



## AMAHORO - FDU INKINGI - RNC PLATFORM

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### STATEMENT BY FDU-INKINGI, AMAHORO, RWANDA NATIONAL CONGRESS PLATFORM

#### ***RWANDA PARLIAMENT'S DECISION TO REMOVE CONSTITUTIONAL TERM LIMITS IS A PATHWAY TO ENTRENCH DICTATORSHIP AND INSTABILITY***

The decision by Rwanda's Parliament on 14/7/2015 to change the constitution so as to enable incumbent President Kagame to run for a third term is a betrayal of the true wish of the Rwandan people and a dangerous move.

There is a general consensus in Africa and elsewhere that the future stability and sustainable economic development of the continent depends on building strong institutions and not strong men. The Rwandan regime is driving Rwandans in a reverse gear to build the cult of one strong man, President Kagame. The irresponsible and dangerous action of the Rwanda Parliament was preceded by the ruling party's similar action, and an alleged 3.7 million Rwandans signing petitions demanding that President Kagame rules the country indefinitely.

We are quite encouraged by the statement of the US Department of State and the stand of certain African leaders including President Zuma of South Africa, Ghana Vice President Kwesi Amissah-Arthur, as well as the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, HE Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, rejecting changes in the Constitutions to accommodate the wishes of incumbent Presidents. We urge all other governments and international organizations to add their voices in rejecting this trend that threatens Africa's progress towards democratic governance of the last two decades.

The Parliament's decision is an offence not only to the dignity of all Rwandans, but to all Africans and humanity whose aspirations include freedom, the rule of law, democracy, peace and sustainable prosperity. We believe that long term social and economic progress is linked to the rule of law, political and civil freedoms, a vibrant civil society and independent media, all of which are lacking in Rwanda today. The much celebrated economic progress, although with glaring and growing inequalities, did not start with Kagame's reign nor will it end with it. Most importantly, this social and economic progress can be swiftly stopped and reversed in the event the current crisis of governance, if it remains unresolved peacefully, leads to another cataclysmic upheaval.

We are quite conscious that contrary to the general belief, the cycle of political violence in Rwanda is due to violent competition for power and the use of force to maintain it. It is quite tragic that since independence, all Presidents have been removed by violent means. We have to work to end this culture of political violence and foster the goodwill of every peace loving person.

Our political organisations reject the manipulation of citizens and national institutions to consolidate the President's personal power and that of his inner circle. We would like to warn the international community that Rwanda's apparent stability is deceptive because it hides deep seated tensions, unresolved issues, and a totalitarian regime which contains them only through violence. Condoning it, or keeping silent in the face of it, is to condemn all Rwandans to an uncertain, unstable, and possibly violent, future.

Our political organisations call upon peace loving people and friends of Rwanda to help end this cycle of violence by putting pressure on President Kagame to respect the constitution.

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