

President Paul Kagame on Friday urged 108 graduating senior military officers from 20 African countries to uphold integrity, professionalism and sound judgment as they assume greater leadership responsibilities in their respective armed forces.

Speaking at the graduation ceremony of the Senior Command and Staff Course at the RDF Command and Staff College, Kagame said the advanced training had equipped the officers with broader knowledge and prepared them for more demanding assignments.



“You came here as experienced professionals, and you leave with broader knowledge and greater responsibilities,” Kagame said.

He told the graduates that the impact of their decisions would increase as they take on higher leadership roles, making careful judgment and accountability essential.

“The higher your responsibilities, the greater the consequences of the decisions you make,” he said.

Kagame said effective leadership is built on experience, collaboration and humility, including a willingness to learn from mistakes and adapt to evolving challenges.

He identified prudence, thoughtful decision-making and a clear sense of purpose as critical values for military leaders operating in an increasingly complex security environment.



“For Rwanda, that purpose is rooted in protecting our citizens and safeguarding national sovereignty while continuing to advance the country’s development,” he said.

The president said the key question facing the graduates was not whether they would lead, but how they would lead, urging them to uphold the values that have shaped the reputation of the Rwanda Defence Force.

He said the trust enjoyed by the Rwanda Defence Force among Rwandans and international partners was built over many years through dedication, discipline and professionalism.

“The position RDF holds today did not happen by accident,” Kagame said. “It was built over many years through service, discipline and professionalism. That is what earned the trust of Rwandans and our partners.”

Kagame also thanked family members and friends of the graduates for supporting them throughout the 46-week program, noting that military service requires commitment and sacrifice both from personnel and their loved ones.

He commended the participation of officers from across Africa and beyond, saying the relationships forged during training help strengthen cooperation among military leaders who may later work together in regional security operations, peacekeeping missions and other multinational engagements.

The president also praised the leadership of the Rwanda Defence Force for continuing to invest in the college and maintaining training standards that attract officers from across the continent.



The graduating class included officers from Rwanda, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Jordan, Kenya, Malawi, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Somalia, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia.

During the ceremony, Kagame presented awards to three officers who achieved the highest academic performance in the course.

He concluded by encouraging the graduates to continue learning, uphold professional standards and contribute to strengthening the institutions they serve as military organizations adapt to technological advances and evolving security challenges.