

## **STATEMENT BY THE FDU-INKINGI AND RWANDA NATIONAL CONGRESS AT THE CONCLUSION OF A WEEK-LONG CONSULTATION IN WASHINGTON, D.C., IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

From 16<sup>th</sup> -23rd September, 2011, senior leaders of FDU-Inkingi and Rwanda National Congress met in Washington D.C., in the United States, to review progress thus made since the founding of the common platform, a coalition for change established at the beginning of this year. Participating in the consultations were Nkiko Nsengimana, Sixbert Musangamfura, Theophile Murayi and Nepo Manirarora of FDU-inkingi; and Gerald Gahima, Gervais Condo and Theogene Rudasingwa of Rwanda National Congress.

We noted the successful common effort by all Rwandese, Congolese and French in the Paris and USA demonstrations against President Kagame, and exchanged views on how to maintain the momentum. The strategic deliberations also focused on strengthening and broadening the platform for change, launching a diplomatic offensive, extending and intensifying dialogue among all Rwandans, Rwanda political organizations and civil society.

While in Washington, D.C., we had an opportunity to brief the U.S Congressional leaders in the Senate and House, U.S. State Department, the diplomatic community and other international stakeholders on Rwanda's crisis of governance, U.S policies on Rwanda and their implications for the region and international peace and security. They urged the U.S Government to support peaceful change in Rwanda by:

- Calling for the immediate and unconditional release of all political prisoners;
  - Demanding an end to persecution (including arbitrary arrests and detentions, torture, involuntary disappearances and extra-judicial killings) of government opponents and critics and their relatives;
  - An end to the practice of channeling the development assistance that the United States provides to Rwanda through budget support;
  - Conditioning the development assistance that the United States provides to the Rwanda government on political reforms, including opening up political space;
  - Using regional and united Nations human rights mechanisms to ensure that President Kagame and his security officials are held accountable for gross human rights violations that are committed against innocent citizens in and outside Rwanda;
  - Encouraging the government of Rwanda to agree to a comprehensive and unconditional dialogue with all the opposition on ways for resolving the political impasse engulfing Rwanda; and,
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- Calling upon the international community, especially the UNHCR and United Nations member states, to reject the Government of Rwanda's manipulation to apply the refugee cessation clause (due to be applied at the end of 2011) until performance from on the above has created an enabling environment conducive to the return of refugees.

26<sup>th</sup> September, 2011

Washington D.C., USA

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