

Umushyikirano

Fact Sheet

Umushyikirano is an annual event that gives Rwandans from all walks of life the opportunity to ask questions directly to their leaders. The event is chaired by the President and attended by members of the Cabinet and Parliament, representatives of the Rwandan community abroad, local government, media, the diplomatic community and others invited by the President. Governed by Article 168 of the Constitution, Umushyikirano is a forum where participants debate issues relating to the state of the nation, the state of local government and national unity. Umushyikirano draws its strength from the direct participation of citizens in holding their leaders to account.

The first National Dialogue Council took place on 28 June 2003 and has been held each year since. Below is a brief history of previous editions of Umushyikirano in chronological order:

10th Umushyikirano | 13-14 December 2012

The 10th National Dialogue Council was held under the theme “Agaciro: Aiming for self-reliance”. Around 1000 people attended the event including leaders from government, representatives from the private sector and Rwandans from all walks of life, including those living abroad. The following presentations were delivered at the event:

- Promoting Principles and Values of Self-Reliance in Rwanda
- EDPRS 2 Towards Achieving Self Reliance
- Enhancing Domestic Saving Mechanisms Towards Self-reliance
- Prosperity for Generations Agaciro Development Fund
- Strategic Skills Development and Youth Employment

9th Umushyikirano | 15-16 December 2011

The 9th National Dialogue Council was held under the theme “Strive for our dignity, together we pitch for rapid development”. Around 1000 people attended the event including leaders from government, representatives from the private sector and Rwandans from all walks of life, including those living abroad. The following presentations were delivered at the event:

- Approaches used by Rwandans to find Home Grown Solutions and self-development by upholding their dignity
- Implementation of the development plan, EDPRS I, and requirements to prepare EDPRS II
- Role of service delivery in speeding up national development and promoting good governance
- Role of education in speeding up sustainable development

8th Umushyikirano | 20-21 December 2010

The 8th National Dialogue Council was held under the theme “Our responsibility is delivering quality service”. Around 950 people attended the event including leaders from government, representatives

from the private sector and Rwandans from all walks of life, including those living abroad. Those unable to attend were able to contribute via a toll free hotline, SMS and email. More than 100,000 Rwandans followed the discussions online. The following presentations were delivered at the event:

Strategies and orientation of the third phase of decentralisation (2011-2015)

- Social cohesion and reconciliation barometer
- The Second Consultative Meeting on the Fight Against Genocide
- Nine Years of Basic Education (9YBE)
- Savings and small and medium scale enterprises
- Housing, reforestation irrigation and land consolidation
- Community based health insurance scheme (Mutuelle de Sante), nutrition, hygiene and sanitation and HIV/AIDS

7th Umushyikirano | 10-11 December 2009

The 7th National Dialogue Council was held under the theme “Let us do more valuable and sustainable work”. Around 900 people attended the event including leaders from government, representatives from the private sector and Rwandans from all walks of life, including those living abroad. The following topics were discussed at the event:

- The Vision 2020 programme and the Millennium Development Goals
- Streamlining trading activities and customer care service
- Outdated customs hampering development
- Participation of Rwandans living abroad in the country’s development
- Achievements in reconciliation and unity over the past 15 years
- Achievements by the National Service of Gacaca courts

From the discussions that took place, a total of 23 resolutions were passed. The resolutions fall under four broad categories:

Economic: Six resolutions were passed that focused on the TIG (Travaux d'Interêt Général/Community Service) program, the Savings and Credit Cooperatives known as Umurenge SACCO, the Agriculture Guarantee Fund and energy saving stoves.

Good Governance: Five resolutions were passed that focused on improving communication of government development programs to citizens and improving service delivery.

Social Welfare: Five resolutions were passed that focused on the recovery of cows that were wrongly distributed as part of the Girinka program, encouraging community ownership of the Nine Years of Basic Education Program, promoting cultural values that drive development and facilitating Rwandans living abroad to send remittances home more easily.

