



## **INVITATION TO SUPPORT NOBEL PEACE PRICE TO RWANDA'S RIGHTEOUS**

Dear Sir, Dear Madam,

This letter is addressed to you in your capacity as a qualified nominator of candidates for the Nobel Peace Prize, recognized by the Norwegian Nobel Committee and thus to appeal for your **support to the candidacy of Zura Karuhimbi, Yolande Mukagasana and Pierantonio Costa, and to nominate them for the Nobel Peace Prize 2011**, as those righteous for their actions during and after 1994 Rwanda genocide and as symbolic figures against all genocides.

In 1994, in the space of three months, between 6<sup>th</sup> April and 18<sup>th</sup> July, one million people in Rwanda, mostly belonging to the ethnic Tutsi minority, were murdered by criminal extremists from the Hutu majority. They were murdered for the only reason that they belonged to a different ethnic group. Every ten seconds a murder took place under the very eyes of an indifferent international community. In this context, on the one hand, many obeyed orders and killed, raped and tortured. While on the other hand, a few courageous others chose to deny this logic of the genocide, and oppose such horrors to save other lives often at the risk of their own. It is to them that we give our support.

Until today, no Nobel has been awarded to those who have refused violence in a genocide, and thus heroically saved hundreds of lives. Their example should instead be known, now more than ever, to show to the world that we always have a choice: the choice of saving lives over killing, the choice to oppose violence against that of being passive.

Unfortunately in the last century, history has shown that the danger of the emergence of genocidal ideology is still alive. A Nobel Prize awarded to our candidates is not only a recognition to those who opposed the Rwandan genocide, but is also a strong conviction against all genocides.

The genocide of the Rwandan Tutsis, together with the massacre of moderate Hutus who opposed the genocide, is an event of primary importance in the history of humanity. The media has never shown the real and transparent picture to the international public and neither have they ever explained that the genocide was in reality, scientifically planned by the extremists in charge in the country and was actually widely foreseeable. On the contrary, they spread the incorrect idea that a sudden and irrational blow of violence had occurred, a matter "between tribal Africans" for which there was not quite anything that could be done. Unfortunately, silence, abandonment of the survivors, who were forced to live in situations of deep economic and psychological difficulties among the very assassins of their own relatives, and even negationism are still continuing. The martyrs and the victims of the genocide are still waiting for a recognition of this reality. Revisionism and the erasing of the historical events are the first step towards the formation of the civil ignorance and apathy, which threatens the future generations of any society. And are the first seeds for a repetition of such events.

We strongly believe in the relevance of awarding the **Nobel Peace Prize to Rwanda's Righteous Zura Karuhimbi and Pierantonio Costa and to the survivor, Yolande Mukagasana**, to show their example to whom all of us can gather inspiration from; because the memories of genocides and the knowledge of the mechanisms that eventually lead to their explosion should never be lost.

For this reason, we're asking your support to this cause.

#### Who are our candidates?

**Zura Karuhimbi** is a Hutu peasant who is now 84 years old and, at the time of the genocide, was almost 70. With great intelligence and courage she hid and saved the lives of nearly 100 refugees. Had she been caught, Zura would surely have met a terrible death. She was intended for the "accomplices" of the Tutsis. Zura has also been recognized by the Government of Rwanda and has also recently been recognized as "Righteous" by the Garden of the Righteous of Padua, Italy.

**Yolande Mukagasana** is a Tutsi nurse whose entire family, including her three children and her husband, were brutally murdered by the blows of machetes. Saved by a Hutu woman, Yolande began an untiring campaign to witness the genocide of Rwanda all over the world. Her story is told in the book "Death does not want me". Writer of international reputation, Yolande has already received several awards including the UNESCO Honorable Mention for Education to Peace, and the American Jewish Committee award.

**Pierantonio Costa** held the office of Italian Honorary Consul in Kigali at the time of the genocide. After aiding the evacuation of Italians and other foreigners and having already saved many Rwandan people in the early days of the genocide, he went back to the country to rescue some 2,000 Tutsis beyond the Rwanda borders. His exceptional story is told in the book "The list of the Consul". Renamed by various media "the Italian Schindler", Costa was recognized as "Righteous" by the Committee for the Gardens of the Righteous Worldwide of Milan and by the Garden of the Righteous of Padua.

You will find attached the detailed profiles of our candidates. For further information and downloads regarding the campaign, you may visit the website <http://nobelrwndasrighteous.blogspot.com/>, from where it is also possible to enter the thematic blogs concerning the Nobel Peace Prize campaign in English, French, Spanish and Italian, and the facebook website <http://www.facebook.com/nobelwanda..>

Should you decide to honour our campaign with your valuable support for the candidacy of the Righteous of Rwanda, you could write a letter to the Norwegian Nobel Committee to elect our three candidates. Or should you prefer, you may print the attached letter we have already prepared. This letter may be printed on a letterhead of the institution you belong to. You may then simply sign it specifying your function and send it via an e-mail with the report of the three candidates to:

- [gl@nobel.no](mailto:gl@nobel.no)

or via ordinary mail to:

- The Norwegian Nobel Committee  
Henrik Ibsens gate 51  
NO-0255 OSLO  
NORWAY

We further appeal to you to communicate your support to [info@benerwanda.org](mailto:info@benerwanda.org) .

May we also gently remind you that the Norwegian Nobel Committee strongly recommends the Qualified Nominators not to publish their candidacy proposals.

With all our gratitude,  
Bene Rwanda Onlus

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