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Japanese Minister pays homage to Genocide victims



Yamamoto, Japanese deputy finance minister lays a wreath on the Kigali Genocide memorial site. Ivan Ngoboka.

The Japanese Deputy Minister for Finance yesterday visited the Kigali Genocide Memorial, Gisozi, to pay tribute to the over 250,000 victims of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi buried at the memorial.

Hiroshi Yamamoto, who was in the country for the just-concluded African Development Bank Group Annual Meetings, expressed sympathy towards those who lost their loved ones.

“A tour of this place fills one with sadness, as it brings to light one of the worst humanitarian catastrophes in human history,” he noted.

He also lauded the Rwandan government for achieving social, economic and political progress despite the Genocide.

“It’s amazing how this country managed to shake off that kind of mayhem and achieve the level of development it has today. It is an account I will share back home,” Yamamoto said.

He also pointed out that Rwanda and Japan have a similar history, likening the Rwandan Genocide to the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945.

“Both countries had tragedies that did not only destroy lives, but the economy too. They both managed to put that in the past and achieved miraculous progress,” Yamamoto said.

Yamamoto also highlighted his government’s financial contribution towards the construction of the Global Centre for Humanity, next to the Gisozi memorial.

He also pledged further support on behalf of his government to projects related to Genocide.

“I also call upon the international community to co-operate and bring to book Genocide perpetrators who are still at large,” Yamamoto said.