

Darkness is looming over Rwanda as main political leader Victoire Ingabire Umuhuza is detained.



Stop it NOW!



Forces Démocratiques Unifiées – United Democratic Forces FDU/UDF Inkingi

Democracy – Rule of Law – Equal Opportunity

Historic decision to end political change through violence

Following wide ranging consultations with Rwandan civil society organisations and its own research on the ground, it became clear to the United Democratic Forces UDF/UDF-Inkingi that if not addressed appropriately, the weight of internal contradictions and systemic failures to manage them: lack of political participation and of equitable justice, scandalous economic disparities, use of a collective memory of a national tragedy i.e. genocide, for political ends, could lead to a worse tragedy.

The Party took a historic decision to participate in the August 2010 presidential elections to offer Rwandans a viable political alternative for a brighter future, based on democracy, the rule law and equal opportunity. Its President Victoire Ingabire Umuhuza decided to advance these values in Rwanda and light the candle of hope in Rwanda than curse the darkness in a safe haven of Europe. She wanted to tell Rwandans that change is possible without resorting to violent means.

The VOICE of DEMOCRATIC change in RWANDA



Victoire leaves the comfort of her house and job



Victoire is warmly welcomed by Rwandans



DENIED DEMOCRACY

Victoire ends up in the dreaded "1930" Kigali prison

*"What I wish for people to grasp is that an innocent woman is in prison
This woman could be
your sister,
your mother,
your daughter"*

Raissa-daughter of Victoire Ingabire

Victoire: Light for Peaceful Political Change in Rwanda



Mrs. Victoire Ingabire Umuhiza, a mother of three, trained in commercial law and accounting, graduate in business economics and corporate management, resigned from her post of Head of the Accounting department of an international accounting firm based in the Netherlands with 25 branches in Europe, Asia and Africa to spearhead peaceful political change in Rwanda.

The warm reception she received, her audacity to criticize the regime as well as calling on people to come out of fear and speak out for their democratic rights were seen as a bad precedent and threat to its legitimacy. A series of actions were taken by the regime including barring her Political party from participating in the 2010 presidential elections and ultimately arresting and detaining her, charged for “endangering state security.”

POLITICAL PROGRAMME OF UFDU/FDU INKINGI ⁱ

Contrary to the popular discourse that political violence in Rwanda emanates from a congenital rivalry between the two dominant ethnic groups in Rwanda, Hutu and Tutsi, the United Democratic Forces Inkingi believes that the violence is due to the absence of a transparent and democratic mechanism for a peaceful competition for and transfer of power. Ethnicity has been used to galvanise support by a power hungry elite in both camps to access power because it lacked a national political vision and convincing political programmes transcending parochial interests. This explains why violent political change has existed under Tutsi and Hutu led administrations. Democracy, the rule of law and equal opportunity would make ethnicity as a rallying point to access resources irrelevant. Key elements of the political programme include: **Democracy; Rule of law; equitable Justice and ending impunity; Protection of minorities; Freedom and equal opportunity; Freedom of thought and action; Sound Social system and competitive health care; National reconciliation and Remembrance duty; Decentralisation; Durable development; Free trade.**

The UDF once in power wants to organize an all inclusive dialogue that brings together representatives of political actors , representatives of civil society from inside and outside the country, from public administration and security forces, the business community and representatives of refugees to discuss , without any taboos all major national issues and challenges facing the nation, then establish a political process and rules for participation in public life that make everyone feel secure and to finally agree on the fundamental elements of an institutional framework for sustainable management of the naturally divergent and competing demands of the various sections and forces in country. It determined to end mistrust between ethnic groups which has marked the rwandan political history.

General Paul Kagame was recruited in the Ugandan army after his secondary school education. He was sent to Monduli military school in Tanzania to train in military intelligence. He joined the National Resistance army of Yoweri Museveni who sent him to Cuba for further training in military intelligence. When Museveni overthrew General Tito Okello in 1986 Paul Kagame rose to the rank of mid-level intelligence officer in the Directorate of Military Intelligence based in the notorious Basima House. In 1990 he joined the rebel force, the 'Rwandan Patriotic Army (RPA)' that invaded Rwanda in October 1990 and took power in 1994.

