

REPUBLIC OF RWANDA



PRIME MINISTER

Remarks by the Rt. Hon. Prime Minister

Dr. Justin Nsengiyumva

**At the 20th Edition of Kwita Izina - Gorilla
Naming Ceremony**

Musanze | September 05, 2025

- **Your Excellency First Lady of Rwanda;**
- **Senior Government officials;**
- **Members of the Diplomatic Corps;**
- **Distinguished Kwita Izina Namers;**
- **Esteemed Conservation and Kwita Izina partners;**
- **Distinguished Guests;**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen;**
- **Baturage b'Akarere ka Musanze muri hano**

Good Afternoon, Muraho neza mwese!

1. Mu izina rya Nyakubahwa Paul Kagame, Perezida wa Repubulika y'u Rwanda, nishimiye kwifatanya namwe, muri uyu muhango wo Kwita Izina abana b'ingagi ku nshuro ya 20.
2. Ndagira ngo mbanze nshimire abaturage ba Musanze kuba mwitabiriye uyu muhango muri benshi kandi mwakoze kutwakira neza.

3. Uyu muhango wo Kwita Izina abana b'ingagi, ni umwanya mwiza wo kongera gushimira abaturage bose baturiye parike z'Igihugu, ku ruhare rukomeye bagira mu kubungabunga ibidukikije.
4. By'umwihariko, ndashimira mwe muturiye Parike y'Ibirunga kuko muri abafatanyabikorwa b'ingenzi mu kubungabunga ibidukikije harimo n'ingagi.
5. Ndagira ngo rero munyemerere nkomeze mu rurimi rw'Icyongereza kugira ngo abashyitsi baje kwifatanya natwe muri ibi birori bumve ubutumwa twabageneye.

Murabinyemereye?

Murakoze cyane.

● **Distinguished Guests;**

6. On behalf of His Excellency Paul Kagame, the President of the Republic of Rwanda, it is my great pleasure to welcome you all to the foothills of Volcanoes National Park for this 20th edition of *Kwita Izina*.
7. Today, we gather here to celebrate not only the naming of baby gorillas, but also conservation, communities, and the extraordinary power of nature to unite people from all corners of the world.
8. To our distinguished Namers, thank you for bestowing meaningful names upon these baby gorillas, leaving a piece of your heart in Rwanda.
9. To our local communities, thank you for being true champions of conservation, ensuring peaceful coexistence with gorillas and all wildlife in this beautiful landscape.

And to those who have travelled far to be here, we deeply appreciate your presence and solidarity.

- 10.** Nearly three decades ago, when trackers, rangers, and researchers were working tirelessly to protect the last mountain gorillas, they began a remarkable tradition by naming the baby mountain gorillas.
- 11.** In Rwandan culture, naming a child is not just a formality, but an act of love, commitment, and hope, done in the presence of family and friends who pledge to support that child's future.
- 12.** Today, we carry forward this tradition with the same spirit, giving 40 baby gorillas their names, surrounded by thousands of friends from across the globe.

- 13.** The story of the mountain gorillas has not always been one of celebration. Years ago, their population had alarmingly decreased, and their survival seemed uncertain.
- 14.** However, thanks to the leadership of Rwanda, the dedication of passionate conservationists, the daily sacrifices of rangers, and the commitment of our communities, the gorillas came back from the brink.
- 15.** Today, there are over 1,000 mountain gorillas worldwide, including more than 600 in the Virunga Massif.
- 16.** This success is also the result of well-coordinated efforts involving many partners: local communities, local administrations, conservation agencies, the Rwanda Development Board (RDB), and, indeed, tourists who contribute directly to

conservation by visiting these magnificent creatures.

- 17.** Rwanda is honoured to be the custodian of these last mountain gorillas, which are not only a global treasure but also a source of pride and economic opportunity for our nation.
- 18.** But success brings new challenges. As gorilla families grow, we must expand their habitat. Rwanda has set out a bold plan to extend the Volcanoes National Park by nearly 25% to ensure the next generation of gorillas has a secure home.
- 19.** This effort will also improve the lives of surrounding communities, demonstrating once again that conservation and development can go hand in hand. We call on

the world to join us in this ambitious project, as we share this responsibility.

