



UMBRELLA ORGANIZATION OF GENOCIDE SURVIVORS' ASSOCIATIONS



ASSOCIATION DES VEUVES DU GENOCIDE AGAHOZO

**Annette Lantos**  
**Chairman, Board of Trustees**  
**Lantos Foundation for Human Rights and Justice**  
**Concord, New Hampshire**

14 October 2011

Dear Annette Lantos,  
IBUKA (the umbrella organization of Genocide survivors' associations) and AVEGA AGAHOZO (Association of the Widows of genocide) are outraged to learn that the Lantos Foundation intends to award the Lantos Prize to Paul Rusesabagina.

We request the immediate withdrawal of this nomination as it is an unforgivable insult to the honor of victims of the genocide of Tutsis, and an affront to the memory and dignity of survivors. This nomination violates the values espoused by your foundation as an ardent champion for human rights and justice.

The survivors of the Hotel des Mille Collines ("Hotel Rwanda" in the film) have repeatedly testified that Rusesabagina did nothing to save their lives. The hotel was never attacked and the refugees' lives were spared because of the following reasons:

- The French envoy on humanitarian action and founder of Doctors without Borders, Bernard Kouchner, visited the genocidal government in Gitarama and warned against harming the refugees in the Hotel des Mille Collines as this would jeopardize support the government was receiving from France;
- The killers knew that the refugees at the hotel would eventually be exchanged with others who wanted to leave the area occupied by the forces of the RPF;
- The French military had a communication unit located in the 5th floor of the Hotel des Mille Collines which made the hotel an unlikely scene for a massacre;
- There was also pressure on Belgium and France by the Belgian owners of the hotel (Sabena) who sought to protect their assets;
- The Rwanda Patriotic Front – RPF (the rebel movement fighting the genocidal government) issued a warning not to threaten the security of the refugees in the Hotel des Mille Collines and at the end of the genocide the refugees from the hotel, including Rusesabagina and his family, were taken to the RPF zone.

According to the testimonies of survivors of the Hotel des Mille Collines, as well as his friends currently in jail for genocide and his employers at the time of the genocide, Rusesabagina did not selflessly offer a safe refuge for refugees fleeing the genocide but demanded payment for rooms at the hotel. Those who had money got the rooms; others, including those who were in the hotel before his arrival, were

threatened with expulsion from the hotel. The hotel owners confirmed that these funds never reached the hotel's account.

Publicly available information shows clearly that Paul Rusesabagina is not a humanitarian hero, but an opportunist who has worked closely with genocide perpetrators including Colonel Bagosora who was sentenced in 2010 to life imprisonment; and General Augustin Bizimungu who was sentenced to 30 years by the UN's International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda set up to try the key perpetrators of the genocide. Rusesabagina was a defence witness for both Colonel Bagosora and General Bizimungu at their ICTR trials.

Rusesabagina has and continues to enjoy the success of the film *Hotel Rwanda* to enrich himself and his family. He claims to have established a support fund for widows and orphans of the genocide in Rwanda, but neither IBUKA nor AVEGA are aware of a single beneficiary of this fund in Rwanda.

Rusesabagina is an extremist politician disguised as humanitarian, who is actively raising funds not to help the victims of genocide but to arm militias, composed of perpetrators of the genocide, who are wreaking havoc, including mass rape, in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo.

Rusesabagina actively promotes negationist ideologies working with well known genocide deniers. In public forums, Rusesabagina flatly denies that the genocide was planned and has justified the genocide as the wrath of the militiamen taking revenge on the RPF.

IBUKA and AVEGA struggle daily to safeguard the interests of survivors of the genocide of Tutsis in Rwanda, and to protect the memory of those who perished. Together with all Rwandans we are working for the reconstruction of our country and reconciliation of the Rwandan people who have to overcome a violent past and live together in harmony. Our work is frustrated by genocide deniers like Paul Rusesabagina and his network of individuals and groups who continue to harbour hate and genocide ideology.

It is our hope that you will find that awarding Paul Rusesabagina is incompatible with your mission to be a vital voice standing up for the values of decency, dignity, freedom, and justice in every corner of the world.

Yours sincerely,

  
Prof. Jean Pierre DUSINGIZEMUNGU  
President of IBUKA



Chantal KABASINGA  
President of AVEGA AGAHOZO

P.O. S.E

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