He has ruled Rwanda for the last 16 years. His army has twice invaded the Democratic Republic of Congo and involved in proxy wars that have left an estimated 6 million dead, highest humanitarian disaster since the Second World War.



Paul Kagame warns the West over opposition leader Victoire Ingabire Umuhoya. ***"They think Africans deserve to be led by these hooligans – and to this we say no – a big no"***. (Speech of 07/04/2010)

General Paul Kagame took over the leadership of the Rwandan Patriotic Front following the death of its leader, hero of the National Resistance Army of Museveni, and former Deputy Minister of Defence, Major General Fred Rwigyema and other senior military leaders Dr Baingana and Major Bunyenyezi who were killed by the Rwandan Army during the first days of the invasion of Rwanda.

General Kagame has purged the army of its founders, some of whom now live in exile who point out that *"the RPF is no longer the democratic, inclusive and principled organization that its founders and early leaders and members intended it to be. The organization has now become a caricature of its former self"*. They attribute the situation to the personality of President Kagame which does not tolerate challenging views. Colleagues in military intelligence in Uganda recall that *"Paul Kagame was renowned for high-handedness, impulsive mistreatment of subordinates, and torture of suspects!"* They warn that *"the chances of violent conflict appear more likely with each passing day"* due to the way that he is managing state affairsⁱⁱⁱ.

Robert C. Krueger PhD (Oxford University) who served as a U.S. congressman, senator, ambassador at large for Mexican affairs, ambassador to Burundi, and ambassador to Botswana while writing on the recent elections in Rwanda in August 2010, in an article issued in Foreign Policy journal commented: *"Many corporate leaders and economists will be pleased that the government of a Central African country claiming the fastest economic growth in its region has won again. Only justice, democracy, and the silent and terrified majority of the Rwandan population will have lost"*^{iv}.

Reassured of the unconditional support from the key allies from the corporate world and political backers General Paul Kagame has embarked on implementing his warning to use a hammer to kill a fly: meaning his political opponents^v hence the seriousness of the warning from General Paul Kagame to Victoire Ingabire, his serious political rival: *"This woman will certainly be where she belongs; now the outsiders who want so badly Ingabire to be an opposition leader here or later on be our President, well, they may wait for a while"* he told the newspaper^{vi}.

Paul KAGAME:

Rwanda's Redeemer or Ruthless Dictator



Kagame recruited in the Ugandan Army as intelligence officer ends up leader of armed rebellion (Rwandan Patriotic Front) that overthrew the Rwandan government



Paul Kagame seizes power

Paul Kagame gains Wealth:
2003 and 2008 he acquires 'Bombardier Global Express BD-700 jets' priced at \$50-million each. 60% of the population live on less than \$1 a day & 49% of budget is from aid.



Like many other "strongmen", who seize power by force Paul Kagame mocks democratic rules to access power.

Paul Kagame has been hailed as the man behind Rwanda's economic success story. Nonetheless, experience has proved that economic success cannot be sustained without democracy, rule of law and equal opportunity to harness all the talents. North Korea is a good example.

Besides, UNDP Human Development Index Report (2007) which was jointly published with the Rwandan government as a blueprint of "turning vision 2020 into reality" reveals that "Rwanda's high growth rates are deceptive in that they hide large and growing inequalities between social classes, geographic regions and gender". The report points out that economic inequalities, have almost doubled in the last 20 years, placing Rwanda among the top 15% most unequal countries in the world

<http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/nationalreports/africa/rwanda/name,3322,en.html>. In 2006, a primary school teacher earned 20,000 Rwf per month. In comparison, Kagame receives from the State every month "a wholesome working allowance of 4,781,700 Rwf (239 times more) and a residence and guest entertainment allowance of 6,500,000 Rwf" as provided for by Presidential Order n° 52 of 12/10/2006 modifying Presidential Order n° 59/01 determining allowances and other fringe benefits to be allocated to State Top Political Appointees(See <http://www.primature.gov.rw/journal/I.0%20n0%2021%20du%2001.11.2006.pdf>)

