

Call for abstracts

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE IN COMMEMORATION OF THE GENOCIDE CONVENTION

Theme: From memory to prevention: global responsibility and lessons from Rwanda

Venue: Kigali, University of Rwanda

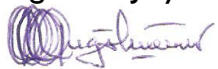
Date of the conference: 9th December 2026

Eight decades after the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (CPPCG) and 32 years after the genocide against the Tutsi was perpetrated, genocide prevention remains an unfinished global project despite impressive policy frameworks. Persistent identity-based politics and violence, genocide denial, hate speech, systematic discrimination of communities, historical distortion, and mass atrocities risk exposing the enduring tensions between normative commitments and practical implementation. It is against the above backdrop that the University of Rwanda through its Centre for Genocide and Conflict Studies (CGCS), in collaboration with the Black Honors College of California State University at Sacramento and Aegis Trust, will host an international conference titled *“From memory to prevention: Global responsibility and lessons from Rwanda”*. The conference will serve as an international platform dedicated to advancing research, policy engagement, education, and collaborative action on genocide prevention.

This call is particularly inviting papers discussing genocide and mass atrocity prevention, conflict transformation, peacebuilding, hate speech and misinformation, transitional and restorative justice case and comparative studies, and related topics. The organizing team is looking forward to receiving papers from academics, practitioners, policy makers and other relevant actors on the aforementioned overall theme and sub-themes. As such, purely theoretical papers, policy-oriented and practical experience-based papers are accepted. Outstanding papers will be presented in plenary sessions and published as Conference Proceedings in a special issue to be coordinated by the CGCS, policy briefs and research agenda.

The conference will take place at the University of Rwanda, at **KN 3 Ave, Kigali, Rwanda**. Abstracts should not exceed 500 words and must include the focus, method, and original contribution to the knowledge. The deadline for submitting abstracts is **30th August 2026**. Authors will be notified of abstract acceptance by **20th September 2026**. The deadline for submitting full papers (word-processed document, 1.5 spacing, size 12, not exceeding 25 pages) is **the 25th November 2026**. Abstracts and full papers should be submitted to: Dr Gasasira Gasana John at g.j.gasasira@ur.ac.rw with a copy to cgcs@ur.ac.rw and a.shyaka@ur.ac.rw

Kigali, 13 July 2026



Assoc. Prof Aggée Shyaka Mugabe, Ag. Director of the CGCS



UNIVERSITY of
RWANDA

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

CENTRE FOR GENOCIDE AND CONFLICTS STUDIES (CGCS)

“FROM MEMORY TO PREVENTION: GLOBAL RESPONSIBILITY AND LESSONS FROM RWANDA”

Kigali Conference & Exhibition Village, 9 December 2026

1. Abstract

The University of Rwanda's Centre for Genocide and Conflict Studies (CGCS), in collaboration with the Black Honors College of California State University at Sacramento and Aegis Trust, will host an international conference titled *“From memory to prevention: Global responsibility and lessons from Rwanda”*. The conference will serve as an international platform dedicated to advancing research, policy engagement, education, and collaborative action on genocide prevention, memory, social media, peacebuilding, and conflict transformation. It will take place in Kigali, Rwanda, in the Kigali Conference and Exhibition Village of the University of Rwanda (KN 3 Ave, Kigali, Rwanda). The conference will highlight issues pertaining to genocide prevention, conflict transformation, and peacebuilding. In addition to a keynote speech, the conference will consist of plenary sessions and parallel sessions to deeply discuss specific aspects of the conference goal. Deadlines for submitting abstracts and full papers are respectively 30 July 2026 and 15 November 2026.

2. Background

9th December 2026 will mark the 78th anniversary of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (CPPCG). The adoption of the CPPCG was considered a landmark international commitment to ensuring that genocide would never occur again. Forty-six (46) years after the adoption of this convention, the genocide was perpetrated against the Tutsi in Rwanda. This year 2026, Rwanda commemorated for the 32nd time the genocide against the Tutsi during which more than one million people were systematically murdered in less than three months. The genocide against the Tutsi and other serious crimes committed elsewhere in the world prompted global, regional, and national debates on ways to prevent further genocides, discrimination, and injustices.

