



Inkingi
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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"

Press release

Swearing in address by General Kagame is disappointing

This Monday September 6th 2010, General Kagame was sworn in for another seven year term in office. In his address to the Rwandan people and friends of Rwanda, the United Democratic Forces regret that he evaded the key issues that threaten our country and which relate to the principles of democracy and human rights and good governance.

While more and more people are voicing their call for a highly inclusive national dialogue, the FDU-Inkingi are surprised that President Paul Kagame continues to ridicule those who advocate non-violence to solve the thorny problem of Rwanda. Indeed, in its militaristic style, the president concluded his speech in the national language by these unfortunate words: "*We defeated those who were in arms; we will equally defeat those without arms.*" a clear allusion to the democratic opposition

Regarding calls for more political openness, Paul Kagame said that "*Africans do not need democracy but rather to fight against poverty*". Democracy is a universal value and to claim that Africans do not need it is sheer dictatorship and contempt vis-à-vis all the African peoples. Africans do not have to choose between "stomach" and democracy.

Moreover, the failure of government policy in fighting against poverty is obvious. Farmers in the North and East of the country which used to be the country's food securest areas are today experiencing severe hunger because the regime imposed on them a brutal agricultural regionalization schemes. An all out cash crops agricultural in a subsistence economy will ultimately lead to food insecurity in the country.

The population was also expecting the President to justify the choice of his government to foster the development of the city of Kigali to the detriment of rural areas where more than 80% of the population lives.

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For FDU- Inkingi it is absurd to promise economic miracles for the next term in office, so long as the so called Vision 2020 that the government uses as a smoke screen to critics and investors, will not be extensively reviewed to take into accounts the realities of rural areas.

He also mentioned the promotion of education. The FDU - Inkingi denounce the gap between promises and achievements of President Kagame during the last 16 years of his regime. Indeed, the current education system is a two-tier system: a system developed for the elite in government and the rich, and a system of "trial and errors" for the rest of the population. Thus, the current 9-4-4 system only applies to public schools where poor children go and does not apply to private schools.

The Rwandan people finally expected that the president shed light on very serious charges brought against his army and government by the United Nations, during the invasion of DRC in 1996-2003. Instead he swept them under the carpet and tried to put them on the shoulder of foreigners and human rights organization, scapegoats for all the ill doing of Rwandans. Instead of taking note of these charges and promising full cooperation with international justice so as to bring to book the guilty, he unleashed his anger against those who demand accountability. It is an insult to the Congolese and Rwandan victims

It is a double standards policy to use UN reports to indict opposition members and cry foul when the same organization calls for accountability in so serious crimes against humanity and war crimes genocide.

The move to blame every time the international community for failures of governance and for crimes committed by all sides in Rwanda and whichever ethnic groups, is a blatant denial of our responsibilities. Foreigners are not responsible for the murder of the vice president of the Green Party or for the journalist Rugambage. They are not responsible for the crack down on opposition members.

The FDU- Inkingi are of the opinion that the ethnic problems that poison all corners of the country's life are not a creation of foreigners. It's a reality we must all face.

The FDU-Inkingi , like other members of Permanent Consultative Council of the opposition, are convinced that in order to avoid chaos and ensure stability, the regime should take leaf from neighbouring countries and accept direct talks between government and the opposition. Both would discuss the best way of ensuring a full transition to good governance, national unity, reconciliation and stability in Rwanda. Talking to the opposition is not a sign of weakness but of good leadership.

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