TACTICS TO BREAK VICTOIRE'S RESOLVE TO FIGHT FOR DEMOCRACY, THE RULE OF LAW AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

Victoire Ingabire Umuhoza arrived in Rwanda on the 16th of January 2010 as leader of the United Democratic Forces – Inkingi to represent her party in the presidential elections of August 2010. From the airport she went straight to the memorial of the genocide against Tutsi to pay respect to Tutsi victims of genocide. She made a speech in which she called for justice to bring to book those who committed genocide against Tutsi and those who committed other crimes including war crimes and crimes against without fear or favour, irrespective of ethnic or political affiliation. She considered equitable justice as a solid foundation for national reconciliation and durable peace and development.

The government and particularly the intelligence services, alarmed by the warm welcome received by Victoire Ingabire and her violating the taboo to call for justice for Hutu victims of crimes committed by the ruling officials, soon developed tactics to stop a bad precedent of tolerating critics of the official line.

- **Party Newspaper “The New Times” onslaught**

The Party Newspaper “The New Times” launched an onslaught on Victoire for 3 consecutive days following her arrival on the 16th January 2010. Each day the paper carried an editorial and a front page article, full of threats and false accusations. Some read as follows: Victoire “desecrates memory with Double Genocide theory”, “genocide denier: the law should take its course”, “Government won't stand violation of the laws”, “Ms. Victoire Ingabire Umuhoza's arrival in Rwanda, an utter reminder of the RTLM!”. “Political Parties slam Ingabire 'divisionist' politics”.

- **Attack by government officials**

The Minister of Internal Security Sheikh Mussa Fazil Harerimana quoted by the Party Newspaper “The New Times” issue of the 20th of January 2010, accused Victoire Ingabire Umuhoza of “revisionism and Genocide denial” stating that it was a “clear violation of the country's laws”.

In one of the briefing to the press beginning of February 2010, President General Kagame accused Victoire of breaking the law by speaking publicly before her party was registered and called on the judicial system to deal with her. This was repeated in an interview given to the Ugandan newspaper Monitor where he said that she has to be “where she belongs” i.e. prison. “This woman will certainly be where she belongs; now the outsiders who want so badly Ingabire to be an opposition leader here or later on be our President, well, they may wait for a while” he told the newspaper”^{vii}.

The message was echoed by the Prime Minister Makuza and the Minister of Foreign Affairs. The Prime Minister said that Ingabire's rhetoric showed utter disrespect for Rwandans and what they have worked hard to achieve over the past 16 years and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Louise Mushikiwabo when asked by a reporter, Kezio-Musoke of the East African Newspaper about Mrs Victoire Ingabire she stated : “*there is no place for people like Ingabire in Rwanda. Not now and not in many years*”^{viii}.

In his address to mark the 16th anniversary of the 1994 Tutsi Genocide on 7th April 2010, Mr. Kagame accused the opposition – specifically naming Victoire in person, of “political hooliganism”.^{ix} Foreigners are imposing ‘hooligans’ like Ingabire on Rwanda, President Paul Kagame stated.

With these pronouncements coming from a dictatorial Head of State, the state machinery is left with no choice but to satisfy the “leader's” will. The order for Victoire' arrest was sealed leaving the relevant government department to find the best way to limit the political damage.

- **Physical Abuse**

On the 3rd February 2010, Victoire Ingabire was called by the local administration to collect her papers regarding the registration of her party. Instead of getting the papers Victoire Ingabire was attacked by a mob within the administration building under the watchful eyes of the administration officials including the Police. She succeeded in running back to her car and was driven away quickly in a waiting car. People threw stones at her car as it speeded off. In the attack the thugs snatched Mrs. Victoire's handbag which contained her identity papers and personal belongings. No investigation has been conducted to find and bring the culprits to justice^x.

