

**STATEMENT BY H.E. GEORGES REBELO PINTO  
CHIKOTI, SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE  
ORGANISATION OF AFRICAN, CARIBBEAN AND  
PACIFIC STATES (OACPS)  
ON THE OCCASION OF THE 26TH  
COMMEMORATION OF THE GENOCIDE  
IN RWANDA**

**TUESDAY, 7 APRIL 2020**

Today marks the 26th anniversary of the Genocide perpetrated against the Tutsi in 1994. Over the past 16 years, the OACPS has commemorated this day in accordance with the decision of the 59th Session of the OACPS Council of Ministers. This attests to the OACPS' unwavering solidarity with the Government and people of Rwanda, and our solemn commitment to never forget one of the most heinous crimes against humanity.

This year's remembrance under the current circumstances underscores the significance of international solidarity. It recalls the importance of unity and alliances to address global challenges, a principle that was tested in 1994 when the international community remained silent to a nation's cry.

As we commemorate this day we are sadly reminded of the negative impact of genocides and the importance of collective responsibility through the commitment by all our Member States to uphold their obligations under international law to prevent abuses and protect their populations.

This commemoration also calls for building the resilience of societies in accordance with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16, through the strengthening of the rule of law, and the creation and maintenance of inclusive and accountable

institutions which safeguard against the structural root causes of atrocities. Additionally, the importance of promoting a culture of peace and non-violence that includes respect for diversity and non-discrimination, leads to building societies that are resilient to the risk of genocide.

I commend the Government and people of Rwanda for the courage and resilience that they have demonstrated in rising from the depths of adversity to rebuild and rehabilitate their country socially, politically and economically; and to mend the deep ethnic-based differences that so devastated their country.

Rwanda now remains a beacon of hope for peace and tranquillity, as one of the largest troops contributing nations to the United Nations Peacekeeping Operations. A nation that was brought to its knees, stands ready to prevent such events from never happening again. It is therefore my hope that all States will remain vigilant and determined to strengthen cooperation to combat genocide.

On behalf of the OACPS, I would like to reaffirm our compassion, solidarity and support for the Government and people of Rwanda. As we commemorate this day under the theme **Remember, Unite and Renew**, let us resolve to never forget these heinous crimes against humanity. Let us REMEMBER to honour the victims and survivors by

advocating for, and boldly defending the international norms, practices and rules-based order at a time when multilateralism is under threat.

Let us UNITE in supporting Member States in their efforts to build bridges across countries, promote tolerance, understanding and genuine trust amongst communities, for a world free of hate and division.

Let us RENEW our commitment to identify and advocate for concrete actions by governments, religious leaders, civil society and all other relevant bodies, to promote accountability and reconciliation.

Let us never deviate from this commitment and resolve to nurture these values that will provide a life of dignity and security for all.