



RWANDA HIGH COMMISSION IN KENYA

NEWSLETTER ISSUE 7 - APRIL 2024

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President Paul Kagame delivering his address on the 30th Commemoration of the Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda. *Courtesy.* Story on page 3



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Address by President Paul Kagame on the 30th Commemoration of the Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda



President Paul Kagame delivering his address on the 30th Commemoration of the Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda. *Courtesy.*

Today, our hearts are filled with grief and gratitude in equal measure. We remember our dead, and are also grateful for what Rwanda has become.

To the survivors among us, we are in your debt.

We asked you to do the impossible by carrying the burden of reconciliation on your shoulders. And you continue to do the impossible for our nation, every single day, and we thank you.

As the years pass, the descendants of survivors increasingly struggle with the quiet loneliness of longing for relatives they never met, or never even got the chance to be born.

Today, we are thinking of you as well. Our tears flow inward, but we carry on, as a family.

Countless Rwandans also resisted the call to genocide. Some paid the ultimate price for that courage, and we honour their memory.

Our journey has been long and tough. Rwanda was completely humbled by the magnitude of our loss, and the lessons we learned are engraved in blood.

But the tremendous progress of our country is plain to see, and it is the result of the choices we made together to resurrect our nation.

The foundation of everything is unity.

That was the first choice: to believe in the idea of a reunited Rwanda, and live accordingly.

The second choice was to reverse the arrow of accountability, which used to point outwards, beyond our borders.

Now, we are accountable to each other, above all.

Most importantly, we chose to think beyond the horizon of tragedy, and become a people with a future.

Today, we also feel a particular gratitude to all the friends and representatives here with us from around the world. We are deeply honoured by your presence alongside us on this very heavy day. The contributions you have made to Rwanda's rebirth are enormous, and have helped us to stand where we are now.

I want to recognize a few, while also asking for forgiveness for not being able to mention all who deserve it.

For example, Uganda, which carried the burden of Rwanda's internal problems for so many years, and was even blamed for that.

The leadership and the people of Ethiopia and Eritrea helped us in starting to rebuild at that time. In fact, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, who is here, even served as a young peacekeeper in the immediate aftermath of the genocide.

Kenya, Burundi, and the Democratic Republic of Congo hosted large numbers of Rwandan refugees, and gave them a home.

Tanzania did as well, and also played a unique role at many critical points, including hosting and facilitating the Arusha peace process. And here I must single out the late President Julius Nyerere who embodied the spirit which laid that foundation.

The Republic of Congo has been a productive partner in rebuilding, and more.



Many of the countries represented here today also sent their sons and daughters to serve as peacekeepers in Rwanda. Those soldiers did not fail Rwanda; it was the international community which failed all of us, whether from contempt or cowardice.

Among those here with us today, I salute the widow and daughter of the late Captain Mbaye Diagne of Senegal, who died a hero as he rescued many Rwandans from death.

At the United Nations Security Council in 1994, moral clarity came from Nigeria, the Czech Republic, and even as far away as New Zealand.

Their ambassadors had the courage to call the genocide by its rightful name, and resist political pressure from more powerful countries to hide the truth. Ambassador Ibrahim Gambari of Nigeria and Czech Ambassador Karel Kovanda are here with us today, and we applaud you.

Even in countries where government policy was on the wrong side of history, both during the genocide and even afterwards, there were always individuals who stood out for their honesty and humanity. We shall always be grateful.

We also appreciate the tangible support we have received from partners beyond our continent over the past thirty years, in Europe, the United States, Asia, and many international organizations and philanthropies.

A notable example of solidarity came to us from South Africa, one among many. Indeed, the entire arc of our continent's hopes and agonies could be seen in those few months of 1994. As South Africa ended apartheid and elected Nelson Mandela president, in Rwanda the last genocide of the 20th century was being carried out.

The new South Africa paid for Cuban doctors to help rebuild our shattered health system, and opened up its universities to Rwandan students, paying only local fees.

Among the hundreds of students who benefitted from South Africa's generosity, some were orphaned survivors; others were the children of perpetrators; and many were neither.

Most have gone on to become leaders in our country in different fields.

Today, they live a completely new life.

