

# Survivors' Group Urges University of Auckland to Reconsider Event Over Genocide Denial Concerns.

By **JOLIE TETA** // Published: June 23, 2026



Australia – A growing controversy has emerged at the University of Auckland after Ibuka-Australia Inc, an organization representing survivors of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda, called on the institution to reconsider its support for a scheduled event featuring speakers whom survivor groups have accused of promoting genocide denial and historical revisionism. The appeal was made in an urgent letter sent to University of Auckland Vice-Chancellor Professor Nic Smith ahead of the June 24, 2026 event titled “Displacing Civilians as a War Tactic in Central Africa.”

In the letter, Ibuka Australia stated that it was acting on behalf of genocide survivors and in solidarity with survivor organizations worldwide, including Ibuka Rwanda, Ibuka Europe, Ibuka USA, the Survivors Fund (SURF), and the Ishami Foundation. The organization expressed alarm over the participation of author Judi Rever and speaker Joseph Kimenyi, arguing that their public narratives regarding Rwanda’s history have been widely criticized by survivor communities and numerous genocide scholars. According to the letter, survivors believe that the platforming of such views risks legitimizing narratives that undermine the established historical record of the Genocide

against the Tutsi, which is recognized by the United Nations and numerous international judicial bodies.

Ibuka Australia emphasized that the concerns being raised are not simply academic disagreements but issues that directly affect survivors and families who continue to live with the consequences of the 1994 genocide. The organization stated that many survivors view attempts to reinterpret the genocide through narratives that shift, relativize, or invert responsibility as forms of genocide denial that inflict additional harm on those who lost parents, children, siblings, and entire communities. Survivors argue that such narratives threaten efforts to preserve historical truth and combat misinformation about one of the twentieth century's most devastating atrocities.

The letter highlights the role of the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) in ending the genocide and rescuing civilians who were facing extermination. Many survivors, the organization noted, credit the RPF with saving their lives when much of the international community failed to intervene. As a result, they consider portrayals that recast those forces as primary perpetrators of the genocide to be both historically inaccurate and deeply offensive to survivors' lived experiences.

Ibuka Australia also referenced a recent dispute involving Griffith University in Australia, where similar concerns were raised over an event featuring Judi Rever. According to the organization, Griffith University later indicated that it did not anticipate further engagement with Rever and expressed a willingness to hear directly from survivor representatives regarding their concerns. The survivor group urged the University of Auckland to demonstrate a similar commitment to engaging with those most affected by the genocide and its legacy.

The organization called on the university to urgently review whether the event should proceed in its current form, to publicly reaffirm the historical and legal reality of the Genocide against the Tutsi, and to ensure that future discussions on Rwanda's history involve consultation with recognized genocide scholars and survivor organizations. It also encouraged public officials and university departments to carefully consider whether participation in the event could be interpreted as endorsing narratives that survivors believe contribute to genocide denial.

As debate surrounding the event intensifies, the controversy underscores the continuing global struggle over historical memory, academic responsibility, and the protection of genocide truth. For survivors and advocacy organizations, the issue extends beyond freedom of expression and enters the realm of safeguarding the integrity of documented history and honoring the experiences of those who endured one of the most tragic chapters in modern history. The University of Auckland has yet to publicly respond to the requests outlined in the letter, but the dispute has already attracted attention from survivor networks and human rights advocates across several countries.



—— Judi Rever has been involved in denying the 1994 genocide against Tutsi in Rwanda .



—— According to the report Mr. Kimenyi promotes the genocide denial ideology.