

extraordinary explosion of communications. The globe is becoming a village. Satellite communications and information sharing have generated a transparency revolution which has changed totally and irreversibly the space and territory which we inhabit. Artificial state boundaries have been frozen, creating ethnic stress for which there is no longer any resolution by war and bloodshed.

- (vii) **In parallel with this revolution in transparency is a massive spiritual shift manifested in the human rights movement.** The depth and scope of this movement cannot be overestimated. The central pillar of the human rights movement, resonating down the centuries from the time of the French Revolution and the American Declaration of Independence, and enshrined after the Second World War in the first article of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, is that 'All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights'.

This is in essence the countervailing force that is being mustered against genocide. In the human rights perspective, there is no more fundamental right than the right of life. There can be no more radical assault on universal human rights than the systematic slaughter of a group of human beings because of their ethnic origin, political affiliation or beliefs. This is indeed the archetypal crime of crimes in the human rights perspective. If this is tolerated or condoned anywhere in the world, then the whole human rights edifice is undermined.

- (viii) **The human rights movement however is not just a juridical theory. It is a new perception, a 'paradigm shift', in response to the shrinking world and the end of empire.** Seen in another context, it is an explosion of compassion; breaking out of the confines of nationalism and local identity and flooding out to the furthest corners of the globe. Compassion and the human rights movement are basically an assertion that there is only one tribe, and that its home is the planet.

- (ix) **This paradigm shift carries political impact. The world's public in democratic countries is increasingly vociferous in its demand for action when confronted with images of human suffering,** especially when this is caused by genocidal activity. It does not matter whether the victims are Serb or Albanian, Hutu or Tutsi, white or black, Moslem or Christian. The demand for action is insistent and political leaders ignore it at their peril.

It is worth recalling that at the height of the Vietnam War, in 1972, the American public was rocked by a press photograph of a naked nine year-old Vietnamese girl fleeing in terror from her village, burning with napalm that had been dropped by US bombers, in an act of territorial cleansing. The impact of that one photograph was immense, and could be seen as a turning point in the war. The universal perception was that this child was reaching