Today, it is 29 years since the liberation of the Rwandan people happened. Liberation Day is mainly a moment for citizens to celebrate the gains recorded in all spheres of life, and to pay tribute to the liberators as well as reflecting on the liberation mission as relentless efforts are directed towards shaping the country's future.

Rwanda emerged from the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi on July 4, 1994 when Gen. Paul Kagame, Rwanda's President since 2000 stopped the genocide. Kagame commanded the Rwanda Patriotic Army (RPA) to liberate the country from the brutal rule of the genocide regimes.

Thus, every July 4, Rwandans celebrate Liberation Day and this year's (Kwibohora29) celebrations included one of the latest innovations – Liberation Run and inaugurating a model village in Rugerero, Rubavu District.

Rugerero model village in Rubavu District

Remarkably, after 29 years Rwandans are still indebted to the liberators who sacrificed own lives to liberate their homeland from authoritarian regimes that orchestrated the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi that left more than a million dead.

This is mainly the motivation behind the uncompromised stance by Rwandans to safeguard the peace and unity which are some of the invaluable fruits of the liberation.

RWANDA'S STORY WAS WRITTEN WITH OUR BLOOD

In his message, President Paul Kagame reproached Western media obsessed with trading lies about Rwanda, calling on Rwandans to confront the lies they use to tarnish the country's image other than fighting them.

"When you look at what is written about Rwanda you wonder whether they are talking about the Rwanda we know whose story we wrote with our blood," said Kagame.

"We cannot let other people write our history. We cannot accept. It's our history, our life, our country,"

The essence of liberation is to bring about total liberation of the Rwandese people

and build a nation where unity, security, development and other democratic values are promoted, and ensure citizens lead dignified lives. Thus, the 29 years have witnessed continuously enormous government's efforts towards increasing access to the basics of life – shelter, food, water, health services, education, habitable environment and transport network alongside promoting fundamental human rights and freedoms.

As part of Kwibohora29, Rwanda Defence Forces (RDF) showcased a model village with basic services as water and electricity – built for vulnerable and disadvantaged citizens some of whom trace their situation to the genocide. Such efforts are motivated by the country's mission enshrined in the 2003 Constitution of uplifting citizens' wellbeing and turning the country into a middle-income economy by 2050.

Also, RDF provide free medical examinations and treatment to common diseases such as Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) like blood pressure, diabetes and heart related diseases. It is a moment when the Army scales up mass awareness campaign about the prevalence of different diseases alongside sensitizing masses on preventive measures. They empower health personnel and community health workers with skills of dealing with new health challenges in communities through free capacity building training and coaching.

Meanwhile, peace lovers in the region and beyond condemn the violence in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) based on ethnicity lines. The first half of 2023 ended when violence was still the main cause of deaths, internal displacement and exodus of hundreds of Congolese into neighbouring countries. The most affected are the Kinyarwanda-speaking Congolese reportedly persecuted for their cultural heritage they share with Rwandans though they are Congolese by nationality.

In his previous Liberation Day address, Kagame said the failure of Kinshasa and the UN to offer a political solution instead of a military one, and blaming own weaknesses on Kigali is the reason peace has taken long to return to this region.

One of the main highlights of Kwibohora29 is Rwanda's fast infrastructural development that has significantly changed the country's image, which proudly hosts six secondary cities aspiring to become modern green cities.

Besides ensuring security along its borders and for her people, Rwanda has responded to the cause of peace in the region by vastly contributing to

peacekeeping missions of the African Union as well as UN in South Sudan, Mozambique, Central African Republic (CAR) and Haiti.