For instance, the United Nations and the African Union achieved some normative progress in this area. In this regard, in 2006, the United Nations officially recognized atrocities committed in Rwanda in 1994 as the “genocide against the Tutsi”. The UN Security Council (UNSC) unanimously adopted Resolution 2150, on 16th April 2014 known as the anti-genocide resolution, and called on all states to renew their commitment to preventing and fighting against genocide

and other serious crimes under international law. The resolution calls on UN member states to “recommit to fighting genocide by addressing early warning risk factors, including hate speech and discrimination and urges them to cooperate in the arrest and prosecution of fugitives of the genocide against the Tutsi. The resolution condemns without reservation any denial of this genocide and urges Member States to develop educational programs that inculcate in future generations the lessons of the genocide in order to help prevent such atrocities in the future.

On 26th January 2018, the UN General Assembly adopted resolution A/72/L.31, amending the title of the annual observance to the “International Day of Reflection on the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda” to “International Day of Reflection on the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda”, thereby clarifying the terminology used for both the victims and the systematic nature of the crime.

At the continental level, African Union member states have embraced the “Right of the Union to intervene in member states...” in cases of war crimes, genocide, and crimes against humanity (Art.4 of the Constitutive Act). During a conference held in 2017 entitled “From Non-interference to Non-indifference: Reflecting on an art 4(h) Agenda at the African Union”, the AU members renewed their commitment to fighting genocide and war crimes and involving the civil society in sharing experience on how they are engaging African governments and inter-governmental organizations concerning issues of the right to protect and prevent mass atrocities. At the regional level, the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) was established to implement the Pact on Security, Stability, and Development in the Great Lakes Region. Adopted in December 2006, the Pact consists of ten protocols and four programs of actions. One of the ten protocols that make up the ICGLR Pact is the Protocol for the Prevention and Punishment of the crime of Genocide, War crime and Crimes against Humanity and all forms of Discrimination.

Internally, Rwanda continued to strengthen its legal and educational infrastructure to prevent the crime of genocide through a robust combination of accountability, civic education, and the strict outlawing of the genocide ideology. Law N° 59/2018 of 22/08/2018 on the crime of genocide ideology and related crimes, the *Ndi Umunyarwanda* programme whose aim is to promote the cohesive national identity against divisive identifications, the introduction of peace education and genocide prevention programs at the secondary and tertiary levels are all part of these efforts.

3. Rationale and aim

Nearly eight decades after the CPPCG was adopted, and 32 years after the genocide against the Tutsi was perpetrated, genocide prevention remains an unfinished global project despite impressive policy frameworks. Persistent identity-based violence, genocide denial, forced displacement, hate speech, historical distortion, and mass atrocities risk exposing the enduring tensions between normative commitments and practical implementation. At the same time, new challenges – including geopolitical fragmentation, weakening multilateralism, digital misinformation, online radicalization, and algorithmically amplified hate – are reshaping the landscape of prevention in ways that demand renewed reflection and collective action.

In the Great Lakes of Africa, a conflict affected-region, dynamics are becoming even more complex. Hate speech is taking worrying dimensions, and the phenomenon is amplified by easy

access to social media.¹ The proliferation of hate speech remains a major challenge to social cohesion and relationships across communities and countries. Hate speech in the region remains mildly denounced by UN officials and human right organizations.² However, the situation continues to worsen. The attacks targeting the Tutsi in eastern DRC is a persuasive sign that hate ideology is a living reality in the region and that another genocide is possible. Observers convergently affirm that hate speech and discrimination in the Great Lakes region remain critical drivers of conflict and identity-based violence, primarily targeting Kinyarwanda-speaking communities and political rivals. Amplified by digital platforms, dangerous rhetoric risks escalating into wider regional instability. As rightly put by Cigdem Kentmen-Cin, “hate speech on digital media frequently fuels real-world harassment, deepens societal polarization, and risks escalating into violence”.³

Domestically, reports from competent institutions consistently point to rampant genocide ideology after 32 years of reconciliation efforts.⁴ Recent parliamentary consultations rightly concluded that “the genocide ideology is persistent in Rwanda and the region” and called for the fight against this ideology through various means, including education and media.⁵ Genocide ideology manifests itself in various ways, including denialism of the genocide against the Tutsi.