What lessons have really been learned about the nature of genocide, and the value of life?

I want to share a personal story which I usually keep to myself.

My cousin, in fact a sister, Florence, worked for the United Nations Development Program in Rwanda for more than fifteen years. After the genocide started, she was trapped in her house near the Camp Kigali army barracks, with her niece, and other children and neighbours, around a dozen people in total.

The telephone in Florence's house still worked, and I called her several times using my satellite phone. Each time we spoke, she was more desperate. But our forces could not reach the area.

When the commander of the U.N. peacekeeping mission, General Dallaire, visited me where I was in Mulindi, I asked him to rescue Florence. He said he would try.

The last time I talked to her, I asked her if anyone had come. She said no, and started crying. Then she said, "Paul, you should stop trying to save us. We don't want to live anymore anyway." And she hung up.

At that time, I had a very strong heart. But it weakened a bit, because I understood what she was trying to tell me.

On the morning of May 16th, following a month of torture, they were all killed, except for one niece, who managed to escape, thanks to a good neighbour.

It later emerged that a Rwandan working at the UNDP betrayed his Tutsi colleagues to the killers. Witnesses remember him celebrating Florence's murder the night after the attack. He continued his career with the United Nations for many years, even after evidence implicating him emerged. He is still a free man, now living in France.

I asked General Dallaire what had happened. He said that his soldiers encountered a militia roadblock near the house, and so they turned back, just like that.

Meanwhile, he conveyed to me an order from the United States ambassador to protect diplomats and foreign civilians evacuating by road to Burundi from attack by the militias. These two things happened at



the same time. I did not need to be instructed to do something that goes without saying. That's what I was going to do.

I do not blame General Dallaire. He is a good man who did the best that could be done in the worst conditions imaginable, and who has consistently borne witness to the truth, despite the personal cost.

Nevertheless, in the contrast between the two cases, I took note of the value that is attached to different shades of life.

In 1994, all Tutsi were supposed to be completely exterminated, once and for all, because the killings that had forced me, and hundreds of thousands of others, into exile three decades before, had not been sufficiently thorough. That is why even babies were systematically murdered, so they would not grow up to become fighters.

Rwandans will never understand why any country would remain intentionally vague about who was targeted in the genocide. I don't understand that. Such ambiguity is, in fact, a form of denial, which is a crime in and of itself, and Rwanda will always challenge it.

When the genocidal forces fled to Zaire, now called the Democratic Republic of Congo, in July 1994, with the support of their external backers, they vowed to reorganize and return to complete the genocide.

They conducted hundreds of cross-border terrorist attacks inside Rwanda over the next five years, targeting not only survivors, but also other Rwandans who had refused to go into exile, claiming thousands more lives.

The remnants of those forces are still in eastern Congo today, where they enjoy state support, in full view of the United Nations peacekeepers. Their objectives have not changed, and the only reason this group, today known as FDLR, has not been disbanded, is because their continued existence serves some unspoken interest.

As a result, hundreds of thousands of Congolese Tutsi refugees live here in our country in Rwanda, and beyond, completely forgotten, with no program of action for their safe return.

Have we really learned any lessons?

We see too many actors, even some from Africa,

getting directly involved as tribal politics is given renewed prominence, and ethnic cleansing is prepared and practiced.

What has happened to us? Is this the Africa we want to live in? Is this the kind of world we want?

Rwanda's tragedy is a warning. The process of division and extremism which leads to genocide can happen anywhere, if left unchecked.

Throughout history, survivors of mass atrocities are always expected to be quiet, to censor themselves, or else be erased and even blamed for their own misfortune. Their testimony is living evidence of complicity, and it unsettles the fictions which comfort the enablers and the bystanders.

The more Rwanda takes full responsibility for its own safety and dignity, the more intensely the established truth about the genocide is questioned and revised.

Over time, in the media controlled by the powerful in this world, victims are rebranded as villains, and even this very moment of commemoration is derided as a mere political tactic.

It is not. It never has been.

Our reaction to such hypocrisy is pure disgust.

We commemorate because those lives mattered to us.

Rwandans cannot afford to be indifferent to the root causes of genocide. We will always pay maximum attention, even if we are alone. But what we are seeking is solidarity and partnership to recognize and confront these threats together, as a global community.

