pastor Jean Uwinkindi to be tried by the Rwandan courts. This was succeeded by the transferal of other genocide suspect cases to Rwanda, including Bernard Munyagishari and Ladislav Ntaganzwa whose cases are currently underway in the Rwandan courts. Eight (8) other

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