



## **20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Rwanda genocide**

### ***Reading of testimonies, in support of the survivors***

#### **Uyisenga (34 years old). Taken in 2008**

I do not cry for justice because it is beyond my reach, the horrors of genocide have been reduced to a mere manslaughter; no justice can bring back my sanity and life.

I was there when the madness struck. I was a child, and yet not really, I was only 14 years of age. I don't know how I lost my family, all I know is that wherever they lie, they have more peace than I can ever achieve; pain and sorrow can never reach them.

I ran with different people in search of safety. Children, men, women, grandmothers, grandfathers, were struck with machetes, clubs and pangas. As they fell down, those with energy continued the journey, surrounded by heaps of mutilated and rotting bodies.

I don't know why I was being chased, but it felt the right decision to run. Now I know I should have stayed put, and joined the fate of my family. My body was struck with sticks and machetes, but I still ran on. I was raped and abused, but still had the courage to keep running. You may say that I am brave and courageous. Yes I have looked death in the face, and have paid a shocking price to survive. But in some ways, I was lucky. I did not see my family killed. Not knowing whether they were tortured or not, seeing babies shot and killed for target practice. This should never happen to anybody.

Then the day of judgement came. I have buried my family; others do not know where their relatives lie. I am among the many dead and yet I am not buried. I remain as a statement to what happened to a million others, for you and for the world to hear.

This should never happen to anybody. History has a way of repeating itself, don't allow it. By remembering me, you remember all those innocent victims. Moving forward and



forgetting what happened is forgetting me. Then there will be no reason for me to live. I live to bear witness



When I returned to school, we always had difficulty



He told the other militiamen to reduce my height because I had always been arrogant; so they got clubs and hit my legs. They didn't cut my leg off, but they hit it until it was all broken. I couldn't move; I was shaking all over. Later, I escaped to a refugee camp. But little did I know that this man had made me pregnant. I had the problem of the pregnancy and the problem of the leg, which had swelled up.

I knew that nobody would be happy with the child, but I prepared myself. I was excited about it. Today, if you want trouble with me, then show me that you hate my child. I am a mother, yes, but I am not a mother like I ought to have been a mother. Maybe God chose that this is my life. I've accepted it. Although, I think if it wasn't for the genocide, I would have been a better mother.

My family didn't show me that they didn't like my child. In Rwandese, a child is an angel, is innocent. You can't take the sins of the father and blame them on the child. My family accepted this child, but I am talking about my family, not the family of the father. My son is nineteen years old, and I think he knows, though we have never sat down and squarely talked about it. Once he came crying and yelling that someone told him, "You're the son  
n



**Jocelyne (41 years old). Taken in 2008**

About ten thousand people had fled to the church compound at the time. After a week,



As they were cutting people, blood was falling on us. I confess that I was so thirsty that when the blood ran into my mouth, I drank it. The taste was a mixture of salt and blood. When they came to my layer, the militiamen said, "I think this one is already dead." I pretended to be so. He removed my watch and then my shirt. I waited and then woke up around 3:00 a.m. I didn't know where I was, but then I remembered the church and the dead bodies. I moved slowly, stepping on dead and wounded people, until I got so disoriented. My son was alive, but I learned later that my other two children were killed after I left them behind in the church.

All survivors have issues, but survivors who went through what I went through have bigger challenges. I am expecting death soon, and when I die who is going to look after my children, who will be their safety net?

\*\*\*

**Donathile (38 years old). Taken in 1 314.45 0 0 n4(g)6(h)3( )461(w)12(h)TJ53( )3045 T[1 314.45 d**



At night he came he came and raped me. His wife was there, but he never bothered about her. In the morning, he put a spear to me and said, "you shouldn't move. If you move, you will be killed." He told me that from that day on, I was his second official wife. I stayed in that man's house as a wife. He went to kill; then he came back and raped me. He went to kill; he came back. I was there for about months. I never loved him. He was married with four children. I was still a virgin.

If he asks for forgiveness publicly and he tells everybody what he did to me, I'm willing to forgive him. There is this pamphlet that has gone around telling us that we must