



PRESIDENT OF SYRIAN COMMISSION FOR TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE TRAVELS TO RWANDA

Ziadeh Meets with Rwandan Officials to Learn from Rwandan Transitional Justice Experience

Washington, DC – April 7th, 2014 marks the 20th Anniversary of the Rwandan genocide, a tragedy in which more than a million Rwandan Tutsi and moderate Hutu were murdered by their Hutu countrymen.

On March 16-22, 2014, Dr. Radwan Ziadeh, president of the [Syrian Commission for Transitional Justice](http://www.syriatransitionaljustice.org), visited the Republic of Rwanda to learn from the Rwandan transitional justice and reconciliation experience and apply lessons learned to the Syrian context.

Throughout the weeklong trip, Dr. Ziadeh learned about truth-telling and memorialization efforts, visiting the Gisozi Genocide Memorial, the Murambi Genocide Memorial, and meeting Rwandan documentarians. Additionally, Dr. Ziadeh met with Oswald Rutiburana, a retired member of the Rwandan National Unity and Reconciliation Commission who was one of the first coordinators of reconciliation projects in Rwanda.

Dr. Ziadeh also met with Mr. Rubango Epimague, the Principle State Attorney in the Office of the Attorney General of Rwanda, and Mr. Richard Muhumuza, Prosecutor General of Rwanda. Dr. Ziadeh, Mr. Epimague, and Mr. Muhumuza discussed the role of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) in restoring justice alongside with the traditional justice system known as the Gacaca Courts.

Additionally, Dr. Ziadeh met with Rwanda's National Commission for the Fight against Genocide, a national and permanent institution established in 2007 to prevent genocide, to fight against genocide ideology, and to address the consequences of genocide inside Rwanda and abroad. Furthermore, The Commission conducts documentation, research, and advocacy on behalf of genocide victims.

Dr. Ziadeh also attended and participated in various panels and discussions on the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, the role of the Rwanda Defense Forces in peace building, the role of foreign aid in post-conflict societies, the role of art and faith in reconciliation, governance challenges of post-genocide societies, and the importance of judicial independence in reconstruction.

Finally, Dr. Ziadeh visited a "Solidarity Camp" in which confessed perpetrators of the Rwandan genocide were serving commuted prison sentences through community service and also Mutobo Camp, a facility engaged in demobilizing and reintegrating former militia members.

The Syrian Interim Government established the Syrian Commission for Transitional Justice in November 2013. The Commission is tasked with leading on the transitional justice file in Syria.

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For additional information on the Syrian Commission for Transitional Justice, please contact info@syriatransitionaljustice.org.