



REMARKS OF HER EXCELLENCY MRS JEANNETTE
KAGAME

Kwita-Izina Gorilla Naming Ceremony



AUGUST 31, 2023
MUSANZE

Rwanda Development Board Chief Executive Officer,

Governor of the Northern Province,

Ministers here present, Esteemed Senior Officials,

**Our Dear Guests, Past and Present Kwita-Izina Namers –
You Brilliant Artists, Pioneers, Innovators from Across
the World,**

Our Youth Leaders and Activists, Abanyamusanze,

Muraho neza, Good Afternoon to you all!

- Nejejwe no kwifatanya namwe muri uyu muhango wo kwita izina, abana b'ingagi ku nshuro ya 19. Banyamusanze mwakoze kutwakira neza!
- Thank you for being here with us today.
- Today's event is perhaps one of the highlights of our year, as admirers of our rich biodiversity.
- There is little, as fulfilling to celebrate, as healthy new life, and our adorable baby gorillas are certainly worth the occasion!

- I once stood where you do, with his Excellency the President, as a proud namer of adorable, hearty, twin baby gorillas.
- They are 19 now.
- To us, mountain gorillas represent more than a source of tourism, or adventurous entertainment.
- To us, our gorillas are the custodians of a nature we cherish.

Batumirwa turi kumwe mu birori by'uyu muni,

- Ibidukikije ni indorerwamo iduha urugero rwiza rwerekana akaga isi yahura nako, mu gihe tutitaye ku rusobe rw'ibinyabuzima nk'uko bikwiriye.
- Nk'abantu, mu mibereho yacu dukeneye ibidukikije n'urusobe rw'ibinyabuzima ku buryo bw'umwihariko.

Bityo rero, dusabwa kubana neza nabyo kuko ubuzima bwacu ari magirirane.

- Ku ngagi, kwitegereza byonyine bigaragaza ko imyitwarire n'imibanire hagati yazo ijya kwegera ubuzima n'imibereho bya muntu. Hari byinshi tubona bijya gusa n'ibiba mu buzima bwacu nk'abantu; nko kubaho mu miryango, buri muryango ukagira umuyobozi ufite inshingano zo kumenya abawugize, kuwitaho no kuwurinda.
- Uretse ko ingagi zinagira uruhare mu iterambere ry'ubukungu bw'igihugu cyacu, iyi rero nayo, yaba impamvu ikomeye yo kurushaho kubungabunga ubuzima bw'ingagi.
- Conservation, our **Dear Friends from Across the world**, is not a virtuous act, for which we should pat ourselves on the back.
- Conservation is, what we owe the earth that has nourished us.

- Conservation is the first layer of gratitude, that we must express for a mother nature, that has granted us survival, shelter, nourishment, and wonder, from our very first days as a species.
- It seems almost unbelievable that while this earth is humanity's most precious gift, its source and origin of life, we have found the recklessness to abuse it, over and over again.
- Because as we all know, as has been stated by the conservation experts that have spoken before me: nature will persist without us, but we cannot persist without it.
- Let us not mistake our earth's kindness for weakness.
- Let us not interpret its hospitality as dependency upon us.

- The sooner we act, the sooner we can reverse our current trend towards an eventual, absolute ecosystem collapse.
- The earth may indeed become, for our children, a much more hostile place than it is for us now.
- For all we may currently believe we lack, as nations striving for our development, I can assure you that we already have much more, than we sometimes appreciate. Our earth is fertile to the point it appears to be bragging! Our fauna is fascinating!
- This is why we are here; this is why we are thankful. One thing about being constantly reminded that you don't have much, is that you learn to value that which you do have.
- You learn to see worth and beauty in every single gift that life has placed before you.

- We must remember that no hand can give infinitely – and our earth is no exception.
- No matter the subject, to receive, you must give in return. To be blessed continuously, the source of your blessings must be replenished.
- **Dear guests,** beyond the admiration we have for your commendable work, thank you for returning the love we have for you. Let us all do the same for **all** the life that surrounds us, in **all** its forms.
- **Ladies and Gentlemen,** we at least partly owe the bountiful vegetation around us to the beloved mountain gorillas that we celebrate today. Their interactions with the plants around them, their feeding and seed dispersal habits, promote the growth of vegetation, increase our plant diversity, and fortify our agriculture.
- And yet, our precious **Mountain Gorillas** were once at risk of complete extinction – because sadly, and too often, humanity’s hand, for all its power, threatens to erase rather than conserve.

- But the **Mountain Gorillas** showed resilience. They showed astuteness in ensuring their survival.
- It's a wonder to behold: the gorilla's fierce protectiveness over its young ones, even when faced with fatal threats.
- When endangered, they may migrate to wherever better fortune and security might await them, but most fascinatingly, they will often return home, once the environment is more welcoming.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

- Rwanda's efforts to protect its biodiversity have been multi-faceted, and multi-purposed. From local and international advocacy, to the creation and expansion of national parks, no stone is being left unturned, and for cause.

- We should not simply wait for decisive efforts against climate change, and the extinction of species; not when we **do** know better, and **especially not, when days like these**, are the proof that we can do our part from home – **not tomorrow, but now**.
- We will endeavor to multiply our conservation efforts. To the Rwanda Development Board, to the Rwanda Green Fund, to all our wonderful partners, our Local Leaders, Conservation Experts and Advocates, our friends from across the world, our supportive and loving local communities, and last but not least, to the Kwita Izina namers, thank you! Thank you for the incredible developments you have earned us.

Esteemed Guests,

- Rwanda will not choose, between prosperity and a beautiful, healthy environment. Rwanda will not choose, between profit and responsibility!
- We will work, we will push, for it all! For **both** success and harmony!

- We will commit to every aspect of our development, with equal determination.
- For our determined and resilient people, for our fresh air, for our rich green lands, for our beautiful healthy baby gorillas, for the incredible, dynamic energy around me and what it shall do for us all, for the bright future ahead, **Champions of Conservation**, I sincerely thank you!
- I am deeply touched by today's turn out, by the grace of our namers, by the warmth and hospitality of the local community welcoming us all, and as always, as ever, by the commitment and hard work, of those that have gathered us here.

Ba Nyamusanze, Batumirwa mwese, by'umwihariko mwe Abato turi kumwe uyu munsi,

- Nsoza nifuje kubagezaho ubutumwa bwihariye.

- Nimwitegereza abateraniye aha twese, ndetse mwabonye n’abashyitsi batandukanye batugendereye, duhujwe no kwizihiza uyu munsi ukomeye mu rugendo rwo kubungabunga ibidukikije – ntawe bitanzezeza kuba muri mu bagira uruhare mu kubihararira.
- Uruhare rwanyu rugaragarira mbere na mbere mu kubungabunga ibidukikije harimo n’izi ngagi, kwakira neza ababagana ndetse no guhanga imirimo itandukanye ishingiye ku bukerarugendo, ndetse inyungu zitugeraho twese nk’Abanyarwanda n’Abaturarwanda.
- Umurimo mukora ni uwo gushimwa. Muri Ishema ry’igihugu cyacu. **Ntimuzadohoke!**
- Thank you all for your kind attention, and have a wonderful stay in Rwanda – **Murakoze!**