I will tell you another story.

One night, in the latter days of the genocide, I received a surprise visit past midnight from General Dallaire. He brought a written message, of which I still have a copy, from the French general commanding the force that France had just deployed in the western part of our country, Operation Turquoise.

The message said that we would pay a heavy price if our forces dared to try to capture the town of Butare, in the southern part of our country.

General Dallaire gave me some additional advice, in



fact he warned me that the French had attack helicopters, and every kind of heavy weapon you can imagine, and therefore were prepared to use them against us if we did not comply.

I asked Dallaire whether French soldiers bleed the same way ours do; whether we have blood in our bodies.

Then I thanked him, and told him he should just go and get some rest and sleep, after informing the French that our response would follow. And it did.

I immediately radioed the commander of the forces we had in that area, he is called Fred Ibingira, and told him to get ready to move. And move to fight.

We took Butare at dawn.

Within weeks, the entire country had been secured, and we began rebuilding. We did not have the kind of arms that were being used to threaten us, but I reminded some people that this is our land, this is our country. Those who bleed will bleed on it.

We had lost all fear. Each challenge or indignity just made us stronger.

After the genocide, we faced the puzzle of how to prevent it from recurring. There were three broad lessons we learned as result of our experiences.

First, only we as Rwandans and Africans can give full value to our lives. After all, we cannot ask others to value African lives more highly than we ourselves do. That is the root of our duty to preserve memory and tell our history as we lived it.

Second, never wait for rescue, or ask for permission to do what is right to protect people. That is why some people must be joking when they threaten us with all kinds of things, they don't know what they are talking about. In any case, that is why Rwanda participates proudly in peacekeeping operations today, and also extends assistance to African brothers and sisters bilaterally when asked.

Third, stand firm against the politics of ethnic populism in any form. Genocide is populism in its purified form. Because the causes are political, the remedies must be as well. For that reason, our politics is not organized on the basis of ethnicity or religion, and it never will be again.

The life of my generation has been a recurring cycle of genocidal violence in thirty year intervals, from the early 1960s, to 1994, to the signs we see in our region today in 2024.

Only a new generation of young people has the ability to renew and redeem a nation after a genocide. Our job was to provide the space and the tools for them to break the cycle. And they have.

What gives us hope and confidence are the children we saw in the performance earlier, or the youth who created the tradition of Walk to Remember that will occur later today.

Nearly three-quarters of Rwandans today are under age 35. They either have no memory of the genocide, or were not yet born.

Our youth are the guardians of our future and the foundation of our unity, with a mindset that is totally different from the generation before.

Today, it is all Rwandans who have conquered fear. Nothing can be worse than what we have already experienced. This is a nation of 14 million people, who are ready to confront any attempt to take us backwards.

The Rwandan story shows how much power human beings have within them. Whatever power you do have, you might as well use it to tell the truth and do what is right.

During the genocide, people were sometimes given the option of paying for a less painful death. There is another story I learned about at the time, which always sticks in my mind, about a woman at a roadblock, in her final moments.

She left us a lesson that every African should live by.

When asked by the killers how she wanted to die, she looked them in the eye, and spit in their face.

Today, because of the accident of survival, our only choice is what life we want to live.

Our people will never — and I mean never — be left for dead again.

I thank you.

Conference on Kwibuka30: Renewed calls to end hate speech, dehumanisation



In line with the 30th Anniversary of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda, the Rwanda High Commission in Kenya on April 4th organized a conference to discuss the country's 30-year journey of unity and reconciliation, the progress made over the years, and the remaining challenges.

During the conference that brought together more than 500 people, High Commissioner Martin Ngoga stressed the need to learn from Rwanda's dark history of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi, and put an end to the rising hate speech and intolerance in many parts of the world.

He reminded that genocides are not born overnight, but rather stem from deep-seated prejudices, discrimination, and a systematic dehumanization of a particular group, as it was the case for Rwanda.

"As we renew our resolve to prevent such atrocities from ever happening again, we are seeing dangerous trends of rising hate speech and intolerance in

many parts of the world. Particularly troubling is the current widespread proliferation of hate speech and incitement to violence, things that were very clearly present in Rwanda immediately before the genocide," he said.

