

UNITY AND RECONCILIATION PROCESS IN RWANDA

**24 years after the 1994 genocide
perpetrated against Tutsi**

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How has Rwanda moved
*from a destroyed society
and a failed state to a
reconciled and reunified
one?*

Historical background to unity and divisions in Rwanda

□ Pre-colonial Rwanda:

- Rwanda existed long before European colonization
- It had its political and socio-economic organization, its culture and traditions. It was a sovereign nation governed by a King.
 - Unity and cohesion based on the same people (clans), one language, culture, habitat, myths, etc

□ Colonial Rwanda:

-At the end of the 19th century, Rwanda became a colony first to the Germans and then to the Belgians, serious and irreversible changes affected leadership, economy, society and culture.

-Origin of Rwanda's division/sectarianism based on 'divide and rule' policy and colonial racism.

Historical background to unity and divisions in Rwanda ...

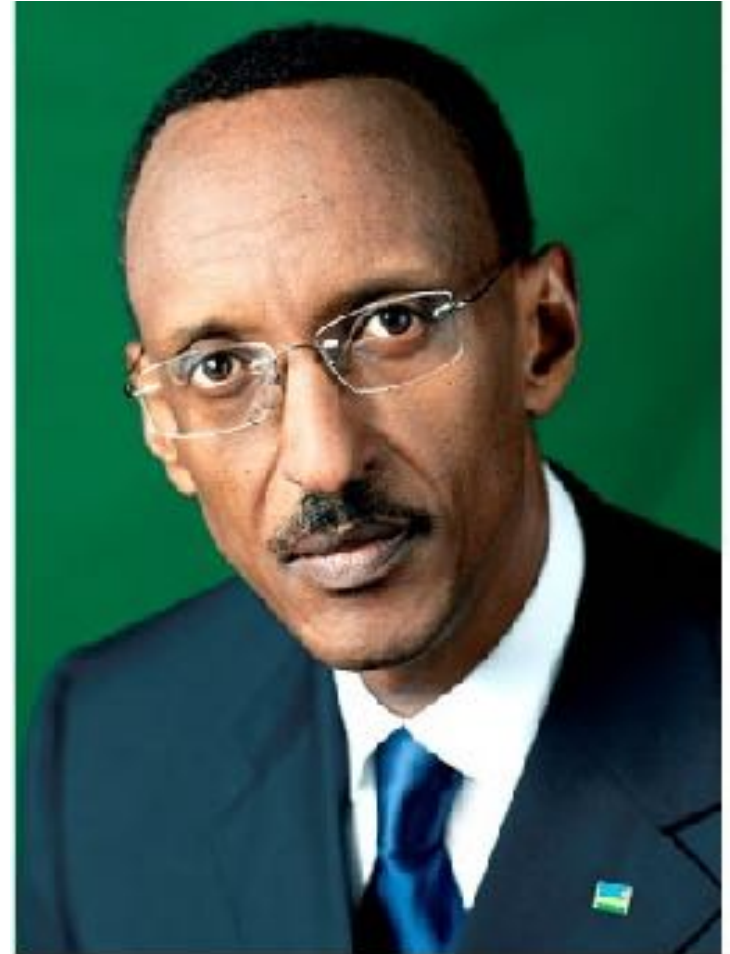
□ Post-independence Rwanda :

- Post-independence two governments pursuing policies of discrimination against Tutsi (and others, who never supported this).
- Culmination into the 1994 genocide against Tutsi
- Genocide that came to halt by RPA/RPF's liberation war.
- Necessity of reconciliation and the restoration of unity after 1994

RWANDA AFTER GENOCIDE : Government of National Unity

“My vision of Rwanda is a united country that feels itself as an integrated into the sub region family of nations, a country that is developed and has eradicated poverty, as a country that is democratic and above all, a stable country at peace with itself as well as its neighbors.”

“We are the first generations charged with responsibility to rebuild Rwanda. This is our promise to posterity and to the world.”



H.E Paul Kagame, President of the Republic of Rwanda

RWANDA AFTER GENOCIDE

This was the glaring state of affair in Rwanda after the 1994 genocide. The country had been

totally
destroyed to
the level where
some people
believed
Rwanda was
never going to
be a nation any
more.



