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COMITE DIRECTEUR – STEERING COMMITTEE

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

PRESS RELEASE

**THE RWANDAN GOVERNMENT DESPERATELY SEEKS TO TORPEDO THE APPLICATION
OF MRS. VICTOIRE INGABIRE TO THE AFRICAN COURT ON HUMAN AND PEOPLES’ RIGHTS.**

Following obstructions to the preparation of Mrs. Victoire Ingabire’s trial [by refusing to Me. Gatera Gashabana to meet with his client](#), after refusing the granting of visa to the Dutch lawyer, Me. Caroline Buisman to visit Rwanda in a timely manner and meet with Mrs. Victoire Ingabire, the Rwandan government has simply shunned the public hearings scheduled this March 4, 2016 before the Court in Arusha.

Having exhausted all delaying tactics, unable to derail the trial, the Rwandan government has notified the Court, in a letter dated 3 days ago, that it was withdrawing from the additional protocol allowing its citizens to seize the Court. However, the Rwandan government had already sent its submissions and had even recruited an Amicus Curiae in the person of the National Center for the Fight against Genocide, which is usually known for its baseless accusations. As if the Court had already granted such a withdrawal, the Rwandan government did not show up at the court hearings. It should be recalled that although Rwanda has the right to withdraw from the protocol, it is not up to the Court to decide on such a request, but the African Union which created the Court.

It is therefore clear that for fear of a domino effect the hearings may cause and considering the arguments presented in the submissions of the defense, the Rwandan government seeks to avoid any form of international justice. It is important to recall that Rwanda has categorically refused to ratify the agreement creating the International Criminal Court.

The party FDU Inkingi sees such an attitude as evidence for the weakness of the legal arguments that led to the condemnation of Mrs. Victoire Ingabire and reiterates its demand to see her unconditional release. If she were fairly sentenced, the Rwandan government would not be afraid to demonstrate it before an African court. Such an approach of the Rwandan government provides sufficient evidence on the true nature of Rwanda’s judiciary, which stubbornly refuses to conform to international standards.

Accordingly, the party FDU Inkingi requests all donors of the Rwandan regime to review their positions and to urge the government to comply with its international obligations in the field of justice.

Finally, the party FDU Inkingi calls upon all countries hosting Rwandan refugees not to give any credence to extradition requests for Rwandan nationals to Kigali given such a blatant affront to the African international jurisdiction of which Rwanda had knowingly ratified the texts.

Done in Brussels, March 4, 2016.

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