

DISCOURS DE S.E. PATRICK I. GOMES, SECRÉTAIRE GÉNÉRAL DU GROUPE DES ÉTATS ACP À L'OCCASION DE LA 24^e COMMÉMORATION DU GÉNOCIDE RWANDAIS, samedi 7 avril 2018.

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Your Excellency, Mr. Amandin Rugira Ambassador of the Republic of Rwanda,

Your Excellency, Mrs Sheila Monteith, Ambassador of Jamaica and the Chairman of the ACP Committee of Ambassadors,

Distinguished Invited Guests and Friends,

Dear Sisters and Brothers from Rwanda,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me from the onset, on behalf of the ACP Group, to welcome each of you to the ACP House which is indeed your house. I am humbled to be addressing you on this occasion.

Today we mark the 24th anniversary of the Genocide perpetrated against the Tutsi in 1994. As custom for the ACP Group in the last 14 years, we commemorate this day to ensure we never forget one of the most heinous crimes against humanity. The ACP Group remains committed to efforts and initiatives that target combating such instances that can lead to situations where man - for no understandable or logical reason – seeks to annihilate his fellow man.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The ACP Group has a moral duty to act on the lessons of Rwanda. The ACP Group reaffirms its commitment to support Member States in their efforts to establish peaceful environments, rule of law and good governance as enshrined in the Cotonou Agreement.

Genocide prevention remains a collective responsibility countries must go beyond words and effectively continue to safeguard our people. When these challenges are met only can we believe we will have truly honoured the memory of those that departed 24 years ago.

On this day of commemoration in Rwanda and throughout the world, ACP joins with the Rwandan people to honor the memory of the victims of the genocide and the dignity of the survivors and reaffirms our determination to keep such atrocities from recurring.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I wish to avail myself of this opportunity to 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, as well as to mend the deep ethnic-based differences that were manipulated, with devastating effect, by the perpetrators of the genocide.

Early this month, I had the honor of visiting your country and no one visits Rwanda and fails to be impressed by the peace, stability and harmony, which are the conditions for long-term sustainable development that have been so carefully nurtured by President Kagame, the government and its people. These achievements give the ACP Group hope that indeed a country can fully embark on the path to peace, serenity, consolidation of unity and national reconstruction.

Rwanda has now become a point of reference for advocating for peace for other nations, by being one of the providers of peace keepers for both UN and African Union. Additionally, Rwanda is now a beacon of hope through its recent gesture of hosting 30000 migrants affected by slavery in Libya. Rwanda remains an inspiration to other countries that a nation can unite and show that reconciliation is possible and truly a champion of progress for nations.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the ACP Group, I would like to reiterate our compassion, solidarity and support for the Government and people of Rwanda. As we commemorate this day, let's really not forget the greater lesson from Rwanda that the ability for evil to reside in our societies, is the same ability for generosity and reconciliation to reside in our societies.

Let's resolve today to nurture these values that will provide a life of dignity and security for all.

Let us never forget to remember, unite and renew!

I thank you for your kind attention and wish each of you great success.

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[1] <http://acp.int/fr/category/story-type/discours-du-sg>