



Inkingi Forces Démocratiques Unifiées United Democratic Forces

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Kigali - Rwanda

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

RWANDA:

HIGH COURT REMAINS SILENT ON DEFENSE CONCERNS WHILE THE PROSECUTOR IS CONFUSED ON THE LAWS TO USE AGAINST THE OPPOSITION LEADER, MADAME VICTOIRE INGABIRE.

Kigali, 04 October 2011

After the adjournment decided last week, the High Court reopened today the trial of the opposition leader Madame Victoire Ingabire. Last week the presiding judge Alice Rulisa, siding too closely with the prosecutor, refused the defence the right to comment her angry and out of context comments. Today, she silently listened to the defence concerns before returning the word to the national public prosecution authority. Key diplomats including the Dutch Ambassador in Kigali, the British High Commission's political affairs followed the trial.

According to criminal law analysts, the attempt by the prosecutor to justify against all odds the principle of non-retroactivity of criminal law, and the territorial jurisdiction of the high court on most aspects of this political trial is still raising questions. Most of the new justifications are based on illegal details that were not submitted to the High Court in the indictment. If the government of Rwanda is trying to maintain the opposition leader in maximum security, they need to submit a new indictment based on the revised prosecution narrative. It's very unfortunate indeed to pretend that some laws should be used to prosecute the accused simply because they have helped unfair proceedings to sentence other people, without proving their relevance to this case. If many other Rwandans were denied justice because of confusion, unfairness and lack of jurisdiction, this shame can't absolve or serve ground to future judicial errors. Urgent procedures for redress are needed instead of using faulty jurisdiction to condemn innocent citizens. The use of diabolising information in this trial shows the bad faith of this whole process.

Madame Victoire Ingabire should be released without any further delay.

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