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**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**

**RWANDA: RPF REGIME PERSITS IN EXTORTING MONEY FROM POOR RWANDANS TO  
FUND PRESIDENT KAGAME'S CAMPAIGN.**

FDU-Inkingi, a political party opposed to the regime in Kigali, strongly condemns the institutionalized extortion of money from poor Rwandans. Indeed, we have learned from well informed sources that the RPF party has just ordered Rwandan employees to pay 50% of their salary as a "special contribution" to support the candidacy of President Paul Kagame in the flawed presidential elections scheduled for August 2017.

If eligibility is a recognized right for every Rwandan, it is unacceptable that a Rwandan citizen be forced to support any candidate in the presidential elections. From the analysis of the credible documents that we have, the said "special contribution" will be given by all the employees of Rwanda even if, on paper, it is stipulated that only the RPF members are required to contribute to this election. It all comes to mean that all employers are obliged to give half of the salary of their employees to the RPF.

While a salary is an inviolable individual remuneration, it is scandalous that the RPF government dares perpetrate such embezzlement and, and be so cynical as to ask employers to deduct the contribution from the end-of-service allowances from those who lose their jobs. This is pure theft that all Rwandans should reject.

We take this opportunity to recall once again our position on the elections of August 2017. The exercise is a monumental farce, in as much as President Kagame decided to remain in power until 2034 when he tampered with the constitution in December 2015, alleging that the people who begged him to do so. It was quite clear that the presidential elections are no longer necessary in Rwanda after the President thanked the people for asking him to lead them again. In his address to the nation on 24/12/2015, he said: *"Thank you for asking me to continue leading you ..."* The message was clear that, for Paul Kagame, the elections were over. Considering this statement, it does not make sense for the government to rob Rwandans of their meagre income. This is sheer and unspeakable cynicism.

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We are asking all Rwandans who will be forced to give up 50% of their wages to consider that this as a debt that the RPF and its President, General Paul Kagame, will have to pay back with interest. It is a well-known fact that the ruling party RPF has a lot of financial resources from its business ventures such as [Cristal Ventures](#), Horizon and so on, which have monopolised businesses in Rwanda. It is also an open secret that Paul Kagame himself has the financial capacity to fund his campaign, including the allowances that he derives from the innumerable trips he makes abroad as well as income from his private jets which are hired by the government for his use.

Besides, did he not declare on the 50th anniversary of the "Bank of Kigali" that he never made a withdrawal from his personal account at the Bank on which his monthly salary is paid? Another question could be why the regime would go for the poor man's money instead of getting it from this account.

FDU-Inkingi urge all Rwandans to strongly condemn this institutionalized extortion, and Rwanda's employees to stand up for their right to the inviolability of wages.

The FDU-Inkingi is calling on the international community, and particularly the donors of Rwanda, to put pressure on the RPF regime to put an end to its acts of shameless extortion of money from the population to finance flawed presidential elections, whose result is known in advance.

Done in London, this May 29, 2017

Justin Bahunga

Commission for External Relations and Spokesperson FDU-Inkingi

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