



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

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Mo Ibrahim Governance Weekend in Rwanda: time of mourning for human rights defenders and political activists.**

The rwandan political opposition platform (P5) composed of Amahoro PC, FDU-Inkingi, PDP-Imanzi, PS Imberakuri and RNC political organisations believes that the choice of Rwanda, the worst human rights abuser, to host 'Mo Ibrahim Governance Weekend (27-29 April 2018) is an offence to the human dignity of the African and a mockery of democratic values. It undermines the noble cause of MO Ibrahim foundation to promote good governance in Africa.

It is cynical that the award is given in Rwanda to a lady, Mrs Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, when two Rwandan ladies, Mrs Victoire Ingabire Umuhoza and Ms Diane Rwigara who tried to stand against President Kagame in 2010 and 2017 respectively are languishing in prison for having tried to stand in his way to getting 98% of the votes, a score that is only possible in a totalitarian state. It is also quite ironical that former President Mrs Ellen Johnson Sirleaf who is praised for having respected her two terms mandate and for having taken power "In very difficult circumstances and yet helped guide her nation towards a peaceful and democratic future, paving the way for her successor to follow" in just 12 years, is hosted by President Kagame, who has been in virtual control of the country for 24 years, twice the time and has failed to pave the way for a successor. He has only been able to pave the way for his own succession for another 16 years by bulldozing the change of the constitution that limited his presidency to two terms.

Rwanda human rights record is appalling as the key ally of Rwanda, the US points out. The just released US report 2017, on the Human rights situation in Rwanda highlights what is an open secret: *arbitrary killings and politically motivated disappearances by security forces; torture and other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment by security forces; security forces' disregard for the rule of law; restrictions on freedom to participate in the political process and the ability to change government through free and fair elections; harassment, arrest, and abuse of political opponents, human rights advocates, and individuals perceived to pose a threat to government control of social order; trafficking in persons; and restrictions on labour rights*". The repression is targeting all ethnic groups Hutu and tutsi, survivors of genocide, all professions, farmers, soldiers, lawyers, peasants, businessmen etc. who are perceived to pose a threat to the social and political control of the people.

We may recall also that UN reports accuse Rwanda of serious crimes committed in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) including.

- war crimes, crimes against humanity and possibly the crime of genocide (UN mapping report 2010) committed in the Democratic Republic of the Congo;
- plunder of the resources of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) (Document S/2002/1146 of the Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and other Forms of Wealth of the Democratic Republic of Congo)
- triggering and fuelling a civil war in the DRC, the most lethal conflict since the Second World War (estimated loss of more than 6 million lives) with barbarism that defies description, through two invasions of the country and support of proxy armed rebel groups including the murderous rebel group M23 in Eastern DRC.

Celebrating "good governance" in Rwanda is tantamount to giving green light to the Rwandan regime to continue repression within and across borders and to taking as normal the slaughter of 200,000 Rwandan Hutu refugees and millions of Congolese citizens in the Democratic Republic of Congo. It could be construed to mean also that the lives of more than 6 million African lives do not matter. Giving a lease of life to such a repressive regime is a betrayal to the dead

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*La Plateforme P5 est une coalition des organisations politiques AMAHORO P.C, FDU - INKINGI, PDP - IMANZI, PS - IMBERAKURI ET RWANDA NATIONAL CONGRESS (RNC); The platform P5 is a coalition of political organizations AMAHORO P.C, FDU - INKINGI, PDP - IMANZI, PS - IMBERAKURI and RWANDA NATIONAL CONGRESS (RNC); Plateforme P5 ni urugaga rw'amashyaka n'imitwe ya politiki AMAHORO P.C, FDU - INKINGI, PDP - IMANZI, PS - IMBERAKURI n'IHURIRO NYARWANDA (RNC);*

and the people who lost their loved ones in all ethnic groups and those who are fighting in all ethnic groups to end the cycle of political violence in Rwanda through dialogue, democracy and respect of human rights.

We invite the MO Foundation, for which we have a lot of respect, to examine the process through which venues are selected. We have serious concerns that powerful lobbies, handsomely paid by the Rwandan impoverished taxpayer, could have played a big part in the selection of Rwanda to host Mo Ibrahim good Governance Award 2018.

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