

Remarks by H.E. Mr. Estifanos Afeworki Haile Ambassador of the State of Eritrea to Japan and Dean of the African Diplomatic Corps at the 1994 Rwanda Genocide Memorial Ceremony held in Tokyo on April 7, 2022:

Ambassador RWAMOCYO Ernest of the Republic of Rwanda

H.E. Mr. Koji YONETANI, African Affairs Department, Director-General/Assistant Minister (Ambassador), Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan

H.E. Archbishop Leo BOCCARDI, Apostolic Nuncio to Japan

Dr. Sawako SHIRAHASE, Senior Vice-Rector of United Nations University, Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations

Mr. Takayuki MIYASHITA, Former Ambassador of Japan to Rwanda

Excellencies and Dear Colleagues

Ladies and Gentlemen:

First of all, let me convey in my capacity as the Dean of the African Diplomatic Corps (ADC) and on behalf of all Excellencies and Colleagues present here today our thanks and gratitude to Ambassador RWAMOCYO Ernest for the invitation extended to all of us to attend this solemn memorial ceremony, which is being held in Tokyo, to commemorate jointly and reflect back together on the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda.

Our history books are filled with the most blatant, disgusting, savage atrocities committed by powers and empires which have left deep marks in the hearts and souls of all the people who currently inhabit the six continents. International politics is still vividly marred by them. What makes the Genocide in Rwanda unique is, it happened in the heart of Africa. The heart of Africa that has suffered persistently and repeatedly for generations - both during the colonial and post-colonial period of the African continent.

It happened when the first cold war came to an end. It happened when all the proxy wars and conflicts that engulfed Africa since 1961 were closing down and a new hope of peace and stability was in the horizon for the people of the continent of Africa. If anything has transpired in the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda,

it was the return of the past history with a bigger vengeance. It was a massacre of innocent people. Definitely, there were villains to this sad history – i.e., to put it bluntly, culprits to the 1964 Genocide in Rwanda.

Patrice Lumumba was the Congolese politician and independence leader who served as the first prime minister of the independent of Congo. He was murdered publicly in 1961.

The shock of the murder of Patrice Lumumba in 1961 and the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda still reverberates all over our planet. In the name of humanity, may all the innocent people who were and are still being sacrificed rest in peace. May peace prevail in our planet.

Lumumba said right before he was killed: “Africa will write its own history and it will be a history of dignity and equality”.

Thank you,