- **Denial of family life**

On March 23, 2010, while Mrs. Victoire Ingabire was not subject to judicial review forcing her to remain in Rwanda, she was prevented from boarding the plane at Kanombe International Airport to visit her family in the Netherlands.

- **Harassment and intimidation by the Criminal Investigation Department**

As verbal and physical threats failed to deter Mrs. Victoire from expressing herself publicly, the Criminal Investigation Department stepped in. She was summoned to the CID and interrogated on alleged genocidal ideology and links with "Forces Democratiques pour la Liberation du Rwanda (FDLR) in the DRC. At this point, the UDF party warned in its press release of the 30th March 2010 that it was aware some ex combatants of FDLR were being coached by the military intelligence to act as witnesses against Victoire.

On the 21st April 2010, Victoire was arrested and charged of collaborating with a terrorist group, the FDLR, and of denying the 1994 genocide of the Tutsi. She was released on bail.

The intimidation of the CID did not stop Victoire from speaking to the media something that annoyed the authorities. The worry is expressed in a statement made by the Prosecutor, Martin Ngoga, to The New Times newspaper of the 14th of May 2010 pointing out that: ***"the Prosecution is more specifically concerned with continued posting declarations and newspaper interviews she has been doing. The case against her is not one of robbery in which restraining physical movement would be enough to contain further damage. It is a case of destructive and divisive ideology whose damage does not require physical proximity of the offender."*** They felt they had to take a more drastic step of throwing her in jail to silence her.

- **Intimidation of foreign lawyers ^{xi}**



The U.S. attorney Peter Erlinder, law professor at William Mitchell College of Law in St. Paul, Minnesota came to Rwanda to consult with Mrs. Victoire Ingabire as his client. On May 28th 2010 he was arrested and charged for genocide denial.

The arrest was followed by a public outcry, particularly from members of the law profession. The US National Lawyers Guild accused the Rwandan government of trying to hamstring the legal defense of Victoire Ingabire to stop her from running against President Paul Kagame in August 9, elections. David Gespass, the President of The U.S. National Lawyers pointed that: *"There can be no justice for anyone if the state can silence lawyers for defendants whom it dislikes and a government that seeks to prevent lawyers from being vigorous advocates for their clients cannot be trusted"*.

Other protests came from the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers, the International Criminal Defense Attorneys Association, The International Criminal Bar; the Bar Association of France; the Bar of the United Kingdom. The latter pointed out in its press release of June 2010 that "his arrest is a violation of the most basic principle for the proper presentation of a defense, namely the immunity of counsel from any criminal proceedings for defense positions taken in Court. More than 90 law school deans from across the United States also signed a letter that clearly reminded the world community that the arrest of Professor Peter Erlinder violated the U.N. Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers and the core values of the legal profession.

The lawyer was finally released and has now declined to continue to defend Victoire Ingabire Umuhoza. The World law profession rightly stood up for him. **Victoire Ingabire Umuhoza, the main victim is appealing for the same sympathy and protest against injustice done to her.**

- **Final act to silence Victoire Ingabire Umuhoza**

As Mrs. Victoire stuck to her right to freedom of speech, the regime decided to arrest her and to keep her in prison without any possibility of a bail.

- **Psychological torture, degrading and inhuman treatment**

Victoire Ingabire Umuhoza was arrested on the 14th of October after a week of siege of her house by security agents. She was kept in a police cell, seated on a chair, handcuffed the whole night and not allowed to take a mattress to put on the cold cement floor. She was not allowed to receive food or water from her home. She kept awake fearful that the notorious secret agents would try to kidnap her. She was not allowed to receive spare clothes and other sanitary items. Indeed when she appeared before the judge 5 days later after her arrest she wearing the same clothes she wore on the day of her arrest. She was not allowed to be seen by her lawyer or by the Red Cross. Such conditions of detention amount to torture, degrading and inhumane treatment according to the UN convention against torture and inhumane treatment.

- **Delaying tactics to keep her locked up in prison**

Since her arrival in Rwanda, 12 months ago, the prosecution was still struggling to find enough evidence to submit the case for trial. One person, a former FDLR rebel, who returned to Rwanda and reintegrated in civilian life by the regime has been arrested. He pleaded guilty to have been recruited by Victoire to form armed rebellion and he has promised to collaborate with the prosecution. Other witnesses are said to be under crash training programme to help charge Victoire.

