

## **Press Release**

### **Concern: Rwanda**

**APPEAL OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON  
"RWANDA IN ITS REGIONAL CONTEXT: HUMAN RIGHTS, RECONCILIATION  
AND REHABILITATION" (THE HAGUE, 17/9/94)**

#### **For more information:**

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**The text of the main speakers, for example the President of Rwanda Pasteur Bizimungu (text in French) at the international conference in the Hague can be obtained on request by fax or by mail.**

#### **TEXT OF THE APPEAL** (3 pages)

The International Conference on Rwanda, organised at the initiative of the Council of Europe's North-South Centre and its partners in various European countries, in co-operation with the Liaison Committee of Development NGOs of the EU, under the joint auspices of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe and the Organisation of African Unity, met in the Hague on 16-17 September 1994.

Being desirous to contribute to international efforts for the establishment of sustainable peace and stability in Rwanda and the sub-region through reconciliation and reconstruction in the spirit of the Arusha peace process, the Conference made the following appeal.

## I. RECONCILIATION

1. The international community should continue to render relief assistance to the Rwandese refugees and the internally displaced persons. The convening of an international conference on humanitarian relief assistance under the auspices of the United Nations, OAU and with the support of the international community, governments, agencies as well as non-governmental organisations is urgently required.

2. As a matter of urgency an international tribunal under the auspices of the United Nations should be established to bring to justice suspected perpetrators of acts of genocide, massacres and other crimes against humanity. This tribunal could conduct its business inside and outside Rwanda. Such a judicial process will contribute to bring to an end the culture of impunity.

3. The Conference urges all components of the international community to work with the Rwandese government in its efforts to create the conditions for refugees and internally displaced persons to return to their homes in safety. Acts of vengeance and retribution should be prevented.

4. The Conference appeals to host countries to separate and disarm military and militia elements among the refugee population, in conformity with international law, including relevant OAU conventions.

5. The Conference appeals to all components of the Rwandese civil society and government to contribute their utmost to a process of national reconciliation. Such a process could consist of confidence-building measures, putting an end to hostile propaganda and counter-propaganda, establishing pluriformity in the media and education for national unity.

6. The Conference appeals to help the Rwandese government to apply democratic principles and the strengthening of democratic institutions, human rights and good governance with a view to ensuring the broadest possible participation in the political process.

## II. RECONSTRUCTION

1. The Conference appeals to initiate adequate and well co-ordinated international support in all aspects of post-war reconstruction efforts. Particular attention should be given to the role of women in these reconstruction efforts.
2. The Conference appeals to formulate policies and initiate projects for the rehabilitation and the creation of employment opportunities for youth.
3. The Conference appeals to undertake measures and mobilise resources for post war reconstruction efforts through national and sub-regional economic co-operation structures.
4. The Conference appeals to help neighbouring countries to overcome the environmental and socio-economic effects of the Rwandese crisis.
5. The Conference appeals to set up an international economic support mechanism to assist the governments and the people of the Great Lake area.

### III. PERCEPTION AND THE MEDIA

1. The Conference appeals to the Government of Rwanda to respect the freedom of expression; especially the freedom of the media. Special attention should be paid to pluralism and people's accessibility to the media.
2. Furthermore, the Conference appeals for the establishment of an independent, national radio broadcasting station for the promotion of human rights, national dialogue and reconciliation.
3. The Conference appeals for technical and financial support for the rehabilitation of the Rwandese media, including radio and television broadcasting facilities. This should include support for the human resources, including the training of journalists and other media experts.

### IV PREVENTION

1. The Conference appeals to the international community to establish an early-warning mechanism with commensurate early response capacity. This requires financial and material assistance as well as human resources development. Such preventive action should address all real and potential threats to the peace and stability of Rwanda and the neighbouring countries, for instance by setting up a strategic observatory. This early warning mechanisms and commensurate early response capacities should also address the root causes of conflicts.
2. To this end the international community should assist in the strengthening of the OAU Mechanism for Prevention, Management and Resolution.

3. The Conference appeals to the OAU and the international community to assist the Government of Rwanda in strengthening and, where appropriate, re-establishing, a public administration, the judiciary and a national police force, to establish and maintain law and order and the rule of law.
4. The Conference appeals to urgently convene a regional conference under the auspices of the OAU and with support of the international community to address the root causes of the conflict within the region, including ethnicity and with due regard to the need to develop a new vision on the concept of power.
5. The Conference encourages member states of the OAU to strengthen and empower the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights and to accelerate the process for the establishment of an African Court for Human and Peoples' Rights.

Finally the Conference appeals to the OAU, the Council of Europe and the European Union to initiate a process towards a new relationship between Africa and Europe, aiming at genuine equal partnership based on the quest for sustainable socio-economic development, security and respect for human rights, democracy and good governance.

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