



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

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### THE ARREST OF FORMER PRESIDENTIAL HOPEFUL Ms DIANE RWIGARA , FDU-INKINGI AND PDP-IMANZI MEMBERS, KICKS OFF THE POLITICAL PROGRAMME OF PRESIDENT KAGAME 3<sup>RD</sup> TERM.

[During the swearing in ceremony of the new cabinet on Thursday August 31, 2017 President Kagame gave](#), in a veiled language, instructions to the Minister of Justice to prosecute former presidential hopeful Diane Rwigara when he stated that all those who embezzle public money should be prosecuted and that *“those who were presidential candidates and lost do not enjoy immunity from prosecution”*, intimating to him: *“you know what I mean”*.

Indeed, two days ago, the police had raid on the Rwigara’s family home and arrested all the present members. The day after the Kagame speech, four journalists who were investigating the whereabouts of Rwigara family have been threatened to be arrested by the Presidential body guard who were patrolling the area. Tuesday on the 4<sup>th</sup> September 2017, can be construed to be a quick response to the President’s instructions. She was arrested with her mother and sister, thus sending a chilling message to government critics about government policy towards the opposition in the next seven years: *“you either keep quiet or you will be in trouble. It is not only you but your family that you are putting at high risk”*.

Today, the [arrest of FDU members](#) Boniface Twagirimana: First Vice-President; Fabien Twagirayezu responsible for mobilization; Gasengayire Léonille: Assistant Treasurer, Mr. Nsabiyaemye Gratien Assistant Commissioner of FDU-Inkingi, Theophile Ntirutwa representative of FDU-Inkingi in Kigali ; and JMV Kayumba Vice-Chairman of PDP-Imanzi shows the escalation of repression to silence completely the [dissenting voices of the democratic opposition in Rwanda](#).

The arrest Diana Rwigara calls to mind what happened to another presidential hopeful in the 2010 elections namely Mrs Victoire Ingabire Umuhiza, President of FDU-Inkingi, in 2010. In an interview with Ugandan newspaper monitor President Kagame had warned: *“[this woman will certainly be where she belongs; now the outsiders who want so badly Ingabire to be an opposition leader here or later be our president, well, they may wait for a while](#)”*. She was interrogated several times before she was finally thrown into jail soon after the elections.

The general prosecutor Mr [Martin Ngoga had specifically complained about her contacts with the media](#), which seems to be the same case about Diane Rwigara: *“The Prosecution is more specifically concerned with continued posting declarations and newspaper interviews she has been doing. The case against her is not one of robbery in which restraining physical movement would be enough to contain further damage. It is a case of destructive and divisive ideology whose damage does not require physical proximity of the offender”*. Because it is hard to accuse Diane of divisive ideology,

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La Plateforme P5 est une coalition des organisations politiques AMAHORO P.C, FDU - INKINGI, PDP - IMANZI, PS - IMBERAKURI ET RWANDA NATIONAL CONGRESS (RNC); The platform P5 is a coalition of political organizations AMAHORO P.C, FDU - INKINGI, PDP - IMANZI, PS - IMBERAKURI and RWANDA NATIONAL CONGRESS (RNC); Plateforme P5 ni urugaga rw'amashyaka n'imitwe ya politiki AMAHORO P.C, FDU - INKINGI, PDP - IMANZI, PS - IMBERAKURI n'IHURIRO NYARWANDA (RNC);

because she is tutsi and her late father was a big financial backer of RPF, [she is being accused of forgery](#).

This crusade against ladies who try to challenge President Kagame for the highest office in the country contradicts the public relations machinery of the government which proclaims that the Rwandan regime has done better than any other country in the world in empowering women. If ever there are allegations of tax evasion or forgery, the family should be treated humanely and according to the law without interference of the executive as it happened in the case of Mrs. Victoire Ingabire, President of FDU-Inkingi.

During the raid on their home, [Ms Diane Rwigara claimed that family had been held under house arrest](#) before police arrived on Monday evening to pick them. She also claimed that telephone and cash in the house was taken away and that the home was under surveillance by members of the presidential protection unit. Neighbours who had claimed to see them being taken away on the 29<sup>th</sup> August 2017 had not noticed that they have been brought back leading to speculations even among relatives that they were kept in one of the secret houses operated by the Directorate of Military Intelligence.

We would like to recall that Mr Shyaka Kanuma, a tutsi, was also arrested under dubious claims of tax evasion shortly after he announced himself as a peaceful activist in Rwanda, hoping to bring about democratic change outside of the ruling party RPF. General Nyamwasa and Colonel Karegeya were accused of embezzlement of public funds when they fled the country.

As it happened in the cases of Mrs. Victoire Ingabire Umuhoza, Deo Mushayidi and other politicians including Faustin Twagiramungu, former Prime Minister, Paul Rusesabagina and Bernard Ntaganda, members of FDU-Inkingi are accused of trying to form an armed group to fight the government. The regime seems to have a phobia that all other political organisations would follow its military strategy to get to power.

The latest arrests are meant to divert attention from the embarrassing case of Assinapol's family, to divert attention from internal problems and to intimidate neighbouring countries by falsely accusing them of harbouring armed groups.

The Rwandan political opposition platform composed of political organisations Amahoro PC, FDU – Inkingi, PDP – Imanzi, PS –Imberakuri and Rwanda National Congress- RNC calls on the international community, particularly the financial backers to use their influence to urge the Rwandan government:

1. To end the plight of Ms Diane Rwigara and her family;
2. To end all forms of repression, intimidation and detention of members of the opposition;
3. To release all individuals and other activists detained or convicted solely for exercising their rights of freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly.

Done in Brussels on September 6, 2017

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