Guidelines for Commemoration of the Genocide against the Tutsi

Remembering Genocide against the Tutsi is for Rwandans and Foreigners.

According to the article N° 15/2016 on 2nd May 2016 about the Commemoration of the Genocide against the Tutsi and the preservation of the memorial sites.

A. Commemoration period of the Genocide against the Tutsi

Remembrance of the Genocide against the Tutsi is always with us, but the official period is particularly seven days beginning on April 7 to April 13 every year in all Districts. This period continues for 100 days until 3 July every year.

In Rwanda, each institution, Government organization, Embassy, non-government organization, local NGO and religious organization organize the venue and a day for Commemoration of the Genocide against the Tutsi, and participate Commemoration activities.

Outside Rwanda, Rwandan Embassies and Rwanda diaspora organize the Commemoration of the Genocide against the Tutsi. This may be at one place or in different places in the country of residence.

B. Requirements for the Commemoration of the Genocide against the Tutsi

Security and health institutions are informed on time about all activities for the Commemoration of the Genocide against the Tutsi in order to get prepared for it.

All institutions concerned by the Commemoration of the Genocide against the Tutsi should record videos and audio of the Remembering activity and hand them to the National Commission for the Fight against Genocide not later than July that year.
C. Preparation before the Commemoration of the Genocide against the Tutsi

1) Budget for the Commemoration of the Genocide against the Tutsi.

Every institution should plan the programme and the budget yearly to be used in all activities for Commemoration.

If the Commemoration activity is organized by a government institution, it is a must that the Commemoration programme is included into the annual plan and follow the rules of national budget.

2) Training of presenters of Genocide talks during the Commemoration week

Districts should make a list of the selected presenters of talk shows and hand it to the National Commission for the Fight against Genocide not later than 10 February every year.

The selected presenters should have enough knowledge in public talk shows and every Village should select 3 candidates.

All presenters of the Genocide talks must attend trainings given by the National Commission for the Fight against Genocide, in order to have the required knowledge to reach the goal.

Districts organize different places for trainings in order to facilitate that the presenters do not have to make long journeys. Also, training should start not later than between 20 February and 25 March every year.

Non-governmental organizations, Associations, Federations operating in Districts which wish to send their candidates for trainings should inform and send the list to the Districts before 10 February every year in order to include them into the Commemoration programme.

D. The Commemoration activity

3) In Villages.

The Commemoration week starts in all villages countrywide, then one village in every District is selected for the Commemoration activities on District level.

Districts should prepare Villages which have been selected at the District level and send them earlier to the National Commission for the Fight against Genocide not later than 15 March every year.

In selecting these Villages, the emphasis is put particularly on history of the Genocide against the Tutsi in said Village, the impact of the Genocide against the Tutsi or the importance of the message needed to be delivered every year for the Commemoration against the Tutsi.

4) Village Genocide talks during the Commemoration week

All the citizens of the Village participate in the daily talk groups throughout the week. The Genocide talks begin on April 7 before noon and end on April 13 at noon.

Then between April 8 and 12, talk shows will be from 3pm to 5pm.
Every talk forum should have enough time to discuss on the topic based on the questions given by the National Commission for the Fight against Genocide.

5) Genocide talks at office work places during the Commemoration week (Ministries, Organizations, Associations, etc.)

During the Commemoration week, Genocide talks for people working in different institutions, Government and non-Government, will be at their work places from 3pm to 5pm.

Institutions select a presenter who is knowledgeable for the Genocide talks, he or she could be from that institution or from elsewhere. The Genocide talks which are presented in Villages as well as places of work are from the National Commission for the Fight against Genocide.

6) Programme of the Commemoration of the Genocide against the Tutsi at Sectors level of every District

Each District should ensure that every Sector has its own Commemoration schedule in order to facilitate those who want to remember their loved ones in different places.

7) Agenda during the Commemoration of the Genocide against the Tutsi by the non-religious groups

The ceremony for the Commemoration of the Genocide against the Tutsi should be held at most during 3 hours in order to make it easy for participants and to avoid tiredness.

