



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

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Dumping ground for the “underdogs” of Rwandan capital Kigali exposed by HRW:

but just a tip of an iceberg.

The political platform composed of political organisations Amahoro PC, FDU-Inkingi, PDP – Imanzi, PS - Imberakuri and Rwanda National Congress - RNC would like to express its gratitude to the Human Rights Watch for calling for the closure of the Unofficial Detention Centre in Gikondo - Rwanda.

The platform is quite pleased that the Human Rights organisation has helped to demonstrate with this small but sad story, the true nature of the Rwandan regime: lack of empathy and disregard for the disadvantaged people in the community, mockery of the rule of law, cynicism and obsession with external image at the expense of its own citizens. As Daniel Bekele, the Africa Director at the Human Rights Watch points out, the positive image of Kigali as clean and tidy is highly paid by the underdogs of the city: the socially and politically excluded i.e. street vendors, sex workers, beggars, homeless people, and suspected petty criminals who are forcefully collected as refuse from the streets of Kigali and dumped in a centre away from the eyes of external visitors. *“The contrast between the immaculate streets of central Kigali and the filthy conditions in Gikondo couldn’t be starker”*, the HRW points out.

The example also highlights what the opposition has always pointed out: contrary to official narrative, the regime has no regard for its poor who are disposable when they compromise its outside image. These poor and destitute fighting for survival are held in deplorable conditions for periods ranging from a few days to several months, *“with insufficient supplies of food and water, poor sanitation and hygiene facilities, and inadequate access to medical treatment”*. *“They are routinely beaten, humiliated, extorted, or punished for trivial actions such as talking too loudly or not forming an orderly line for the toilets”*. Visits by family, friends, and lawyers are almost impossible. Their crime is that they are undesirable for the tidiness of the city.

It also demonstrates that the government has no regard for the rule of law. Unlike other detention centres, currently there is no legal framework for the centre’s administration; no judicial process governing arrests or detention. Victims are held without charge for days to several months, in violation of Rwandan and international law and Rwanda’s regional and international obligations.

Just to show how far the regime can reach in cynicism, the Minister of Justice is alleged to have responded to the complaints of HRW by saying that what is done at the centre is: *“part of the general Rwandan philosophy of rehabilitation rather than unnecessary incarceration”*. The platform would like to state that such a statement is an offence to the conscience of Rwandans and an insult to them as a people. Such a perverted understanding of rehabilitation is unique to RPF, which unfortunately has come to a delusory belief that it embodies the state and the nation of Rwanda.

The underlying part of the iceberg.

The platform has learnt from reliable retired intelligence officers that this centre which is run by the Police also serves as a screening place for suspected members of the FDLR and other opposition groups who undergo torture before they are transferred to DMI torture chambers in Nasho and Kami Barracks for further interrogations. Some of these suspects and others, picked at random, are said to be sent among others to Nasho military camp that trains military interrogators and they are used as Guinea pigs for trial in various interrogation techniques or chemical substances used to kill or debilitate critics. According to credible sources the trainers include North Koreans. Those who do not survive the interrogation techniques are thrown away, especially when they have no relatives or the latter are not aware of their whereabouts.

We may also recall that there are a number of so called "safe" houses which are private houses owned by military officers and rented by the Ministry of Defence or containers where high profile suspects are kept for interrogation or potential physical elimination.

The Platform would like to call for the immediate closure of the dumping centre for the poor and destitute and condemns in the strongest terms possible the use of the poor as guineas pigs in the research for the most effective interrogations techniques.

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