



STATEMENT BY

H.E. MR. GEORGES REBELO PINTO CHIKOTI

**SECRETARY- GENERAL
OF THE ORGANISATION OF AFRICAN,
CARIBBEAN AND PACIFIC STATES (OACPS)**

**ON THE OCCASION OF THE 30TH
COMMEMORATION OF THE 1994 GENOCIDE
AGAINST TUTSI IN RWANDA
"Memory – Unity – Renewal"**

7th APRIL 2024

**Mr. Andre Bucyana, Charge d’Affaires a.i. of the Embassy
of the Republic of Rwanda in Brussels,**

**His Excellency, Dr. Jesse JEAN, Chair of OACPS Committee
of Ambassadors,**

The Mayor of the Commune of Woluwe-Saint-Pierre,

Distinguished Members of the Diplomatic Corp,

Members of the Rwandan Diaspora,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I thank the organizers of this incredibly important event. We are gathered here today for this solemn ceremony to commemorate the genocide perpetrated against the Tutsis in Rwanda..

You will recall that in 2003 the United Nations General Assembly declared April 7 is the International Day of Reflection on the Genocide against Tutsi in Rwanda. Since then, the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States has joined with the Embassy

of the Republic of Rwanda in Brussels to commemorate the 1994 genocide. This is a day to remember the immense tragedy that befell a nation and the lasting scars it left on the conscience of humanity.

We join hands in solidarity in memory of the victims, we join hands in solidarity in paying tribute to the survivors and we join hands in solidarity in reaffirming our commitment NEVER TO FORGET, as we strive and hope for a world that is far better, free of such atrocities.

The genocide against the Tutsi which unfolded with brutality and cruelty that defies all imagination, stands as a stark reminder of the darkest depths of human depravity. It illustrates the disastrous consequences of hatred, division and the failure to respect and protect the dignity inherent in the rights of every individual.

The annual commemoration of the genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda is an opportunity to remember the victims of the genocide and, beyond that, an opportunity to acknowledge the resilience and strength of survivors. We applaud the survivors for their remarkable courage in rebuilding their lives and communities despite the huge loss and suffering they endured. Their stories of survival, their actions of perseverance and their hearts to forgive, inspire us all to strive for reconciliation and healing. Their stories demand of us to promote love, peace and unity.

The significant presence of Ambassadors and Heads of Mission from Africa, Caribbean and Pacific nations at today's event bears witness to the values we uphold in this regard.

It is, therefore, fitting that we join the Charge d ' Affairs and Official of the Embassy in Brussels and the Government and the people of the Republic of Rwanda, including the diaspora, in

commemorating the 30th anniversary of Kwibuka. It is important that we continue to recall and sensitize the global community of untold suffering resulting from genocide and ensure that, through collective memory, our pronouncements of condemnation of what occurred the atrocities they experienced are never repeated.

Excellencies,

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

I believe and expect that this commemoration will significantly contribute to raising international awareness of the destructive effects of genocide and other heinous crimes. We further hope that this commemoration will marshal, support for collective global action in support of policies and processes that will prevent impunity globally such crimes that were committed in Rwanda and elsewhere. Most importantly, the annual commemoration is about supporting a national process of reflection, reconstruction, reconciliation, healing and recovery from the pain of genocide that

still lingers in the memory and lives of survivors and the Rwandan people as a whole.

For the OACPS, this commemoration provides yet another opportunity to reiterate its firm and enduring commitment, repeatedly expressed by OACPS Heads of State and Government in declarations issued at their regular Summits, and which guides OACPS initiatives and actions aimed at addressing our peace and security challenges in various political hotspots in our Member States

On a separate note, the horrendous events in Rwanda in 1994 gave rise to the importance of setting up an African early-warning mechanism, and for establishing an effective system for the international responsibility to protect, as well as stemming the negative impact of the media and propaganda. Such preventive approaches and measures must be constructed on pillars of good

governance, respect for human rights and human dignity as well as of solid democratic principles.

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On this solemn occasion, let us reaffirm our commitment to combatting genocide denial, which we frequently witness in various conflict spots. Let us combat hate speech and deal with all forms of discrimination. Let us stand together to promote justice, accountability and reconciliation. And let us do all we can to ensure that the lessons of history are learned and heeded.

In conclusion, as we reflect on the past, let us also look to the future with hope and determination, working tirelessly to build a world where diversity is embraced and celebrated, where human rights are respected and where every human being is valued and

respected, in a manner that atrocities such as those that occurred in Rwanda must never occur again.

May the courage and resilience of the Rwandan people serve as a beacon of hope for a brighter and more compassionate future for all humanity.

I thank the OACPS Ambassadors and all who are here present, for making the time, in solidarity and remembrance, to share this moment with the Peoples of Rwanda, in particular, and the global community, in general.

I thank you for your kind attention.