He went on to say that these vices threaten human rights, social stability and peace, hence calling for decisive, deliberate and timely actions by the international community.

This was also echoed by PLO Lumumba, pan-Africanist and Founder of PLO Lumumba Foundation, who observed that one thing that humans learn from history is that they learn nothing.

He added that it was unfortunate that many decades after the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, another genocide unfolded in Rwanda, and the international community stood by.

Nobody needs to be told of the pain that hatred occasions to man, he observed, reiterating the need to remain vigilant and pre-

vent the repeat of such atrocities.

"We must never forget that eternal vigilance is critical that we may preserve dignity among men. If we are not eternally vigilant, then we are likely to repeat the things that harm us. We cannot afford the luxury of doing nothing when we know that the perpetrators of evil are always in the business of planning the next evil," he noted.

The failure of the international community

Charity Kagwi-Ndungu, Former Trial Attorney at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), who also participated in the conference in Nairobi noted that there was a possibility to prevent the death of a million people during the Genocide against the Tutsi, had the international community had the will to do so.

"The world community could have done better for Rwanda. During that time there was still a lot of help and sympathy going to Habyarimana's regime. Also, the Security Council refused to use the word genocide because it would have required a global response," she explained.

Meanwhile, according to Applied Policy Researcher Lonzen Rugira who also participated in the panel discussion, one of the remaining challenges following the Genocide against the Tutsi is refusing to repatriate or try genocide suspects who are still roaming freely in many parts of the world, consequently denying justice to genocide victims.

"If these countries are refusing to send them to Rwanda or prosecute them where they are, it means they are facilitating the evasion of justice, and, therefore, accomplices in these crimes," he said.

Rwandans in Kenya commemorate Genocide against the Tutsi



L-R: Eritrea Ambassador to Kenya and Dean of African Diplomatic Corps, Beyene Russom; High Commissioner Martin Ngoga, Zainab Hawa Bangura, Under-Secretary General & the Director-General of the United Nations Office at Nairobi (UNON); and Kenya's Permanent Secretary for Foreign Affairs Korir SingOei observing a moment of silence at Kwibuka30 in Nairobi. *Courtesy.*

More than 1000 people including the Rwandan community living in Kenya, Kenyan government officials, members of the diplomatic corps, representatives of UN agencies, and friends of Rwanda gathered at the United Nations Office in Nairobi to commemorate the 30th Anniversary of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi.

During the event held on April 9th, High Commissioner Martin Ngoga noted that although this year Rwanda is commemorating 30 years after a horrific chapter of its history, the country is also celebrating 30 years of unity and resilience, and a whole new generation of Rwandans aspiring for a future free of hatred and division.

The High Commissioner also stated that the genocide commemoration should serve as a powerful reminder to confront hatred, discrimination, and division wherever it may arise.

"Genocide is not an isolated event but a consequence of a society that has allowed prejudice and intolerance to take root. We must ensure that the lessons of the past are never forgotten. We must strive to create a world where diversity is celebrated, where differences are respected, and where all individuals can live free from fear and discrimination," he noted.

Additionally, he said that commemorating the genocide should go hand in hand with collectively fighting genocide denial and bringing to book genocide perpetrators.

"Genocide deniers, including a number of academics, continue to perpetuate negationism by conveniently ignoring the judgements of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda. Negationism can in no way be accepted as a tolerable opinion or a legitimate right. Genocide denial

is a crime, and therefore must be fought by all means,” he underscored.

He added: “Perpetrators and deniers of the Genocide against the Tutsi still continue to move freely in many parts of the world, spreading hate ideology and misinformation on the facts surrounding the genocide against the Tutsi. This commemoration is therefore a collective plea to members of the international community to ensure the arrest of genocide perpetrators and to deny platforms to the deniers of the genocide against the Tutsi.”

Kenya commends Rwanda’s rebirth, progress

Representing the government of Kenya at the Kwibuka event in Nairobi, Korir SingOei, the Principal Secretary of Foreign Affairs in the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs, said that Kenya stands in solidarity with Rwanda and her people, commending how the country was able to rebuild after the darkest chapter of its history.