Rwanda National Unity Barometer 2025 shows that outstanding progress has been achieved in building national unity and promoting reconciliation among Rwandans. Indicatively, 99% respondents agreed that “commemoration of the genocide against the Tutsi plays a significant role in building reconciliation among Rwandans”, and 98% respondents confirmed that there is “a strong political will to build unity among Rwandans”. In the same vein, 97% of respondents confirmed that “the existing leadership serves everyone equally, without any kind of discrimination”. The same report, however, recognizes that serious challenges persist. Its findings indicate that the genocide ideology is still observed in different parts of the country as confirmed by 23% respondents. According to other 38% respondents, individuals who committed genocidal crimes still adhere to ethnic-based and discriminatory ideologies. The same study shows that social media platforms, particularly those operating from outside Rwanda, continue to pollute the social environment by distorting history and spreading hate-oriented misinformation.⁶

¹ Ndahinda, F.M., & Mugabe, A.S. (2022). Streaming Hate: Exploring the Harm of Anti-Banyamulenge and Anti-Tutsi Hate Speech on Congolese Social Media. *Journal of Genocide Research*, 26, 48 - 72.

² UN Security Council, The Situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo Seventy-Sixth year, 8873rd meeting, S/ PV.8873, 5 October 2021, 3; Nana Rosine Ngangoue, “RDC: François Grignon stresses the importance of setting up a mechanism for sustainable protection of civilian populations”, <https://monusco.unmissions.org/en/rdc-fran%C3%A7ois-grignon-stresses-importance-setting-mechanism-sustainable-protection-civilian> (accessed 12 August 2020); Final report of the Group of Experts on the Democratic Republic of the Congo, S/2019/469, 7 June 2019; Movements of Rwandan rebels in South Kivu raise fears, KST on June 21, 2019, <https://blog.kivusecurity.org/movements-of-rwandan-rebels-in-south-kivu-raise-fears/> (accessed 4 June 2020).

³ Cigdem Kentmen-Cin, “Hate Speech on Social Media: A Systemic Narrative Review of Political Science Contributions. *Social Sciences*” 14: 610., 2025, <https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci14100610>

⁴ National Unity and Reconciliation Commission, Rwanda Reconciliation Barometer, 2020; MINUBUMWE, Commemoration speeches, 2022, 2023, 2024.

⁵ Parliament of the Republic of Rwanda, *Resolutions of the consultative meeting on the nature and manifestations of genocide ideology in the region, its ramifications, and strategies for combating it*, Kigali, March 2025

⁶ MINUBUMWE, Rwanda National Unity Barometer, Kigali, November 2025.

It is against this background that the Centre for Genocide and Conflict Studies (CGCS) at the University of Rwanda is organizing a one-day international conference on “*From Memory to Prevention: Global Responsibility and Lessons from Rwanda*”. The conference is a flagship international platform dedicated to advancing research, policy engagement, education, and collaborative action on genocide prevention, memory, social cohesion, peacebuilding, and conflict transformation.

4. Thematic areas

In line with the overall conference theme above, the following sub-themes will be covered:

- **The Future of genocide prevention:** This sub-theme will evaluate the promise, achievements, and limitations of the CPPCG and contemporary prevention frameworks, and discuss improvements needed to ensure effective prevention in the future.
- **Memory, denial, and historical responsibility:** This sub-area will address genocide denial, historical distortion, memorialization, education, and the protection of historical truth.
- **Rwanda’s post-genocide reconstruction and social cohesion:** This sub-theme will examine lessons from Rwanda, with a focus on the role of home-grown solutions, achievements, tensions, and unresolved questions emerging from the genocide legacies.
- **Technology, youth, and emerging risks:** This topic will explore technology assisted-hate, misinformation and disinformation, artificial intelligence, social media governance, and the role of the youth in the prevention of genocide and manipulations.
- **Regional and comparative perspectives:** The sub-theme will focus on exchanging experiences on approaches and practices to strengthen dialogue on atrocity prevention, conflict transformation, and the peacebuilding process across regions

5. Conference outputs

The one-day conference is expected to lead to the following outputs:

1. The CGCS Research and Policy Agenda 2027–2032.
2. A network of like-minded institutions and organizations working on genocide prevention and conflict transformation.
3. A conference proceedings volume or edited publication.
4. Policy briefs; and
5. Collaborative research initiatives and future grant opportunities.

6. Expected outcomes

It is expected that the conference will produce the following outcomes:

1. Critical review and understanding of practices of genocide prevention and post-genocide/conflict reconstruction approaches and processes.
2. Network of genocide prevention stakeholders and encouragement of broader support from key stakeholders for genocide prevention and conflict transformation; and
3. Wide dissemination of the state of the art on contemporary issues pertaining to genocide prevention and conflict transformation.

