

Madam Jeannette Kagame, chairperson of Unity Club Intwararumuri, on Saturday urged Rwandans to uphold the motto *Ndi Umunyarwanda* as a guiding principle for national unity during the organization's 18th annual forum at Intare Arena Conference.

Themed "*Ndi Umunyarwanda: Igitekerezo ngenga cy'ukubaho kwacu*" ("I am Rwandan: A Core Idea of Our Existence"), the forum emphasized shared identity, culture, and values as foundations for peace and development.

In her keynote address, the First Lady said the club has grown beyond a social association to become a "beacon guiding members' thinking, behavior, and way of life."

"For us, the anthem and motto will remain *Ndi Umunyarwanda*. The foundation of our unity lies in the dreams we share, our culture, language, nation, and the one God of Rwanda," she said.

Mrs Kagame stressed the importance of dialogue, collective effort, and active listening as pillars of national unity, warning against divisions based on identity differences often exploited for personal gain.

"We have been deprived of the chance to critically study Africa's history. By remaining silent, we allowed those who do not wish us well to distort our past," she said. "This is why we must actively write, preserve, and teach our history to future generations."

She called on members to turn reflection into action and safeguard Rwanda's achievements in peace and development for future generations.

"*Ndi Umunyarwanda* is more than a motto. It is a commitment we have made, a legacy we will pass on. No one gives us permission to exist; we claim our right to live fully and well," the First Lady said.

Describing Unity Club as a "school of life," she emphasized that members learn from one another's experiences, and that continuous learning prevents stagnation.

The forum drew over 400 participants, including national leaders, veterans of the Rwandan Patriotic Army, local government officials, youth representatives, religious leaders, and civil society actors.

Dr. Jean Damascène Bizimana, minister of Unity and Civic Engagement, said Rwanda's national unity index reached 95.3% in 2025.

Personal testimonies highlighted the program's impact. Jean de Dieu Uwizeye of Association Modeste et Innocent said it helped him overcome ethnic divisions, while Nyirahabineza Valérie, head of the Commission for Reintegration of Former Combatants, praised Rwanda's rehabilitation of former fighters from the DRC.

The First Lady concluded by urging participants to ensure *Ndi Umunyarwanda* remains a guiding principle and legacy for future generations.

"Unity Club is our school; here we continue to learn from each other and nurture the understanding that Rwanda is a homeland that shelters us all," she said.