

Former ICTR prosecutor takes on Blinken on Rusesabagina, Genocide

Edwin Musoni

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The US Secretary of State, Antony J. Blinken, during a joint news conference with Foreign Affairs Minister Dr Vincent Biruta in Kigali on August 11.

A former senior prosecutor at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) has taken on the US Secretary of State, Antony Blinken, on a number of issues, citing double standards in the way America's top diplomat conducted himself during his visit to Rwanda last week.

Barbara Mulvaney, who is also an American, was the lead prosecutor for Col Theoneste Bagosora, the key architect of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi.

In a thread she shared on her timeline on the microblogging platform Twitter, Mulvaney challenged Blinken and the US establishment for their refusal to recognize what happened in Rwanda as a genocide that was perpetrated against the Tutsi.

She said that the UN court, which has since closed, duly convicted Bagosora and his co-accused of perpetuating the Genocide against the Tutsi, an appellation that is officially recognized by the UN.

During his recent visit to Rwanda, Blinken avoided using '1994 Genocide against the Tutsi' be it at the press briefing or during his visit to the Kigali Genocide Memorial.

At the memorial, Blinken referred to what happened in Rwanda 28 years ago as "100 days of genocidal violence in 1994" and refused to refer to it as a Genocide against the Tutsi.

This rattled Mulvaney who embarked on a Twitter thread to set the record straight.

"Almost 20 years ago we started the Bagosora trial. After 442 days in court and 242 witnesses, we convicted Bagosora et al for committing the Genocide against the Tutsi in

Rwanda. A couple of days ago the US Secretary of State could not say “Genocide Against the Tutsi in Rwanda” it seems it is not correct - How did this happen?” Mulvaney wondered.

She added that “I truly hope that Secretary Blinken makes it a priority to rectify this situation and acknowledge the Genocide Against the Tutsi in Rwanda.”

April 7 is globally marked as the “International Day of Reflection on the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda”. It is a day set forth by the United Nations.

However, the United States and the United Kingdom remain the only countries that have refused to add ‘against the Tutsi’ in the naming of the Genocide.

Rwanda has previously challenged the deliberate refusal by the two countries to use the internationally-accepted appellation. Rwanda’s permanent representatives at the United Nations lodged their protests against the two countries while Rwanda’s minister of foreign affairs tweeted last year during the commemoration saying that, “And to those who are struggling to properly name the Genocide against the Tutsi, it is better not to send us any message. We will be okay, as we always have been!”

About Rusesabagina

In a related development, Mulvaney also revealed in her thread how it was not right for the United States to pursue the release of convicted terrorist Paul Rusesabagina and revealed how he was not willing to cooperate

with the ICTR in having masterminds of the Genocide prosecuted.

“We had the Mille Collines Hotel as part of our case - he was nowhere to be seen - no help whatsoever I asked the investigators and others – they told me he was uncooperative,” Mulvaney wrote.

Mulvaney is not the first one to pin Rusesabagina to the Genocide and Genocidaires. In her book, ‘Intent to Deceive : Denying the Genocide of the Tutsi’ Genocide scholar Linda Melvern, shows how Rusesabagina was never what he seemed.

Malvern indicates in her book that it was a British magistrate who got the measure of him as long ago as April 2008.

Melvern points out that, appearing at Westminster Magistrates’ Court before specialist extradition judge, Rusesabagina tried to prevent the extradition to Rwanda of four genocide suspects living in the UK.

Their lawyers called him as an expert witness on whether the suspect would get a fair trial if sent home to Rwanda.

The fugitives, most of them former senior leaders in the genocidal government, are still scot-free in the UK, despite the overwhelming evidence against them.

The judge noted that in his courtroom Rusesabagina had denied the 1994 genocide of the Tutsi had been organised and denied it had been a systematic, government-led programme of extermination.

He claimed the killing was due to anarchy and this, the judge wrote, was contrary to all evidence and facts.

More excerpts from Melvern’s book indicate that the judge determined Rusesabagina

was “an implacable enemy” of the Rwanda Government and was neither independent nor reasonable.

He knew nothing about the Rwandan judiciary and had a background strongly allied to ‘the extremist Hutu faction’. Rusesabagina made wild and exaggerated claims and his performance in court raised questions about

his direct links with the extremist group Hutu Power – today and in 1994.

In her thread, Mulvaney sought to link the US’s refusal to use the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi to individuals like Rusesabagina that may have successfully duped the US.

emusoni@newtimesrwanda.com