



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 261

Resolution acknowledging Rwanda's move towards democracy, economic growth and development and the country's attempt to bring diverse ethnic groups together in unity and peace since the violence and war of the early 1990's.

By Council Members Barron, Foster, Gerson, Lopez, Perkins, Sanders, Stewart and Jackson

Whereas, Located in Central Africa, Rwanda is a country which has, according to the CIA World Factbook, a population of approximately 7.8 million people with a median age of 18.1 years; and

Whereas, In 1959, three years before Rwanda gained its independence from a Belgium-administered United Nations trusteeship on July 1, 1962, the majority ethnic group, the Hutus, overthrew the ruling Tutsi King and, according to published reports, killed thousands of Tutsi people and forced another 150,000 to flee into exile to neighboring countries; and

Whereas, The children of the Tutsi people forced into exile would eventually go on to form a rebel group called the Rwandan Patriotic Front, a group that would invade Rwanda in 1990 through neighboring Uganda; and

Whereas, The civil war in Rwanda culminated with Hutu extremists unleashing a genocide that, according to published reports, killed approximately 800,000 people beginning in April 1994; and

Whereas, In July 1994, the Tutsi rebels defeated the Hutu regime, and thus ended the killings, but approximately two million Hutu refugees, many fearing Tutsi retribution, fled to neighboring counties like Burundi, Tanzania, Uganda and Zaire; and

Whereas, Since the end of the civil war, many of the Hutu refugees have returned to Rwanda; and

Whereas, Over the last decade, with help from the international community, Rwanda has made great strides towards democracy, including holding the country's first local elections in March 1999; and

Whereas, During this time, Rwanda has also made great efforts to boost the country's investment and agricultural output; and

Whereas, According to the International Monetary Fund, in 2002, Rwanda's economy grew by more than nine percent; and

Whereas, Rwanda has also made attempts during the last decade to foster reconciliation among its many diverse ethnic groups; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York acknowledges Rwanda's move towards democracy, economic growth and development and the country's attempt to bring diverse ethnic groups together in unity and peace since the violence and war of

the early 1990's.

LS#613

RA

3/29/2004

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