

State of Vermont

Senate Chamber



Montpelier, Vermont

Joint Senate Resolution

By Senators Miller, Ayer, Bartlett, Brock, Campbell, Carris, Choate, Cummings, Doyle, Flanagan, Flory, Giard, Hartwell, Illuzzi, Kitchel, Kittell, Lyons, MacDonald, Mullin, Nitka, Racine, Scott, Sears, Shumlin, Snelling, Starr, and White,

J.R.S. 56. Joint resolution supporting continuing implementation of the Inter-Rwandan Dialogue.

Whereas, 20 years ago, Ven Dhyani Ywahoo established the Sunray Peace Village in Lincoln, Vermont, and during the past two decades, she has welcomed many interested visitors and peacemakers, and

Whereas, she imparts to her guests, together with other peacemakers such as Vermont-based international mediator Dr. Louise Diamond, the wise values of compassion, justice, peace and reconciliation that Native American elders have long espoused, and

Whereas, among the peacemakers to the Sunray Peace Village have been two Spanish lawyer-mediators, and

Whereas, since 1990, hundreds of thousands of innocent persons residing in the African nation of Rwanda (Rwandans), and representative of that nation's three primary ethnic groups, Hutu, Tutsi and Twa, as well as Congolese from the neighboring Democratic Republic of the Congo, have perished in one of the most deadly interethnic conflicts since World War II, and

Whereas, both the United Nations and the European Parliament have repeatedly declared the existence of important political, economic and strategic interests in Africa's Great Lakes region where Rwanda is located, and

Whereas, the fissures in Rwandan society remain extremely deep, and an extensive restoration of civil harmony is needed in Rwanda and in Africa's entire Great Lakes Region in order for social, cultural, commercial and political life to function with any degree of long-term sustainability, and

Whereas, despite the legal significance of some international judicial proceedings, a true transformation of Rwandan society will require the establishment of new and enduring bonds of acceptance, cooperation and trust among the different Rwandan ethnic, political and social groups, and

Whereas, with this noble goal in mind, the Brussels-based Hutu president of a victims' association and the Rwandan government's Tutsi former plenipotentiary ambassador to the United Nations initiated an interethnic Rwanda dialogue, and

Whereas, in 2004, subsequent to the dialogue's initiation, ten Rwandan men and women, both Tutsi and Hutu, residing outside Rwanda met in Mallorca, Spain, and

Whereas, in 2006, after this first successful meeting and extensive subsequent planning, a second conclave of 20 mixed ethnic Rwandans, both residents of Rwanda and abroad, and now known as the Inter-Rwandan Dialogue, was convened in Barcelona, Spain under the auspices of the 1980 Noble Peace Prize laureate Aldolfo Pérez-Esquivel, and

Whereas, the 2006 Inter-Rwandan Dialogue in Barcelona laid the foundation for the International Network of Truth and Reconciliation in Central Africa, and the resulting protocol of findings led to five additional Dialogue Platforms during 2007 and 2008 that were held in Washington, D.C. (for Rwandans exiled in the United States and Canada); in Amsterdam (for Rwandans exiled in the Netherlands, Belgium and Germany); in Orleans, France (for Rwandans exiled in France and Italy); in Barcelona - The Platform for Rwandan Women (for Rwandan women exiled in seven European countries); and in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of the Congo, where the plight of Congolese victims, in relation to Rwanda, was the special focus, and

Whereas, in 2009 the Inter-Rwandan Dialogue returned to Mallorca, Spain where the 30 male and female participants included representatives of the seven editions of Dialogue belonging to the Hutu, Tutsi and Twa ethnic groups, and

Whereas, this five-year process has involved former prime ministers, cabinet ministers, ambassadors and political leaders, as well as representatives from civil society, victims' and human rights organizations, and institutions devoted to peace and economic research, and

Whereas, all of these individuals and organizations have focused on the future and continuing this larger Inter-Rwandan Dialogue as the legitimate foundation upon which to build a new Rwanda that all political, ethnic, social, and economic groups in the country, as well as the international community, can widely accept, and

Whereas, the progress that the Inter-Rwandan Dialogue has achieved to date is largely attributable to the enormous leadership of the Spanish mediators who, in their summer of 2009 visit to the Sunray Peace Village, spoke of the centrality of Ven Dhyani Ywahoo's wise values in reducing, and perhaps ultimately transforming, the extreme animosity that the Hutu, Tutsi and Twa, as well as Congolese from the neighboring Democratic Republic of the Congo, have developed toward each other, and

Whereas, the Inter-Rwandan Dialogue is an exemplary and realistic model for the bringing together of opposing ethnic groups involved in major national and international conflicts, and this unusual and praiseworthy international dialogue should be universally applauded and encouraged, and if possible, this dialogue model should be extended to other countries in conflict, *now therefore be it*

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly supports the implementation of the Inter-Rwandan Dialogue in its development and continuing implementation of the Inter-Rwandan Dialogue that is premised on the teachings of Ven Dhyani Ywahoo of Lincoln, Vermont, *and be it further*

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to Ven Dhyani Ywahoo at the Sunray Peace Village in Lincoln, Vermont and to the administrative offices of the Inter-Rwandan Dialogue in Barcelona, Spain.

President of the Senate

Attested to:

Speaker of the House

David A. Gibson
Secretary of the Senate

Date:_____

