



**FDU-INKINGI**  
**Forces Démocratiques Unifiées**  
**United Democratic Forces**



☐: (+250) 728636000

☐ [info@fdu-rwanda.com](mailto:info@fdu-rwanda.com)

☐: (+32)478973762 , (+33)650293997, (+44)7982381717

<http://fdu-rwanda.com>, <http://victoire-ingabire.com>

**COMITE DIRECTEUR – STEERING COMMITTEE**

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

**PRESS RELEASE**

**FDU-INKINGI CALLS ON THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION TO IMPLEMENT  
THE RESOLUTION PASSED BY THE EU PARLIAMENT ON RWANDA**

The European [Parliament resolution on Rwanda, the case of Victoire Ingabire](#) (2016/2910(RSP), passed today October 6, 2016, strongly condemns *“the politically motivated trials, the prosecution of political opponents and the prejudging of the outcome of the trial”*. The [case of Mrs Victoire Ingabire Umuhoza](#), President of FDU-Inkingi, has been the most outstanding show case for the lack of independence of the judiciary in Rwanda.

Indeed, the President of Rwanda [Paul Kagame is on record telling a Ugandan newspaper the Monitor](#): *“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”*. His Minister of Foreign Affairs Mrs [Louise Mushikiwabo joined in and told an East African Newspaper reporter, Kezio-Musoke that](#): *“there is no place for people like Ingabire in Rwanda. Not now and not in many years”*; so said so done. [Mrs Ingabire Umuhoza Victoire is now serving a 15-year sentence](#).

The resolution also *“condemned acts of intimidation, arrests, detentions and prosecutions of opposition party leaders, members and activists, as well as journalists and other perceived critics of the Rwandan Government, solely for expressing their view”*. [At present the FDU-Inkingi assistant treasurer Leonille Gasengayire](#) was arrested for being in the wrong place at the wrong time. She was arrested on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of August 2016 at her village where she had gone to visit her family. The residents are protesting against being evicted from their homes, allegedly to build a public utility project, without legally binding compensation. She is accused under article 463, for allegedly encouraging people to disobey government instructions which is interpreted as inciting the citizens against the authorities.

The resolution further calls on *“the Rwandan authorities, to review and adjust national law in order to guarantee freedom of expression, in particular Articles 463 and 451 of the penal code, which constrains freedom of expression”*;

We would like to recall that many Rwandans, mainly opposition party members, journalists and civil society activists who criticise government policies are tried under these articles for *“inciting the citizens to hate the established authority or for spreading rumours likely to lead the citizens to hate the government or for tarnishing the image of the country at the international level and hence*

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<http://victoire-ingabire.com>

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*threatening state security*". Saying something that contradicts the government line is considered to be either incitement or spreading rumours intended to cause strife in the country.

The resolution asks *"the Commission to continue to evaluate EU support to Rwandan government institutions on a regular basis, in order to ensure that this support fully promotes human rights, freedom of expression and association, political pluralism and independent civil society"*;

In this regard FDU-Inkingi calls on the EU commission to listen to the call of its Parliament and implement article 9 of the Partnership Agreement between the members of African, Caribbean and Pacific group of States and the European Community and its member states on matters *"regarding human rights, democratic principles and the rule of law, and fundamental element regarding good governance"*.

Experience has shown that the Rwandan regime does not respond to diplomatic language but to credible and effective pressure. We have witnessed it in the case of the murderous M23 rebel movement. The partial freeze of EU money to Rwanda jointly with other donors forced the Rwandan government to stop aiding that rebel group. Until now, the message of the EU Commission to Rwanda has been mixed and confusing, on one hand it criticises the regime for its bad human rights record, its changing of the constitution to fit one person and, on the other hand, dishes out more financial resources. The regime is behaving like a spoilt child who is not accustomed to having boundaries. There is therefore no surprise that the government of Rwanda refused EU official delegation to visit Mrs Victoire Ingabire Umuhiza.

FDU-Inkingi would like express its greatest gratitude to the European Parliament and in particular the delegation of the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality of the European Parliament which visited Rwanda for its unbiased representation of the situation on the ground and its attempts to visit the Political prisoner Mrs Victoire Ingabire Umuhiza.

We strongly believe that economic development without rights can only lead to another cycle of violence. It has happened in Rwanda before and we see it happening elsewhere for example in Libya and Syria. [Doing so is merely postponing future conflict](#) that would destroy the achievements funded by the EU as was the case when the war erupted in Rwanda in 1990.

Done in London October 6, 2016

FDU INKINGI  
Justin Bahunga  
Commissioner for External Relations and Spokesperson  
[jbahunga@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:jbahunga@yahoo.co.uk)

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Tel : (+250)728636000, (+32)478973762, (+33)650293997, (+44)7982381717, [info@fdu-rwanda.com](mailto:info@fdu-rwanda.com)

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