



FDU-INKINGI
Forces Démocratiques Unifiées
United Democratic Forces



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COMITE DIRECTEUR – STEERING COMMITTEE

"Pour un Etat de Droit, la Démocratie et l'Egalité de chances" ; "For the rule of law, democracy and equal opportunity"

FDU-Inkingi Statement on the 60th anniversary of Democracy in Rwanda.

Fellow Rwandans,
Ladies and Gentlemen,
Friends of Rwanda,

January 28th is an important date in Rwanda's recent history. January 28, 2021 marks the 60th anniversary of democracy in Rwanda. On this date of January 28, 1961, the elected representatives of the Rwandan people, namely mayors and municipal councilors ("*Bourgmestres et conseillers communaux*") met in Gitarama and took the historic decision to replace the regime of absolute monarchy by a [republican regime](#) ([Res Publica](#) = public affairs = ibya Rubanda): government of the people, by the people and for the people.

Rwandans are commemorating the advent of the Republic of Rwanda on this day. In a republic, leaders who manage public affairs obey precise rules and are accountable to the people whose mandate they hold for the good management of public affairs, through free and transparent elections. It is this duty to be accountable that makes it possible to control, evaluate, correct, sanction, plan, etc.... the action of the state in the interest of the people.

Even if the road to real democracy has been tortuous, it is crystal clear that the situation prevailing today in Rwanda is far from reflecting these basic foundations of good management public affairs. Indeed, the ruling party, the RPF, has seized all the powers and broken all the rules of control, creating a return to a de facto absolute monarchy under a cosmetic face of a Republic. The leaders do as they please, without any real parliamentary control. The judiciary is held hostage by the executive branch of government and fails to deliver real justice. This lack of separation of executive, parliamentary, and judicial powers is the root cause of widespread and recurring injustices, resulting in a brutal and terrorist dictatorship that runs completely counter to basic republican principles and values.

Indeed, [the basic rights of citizens are regularly violated](#), in particular:

- **The right to life:** assassinations, forced disappearances, torture, police brutality and caning;
- **The right to property:** spoliation of property, fiscal and administrative harassment, impoverishment of the masses, the everlasting famine "*Nzaramba*", monopolization of wealth by a small group in power;
- [Terrorism across borders](#) and the violation of international norms: instead of protecting all its emigrant citizens as all other nations do, the RPF regime kidnaps political opponents and crosses the borders of neighbouring countries to hunt down, harass and massacre those who have fled it and who refrain from [swearing loyalty to the RPF regime](#);
- **The right to expression and association:** censorship and imprisonment of journalists, civil society activists and influential persons;
- **Political rights:** closure of the political space, refusal to register new opposition political parties by creating various obstacles, including legal proceedings, etc. ;

- **The right to quality education** and personal development: deterioration of the quality of the education system, discrimination in access to advanced education ;
- **The right to memory** and justice is selective: only part of the mass crimes committed in recent years against various sections of the population have been punished and only part of the population is allowed to mourn their loved ones;
- **Inequalities and blatant discrimination based on ethnicity.**

Ultimately, Rwanda has so far evolved into a political system that is theoretically republican, but where written laws are not translated into practice. The President of the Republic behaves like an absolute ruler who acts as he pleases, out of control. As a matter of fact, we are living under a de facto absolute monarchy operating under the guise of a Republic. The leitmotiv of "accountability, " has become an empty slogan because it is not translated into reality.

The FDU-INKINGI party would like to remind the public that its objective is to establish a state governed by the rule of law where leaders are truly accountable to the People, according to clear democratic values, within the framework of the rights and duties established by the constitution. Respect for laws and rules is the only reliable way to manage public affairs in a republic worthy of the name, in the interest of all.

The FDU-INKINGI party calls on the international community, in particular friends of Rwanda, donors, and financial institutions, to put pressure on the Rwandan authorities and make their financial and political support conditional on the country's governance based on democratic values and respect for human rights.

The FDU-INKINGI party remains committed to bring Rwandans together to build a republican state, where the balance of power guarantees everyone the enjoyment of the inalienable rights enshrined in the Constitution.

Long live the Rwandan People,

Long live the Republic,

Done in London, 28/01/2021

Justin BAHUNGA

Président des FDU-INKINGI

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