All the applications for bail have been refused.

- **Kangaroo court process**

The fact that the fate of Victoire Ingabire Umuhoza was already determined by the statement of the "Leader" General Paul Kagame was not enough to make the government do some damage limiting efforts. Thus the Executive was not bothered to keep Victoire Ingabire Umuhoza in

detention for more than 30 days in violation of articles 18 and 19 of the Rwandan Constitution and article 100 of the Rwandan Criminal procedure Law.

On 17th December 2010, Ms. Victoire INGABIRE was taken to the High Court for the verdict to hear about her bail application, only to be told by a plain clothed security agent who accompanied to the court, and not the judge, that she lost her appeal

- **Arrest of Mrs. Victoire Ingabire- a pattern in a repressive regime**

The arrest and detention of Victoire Ingabire Umuhoza is part of pattern in a systematic drive to silence every dissenting voice. In the run up to the elections of August 2010, two independent newspapers critical of government were banned, one journalist was murdered, the Vice President of an opposition party, the Green Party was beheaded; the leader of the Social Democratic Party Imberakuli Mr Bernard Ntaganda was arrested and another Party leader Mushaidi Deo Chairman of the Pact for People's Defence political party,, was abducted from Burundi in March 2010, tried and sentenced to life imprisonment.

The regime has the highest turnover of political exiles from within the same government in the history of Rwanda. This cuts across ethnic and social groups and professions. It includes the former speaker of the National Assembly, (a survivor of genocide), two Prime Ministers, a Defence Minister, Minister of Home Affairs, Minister of Justice, 3 Ministers of Foreign Affairs, 4 ambassadors, 4 Generals in addition to other very senior Military officers etc... Many refugees including the former Rwanda King Kigeli have not dared return.

The present regime has the highest number of allegations of assassination and abductions of political exiles who include among others, the former Minister of Home Affairs, Seth Sendashonga, Colonel Lizinde Theoneste MP, both assassinated in Nairobi, and a banker, Tumusabe Pasteur assassinated in Cameroon. There was an attempted assassination in South Africa of General Nyamwasa, former chief of staff of the Rwandan Armed Forces and former Ambassador to India The incident has led to the souring of relations between Rwanda and South Africa.

As Ian Birrell, writing for the Independent Newspaper of the 27th November 2009, points out *"should we (the West) be rushing to canonise Kagame and his cronies in Kigali"*, pointing out that *"his actions paint a picture of "a repressive regime that has played on the conscience of the world to silence dissent, crush critics and devastate its neighbour (the Democratic Republic Congo) in a conflict that has left more people dead than any war since the Second World War"*^{xii}.

The regime is blowing off all the lights that would dispel the shadows of fear and helplessness among the population and illuminate the way to democracy, the rule of law and to equal opportunity. Victoire Ingabire Umuhoza has taken the most courageous decision to take on a repressive regime to keep one candle of hope burning. But for how long if all peace loving people keep silence?

"This place is like hell, and there is no relief in hell. But only our determination, courage and faith help the martyrs to endure extreme moments.

My incarceration should strengthen the fire of hope for a lasting solution in Rwanda. This is part of the non-violent struggle for democracy and the Prison is one of dictators' favourite weapons".

Message of Victoire Ingabire to her visitors before Christmas 2010



IMPLICATIONS OVER THE ARREST AND DETENTION OF A FREEDOM FIGHTER: MRS VICTOIRE INGABIRE UMUHOZA

- Making the use of violence to change the system an attractive option, thus risking the destruction of the perceived achievements
- Silence over and condoning the present totalitarian regime is another betrayal to the Rwandan people because its continuation sets the ground for another cycle of violence
- It makes a mockery of the lessons given by the West about the values of Democracy, Human Rights and Rule of Law when it provides financial and diplomatic support to a regime that ignores those values with impunity.
- Impunity of the regime over the political motivated arrest and detention is an encouragement of violence as a means of retaining power and hence jeopardising peace and stability in Rwanda. There is a general consensus that the present trend in the present exercise of power could easily lead to a worse tragedy than what was witnessed in 1994 and certainty that those who support the regime will walk away as before and recite the lamentations of "guilt" and repeat the "never again" slogan.