CHALLENGES OF PEACE BUILDING IN RWANDA'S POST GENOCIDE RECONSTRUCTION...

- 1 million people dead
- 300.000 orphans and non accompanied minors
- 500 000 Widows

CHALLENGES

✓ 3 million
refugees.



CHALLENGES...

- ✓ Thousands of handicapped, horrified and vulnerable claiming for security,
- ✓ A highly divided, suspicious and traumatized population,
- ✓ 120,000 suspects of genocide in prisons,
- ✓ The judicial system and other state management mechanisms had been totally destroyed,

CHALLENGES...

- ✓ Socio-political disintegration
- ✓ Destruction of economy and infrastructure,
- ✓ Inflation stood at 65%
- ✓ Lack/limited administrative capacity,
- ✓ A decimated Civil Service or its membership having fled into exile.

Rwandan Model for U & R

- The National Unity and Reconciliation process in Rwanda is a cornerstone to all national development efforts and a basis for combating all forms of discrimination and exclusion among Rwandans.
- It is the only option to the survival for Rwanda as a nation emerging from a divided past, the 1994 genocide against tutsi and moving towards a reconciled and democratic nation.

Rwandan Model for U & R...

- The Rwandan model for unity and reconciliation is inspired and founded on positive cultural values that have become monumental in conflict resolution mechanisms, citizenship building, good governance and economic empowerment

Rwandan Model for U & R ...

- Redefining the Rwandan identity and building a shared sense of Rwandanness is at the centre of reconciliation in Rwanda.
- Memory, truth, justice, confessions and forgiveness have been the core threads of the reconciliation process in Rwanda.

THE LEGAL AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

- THE CONSTITUTION OF THE REPUBLIC OF RWANDA OF 2003 REVISED IN 2015 CONSIDERS UNITY, PEACE AND SECURITY AS PILLARS OF THE DEVELOPMENT;
- LAW N° 47/2001 OF 18/12/2001 INSTITUTING PUNISHMENT FOR OFFENCES OF DISCRIMINATION AND SECTARIANISM;
- N° 01/2012/OL OF 02/05/2012
ORGANIC LAW INSTITUTING THE PENAL CODE

THE LEGAL AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

The National Unity and Reconciliation Commission and other Government dedicated institutions such as National Commission to fight against Genocide, Ombudsman... have been created to promote unity and reconciliation, fight against injustice and promote rule of law, fight against genocide ideology among Rwandans in the aftermath of the devastating 1994 genocide against tutsi to mark a major milestone in changing, fundamentally, effects of bad governance based on discrimination and exclusion.

WORKING STRATEGY

Through a number of Grassroots consultations with Rwandan population, it became clear that the following were the major factors of conflicts among Rwandans :

- Bad governance,
- politics of hate,
- the culture of impunity,
- ignorance and
- wide spread poverty.

WORKING STRATEGY...

- ❖ Employ grassroots consultations and , national summits, Rwanda Reconciliation Barometer, to evaluate unity and reconciliation process,
- ❖ Civic Education program aimed at promoting informed and responsible citizenry,
- ❖ Advocacy and support for community initiatives that promote unity and community welfare.
- ❖ Development of conflict resolution and civic education manuals to be used at grassroots and national levels.
- ❖ Integrating a component of peace, tolerance and reconciliation into National Curriculum for primary and secondary schools.

WORKING STRATEGY...

- Research on key processes to establish linkage with unity and reconciliation and how such processes affect social cohesion among Rwandans.
- ❖ Promoting partnership with public, civil society institutions, faith based organizations for integrating reconciliation in their work.
- ❖ Integrate peace and reconciliation process in women and youth organizations, community Associations and cooperatives.
- ❖ Establish and build the capacity of key partners Abakangurambaga and student clubs of unity and reconciliation with a view to ensuring their effectiveness.

