

**10 YEARS ON:
SHAPING THE MEMORY OF RWANDA'S GENOCIDE**

On the 7th of April, 2004, Rwanda will mark the tenth anniversary of its 1994 genocide, which saw a million people killed in 100 days. The UK-based Aegis Trust, an organisation addressing causes and consequences of genocide, is currently:

- Managing the creation of Rwanda's national genocide memorial centre, opening in the capital, Kigali, on 7 April. The Centre is modelled on the Beth Shalom Holocaust Centre in the UK.
- Managing the creation of the Murambi Memorial Centre in Gikingoro, which houses Africa's first Genocide Prevention Centre, to open on 9 April.
- Involved in the preparations for Rwanda's official commemorative ceremony, which will be attended by state dignitaries from around the world.
- Responsible for creating an audiovisual record of 'Gacaca', Rwanda's post-genocide communal justice process.
- Supporting projects initiated by survivors on Aegis' staff to assist orphans and HIV-positive rape victims of the genocide.

Brothers Drs Stephen and James Smith, who founded both the Beth Shalom Holocaust Centre and the Aegis Trust, are driving these projects. They are both in Rwanda working 24/7 with survivors and the Rwandan Government.

"We do not create museums for the sake of museums. We create museums to dignify the past, to ensure the historical record and to provide an educational tool for future generations. The Rwandans have been very bold. We are in the process of creating a museum and memorial centre just ten years after the genocide when feelings are still extremely raw.... Genocide takes on a new immediacy when sitting opposite a woman with no family and only half a face, who tells you she wants to help as she wouldn't want anyone to experience what she has gone through."

– Dr Stephen Smith, Aegis Director

If you or your colleagues are interested in covering stories relating to this – and particularly if you or your colleagues are planning to visit Rwanda for the events marking the tenth anniversary of the genocide –, please contact Aegis Press Officer David Brown for more information or to arrange interviews.

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AEGIS TRUST – Rwanda
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**OPENING OF KIGALI AND MURAMBI
GENOCIDE MEMORIAL CENTRES**

“If you knew me, and if you really knew yourself, then you would not have killed me.”
(Felicien Ntagengwa, genocide survivor)

Kigali Memorial Centre

Some 250,000 perished on the streets and in the houses, churches and hospitals of Kigali alone. After the genocide, the Kigali City Council decided to dedicate a site for the burial of its people in a single place. Many mass graves were exhumed from around the city and the remains interred at the Kigali Memorial Centre in Gisozi district. This is now their final resting place. It is a poignant symbol of the devastation that genocide brought to families across the city and the country as a whole.

The cemetery has been developed into a centre and place of reflection and learning for the families of victims, for schools and visitors to Rwanda. You are now able to see the mass graves and view the permanent exhibition, as well as experience the moving children’s memorial and gardens.

Kigali Memorial Centre, Gisozi, Kigali, Rwanda
Mass Graves, Gardens and Exhibition
www.kigalimemorialcentre.org

Murambi Memorial Centre

In Gikongoro province, to the south, some 40,000 to 50,000 perished on 21st April at a single site: the unfinished school complex at Murambi. After the genocide, survivors reburied the dead. On removing the bodies from their shallow grave, they preserved 800 of the corpses in lime. An insight to the genocide in Gikongoro is powerfully detailed in the centre’s exhibition. But the full story of the province remains to be discovered. What is certain, however, is that Murambi poses some of the most challenging questions you will ever encounter.

The main building of the complex houses a Memorial Museum, where some of the corpses are interned; a witness to the genocide and a warning to the world. Africa's first Genocide Prevention Centre has been set on the first floor and offers a program of conferences and seminars for the public, for students and for scholars.

Adjacent to the building are large graves containing most of those murdered on the site, surrounded by smaller school buildings that remain today as they were following the genocide.

The Centre is about two and a half hours' drive south from Kigali, and half an hour drive from Butare, home of the National Museum of Rwanda, on the road to Nyungwe forest and Kivu Lake.

Murambi Memorial Centre, Butare, Rwanda

Mass Graves, Gardens and Exhibition

www.murambimemorialcentre.org

The Aegis Trust, UK registered charity 1082856