“We are inspired by Rwanda’s determination to forge ahead with an unwavering resolve. Present-day Rwanda serves as a distinct mirror of progress, a nation founded on a united vision for the future anchored in economic and structural reforms,” he said.

He added: “We stand in respect and admiration of the survivors who despite their circumstances have worked tirelessly to rebuild Rwanda as we know it today. Their resolve, resilience, strength, courage and fortitude are an inspiration to humanity.”

SingOei also noted that the Genocide against the Tutsi serves as a reminder to protect the inherent human rights to life and dignity.

“The commemoration of the genocide against the Tutsi enflames a deep sense of poignancy on one hand, while at the same time reinforces the importance of upholding the collective duty as the international community to never allow the ugliness of intolerance to rear its head anywhere globally,” he said.

He added: “We must never forget that the genocide against the Tutsi happened partly because the international community could not master the resolve to act in a preventative fashion to halt an imminent atrocity.”



L-R: Kenya’s Permanent Secretary for Foreign Affairs Korir SingOei and High Commissioner Martin Ngoga lighting the candles of hope during Kwibuka30 in Nairobi. *Courtesy.*



Delegates during the 30th Commemoration of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi, held at the United Nations Office in Nairobi, Kenya on April 9. *Courtesy.*

President Kagame mourns late CDF General Francis Ogolla

President Paul Kagame on April 19 extended condolences to Kenya after the death of late Chief of Defence Forces (CDF), General Francis Ogolla, and 9 other Kenya Defence Forces (KDF) personnel, who succumbed to a military chopper crash on April 18.

"I send my condolences to President William Ruto, families and loved ones of the plane crash victims including the Chief of Defence Forces General Ogolla who will be remembered for his professionalism and humility in his service," President Kagame said in his post on X.

Last year in June, Gen. Ogolla visited Rwanda and held talks with his Rwandan counterpart, General Mubarakh Muganga, on how to further deepen the existing relations between the two armies.



Kenya's late Chief of Defence Forces, General Francis Ogolla, during his visit in Rwanda on June 27, 2023. *Courtesy.*

President Kagame condoles with Kenyans over deadly floods



Kenya has been experiencing heavy rains which have led to loss of lives and destruction of properties. *Courtesy.*

President Paul Kagame has extended condolences to the people of Kenya, following heavy flooding that ravaged the country, claiming hundreds of lives and leaving tens of thousands others displaced.

"My sincere condolences to you my brother, President William Ruto and the people of Kenya, for the families displaced and the lives lost in the ongoing mass flooding in Nairobi

and other parts of the country. Rwanda stands in solidarity with you and the country in this difficult time," President Kagame said in a post on X.

Recent seasonal rains, amplified by the El Nino weather pattern, have devastated almost the entire East African region, including Rwanda, with floodwaters engulfing villages, killing people and destroying properties.

Prime Minister Ngirente attends IDA21 Summit in Nairobi



Heads of State and Government who attended the International Development Association (IDA21) posing for a group photo. *Courtesy.*

On April 29, Prime Minister Dr. Edouard Ngirente attended the International Development Association (IDA21) Summit for Africa held in Nairobi, Kenya.

Co-hosted by the government of Kenya and the World Bank, the summit brought together 19 African leaders and 32 finance ministers to discuss ambitious economic reforms for accelerating the continent's development.

Following the summit, the leaders published a communique setting out their firm commitment to strengthening governance, unlocking private sector potential and creating jobs, mobilizing domestic resources, delivering on climate change goals, prioritizing increased energy and digital access, and enhancing resilience to climate change and conflict.

Rwanda's ICT Minister Ingabire participates in Connected Africa Summit



On April 22, Rwanda's Minister of ICT and Innovation, Paula Ingabire, participated in Connected Africa Summit held in Nairobi, where she shared

Rwanda's digital transformation journey over the last 30 years.

Themed "Shaping The Future Of A Connected Africa: Unlocking Growth Beyond Connectivity", the summit aimed to promote greater collaboration and fuel investment towards the achievement of the Africa's Digital Agenda 2063 and Vision 2030.

