

President Paul Kagame, also Commander-in-Chief of the Rwanda Defence Force (RDF), on Friday urged 1,029 newly commissioned junior officers to dedicate themselves to protecting the country and ensuring lasting peace for its citizens.

Speaking at the graduation ceremony held at the Rwanda Military Academy in Gako, Bugesera District, Kagame told the new officers their foremost duty is to serve Rwandans.

“Your mission is to protect Rwanda and its people. Today we are 14 million, but even if we were one, two or three billion, the task remains the same: ensuring our nation is safe and not violated by those who wish it harm,” Kagame said. “Rwanda needs peace. We seek peace because we lost it for many years.”

The RDF inducted 1,029 new junior officers, including 42 trained in military academies abroad. Among them is Brian Kagame, the youngest son of President Paul Kagame and First Lady Jeannette Kagame. He completed his officer training at the prestigious Sandhurst Military Academy in the United Kingdom. Brian now joins the RDF alongside his older brother, Capt. Ian Kagame, who serves in the elite Republican Guard unit tasked with protecting senior government leaders.



*Brian Kagame (middle), the youngest son of President Kagame was among the 1,029 officers inducted by RDF after his training from Sandhurst in the UK.*

The event coincided with the 25th anniversary of the Gako Military Academy, which has been training military officers since 2000. Out of the graduating officers, 117 are women, while 912 are men.

Kagame commended the resilience of the officers during their rigorous training and thanked their instructors, partner countries that contributed to the training, and the families who supported the new officers in choosing a demanding career.

“I want to thank everyone of you for your commitment and the courage you showed throughout this journey. I also thank the parents and families for supporting your decision to join this honorable profession, even though it is not an easy one,” Kagame said.

The president awarded prizes to the best performers, including Emmanuel Kayitare, recognized as the overall best student. Others honored were Jean de Dieu

Iyakaremye for the one-year course, Yves Ndamukunda for the four-year program, and Dan Bakangambira from Uganda among international students.

Brig. Gen. Franco Rutagengwa, Commandant of the Military Academy, noted that 36 cadets did not complete the program due to health issues, academic failure, or misconduct.



He praised the graduating officers for their perseverance, adding: “We commend their choice to serve in the Rwanda Defence Force. We expect them to fulfill their responsibilities with professionalism and discipline, becoming a model of excellence as they were trained.”

Kagame emphasized that the officers’ role in building peace and security begins immediately and called on them to embody discipline, integrity, and selflessness.

“Your contribution as officers starts now. It requires sacrifice, good conduct, and the right mindset so that you, your families, and the nation at large can thrive,” he said.