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Rwanda: Legacy of 1994 genocide and war yet to be addressed

Ten years on from the start of the genocide in Rwanda, genocide, war and HIV/AIDS have contributed to a generation of orphaned children living in destitution and vulnerable to abuse and exploitation, said Amnesty International today.

In a new report - - *Marked for Death: Rape Survivors Living with HIV/AIDS in Rwanda* - - Amnesty International describes how survivors of the 1994 genocide and war remain scarred and traumatized, often marginalized and with scant access to healthcare.

"The foundation for further conflict and insecurity will remain in place until the Rwandese government honours its proclaimed commitment to human rights," Amnesty International said.

The organization is urging the Rwandese government and international community to provide redress and compensation for victims of the genocide and to take on the challenge of justice in Rwanda. The international community must dedicate financial, technical and political resources to protecting human rights in the country.

In 1994, the Rwandese people witnessed some of the most horrific displays of violence of the last century. Up to a million people were killed during the genocide implemented by the *interahamwe* militia and reprisal killings by the Rwandan Patriotic Army.

Rape survivors are amongst those who remain most affected by the genocide. The United Nations estimates that between 250,000 and 500,000 rapes were committed. Many of these women are now living with sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS, with little hope of medical care or compensation. 80 per cent of rape survivors reportedly still suffer from severe trauma.

Although access to medical treatment is increasing, the vast majority of these women can only hope that someone will be able to care for their children after their deaths. In its new report, Amnesty International calls on the Rwandan government, with the help of international donors, to enhance the provision of medical care to all survivors of sexual violence.

"My first husband was killed during the genocide. I had a three-month-old infant, but I was still raped by militia... Since I learned I was infected with HIV, my [second] husband said he couldn't live with me. He divorced me and left me with three children, so now I don't know how to pay for food, rent, and school ... My greatest worry is what will happen to my children if I die," said a rape survivor in Kigali.

"Rwanda faces enormous challenges in delivering justice. However, without investigating and prosecuting abuses committed both by the genocidal militias and the current Rwandan Patriotic Front government, the rights of Rwandese will continue to be violated, creating long-term instability and impunity," Amnesty International said.

Public Document

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