DENIS MUKWEGE

(Peace, 2018)

Dr. Denis Mukwege is a Congolese obstetrician and gynecologist and tireless advocate for survivors of sexual violence. As the founder and medical director of Panzi Hospital in Bukavu, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), he has treated tens of thousands of survivors since the start of the Second Congo War (1998). In 2018, Mukwege was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his "efforts to end the use of sexual violence as a weapon of war and armed conflict."

The Panzi Foundation, also founded by Mukwege, helps women subjected to sexual violence in the DRC to obtain justice and rebuild their lives through access to legal, psychosocial, and economic reintegration services. In partnership with Physicians for Human Rights, Mukwege and Panzi Hospital have provided training on forensic evidence collection for clinicians, leading to the first conviction in the DRC for serial sexual violence as a crime against humanity.

Mukwege's humanitarian efforts and his public calls for the accountability of those responsible for crimes in the DRC have made him a target for human rights abuse. In 2012, he survived an assassination attempt during which his collaborator was killed. He then fled the country with his family. Despite threats to his safety, Mukwege returned to his country the following year, where he continues his life-changing work.

"I call on the world to be a witness and I urge you to join us in order to put an end to this suffering that shames our common humanity."