On the sidelines of the summit, Minister Ingabire visited the East

Africa Device Assembly Kenya (EADAK) Ltd, in Machakos County, a visit which served as an opportunity to learn how the plant is harnessing connectivity across Kenya.

She also visited, alongside other Ministers who were attending the summit, Konza Technopolis, Kenya's smart city project seeking to promote ICT, life sciences and engineering.

President Kagame rallies world leaders to invest with and in Africa



On April 28, President Paul Kagame said the world should invest with and in Africa, stressing that the continent is endowed with both natural resources and human capital.

He made the remarks in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, during the World Economic Forum's opening plenary session on the "New Vision for Global Development" that discussed how to reignite the momentum of development and economic convergence.

"We are seeing Africa, much as you may find problems here and there, Africa is coming together, Africa is moving forward. Different countries have decided to embrace the growth of the economy," he said.

He added: "This can't be coming from nothing but the good efforts that Africans are putting in place. And therefore, the rest of the world must look at Africa as an important entity to develop affairs with its politics, economy."

The President also noted that "Africa is the only continent that has a growing middle-class," adding that "the rest of the world has to see that this is an important place to invest with and invest in."

Additionally, he highlighted the role that Africa needs to play in this regard, where he mentioned that Africa should avoid any victim mentality, and instead start raising itself to the level where it should be.

Rwanda's tourism revenue hit \$620 million in 2023

Rwanda's tourism revenue rose by 36 percent from \$445 million in 2022 to reach \$620 million in 2023, according to the 2023 Rwanda Development Board (RDB) annual report.

The growth generated from 1.4 million visitors indicates that the sector has surpassed 2019 revenues, at a recovery rate of 124 per cent from the hurdles of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Consequently, RDB's revenue sharing scheme with communities surrounding the national parks saw Rwf2 billion (\$1.54 million) disbursed in different projects including 54 projects in agriculture sector, 43 infrastructure projects, 8 projects aimed at supplying equipment for rural shops, housing, and artisans, as well as 6 projects for community enterprises.

When it comes to the Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and



Events (MICE) industry, Rwanda recorded \$95 million in revenue in 2023, from 160 events that attracted 65,000 delegates.

The revenue generated from tourism in 2023 is a step closer to achieving the \$800 million

revenue target by 2024, from \$400 million in 2017, as highlighted under the National Strategy of Transformation (NST1), the government's seven-year (2017–2024) strategy that sets out plans for achieving its larger picture vision for economic development.

Rwanda's horticulture exports generate \$46m in 8 months



Rwanda's fruit, vegetable and flower exports generated \$46 million from July 2023 to February 2024 alone, before the fiscal year 2023/2024 closes.

According to statistics by the National Agricultural Export Development Board (NAEB), horticulture exports increased to \$58.1 million in 2022/2023, from \$42.8 million a year earlier.

NAEB attributes the good performance to deliberate efforts to promote the agricultural sector, which among other things include training farmers on techniques to increase productivity, linking farmers to local and international markets, as well as participating in international exhibitions.

Rwanda remains confident it will achieve the target to generate \$1 billion from agricultural exports in 2023/2024, considering the performance of the previous financial year.

Rwanda reduces Malaria cases by 88%



The Rwanda Biomedical Center (RBC) has announced that Malaria cases in Rwanda have dropped by 88 per cent between 2016 and the year 2023.

Statistics by RBC show that in 2016 the country recorded around five million malaria cases, while in 2023 Rwanda registered 600,000 cases, thanks to combined intervention measures.

The statistics also show a reduction in malaria deaths, from more than 600 in 2016 to 51 in 2023, representing a 91 per cent reduction.

The strides made are credited to adaptable evidence-based approaches such as information, education and communication, dis-

tribution of Long-lasting Insecticidal Nets (LLINs), Indoor Residual Spraying (IRS), and early diagnosis and effective management of malaria cases.

Community health workers also play a pivotal role in malaria management, diagnosis, and treatment. Currently, every village in Rwanda has two community health workers managing malaria.

The progress was highlighted by RBC as Rwanda prepared to join the global community in observing World Malaria Day on April 25, an annual observance aimed at increasing awareness about malaria and raise funds for its prevention and treatment.



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