



News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Rwandan Genocide Survivor
to Speak at State Museum

Columbia, S.C. --- A survivor of the genocide in the African nation of Rwanda during 1994 will speak Wednesday, Nov. 18 at the South Carolina State Museum on his experiences during that dangerous time and his subsequent hope for the renewal of the country.

Bishop Alexis Bilindabagabo, the Anglican bishop of Gahini, Rwanda, will present the talk “Genocide and Reconciliation in Rwanda: A Survivor’s Perspective of Hope” in the museum’s auditorium at 7 p.m.

“Bishop Bilindabagabo has been a refugee three times, but returned each time to minister to his people,” said Chief Curator of History Fritz Hamer. “Three months of political massacre in Rwanda in 1994 killed 800,000 people, including the bishop’s parents and siblings. An outspoken member of the Tutsi tribe, he, too, was on the list to be killed, but he survived and now takes his message of hope and forgiveness – for both the genocide survivors and the perpetrators - around the world.”

In the reconstitution of his country, Bilindabagabo was appointed bishop of the new diocese of Gahini, which was the center of the worst killings of the Tutsis. He actively participates in the rebuilding of schools, hospitals and the social infrastructure of his community.

“Bishop Bilindabagabo was appointed by the government to the board of the National Committee for the Survivors of Genocide, which has been a channel of international and national funds to assist victims,” said Hamer. “He supports the new

‘gacaca’ (village) courts which are currently trying 100,000 prisoners in jails for war crimes.”

Bilindabagabo’s personal story of remarkable rescues during the genocide are told in his 2001 book “Rescued by Angels.” His story was featured in a BBC Worldwide radio documentary series, and he has been featured many times in the media as a spokesman for peace and reconciliation.

The talk is sponsored by the State Museum and the University of South Carolina African Studies Program. It is free of charge.

For more information on the program, contact Fritz Hamer at (803) 898-4921 or visit www.southcarolinastatemuseum.org.

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CUTLINE FOR BISHOP BILINDABAGABO

Alexis Bilindabagabo, the Anglican bishop of Gahaini, Rwanda and a survivor of the 1994 political massacre in that African nation, will present the talk “Genocide and Reconciliation in Rwanda: A Survivor’s Perspective of Hope” Nov. 18 at the South Carolina State Museum.

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Photo courtesy of S.C. State Museum

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