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United Democratic Forces

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Kigali -Rwanda

"Pour un Etat de Droit, la Democratie et l'Egalité de chances" ; "For the rule of law, democracy and equal opportunity"

Statement of the chairperson of UDF at the genocide memorial period

Kigali, 7th April 2010

Dear countrymen

Today we are starting the commemoration of the Rwandan genocide period. On behalf of UDF party and its entire membership, the interim executive committee extends its deep sympathy to all Rwandan who lost their beloved parents, brothers and sisters, genocide survivors who were aggrieved by the genocide.

The memorial period should be an opportunity for all of us to think about this tragedy that befell our country. It should bring each and every one into devising ways and means of ensuring that innocent blood never be shed again.

It is painful to hear that, 16 years after the genocide, there are still people vowing to harm genocide survivors. It is unbelievable to hear that some of the aid meant for genocide survivors ends up in pockets of those who were supposed to manage them.

Indeed, there are reports of genocide survivors who are still languishing in abject poverty, unattended to, without shelter, and orphans still being at the mercy of charity.

It is not enough to denounce malpractices. People need actions. They need to see that the government is truly behind them. It is nonsense to denounce those who swindle survivors' aid, without bringing them to justice, or transferring them to other offices in the civil service. It amounts to putting a finger in a wound.

This should be high on the agenda of the government, in order to ease suffering and regain confidence of all orphans and widows who were traumatised by the genocide.

It is urgent for the government to go beyond slogans and unveil plans of ensuring security for genocide survivors. It is high time for the security services to publish reports of investigations that were carried out into genocide survivors' attacks. The victims are calling for help.

Dear countrymen,

It is paramount not to be hostages of history. We should be courageous enough to think about the long term. We should learn from the past, although it may not be an easy task. We should agree to join forces for the interests of our beloved country, in peace, unity and mutual respect. This is the heritage that we should leave to the future generations.

I will wind up by calling upon every Rwandan to remember our deceased, to remember what happened, but without forgetting the future.

May God bless you all

Victoire Ingabire Umuhoza
Chairperson UDF-INKINGI