



PAUL RUSESABAGINA BIOGRAPHY **OCTOBER 18, 2007 SPRINGFIELD SYMPHONY HALL, 7:30 P.M.**

Paul Rusesabagina became an internationally recognized figure when civil rights groups and journalists learned of his brave and life-saving actions during the 1994 Rwandan genocide. During the hundred-day slaughter, the Hutu militia, Interahamwe, murdered nearly 1 million ethnic Tutsis and moderate Hutus. Despite vast amounts of intelligence and media available to the world as the massacre unfolded, virtually all first-world countries refused to intervene. The United Nations, which had a peacekeeping corps in Rwanda at the time, refused to authorize the corps to take action.

The political unresponsiveness to the massacres forced Mr. Rusesabagina to make a choice. Paul, as the general manager of the luxurious Belgian-owned Hôtel des Milles Collines, used his international connections and well-crafted street smarts to care for and protect the 1,200 refugees who fled to the hotel grounds.

Paul Rusesabagina continues to speak internationally in an effort to keep Rwanda's story alive to help those still healing from the aftermath. He devotes his life to raising awareness of what happened and to push for coverage of present-day atrocities so that they do not suffer the same neglect that Rwanda faced in its time of need. He urges the international community to educate themselves and take a stand against global problems – particularly those in other African countries that are famously overlooked in aid and political efforts.

Mr. Rusesabagina was honored in 2000 with the Prize for Humanity, presented to him by the Immortal Chaplains Foundation. He was also awarded Amnesty International's "Enduring Spirit" award. On November 3, 2005, he was awarded the 2005 International Freedom Award, presented by the National Civil Rights Museum. Also in 2005, Mr. Rusesabagina was honored with the U.S. Presidential Medal of Freedom.

The 2004 United Artist film *Hotel Rwanda* tells the story of Paul Rusesabagina's struggle to keep the lives of his family and 1,200 others safe from the surrounding massacre. The film stars Don Cheadle and Sophie Okonedo - both of their roles were nominated for Academy Awards.

In an effort to continually educate the public of Rwanda's past and present hardships, Viking Books published Rusesabagina's memoirs, entitled *An Ordinary Man*, in April 2006.

Excerpt taken from: <http://www.va-holocaust.com/uploadedFiles/Dec.4%20press%20release.pdf>

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