Justice: Resolutions were passed that focused on returning stolen materials meant for building houses for the vulnerable; working with foreign countries to extradite genocide perpetrators to Rwanda or have

them tried where they reside, publishing data on genocide survivors and seizing the property of genocide perpetrators already sentenced by the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR).

6th Umushyikirano | 18-19 December 2008

The 6th National Dialogue Council was attended by 940 people including leaders from government, representatives from the private sector and Rwandans from all walks of life, including those living abroad. From the discussions that took place, a total of 24 resolutions were passed. The resolutions from the event led to the following achievements:

- A National Consultative Council to fight corruption was established 90,000 people participated in the civic education program known as Itorero ry'Igihugu following greater promotion of the program
- The promotion of a culture of saving and debt reduction led to the creation of Savings and Credit Cooperatives (SACCOs) in all 416 sectors across the country with 675,772 members being registered in total
- Awareness raising campaigns to fight genocide ideology and build a common understanding of family planning, grouped settlements, land consolidation and fighting erosion took place
- The One Dollar Campaign raised one billion Rwandan francs to build houses for orphans of the genocide. This was part of a resolution aimed at supporting vulnerable genocide survivors
- A resolution calling for the speeding up of the Nine Years of Basic Education (9YBE) program led to 3000 classrooms being built by communities in collaboration with the Government of Rwanda

5th Umushyikirano | 27-28 December 2007

The 5th National Dialogue Council was held under the theme “Enhance the national economy even further, as a springboard to address other problems facing the country”. Around 940 people attended the event including leaders from government, representatives from the private sector and Rwandans from all walks of life, including those living abroad. At this year’s event, Rwandan ambassadors and representatives of international bodies working in Rwanda were also invited. The following topics were discussed:

- The country’s economic revolution education as the basis for sustainable economic development program to fight genocide ideology and the phasing out of the Gacaca courts
- The contribution of Rwandans living abroad to the country’s development at the 2007 Umushyikirano, district mayors and the mayor of the City of Kigali presented a summary of their Imihigo (performance contracts) for 2007 as well as their actions plans for 2008.
- The Prime Minister announced that, following assessment of the districts performance, Nyagatare and Musanze were the best performers out of the ten evaluated. This was the first time awards were given for the best performing districts under the Imihigo program.

4th Umushyikirano | 18-19 December 2006

The 4th National Dialogue Council was attended by 800 participants from government, members of parliament, civil society, the private sector and Rwandans from all walks of life, including those living abroad. The following topics were discussed at the event:

- Approving the report from the 3rd National Dialogue Council (Umushyikirano)
- The role of the leaders' accountability in regards to the Gacaca process
- Assessing the country's progress in the area of unity and reconciliation and identifying the major challenges
- Reviewing districts' Imihigo (performance contracts) for 2006 and signing contracts for 2007
- The implementation of Vision 2020 – especially relating to high population growth and resulting environmental pressures.

3rd Umushyikirano | 13-14 December 2005

The 3rd National Dialogue Council was attended by around 860 people including leaders from government, representatives from the private sector and civil society as well as Rwandans from all walks of life including those living abroad. The following topics were discussed at the event:

- Promoting knowledge based decision making using clear social and economic indicators
- Strengthening government reforms
- Fast tracking the processing of genocide cases using Gacaca courts
- Finding effective ways to support the country's most vulnerable people good governance as an effective tool for sustainable development
- Improving awareness of government programs to accelerate development

2nd Umushyikirano | 21-22 December 2004

The 2th National Dialogue Council was attended by around 800 people including leaders from government, representatives from the private sector and Rwandans from all walks of life, including those living abroad. The focus of the event was good governance and how leaders across government could more effectively instil a culture of accountability and performance. Genocide ideology prevention was also discussed.

1st Umushyikirano | 28 June 2003

The first National Dialogue Council was a one day event and was attended by members of the local and central government, parliament as well as civil society. The following topics were discussed at the event:

- The role of local government in development
- The status of unity and reconciliation in the context of a multiparty political system
- The role of leadership in facilitating democratic elections Rwanda's vision for sustainable development

Detailed reports of each National Dialogue Council can be found at www.rwandapedia.rw/explore/umushyikirano