

Administration of Barack H. Obama, 2009

Statement on the 15th Anniversary of the Genocide in Rwanda

April 7, 2009

This week marks the 15th commemoration of the 1994 genocide in Rwanda. It is a somber occasion that causes us to reflect upon the deaths of the more than 800,000 men, women, and children who were killed simply because of their ethnicity or their political beliefs. The memory of these events also deepens our commitment to act when faced with genocide and to work with partners around the world to prevent future atrocities. The figure of 800,000 is so enormous, so daunting, that it runs the risk of becoming a statistic. Today, we must remember that each of the 800,000 individuals who died in 1994 had their own story, their own family, and their own dreams. As we mourn their senseless passing, we must also acknowledge the courageous men and women who survived the genocide and have since demonstrated remarkable strength and generosity in forgiving those who committed these heinous acts. These individuals inspire us daily by working to restore trust and rebuild hope in Rwanda. The United States is committed to its partnership with Rwanda and will continue to support efforts to promote sustainable development, respect for human rights, and lasting peace in Rwanda.

Categories: Statements by the President : Rwanda, 1994 genocide, 15th anniversary.

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