



UNITED NATIONS ANNUAL COMMEMORATION OF THE RWANDA GENOCIDE

Memorial Ceremony

Thursday, 7 April 2011
5:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. | ECOSOC Chamber

Organized by the “Outreach Programme on the Rwanda Genocide and the United Nations”, Department of Public Information, in cooperation with the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Rwanda to the UN

“Preventing genocide is a collective and individual responsibility. Rwanda’s survivors have made us confront the ugly reality of a preventable tragedy. The only way to truly honour the memory of those who perished in Rwanda seventeen years ago is to ensure such events can never occur again.”

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, Commemoration of the Genocide in Rwanda, 7 April 2011

Programme

Message from **United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon**

Remarks by:

His Excellency Ambassador Eugène-Richard Gasana, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Rwanda to the UN

His Excellency Ambassador Néstor Osorio, Permanent Representative of Colombia to the UN, President of the UN Security Council

His Excellency Ambassador Aboubacar Ibrahim Abani, Permanent Representative of Niger to the UN, Chairperson of the African Group

Testimony from **Immaculée Ilibagiza**, Rwanda genocide survivor

Musical performance by **Somi**

Moderated by **Kiyo Akasaka**, Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information

Immaculée Ilibagiza



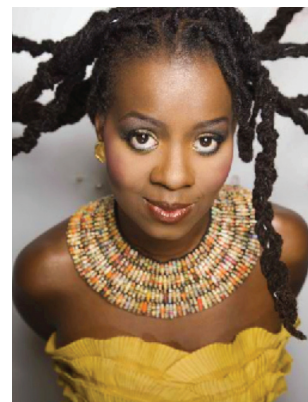
Immaculée Ilibagiza

Immaculée Ilibagiza was 23 years old when the 1994 genocide unfolded. She managed to survive by hiding for 91 days in the cramped bathroom of a local pastor's house along with seven other women. During this time, despite the terrible conditions and the constant threat, Immaculée managed to teach herself English using the Bible and an English dictionary. When she was finally liberated at the end of the genocide, Immaculée learned that most of her family had been brutally murdered. Her knowledge of English allowed her to start working with the United Nations, first in Kigali from 1994 to 1998 and then in New York until 2005. Immaculée managed to forgive her family's murderers. She has gone back to Rwanda many times to spread her message of forgiveness and created a

foundation to help Rwandan orphans. Today Immaculée is a successful author, the recipient of many awards and an acclaimed speaker on peace and reconciliation.

Somi

A true multicultural woman and artist, Somi was born in Illinois to immigrants from Rwanda and Uganda, and spent her early childhood in Zambia. The African cultural legacy, always crucial to her sound, is as vital as ever in her current music. Somi has become one of the most critically acclaimed young African artists of our time. To date, Somi has released three albums, including the recent "If The Rains Come First", which debuted at number 2 on Billboard's World Music Chart and also features her legendary mentor, Hugh Masekela. As her career has taken off, Somi's talents have been called upon for collaborations and live performances with other greats such as John Legend, Baaba Maal, Cassandra Wilson, Mos Def, Paul Simon, and Bobby McFerrin. Most recently, she co-wrote and performed a song



Somi | Photo © Matthew Furman

with internationally renowned Israeli singer-songwriter Idan Raichel on his latest platinum-selling album. In addition to her own works, Somi also aims to bring other important cultural gems to light, and has founded a non-profit arts organization, New Africa Live, committed to producing multidisciplinary events that celebrate contemporary African artists.

The Outreach Programme on the Rwanda Genocide and the United Nations was established by the General Assembly Resolution 60/225 on 23 December 2005 to "mobilize civil society for Rwanda genocide victim remembrance and education in order to help prevent future acts of genocide". In addition to reminding the world of the lessons to be learned from the genocide in Rwanda, the Programme seeks to raise awareness of the lasting impact of the genocide on the survivors and the challenges that they still face today.

For more information about the Outreach Programme on the Rwanda Genocide and the United Nations, please visit: www.un.org/preventgenocide/rwanda