

RWANDA GENOCIDE COMMEMORATION –“KWIBUKA” 2018

On 10th April 2018, Law students from the University of Nottingham supported by the International Criminal Justice Unit of the Human Rights Law Centre, joined hundreds of other people including dignitaries from the UK government, representatives from Rwanda government and diplomatic representatives from other governments, International organisations, Rwandans in the diaspora and students and researchers from various institutions of higher learning in the United Kingdom for the 24th Rwanda Genocide Commemoration service at St. Marylebone Church in London.

The event marked an annual International day of reflection on the Genocide that claimed over 800,000 Rwandans lives, in the Extermination that had been targeted against Tutsi in Rwanda in 1994. It follows a resolution that was passed by the UN General Assembly A/RES/58/234 of 23 December 2003 as amended by Resolution A/72/L.31 of 26 January 2018, which called upon all states and the international community as a whole to strengthen their commitment and actions towards prevention and punishment of perpetrators of genocide throughout the world.

The memorial service was led by the Chaplain of St. Marylebone Church in London. It was followed by speeches from the high commissioner, academicians, and the representative of the United Kingdom government, a poem in acknowledgment of those who lost their lives, testimonies from a survivor of the genocide, candle lighting and a closing prayer.

In her message, the High Commissioner for Rwanda Her Excellency Yamina Karitanyi called upon everyone to take up the responsibility of protecting and fighting ideologies that would result to genocide in every part of the world and, to fight the genocide denial. She added that, the international community including the United Kingdom should continue to cooperate with Rwanda to ensure that all perpetrators of the 1994 genocide are brought to the hands of the law. The High Commissioner remarked that there are still 5 pending extradition requests of genocide suspects residing in the UK. She called upon the UK government to hand over the suspects to the legal authorities for justice.

More information can be found in the Rwanda High Commission Press Release of 11 April 2018 available at <http://rwandahc.org/24th-commemoration-of-the-genocide-against-the-tutsi/>



The High Commissioner Rwanda High Commission, London, United Kingdom, Her Excellency Yamina Karitanyi conveying her message at the 24th Genocide Commemoration 2018.



Third front left row, students from the University of Nottingham attending the 24th Rwanda Genocide Commemoration 2018.

At the end of the memorial service, Nottingham University Law students had an opportunity to interact with the High Commissioner for Rwanda and to ask questions, they were also introduced to the first secretary and in charge of Education affairs Mr. Fidelis Mironko. On behalf of the Rwandan High Commission, the High Commissioner and the First

Secretary and the Communications officer to move forward the relationship between Nottingham University Law School and the High Commission. University of Nottingham Law school and the Criminal Justice Unit of the Human Rights Law Centre were encouraged not to hesitate to contact the Commission wherever need be, in matters of education and furthering the relationship created with the High Commission. That the agenda of promoting the intentions of the Convention against Genocide requires a combined effort of governments and institutions of learning. Contact details of the High Commission were provided to develop future cooperation with the University of Nottingham. The students later had a picture with the High Commissioner Her Excellency Yamina Karitanyi.



University of Nottingham Law Students with Her Excellency Yamina Karitanyi (Center), at the 24th Rwanda Genocide Commemoration in London United Kingdom 2018.

Students Reflection on Commemoration of Genocide

At the end of the Rwanda Genocide Commemoration, some of the law students gave their reflections on the event and its relevance towards promotion of peace and prevention of similar acts against humanity in other parts of the world.

"Genocide commemoration day Kwibuka as it is known in Kinyarwanda marks the day every year where the international community remembers its collective failure to prevent/stop the slaughter of estimated 800000, women, men and children in Rwanda in 1994. At the Commemoration at St. Marylebone Church in London this year, it was

reinforced that while the crimes committed in the past are irreversible, the task of preventing them in the future is very much a work in progress and it deserves the full attention of the international community” **Natasha Barigye, LLM International Criminal Justice, University of Nottingham.**

“I was so moved and impressed by the 24th Genocide Commemoration. It was significant event to remember the loss of lives from Genocide and to show the need for peace today. The future of humanity depends on the history from which we learn and begin to condemn repetition of similar atrocities.

The annual commemoration is a great way for people to come together to remember the victims and to give people courage and strength to fight for love and equality. We are created with equal opportunity to live with full rights irrespective of race, colour, ethnicity, religion, gender or nationality.

I appreciate having had the opportunity to attend this event as it made my view open and broad and reaffirmed to me the significance of history as well as equality of human beings. I will support these kind of events consistently. Much appreciation to the government of Rwanda and the international community for putting in place this program.” **Wenna Bai LLM International Commercial Law, university of Nottingham.**

“The Annual commemoration of the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda is a significant ceremony in keeping the memory of the 1994 massacres alive. This serves as a constant reminder of every individual’s responsibility to prevent such future occurrences and for the international community, the duty to act towards humanity across the world.”

Ivy Mburu Nyambura, LLM International Commercial Law, University of Nottingham.

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