



PLATFORM AMAHORO PC - FDU INKINGI - PDP IMANZI - PS IMBERAKURI - RWANDA NATIONAL CONGRESS (RNC)

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THE REACTION OF THE RWANDAN PARLIAMENT TO EU PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION: A WAKEUP CALL TO STOP RWANDA'S DESCENT TO HELL AGAIN.

[Following the rejection](#) , in its entirety, of the European Parliament “[resolution on Rwanda: the case of Victoire Ingabire \(2016/2910\(RSP\)\)](#)” by the Rwandan Parliament, the political platform composed of political organisations Amahoro - PC, FDU – Inkingi, PDP – Imanzi, PS –Imberakuri and Rwanda National Congress- RNC, would like to draw the attention of the international community on how totalitarian the Rwandan regime has become and on the plight of citizens when a Parliament loses its role as a countervailing force to the excesses of the Executive and becomes its propaganda tool.

The experience of Prof Ghai who led a Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative delegation to Rwanda in 2009, sums up the situation in Rwanda when he observes that: *“beneath the gentility of RPF leaders, the tidiness of Kigali, and its gleaming high rise buildings, I found a country deeply fragmented, operating under the hegemony of a small Tutsi political elite, which rules through oppression and fear”*, and hence a warning from another political analyst of Rwanda, Marc Saunders, that makes it clear that: *“Rwanda is a country in lockdown. Loosening the autocrat’s reins and helping his nation avoid another violent explosion is a message that only Rwanda’s international supporters can deliver to President Kagame”*. It is our very considered view that the EU parliament resolution is a wake-up call to the Rwandan regime and genuine friends of Rwanda to avoid another violent explosion. As the Declaration of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights reminds us: *“it is essential, if man is not to be compelled to have recourse, as a last resort, to rebellion against tyranny and oppression, that human rights should be protected by the rule of law”*.

The EU parliament resolution, after recalling the situation of gross violations of human rights in Rwanda makes recommendations on how to address them. It condemns among other things “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 has been the most outstanding show case for the lack of independence of the judiciary in Rwanda. Just to give one example, President Kagame is quoted telling a journalist of the Ugandan Newspaper the Monitor *“[This woman will certainly be where she belongs \(i.e. prison\); 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](#)”*. She was indeed arrested thereafter.

It is quite tragic that , while the Rwandan constitution guarantees the freedom of expression, the Rwandan Parliament resolution, interprets , like the Rwandan Courts, the statement of Mrs Ingabire Umuhoza that *“genuine reconciliation can only come about if justice does not discriminate for or against anyone”* as *“minimising genocide”* and agrees that her criticism of bad government policies constitutes a crime of *“spreading malicious and harmful propaganda to incite the population against the government”*.

The assessment made in the EU Parliament resolution regarding “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” is shared by independent Human Rights

organisations i.e. [Human Rights Watch](#) and [Amnesty International](#) as well as governments including the United States and the United Kingdom which are key allies of the Rwandan government.

The [US Country Report on Human Rights Practices in Rwanda for 2015](#) states among other things: “The most important human rights problems in the country were government harassment, arrest, and abuse of political opponents, human rights advocates, and individuals perceived to pose a threat to government control and social order; security forces’ disregard for the rule of law; and restrictions on civil liberties. Due to restrictions on the registration and operation of opposition parties, citizens did not have the ability to change their government through free and fair elections. The report also mentions arbitrary or unlawful killings; torture and harsh conditions in prisons and detention centers; arbitrary arrest; prolonged pre-trial detention; government infringement on citizens’ privacy rights and on freedoms of speech, press, assembly, and association”. This is why Rwanda has the highest number of refugees of all time in the history of the country cutting across, ethnicity and profession and the only regime that has hunted its critics to assassinate them.

In his [report \(2014\) to the UN General Assembly its Special Rapporteur Mr. Maina Kai](#), that: *“the fear of a new genocide cannot be invoked to impede of the UN fundamental freedoms in any society, which in fact are necessary to prevent conflicts and genocide”*, stressing that *“a society without room for critical voices to speak freely and peacefully is unsustainable”*.

It is quite delusional for a Parliament and quite indicative of the subservience of Parliament to the Executive, to dismiss all these facts and claim that the country has “made progress in implementing international instruments relating to the respect of human rights”. It is mind blowing to see that while the Rwandan parliamentarians criticise the European Parliament for interfering in the work of other countries’ institutions, they give instructions, in their resolution, to the European Parliament to withdraw a resolution that it has already passed. And one gets a small glimpse of the plight of ordinary Rwandans when one member of the Rwandan Parliament suggests, during the parliamentary debate, to invite members of the EU delegation to Rwanda for a free course at the RPF ideological school, ITORERO to learn how to report properly about Rwanda or suggests to impose a travel ban on members of the EU delegation who made the report.

The complacent attitude of the international community towards violent repression in Rwanda has incrementally led to a situation that may soon be irreversible towards another cycle of political violence as various assessments do indicate.

We would like to call once again on genuine friends of Rwanda, including the European Parliament, to help our political platform bring about peaceful change, genuine national reconciliation and durable peace.

We thank unreservedly the EU Parliament for raising the alarm on the situation in Rwanda. We call upon it to ensure that the recommendations are implemented by the EU Commission.

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