7. Conference methodology and format

The conference will adopt a hybrid format to ease the participation of those who cannot make it physically. This implies that both in-person and online participation will be possible. The structure of the conference will consist of a keynote speech meant to lay the ground for discussions that

will follow and plenary sessions and breakout workshops to examine specific aspects pertaining to the conference goal.

8. Conference organization

The conference will be hosted by the University of Rwanda (UR), Centre for Genocide and Conflict Studies. It will involve an active role of Sacramento State University (California, USA) and Aegis Trust. The overall coordination of the conference will be managed by the following people:

- Associate Prof. Aggée Shyaka Mugabe (a.shyaka@ur.ac.rw , CGCS, UR)
- Sandra Shenge (Sandra.shenge@aegistrust.org.rw, Aegis Trust)

In addition to the coordination committee, the conference will consist of an organizing committee comprising 2 sub-committees: the scientific Committee and the logistics and communication committee. The two sub-committees are composed of the following people:

Scientific sub-committee

- Assoc. Prof. Sam Mutarindwa: Chair
- Associate Prof. Denis Bilksha, Deputy Chair
- Dr. Alice Kerekezi Urusaro: Rapporteur
- Associate Prof. Jolly Rubagiza, member
- Prof. Boatamo Ati Mosupye, member
- Dr. John Gasana Gasasira, Contact person

Logistics and communication sub-committee

- Dr Elly Musafiri, Chair
- Mr Samuel Sibomana, Deputy Chair
- Dr Liberata Gahongayire
- Dr Alida Furaha
- Mr Darius Murangwa
- Ms Chantal Mushimiyimana, Secretary

9. Participants

The conference is expected to attract a diverse range of participants. These will include academics, memorial and documentation institutions, global, regional, and national policymakers, civil society, media, development partners, and university students.

10. Call for abstracts

The conference is particularly inviting papers discussing genocide and mass atrocity prevention, conflict transformation, peacebuilding, artificial intelligence, hate speech and misinformation, transitional and restorative justice case and comparative studies, and related topics. The organizing team is looking forward to receiving papers from academics, practitioners, policy makers and other relevant actors on the aforementioned overall theme and the sub-themes. As such, purely theoretical papers, policy-oriented and practical experience-based papers are accepted. More importance will be given to papers related to transnational aspects. Outstanding papers will be presented in plenary sessions and published as Conference Proceedings in a special issue to be coordinated by the CGCS of the University of Rwanda.

Abstracts should not exceed 500 words and must include the focus, method, and original contribution to the knowledge. The deadline for submitting abstracts is 30 July 2026. Authors will be notified of abstract acceptance by 30 August 2026. The deadline for submitting full papers (word-processed document, 1.5 spacing, size 12, not exceeding 25 pages): 15 November 2026. Abstracts and full papers should be submitted to: Dr Gasasira Gasana John at g.j.gasasira@ur.ac.rw with a copy to a.shyaka@ur.ac.rw and cgcs@ur.ac.rw

II. Conference agenda (9 December 2026)

Timing	Item	Responsible
8:30-9:00	Arrival of participants	All
9:00-9:15	Registration of participants	Conference secretariat
9:15-9:40	Welcome remarks	- Vice-Chancellor, UR - California State University
9:40-10:00	Opening remarks	Minister of Education
10:00-10:30	Keynote speech on genocide prevention	TBD
10:30-10:40	Group photo	Protocol & media teams
10:40-11:00	Health break	Protocol team
11:00-13:00	Panel One: Genocide prevention in the world: State of the arts, practices, and challenges - Genocide prevention, normative frameworks and global practices - Memorializing the genocide against the Tutsi: Current situation, challenges, and prospects for the future - Prevention of genocide in the digital era: Social media and the impact of misinformation Moderator:	Speakers TBD
13:00-14:00	Lunch	Hotel
14:00-15:45	Workshops (2) - Workshop 1: Reconstructing post-genocide/conflict: Experiences from Rwanda and beyond - Workshop 2: Genocide prevention and conflict transformation: Perspectives of collaborative strategies in preventing genocide and critical areas for research and policy engagement Moderators: TBD	TBD TBD
15:45-16:00	Health break	Hotel

16:00-16:45	Plenary session to reflect on the workshop discussions Moderator: TBD	All
16:45-17:00	Conference highlights	TBD
17:00-17:15	Closing remarks	Aegis Trust