Apart from Rwandans, Prof. Phillip Reyntjens a leading expert on Rwanda has warned the West pointing out that:

"By indulging in wishful thinking, the international community is taking an enormous risk and assuming a grave responsibility. While it is understandable that the 'genocide credit' and the logic of 'good guys and bad guys' should have inspired a particular understanding of a regime born out of the genocide, this complacent attitude has incrementally, step by step, contributed to a situation that may well be irreversible and that contains seeds for massive new violence in the medium or long run",^{xiii}

An article in Wall Street Journal of 21st July 2010 also warned that the arrest of Victoire Ingabire Umuhiza and the general crackdown on dissenting voices *"is especially worrisome for Rwanda, not only because the wounds from the 1994 genocide are still raw, but because for a while it seemed that Mr. Kagame would not pattern his presidency on the model of so many of his African counterparts—onetime national saviors who ultimately turn to thuggery"*^{xiv}.

All peace loving people and friends of Rwanda, acting together or individually can **help stop darkness engulfing Rwanda**, help Victoria Ingabire regain her freedom from behind the bars as well as other political prisoners to exercise their political and civil rights.

Stop it now!



WHAT YOU CAN DO...

- Write to/visit your Member of Parliament/Congress/Senate.
- Start a petition.
- Join a campaigning organisation.
- Fundraise or donate to pay for her lawyers.
- Write a blog or online article.
- Set up a local debate on the issue.
- Write to Tony Blair, former Prime Minister of the UK and adviser to Paul Kagame, to Bill Clinton, former US President and Rev. Rick Warren who speak publicly of their admiration for Kagame to prevail upon him to open political space in Rwanda
- Write to the African Commission for Human and People's rights

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- ⁱ <http://www.fdu-rwanda.org/en/principes-base-rwanda/programme-politique-rwanda/index.html>
- ⁱⁱ http://news.jonzu.com/z_uncategorized_kagame-i-am-not-authoritarian-and-i-have-nothing-to-apologise-for.html
- ⁱⁱⁱ www.facebook.com/topic.php?uid=13731708643&topic=16247
- ^{iv} www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2010/08/05/the_paul_kagame_i_know.
- ^v www.allafrica.com/stories/201007090953.html),
- ^{vi} <http://www.monitor.co.ug/News/National/-/688334/923580/-/x064gg/-/index.html>
- ^{vii} <http://www.monitor.co.ug/News/National/-/688334/923580/-/x064gg/-/index.html>.
- ^{viii} <http://rwandinfo.com/eng/there-is-no-place-for-people-like-ingabire-in-rwanda-says-minister>)
- ^{ix} <http://greatlakesvoice.com/?p=25>
- ^x <http://www.amnesty.org/en/news-and-updates/news/intimidation-rwandan-opposition-parties-must-end-20100218>
- ^{xi} U.S. House Resolution Urging Rwanda to Free Law Professor Peter Erlinder
- ^{xii} Independent Newspaper of the 27th November 2009, by Ian Birrell.
- ^{xiii} F. Reyntjens; African Affairs, Vol. 103, No. 411, April 2004, pp. 208-9
- ^{xiv} <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703724104575378802201398266.html>)

Donations for the Defence Fund of Ingabire Umuhuza Victoire

Banking info:

The Foundation for Freedom and Democracy in Rwanda (FFDR), a Dutch Foundation is accepting to host a Defence Fund in this respect. Please for support use the following details:

Bank Account:

RABOBANK: 1140.31.347

Spinozalaan 40-G

2273 XC Voorburg

IBAN: NLOGRABO0114031347

SWIFT/BIC: RABONL2u

Beneficiary: Foundation for Freedom & Democracy in Rwanda.

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