



## DECLARATION ON THE GENOCIDE IN RWANDA

Adopted by the African Union Permanent Representatives Committee  
During its Special Open Session on the Commemoration of the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the  
Genocide in Rwanda  
7 April 2004, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

We, Members of the Permanent Representative Committee, held an Open Special Session on the occasion of the Commemoration of the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Genocide in Rwanda in accordance with the AU Decision Ex.CL/Dec.16(II) adopted by the Second ordinary session of the Executive Council, held in N'Djamena, Chad, from 3 to 6 March 2003, on the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Genocide in Rwanda and the UN General Assembly Resolution A/RES/58/234 adopted by its 58<sup>th</sup> Session held in New York on 23 December 2003, designating 7 April 2004 as the International Day of Reflection on the Genocide in Rwanda.

We recall, with deep sorrow, the cruel events of the genocide of the Tutsi and moderate Hutus in Rwanda, that was perpetrated in broad daylight in April 1994, without the appropriate reaction of the international community to the suffering and the horrible, brutal and barbarous massacre of one million innocent civilians.

We recognize that the magnitude and the severity of the killings have made the Rwanda Genocide an unprecedented tragedy in the history of Africa after Slavery, Colonialism and Apartheid.

We take note of the shock created by this tragedy and the deep dismay which will remain engraved forever in our mind and which we will continue to feel in the very depth of our hearts.

We hope that the commemoration of the Rwanda Genocide continuously awakens greater awareness of the African peoples and the International Community about the value of life and Humanity, and helps us renew our collective commitment to protect and uphold the fundamental human rights.

We also note the acknowledgements of various world leaders and the inquiries carried out by the International Panel of Eminent Personalities (IPEP) under the auspices of the OAU as well as by the United Nations on the failure to prevent and to intervene in the genocide in Rwanda.

We urge that further investigations be undertaken to reveal the responsibilities, at the national and international level, in the genocide, **especially those who were in a position to prevent the genocide and failed to do so.**

We underscore the need for Justice in Rwanda. In this regard we commend the establishment of and the role played by the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) and the National Courts to bring justice to the victims of the genocide.

We also call upon the African Union to offer its full support to these two institutions that are established to ensure justice for the people of Rwanda and to put an end to impunity.

We express our serious concern over the many perpetrators of the genocide who continue to elude justice, and are convinced that exposing and detention of the perpetrators, particularly their accomplices who have to be brought to book, is a positive step towards justice. In this regard, we call upon the AU Member States and of the International Community to fully cooperate with the ICTR and the Rwandese courts in apprehending these perpetrators.

We recognize the need to restore the dignity of the victims through acknowledgement and commemoration of their suffering in order to encourage the societies to prevent further violations of this magnitude.

We underscore the need for National Reconciliation, and strongly commend the efforts made by the government and the people of Rwanda to create this enabling environment through the policy of inclusion and the establishment of the Rwandese National courts, the “Gacaca” and other appropriate institutions.

We condemn the role played by certain media in making propaganda, instigating part of the population to massacre the other part, covering up the reality of the events and presenting situation of illusionism and revisionism and call upon the mass media to exercise their role in truth, neutrality and credibility.

We reaffirm the principles stipulated in the Constitutive Act of the African Union, in particular the right of the Union to intervene in a Member State in case of genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity, and request the African Union and its Member States to take the necessary measures including those recommended by the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights and the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, to ensure that genocide will never occur again on the continent.

We call upon Member States that have not yet ratified the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights establishing the African Court on Human and Peoples’ Rights, the establishment of the African Court of Justice as well as the Protocol to the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, to do so.

We request the Commission of the African Union to follow-up the implementation of the recommendations made by the International Panel of Eminent Personalities in their report on the Genocide in Rwanda.

We reiterate, on this occasion, the appeal of the African Union for the reform and restructuring of the United Nations, particularly its Security Council.