

Rwanda has credited faith-based group Prison Fellowship Rwanda (PFR) for playing a key role in the country's reconciliation process since the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi.

Dr. Bizimana Jean Damascène, Minister of National Unity and Civic Responsibility, said PFR has helped facilitate dialogue between genocide perpetrators and survivors, easing mistrust and fostering forgiveness. The minister spoke Wednesday during a meeting with Andrew Corley, CEO of Prison Fellowship International, who is visiting Rwanda.

"PFR has done remarkable work bringing together perpetrators and survivors. Initially, perpetrators were reluctant to admit their roles, and survivors carried deep wounds," Bizimana said. "Through dialogue, mistrust has been reduced, helping both sides begin to heal."



PFR, a faith-based organization affiliated with the global Prison Fellowship network, focuses on reintegrating prisoners, especially those convicted of genocide-related crimes, into society. The group encourages perpetrators to acknowledge their crimes and seek forgiveness, while helping survivors find the courage to reconcile.

Bishop John Rucyahana, PFR's executive director, said decades after the genocide, many still struggle with denial, anger, and resentment. "Healing is a process. Some people wrestle with these feelings for years, but through consistent dialogue and moral education, progress is possible," he said.

Research shows Rwanda's national unity reached 95.3% in 2025, reflecting the impact of reconciliation programs led by the government and organizations like PFR.

Corley praised Rwanda's approach as a model for countries recovering from mass atrocities. "Instead of succumbing to hatred, Rwanda chose unity, forgiveness, and love. Few countries could follow this path successfully," he said during his two-day visit, which includes trips to the Kigali Genocide Memorial and Nyarugenge Prison.

Minister Bizimana said PFR's long-term work since 1995 has been crucial in restoring trust and rebuilding relationships, noting that reconciliation remains an ongoing process aimed at ensuring lasting peace across the country.