

Ibuka condemns desecration of Genocide memorial in France

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Left: The memorial stele honouring victims of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi in Rouen, France. Right: The stele after it was desecrated. Courtesy.

The organisation of Genocide survivors Ibuka has strongly condemned the desecration of a memorial stele dedicated to the victims of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi in the French city of Rouen.

Ibuka France called for swift investigations and accountability for those responsible.

The memorial was vandalised as Rwanda and the world continue to observe the 32nd commemoration of the Genocide that claimed over one million lives in 1994.

In a statement released on April 16, Ibuka

France described the act as a serious violation of dignity and collective memory.

“Ibuka France calls on authorities to shed full light on the incident, identify those responsible, and bring them to justice,” the statement said.

Members of the Rwandan community in France, Genocide survivors and the Mayor of Rouen had held a commemoration event on April 13 and laid wreath in the garden where the stele was established.

The desecrated commemorative plaque was inaugurated in April 2024.

The survivors’ organisation added that the act of vandalism goes beyond physical destruction, warning that it represents an attack on victims, survivors, and the values underpinning humanity.

“Sites of memory embody history, truth, and transmission. To desecrate them is to attempt to erase what must be preserved,” it added.

“No act of desecration will erase the memory of the Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda. It endures, carried collectively, with determination.”

Pascal Confavreux, deputy spokesperson at the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, condemned the act saying France stands in solidarity with survivors and their families.

“France condemns the vandalism of the memorial stele dedicated to the victims of the Genocide against the Tutsi, erected in

Rouen,” Confavreux wrote in a post on X. “It expresses its full solidarity with survivors and their families. It recalls that the demands of memory and justice go hand in hand.”

France observed the 32nd commemoration of the Genocide against the Tutsi, in Paris on Tuesday, April 7.