When the ceremony is combined with the burial of the found bodies of those who were killed during the Genocide against the Tutsi, and it is not possible to meet the 3 hours schedule, then the local authorities analyses and decides the correct amount of time and put into consideration the security circumstances of the participants.

In order to harmonize the ceremony of the Commemoration of the Genocide against the Tutsi in the whole country, the organizers arrange the agenda as follow:

✓ Introduction (between 5 to 10 minutes)
✓ Prayer (between 5 to 10 minutes)
✓ Welcoming speech (between 5 to 10 minutes)
✓ Talk forum about the Commemoration of the Genocide against the Tutsi (between 20 to 30 minutes)
✓ Testimony of a survivor of the Genocide against the Tutsi (not more than an hour)
✓ Message from IBUKA Association (between 10 to 20 minutes)
✓ Message from the representative from the families whose bodies were buried that day (not more than 10 minutes)
✓ Message from the National Commission for the Fight against Genocide (if represented and when his representative has not been the presenter of the Genocide talks, between 10 to 15 minutes)
✓ Message from the Guest of Honor (according to his/her speech).

During the ceremony, poem and songs interact in tribute to the Commemoration of the Genocide against the Tutsi.
8) **Pray time during the Commemoration of the Genocide against the Tutsi organized by the non-religious groups**

During the Commemoration ceremony organized by the institutions according to the law N°15/2016 on 02/05/2016 governs the Commemoration ceremony, cater for the memorial sites; The pray time should be short and not exceeding 10 minutes, and in case there are many religious representatives, one should stand for the others.

9) **Mass and fellowship time during the Commemoration of the Genocide against the Tutsi organized by the non-religious groups**

During the Commemoration ceremony of the Genocide against the Tutsi, there should not be inequality in the religions. The reason why masses and fellowship are not allowed in the Commemoration ceremony of the Genocide against the Tutsi is because it takes long time, and all the participants do not always belong to all the churches.

For those who wish to attend mass or fellowship should do so before or after the Commemoration ceremony, which also should be at a different venue.

10) **Mass and fellowship time during the Commemoration of the Genocide against the Tutsi organized by the religious groups**

When organized by the Catholic church, religious groups, or any other legal religion with a purpose to remember their followers or their members killed during the Genocide against the Tutsi: the organizers of the Commemoration of the Genocide against the Tutsi do it according to their belief but in respect to the laws.

11) **About testimonies during the Commemoration of the Genocide against the Tutsi**

Testimony during the Commemoration of the Genocide against the Tutsi should be given enough time like any other activity related to the Commemoration as Genocide talks, songs, poems, mentioning names of those who were killed and to deliver the message related to the theme of the year.

12) **E. Special activities in the Commemoration of the Genocide against the Tutsi**

Those special activities for individuals or organizations related to the Remembering, require permission from local and security authorities in that area where the Commemoration will take place, and the National Commission for the Fight against Genocide has to be informed.

13) **The Night Vigil**

The Night Vigil, to those who organize it, is permitted by the local and security authorities, and an emphasis is put on the conduct and the security of the ceremony.

14) **Walk to Remember**

The Walk to Remember for those who participate in it, is done before the Commemoration and should not be long so that people do not get tired before the actual activity.
14) Burial in honor of the bodies of those killed during the Genocide

During the Commemoration, when there are bodies to be buried, the burial ceremony concludes the Commemoration activity.

Bodies found before or after the Commemoration week, will be buried without wait time for the Commemoration week.

15) Support to the Survivors of the Genocide

According to the law, during the Commemoration of the Genocide against the Tutsi, activities are done to respect those who were killed during the Genocide against the Tutsi. To console, to comfort, to donate to the survivors and other activities related to Commemoration as may be organized by the institutions concerned.

However, during that Commemoration of the Genocide against the Tutsi, it’s not allowed for leadership to force people to give support to the disabled survivors.

Done in Kigali, 25 January 2018

Dr Bizimana Jean Damascène

Executive Secretary