HOME GROWN TRADITIONAL APPROACHES
TO RECONCILIATION:

- 1. INGANDO : (solidarity camps), a civic education activity that has facilitated the smooth reintegration of former returnees, X-FAR, provisionally released prisoners back to their communities. Target group include Women, Youth groups, students joining university and local leaders.
- INGANDO provide forums to Rwandans to come to terms with their past by facing history, forging a common vision for a united future.

HOME GROWN APPROACHES...

Ingando:

Ingando for
Students
going to
university



HOME GROWN APPROACHES...

- 2. ITORERO RY'IGIHUGU: was formerly a traditional Rwandan school to instill moral values of integrity, and capacity to deal with ones problems.

It has today been revived to promote values of unity, truth and culture of hard work, all aimed at speeding up the attainment of National Vision 2020.

HOME GROWN TRADITIONAL APPROACHES TO RECONCILIATION...

- **3. GACACA COURTS :**

A traditional Rwandan restorative justice which has been revived to deal with a backlog of genocide cases. Gacaca judges known as Inyangamugayo are elected on the basis of integrity.

After the Genocide against Tutsi in 1994, Rwanda was facing a challenge of more than 120 000 cases of arrested suspects for prosecution; 1958 634 cases handled with 10 years 2002-2012 by Gacaca

HOME GROWN APPROACHES.

GACACA:

The accused
standing
before the
Gacaca court



HOME GROWN APPROACHES.

- 4. ABUNZI (Mediators):

Community Mediators who resolve day to day conflicts before referring them to Courts

Residents in a village participate in the mediation session



HOME GROWN TRADITIONAL APPROACHES TO RECONCILIATION...

- 5. ABAKANGURAMBAGA :
- Are voluntary community animators who are promoting reconciliation at community levels.

HOME GROWN APPROACHES...

UBUSABANE

Get together
festivals aimed
at fostering unity
and
reconciliation
and promoting
partnership
among
communities.



HOME GROWN APPROACHES...

8. UMUGANDA: (community work) A traditional community support to both individual and national cause has been revived in the interest of national reconstruction. This support comes in form of general cleaning, tree planting, road works, building houses for vulnerable groups, construction of schools, health centers etc.

HOME GROWN APPROACHES...

UMUGANDA:

Residents
plant trees



HOME GROWN APPROACHES...

