

Scholars, Genocide survivors, weigh in on Rusesabagina's arrest

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Rusesabagina is a walking contradiction. He portrayed his story in the 'Hotel Rwanda' movie as someone who was helping people during the genocide against the Tutsi.

The arrest of terror suspect Paul Rusesabagina has been welcomed by a cross section of Rwandans with most calling the move a victory for the fight against genocide ideology.

The Rwanda Investigation Bureau (RIB) on Monday August 31 said that it has arrested Rusesabagina through 'international cooperation' for his role in founding, leading, sponsoring terror outfits including MRCD and PDR-Ihumure, operating out of various places in the region and abroad.

Rusesabagina, who has been the subject of an International Arrest Warrant, will be tried for multiple charges including terrorism, arson, kidnap and murder.

The Executive Secretary of the National Commission for the Fight Against Genocide (CNLG) Jean-Damascène Bizimana said that the news of the arrest was 'very welcome' and should be a wakeup call for all those who still harbour genocide ideology and denial.

"Rusesabagina is one of the people who have spread genocide ideology and denial for so many year so his arrest is obviously good news. He has over the years not (only) verbally propagated hatred but he has also injected funding into terror outfits for arms and training all aimed at destabilising Rwanda," he said.

Tom Ndahiro, a Genocide scholar says that the news of the arrest is welcome and should be a message to his deputies and 'cheerleaders' that their time is up.

This he said is because Rusesabagina has openly supported genocidaires and their terror outfits that

have crossed into Rwanda and killed innocent civilians for a long time.

“Rusesabagina is a walking contradiction. He portrayed his story in the ‘Hotel Rwanda’ movie as someone who was helping people during the genocide against the Tutsi. Then he went on to openly support the perpetrators. It doesn’t make sense. His arrest should be a message to his deputies and his cheerleaders including Twagiramungu that their time is up,” he said.

Ndahiro challenged the countries that continue to host those who openly deny and negate the genocide saying that such people should be treated as an ‘embarrassment’.

Former Senator Odette Nyiramirimo is one of the people that were hiding in Hotel des Milles Collines during the genocide.

In the movie ‘Hotel Rwanda’, Rusesabagina is credited for having taken care of thousands through the killings before the then RPA soldiers were rescued.

Nyiramirimo called the arrest of

Rusesabagina an exciting moment, adding that anyone who causes destruction of human lives should be held accountable.

“He wants destruction. He is getting Rwandans killed, taking our country back to the dark times. He needs to be held accountable. I hope that all the people that he has been working with are also eventually brought to book,” she said.

In 2015, people who survived the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi at Hôtel des Mille Collines, as well as experts, said that a book by Edouard Kayihura is a major contribution in the fight against Rusesabagina’s lies that he saved the Tutsi at the hotel.

The book, “Inside the Hotel Rwanda : The Surprising True Story... and Why It Matters Today,” written by Kayihura, a survivor from the hotel, tells the story of what really happened during the Genocide. It discredits the 2004 Hollywood film that inaccurately portrayed Rusesabagina as a hero.