

ONLY WAY TO TRULY HONOUR MEMORY OF THOSE WHO PERISHED IN RWANDA  
GENOCIDE 'TO ENSURE SUCH EVENTS CAN NEVER OCCUR AGAIN,' SAYS  
SECRETARY-GENERAL

Department of Public Information  
28 March 2008

*Following is UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's message on the seventeenth  
Commemoration of the Genocide in Rwanda, observed 7 April:*

Today, we honour the memory of more than 800,000 people murdered in the 1994 genocide in Rwanda. Our thoughts are also with the survivors, left to rebuild shattered communities and an entire nation. On this day of remembrance, let us pay special tribute to the people and Government of Rwanda for the resilience and dignity they have shown in working towards national recovery and managing the trauma of this atrocious episode of history. I encourage them to continue promoting the inclusive spirit and dialogue necessary for healing, reconciliation and reconstruction.

The United Nations is committed to preventing the recurrence of similar tragedies. The recognition of the collective failure of the international community to come to the assistance of the people of Rwanda, and to shield the victims of the wars in the Balkans, led to the endorsement by the 2005 World Summit of the responsibility to protect. Recent measures by the Security Council in response to the crisis in Libya, in particular the adoption of resolutions 1970 (2011) and 1973 (2011), mark a significant step along this path.

The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, the International Criminal Court and other international courts are sending a strong signal that the world will not tolerate impunity for gross violations of human rights and international humanitarian law. My Special Advisers on the Prevention of Genocide and the Responsibility to Protect monitor developments worldwide looking for early signs of risk. We must remain ever vigilant.

The 2006 Pact on Security, Stability and Development for the Great Lakes Region includes a protocol on the prevention and punishment of genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity. I encourage all the countries of the Great Lakes region to fully implement it. I also encourage them to expedite the arrest and prosecution of the remaining fugitives of the 1994 genocide, including Mr. Felicien Kabuga.

Preventing genocide is a collective and individual responsibility. Rwanda's survivors have made us confront the ugly reality of a preventable tragedy. The only way to truly honour the memory of those who perished in Rwanda 17 years ago is to ensure such events can never occur again. See [full source &#160;](#)