9. Community and National Dialogue:

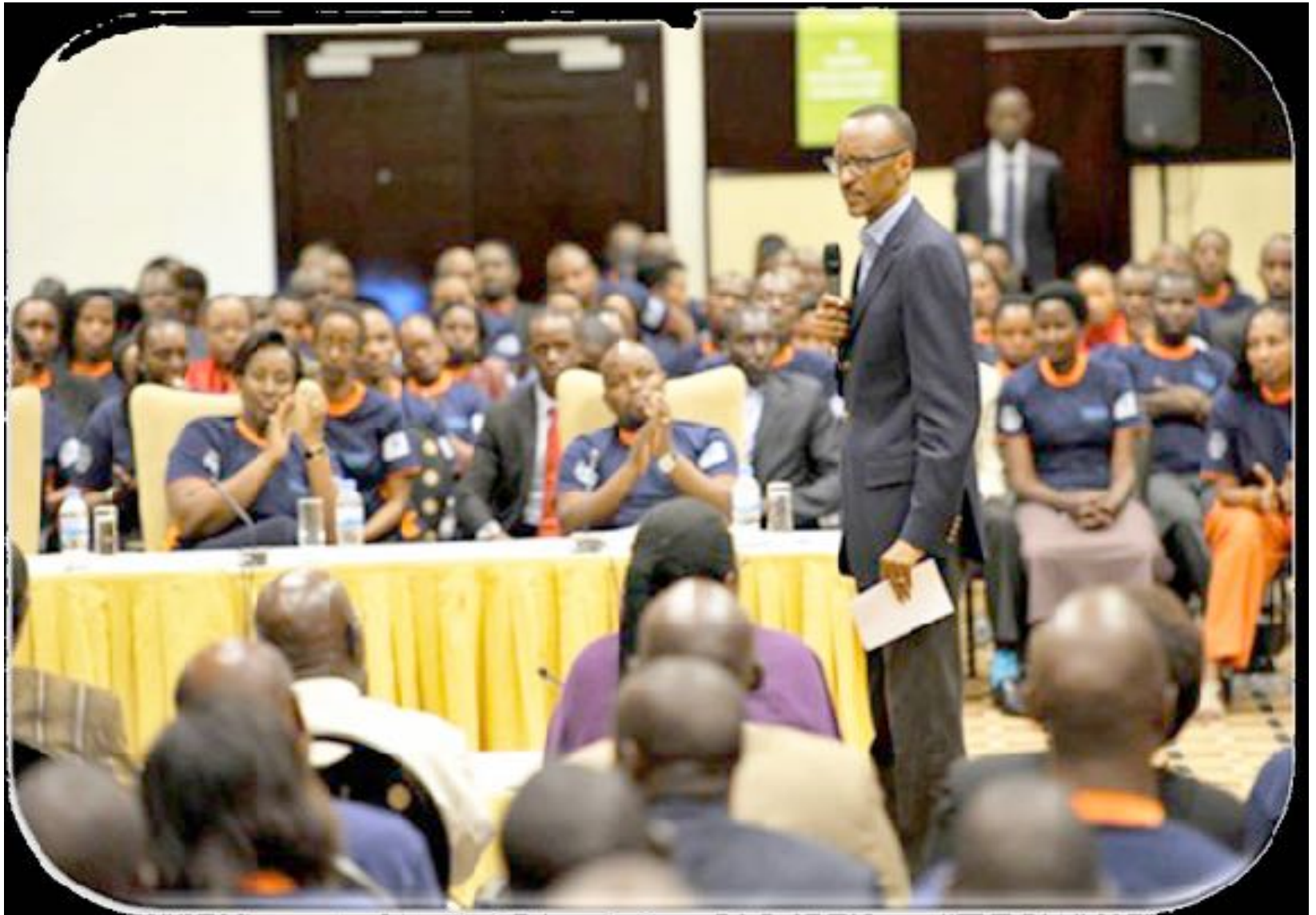


HOME GROWN APPROACHES...

10. “Ndi Umunyarwanda” program

- *“Ndi umunyarwanda” refers to the common values of all Rwandans which link Rwandans to be proud of how they are, to be more patriotic and ready to defend their nation and make it developed.*
- *The idea behind “Ndi Umunyarwanda” is to engage all Rwandans in a critical and truthful self-examination exercise, through open conversation. It is about understanding and strengthening the Rwandan spirit, with our dignity taking center stage. It is an important step in creating trust after what Rwandans went through.*
- *Ndi Umunyarwanda is about Rwandan’s taking responsibility for their destiny.*

H.E. IN DIALOGUE WITH YOUTH ON NDU





“Ndi Umunyarwanda” session in and outside Rwanda

MODEL OF OPERATIONS

3P3D

PROMOTION

DETECTION

PRESERVATION

DENUNCIATION

PREVENTING

DETERRENCE

Challenges to unity and reconciliation process in Rwanda

- Genocide ideology, divisionism and negationism;
- Fresh wounds & memories of divisions and genocide;
- Problem with compensation for property looted/ destroyed

Way forward—Strategies to further unity and reconciliation in Rwanda

- Consolidating existing unity and reconciliatory mechanisms
- Keeping the mainstreaming of unity and reconciliation
- Keeping war against genocide ideology, divisionism and negationism
- Addressing the issue of compensation of property looted/destroyed
- Eliminating poverty

CONCLUSION

- National U & R is cross-cutting and requires holistic interventions in all aspects of political, social - economic life.
- Confession and forgiveness are important tools in reconciliation process.
- Reconciliation is a painful process that requires the knitting of the torn social fabric, healing wounds, rebuilding a sense of togetherness and creation of institutions that promote national unity, accountability,

CONCLUSION...

- The resilience and determination of Rwandans to make a head way after horrific genocide determines political, social and economic progress made so far.
- A revisit to Rwandan culture has been at the Centre of our reconciliation process.
- Consultation and participatory approaches is key to enhancing reconciliation and democracy.

Thank you!