



## **Inkingi Forces Démocratiques Unifiées United Democratic Forces**

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**Kigali -Rwanda****

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

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### **PRESS RELEASE**

Kigali, 05th August 2010

### **Rwanda: the international community has utterly failed Democracy.**

After missing three major turning points, i.e. the prevention and arrest of genocide in 1994; the protection of refugees from war and crimes against humanity in the Democratic Republic of Congo in 1996-1997; the impunity of all people involved in genocide and crimes against humanity committed by both warring parties in the Rwandan tragedy; the international community has utterly fallen short of the fourth turning point. Indeed, on the eve of the forthcoming presidential elections scheduled on 9th August 2010, which had raised a glimpse of hope for the long awaited democratisation of Rwanda, things are being conducted as if no lesson had been learnt from the past.

The disappointing shyness of the international community to accompany the whole election process as well as the lack of a clear public position vis-à-vis the closure of political space and harassment of opposition by the current regime prove that they are inevitably following the same pattern of abandoning the Rwandan people.

Such behaviour coming from governments and international organizations, which share the same democratic values and civil liberties with United Democratic Forces - FDU INKINGI, reinforces our disappointment and disgust.

Up to date, no single genuine opposition party has been allowed to participate in the presidential elections. The FDU INKINGI is not legally registered. Its Chairperson, Ms. Victoire INGABIRE UMUHOZA, is under house arrest on charges of trumped crimes. A member of the party, Ms. Béatrice UWIMANA, is gone missing since the police crack down on the opposition of 24th June 2010. Four executive members of the party were detained on charges related to illegal protest; three of them were later bailed, while Mr. Martin NTAVUKA was transferred to Kigali maximum prison after he was found in possession of printed T-shirts reading "We need democracy and fair justice". In the understanding of the current Rwandan justice this is considered as a threat against the security of the state!

The Democratic Green Party of Rwanda remains unregistered. It has just been tragically shadowed by the political assassination of Mr. André KAGWA RWISEREKA on 13th July 2010. No independent investigation has been allowed despite numerous calls from inside and outside the country.

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Moreover, the sole suspect arraigned in a rush, Mr. Thomas NTIVUGURUZA, has been released from police custody a week later.

Mr. Bernard NTAGANDA, president of the Parti Social IMBERAKURI, is behind bars and the party has split in two factions, due to the regime's interferences. Mr. Deogratias MUSHAYIDI, president of the People's Defence Pact - PDP is languishing in prison as well. This shows that the judiciary has obviously connived with the incumbent government in order to thwart the opposition.

Meanwhile, the internal military crisis has led to the arrests and exile of senior officers and generals. General KAYUMBA NYAMWASA narrowly escaped a life attempt by a gunman on 19th June 2010 in his asylum in South Africa.

With the 24th June 2010 assassination of Mr. Jean-Léonard RUGAMBAGE, Editor of a censored tabloid UMUVUGIZI, the freedom and independence of the independent press has suffered a fatal blow in Rwanda, leaving room only to government sponsored and partisan media. Access to public media is systematically blocked to the opposition parties. Public administration and the judicial system are used to prevent the opposition from exercising their political rights, leading to endless political charges and very expensive lawyers' fees. These two institutions i.e. public administration and the judiciary have become major instruments of political oppression.

The elections taking place in such a climate of unprecedented political exclusion and murders by the current regime are nothing but a masquerade of elections.

FDU INKINGI and all other opposition parties view the silence of the international community as a tacit backup of the current dictatorship. The international funding and support of this sham election is just a shame.

The FDU INKINGI draw the attention of the international community on the risks of derailing once for all any hope of a peaceful transfer of power and a lasting political atmosphere. The closing of the political space on a background of tense political and military crisis put the country on the brink of chaos and "Somalisation". The only alternative to the looming violence is to keep a very strong pressure on the dictatorship for an immediate democratisation of the country.

FDU INKINGI calls upon the international community, particularly the United States of America, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, South Africa, Tanzania, Germany, Belgium, Uganda, Sweden, Spain, Canada, France, the United Nations, The European Union, the African Union, the East African Community and the Commonwealth community to exert political pressure on the Rwandan government in order to:

- Postpone the 9th August 2010 presidential election comedy and to level the election playing field with total participation of the opposition;
- Give without conditions and without delay, freedom of movement to Ms. Victoire INGABIRE UMUHOZA, Chair of the FDU INKINGI and all incarcerated or bailed political opponents;
- Register the FDU INKINGI and other opposition parties;

- Release the preliminary results of the investigations and allow independent inquiry into the assassinations of Mr. André KAGWA RWISEREKA, Vice-President of the Green Democratic Party of Rwanda and the journalist Mr. Jean-Léonard RUGAMBAGE.

Should the regime fail to meet these minimal requests, the FDU INKINGI urges the international community not to recognize the legitimacy of the results of the ongoing sham elections.

In these moments of all dangers, all Rwandan stakeholders need strong signals to prove that power transfer and long lasting solution in Rwanda are possible without resorting to violence.

Sylvain SIBOMANA

Secretary-general

FDU INKINGI