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# REMARKS OF HER EXCELLENCY FIRST LADY MRS JEANNETTE KAGAME

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School of Leadership of Afghanistan RWANDA Visit



OCTOBER 11, 2023

- **My Dear Daughters, Dear Teachers,**

- Thank you all for having me here.
- Today is a special day for you, as it is for all girls around the world!
- It is the International Day of the Girl Child! Today we celebrate you girls, for your preciousness is unmatched. As a proud mother and grandmother, I could not be more honoured, to join you in recognizing the continuity and joy, that young girls bring to their communities.
- I have been looking forward to visiting you girls. I hoped to be able to meet you and see for myself what your journey has been.
- I also have wanted to share a few words of heartfelt appreciation and encouragement, to both you, the students and the educators of the SOLA school.

- Thank you for welcoming us with such warmth and grace today! I hope that Rwanda has been equally welcoming and hospitable since you have been here.

## **Dear Girls,**

- While the circumstances that surround our countries' histories might be different, your experience is one that will always provoke a pang of familiarity in our hearts, as Rwandans.
- Many of us, were once de-rooted from our homes and forced into unfamiliarity, distance and uncertainty.
- I myself was born and grew up in exile, where our communities were expected to survive in optimism and dignity, despite what we had faced. We had to advance in our lives, enough to fight and earn back what we deserved: peace, and ultimately progress.
- Education was, and this particularly, for us who were then young girls, our primary hope.

- Educated girls make educated women, and educated women have been proven, to create healthier families and better communities. Educated women make more secure homes, in terms of wealth, health and safety.
- Daughters, the intention and spirit behind SOLA must never die!
- Strive to keep it alive, for the successes you are pursuing in your education, will increase economic opportunities, not only for yourselves, but also for your families! This education will also ensure the overall growth of your country.
- This is what I wish and pray for all of you, **Dear Girls!** Success, comfort, peace and the happiness that some tried, and failed to take from you. You truly deserve it all.
- It is an honour to be entrusted with your safety, as you pursue what will always remain, first and foremost, your human right: **your education.**

- This country will strive to offer you care, protection, and respect, as best as we can.
- We love you, and are thankful for your presence in Rwanda. Upon the last visit of a representative of my Foundation here at SOLA, I was personally informed of how well you have been performing academically and at a personal level.
- I was informed of how extraordinary, bold and powerful your dreams and ambitions remain. I applaud you, for you will achieve them all.
- You are the personification of our deepest faith: a people determined to survive, to progress and to succeed, cannot be stopped in achieving its goals.
- Remember to listen to your educators; they have given their all, to see you girls excel.
- So please, keep pushing!

- Your journey has been a true story of determination, and a lesson for the world.
- I salute you Shabana, for being such a visionary founder, a relentless defender of the rights of young girls, and an inspiring leader, par excellence.
- History will speak of what you have accomplished here, and providence will see these beautiful daughters of Afghanistan, of Rwanda, and of God's love, live to achieve your utmost dreams.
- Thank you again for your hospitality. I wish you a great International Day of the Girl Child, a fantastic academic year and most importantly, a life of joy, peace, safety and success!
- You were born to rise - to reach the sky and chase the sun. I thank you all for your attention.