

# Melvern : Genocide against Tutsi not a legitimate debate but a historical fact

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Linda Melvern , the British journalist and author on the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi during the launch of her book in Kigali on April 14 . Courtesy

Deniers want to make the Genocide against the Tutsi a legitimate debate rather than historical truth, said Linda Melvern, a British investigative journalist and author.

She said, on April 14, during the launch of her book '*Intent to Deceive : Denying the Genocide of the Tutsi*' which is based on a thorough historical and legal inquiry into the denial of the genocide against the Tutsi.

The launch of the book was attended by First Lady Jeannette Kagame, government

officials, members of the diplomatic corps, researchers and members of the security organs among others.

Melvern discussed some major parts of the book which narrate how the Genocide was planned and executed on the watch of international organs and how some countries have refused to acknowledge it as the Genocide against the Tutsi, giving more room to denialism even up to date.

“There is a ”Tsunami” of denial in the UK currently and nothing could have prepared me for the book by Michela Wrong... it is replete with errors and denial and yet received reviews widely in the British press. I don't think the stage of this history will last, eventually, the truth will come out,” she said.

There are parts of Western media that continue to distort events, she highlighted, the deniers include journalists who have hidden agendas and secret backers who use misleading versions of history and Fake News to try to stop foreign aid and try to weaken Rwandan development.

She cited that the denial campaign coincided with the growth of social media which

has played a huge part in its spread.

“For Rwanda, it is particularly pernicious because a movement has grown up to use this distorted history and try to attack the government here. That is its danger.”

As a retaliation, she said that survivor testimonies will destroy the lies and denial, and for Genocide museums to also include a part that explains why denial exists as an integral of the crime itself.

“It is very important that much is recorded and archives are preserved as research continues.”

Melvern emphasized that to improve the Rwanda-UK ties, officials should understand that in refusing to recognize the designation of the Genocide against the Tutsi, they contribute to the campaign of denial.

Paul Rukeshya, researcher and Digital Content Development Team Leader at Kigali Genocide Memorial, said that the work of

Melvern over the years has inspired him to counter the false narrative of the Genocide against the Tutsi in the face of the so-called powerful agents.

He then encouraged Rwandans to learn the facts of what actually happened to be fully equipped when fighting the battle of denialism that is on the rise.

Sandra Shenge, Regional Programme Manager at AEGIS Trust, commended the author for how she demonstrated the rigorousness in observing and investigating the subject, something that other authors should learn.

“The author had the opportunity of accessing information that is rarely accessed by other authors and she took time to investigate which, unfortunately, many authors don’t do.”

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