



"Preventing genocide is a collective obligation. Let us continue to work together to ensure a future forever free of genocide. This would be the most fitting way to remember those lost in Rwanda 18 years ago, and to honour the resilience of the survivors." - Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on the 18th Commemoration of the Genocide in Rwanda.

The Secretary-General yesterday honoured the victims of the Rwandan genocide and stressed that the only way to prevent such atrocities from occurring again is to learn from history.

"Rwanda has learned from the appalling tragedy of 1994. So has the world," Mr. Ban said in a video message to commemorate the 18th anniversary of the genocide in the African nation, which is observed every year on 7 April. "Rwanda is making progress towards building a more peaceful and just society. The international community is striving to ensure that similar tragedies never happen again."

At least 800,000 ethnic Tutsis and politically moderate Hutus were killed in 1994 during three months of bloodletting that followed the death of the then-president Juvenal Habyarimana.

The theme of the 2012 commemoration on the genocide is "learning from history to shape a bright future." A special ceremony was held at UN Headquarters in New York on Wednesday night; include a musical performance, a reading of excerpts from letters from orphans, widows and imprisoned genocidaires, as well as a candle lighting and remarks by various senior UN officials.

In addition, a screening of the documentary 'Sweet Dreams,' which depicts the journey of a group of Rwandan women who created the country's first all-female drumming troupe and first-ever local ice cream shop, will be screened today at the Economic and Social Council's chamber.

Commemorative events led by UN Information Centres will also be held across the world in Bangladesh, Belgium, Burundi, Colombia, Congo, India, Iran, Kenya, Madagascar, Mexico, Namibia, South Africa, Switzerland, Tanzania, Uganda, Ukraine and Zambia.

* **FEATURE:** [Rwanda – Letters from the Living to the Dead](#)

* **Outreach Programme on the Rwanda Genocide and the United Nations**

The [Outreach Programme on the Rwanda Genocide](#) is an information and educational outreach programme run by the United Nations Department of Public Information.

Source: [UN News](#)