20. Our conservation journey does not end here. Rwanda has embraced policies to strengthen biodiversity protection, from expanding national parks to restoring degraded ecosystems such as the Nyandungu Urban Wetland Ecopark, in the City of Kigali.

21. We also encourage private sector participation in creating and managing sanctuaries and reserves, supported through innovative public-private partnerships.

22. Eco-tourism, anchored in the mountain gorillas, has become a cornerstone of Rwanda's development. It has created jobs, supported young entrepreneurs, and positioned Rwanda as a clean, safe, and welcoming destination.

- 23.** Beyond the mountain gorillas, Rwanda's natural heritage is vast and diverse. In the East, Akagera National Park offers a wide variety of wildlife including sweeping savannahs, rich wetlands, and the Big Five, alongside abundant birdlife.
- 24.** To the South, Nyungwe National Park, one of Africa's oldest rainforests, is rich in biodiversity and home to chimpanzees, rare primates, and over 300 bird species, with its iconic canopy walkway.
- 25.** In the West, Gishwati–Mukura National Park shelters chimpanzees, golden monkeys and a rich variety of flora and birdlife, while also playing a key role in restoring degraded landscapes and protecting watersheds.

- 26.** Together, these parks, alongside our vibrant traditions, music, dance, crafts, and the warm hospitality of our people, offer visitors a truly unique blend of wildlife, nature, and culture.
- 27.** We invite every visitor to experience the richness of Rwanda and to return as ambassadors for conservation.
- 28.** As we celebrate 20 years of Kwita Izina, we honour the communities whose role is central. That is the main reason for having this ceremony held here, at the foothills of the gorillas' habitat, among the people who live closest to them.
- 29.** We pay tribute to their resilience, commitment, and partnership in safeguarding these great apes.

- 30.** The story of the mountain gorillas is one of perseverance, of family, and hope. When their survival seemed impossible, they endured together. This story mirrors our challenges as humans: when we stand united, no mountain is too high to climb.
- 31.** Let this spirit guide us as we look to the future. Let us strengthen the bonds of friendship and family, protect and restore Mother Nature, and build a sustainable future for all life on Earth.
- 32.** To our international guests, we wish you a joyful stay in the Land of a Thousand Hills and a Thousand Opportunities.
- 33.** As you return home, may you carry with you the message of conservation, be witnesses of Rwanda's achievements, and continue to

advocate for the protection of our shared planet.

34. Today, as we name these baby mountain gorillas, Rwanda is fully committed to maintaining sustainable coexistence, protection, and hope for generations to come.

• **Baturage b'Akarere ka Musanze,**

35. Kuri iyi nshuro ya 20 yo Kwita Izina abana b'ingagi, ibi birori byongeye kubera hano mu Kinigi, hafi yanyu, kugira ngo tubagaragarize ko dushima umusanzu wanyu mu gusigasira ingagi no guteza imbere ubukerarugendo mu Gihugu cyacu.

36. Guverinoma irabashishikariza gukomeza kubyaza umusaruro ibikorwaremezo bikikije parike ndetse n'imishinga igamije guteza imbere imibereho yanyu.

37. Muhore muzirikana ko izi ngagi ari umutungo w'agaciro kanini dufite kandi tugomba gusigasira twese.

38. Ni muri urwo rwego, hari gahunda yo kwagura Parike y'Ibirunga, tubasaba gukomeza kugiramo uruhare kuko izafasha ingagi zacu gukomeza kubaho neza mu buryo burambye.

39. Duharanire kandi gukomeza kwakira neza abasura parike zacu, kuko nabyo bigira uruhare mu kumenyakanisha u Rwanda no guteza imbere ubukerarugendo muri rusange.

- **Nyakubahwa First Lady,**
- **Banyacyubahiro mwese muri hano,**
- **Bashyitsi bahire,**
- **Batumirwa mwese,**

40. Mbere yo kurangiza ijambo ryanjye ndagira ngo nongere mbashimire ko mwitabiriye uyu

muhanjo. Ndashimira kandi n'abantu bose bagize uruhare mu gutegura ibirori by'uyu munsi.

Murakoze cyane, mugire amahoro!