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COMITE DIRECTEUR – STEERING COMMITTEE

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

Press Release

63rd Anniversary of the Rwandan Republic

January 28, 2024 will mark the 63rd anniversary of the proclamation of the Rwandan Republic. If there is one thing Rwandans can be proud of, it is the resilience they demonstrated when they supported their elected representatives gathered in Gitarama on January 28, 1961, to raise the flag of the Republic, thus abolishing the feudal regime and the social and institutional injustices it had established and perpetuated for centuries.

The proclamation of the Republic became possible because men and women stood up against the injustice embodied by the feudal system and led the 1959 Revolution to demand the end of absolute monarchy. These exceptionally courageous individuals deserve our recognition, and their example should serve as a catalyst for the current Rwandan population, especially the youth, to break free from the dictatorship of the RPF (Rwandan Patriotic Front), as we are currently experiencing similar moments to those lived by the founders of the Rwandan Republic and their contemporaries.

The advent of the Republic brought much hope to the Rwandan people, allowing them finally to live free and dignified lives, sources of progress. However, the Rwandan Republic faced challenges from its inception, as former privileged individuals of the feudal regime chose to combat the young Republic and encouraged some Rwandans to flee the country rather than accepting progress. Their attacks led to unfortunate reprisals against the population accused of supporting them, and their ultimate defeat around 1967 did not discourage them. Instead, they preferred to change their strategy to prepare for a stronger comeback, which was achieved by their descendants, united within the RPF that attacked Rwanda on October 1, 1990, and ultimately achieved military victory in July 1994. It was a war that cost the lives of hundreds of thousands of people during the mass killings committed by the RPF against the Hutus between 1990 and 1994, and the genocide committed by extremist militias against the Tutsis in the spring of 1994.

The genocide and massacres of 1994 were not confined to Rwanda but continued in the then-Zaire (current DRC), where hundreds of thousands of Hutu refugees were pursued and systematically massacred, as documented in the UN Mapping Report, which concludes that these killings could be classified, by a tribunal, as genocide against Hutu refugees.

Since July 1994, the RPF has established a reign of terror in Rwanda, a dictatorial regime that kills, imprisons, forces Rwandans to flee, and maintains in fear those who cannot escape. Therefore, it is a dark anniversary, as Rwanda, despite remaining a republic, is ruled by the RPF of Paul Kagame as a feudal monarchy. This calls upon all of us to stand together and fight for the restoration of the values of the Republic, namely democracy, equality, and the enjoyment of the country's resources by all the daughters and sons of the country, without any discrimination based on social or geographical origin, wealth, beliefs, etc.

FDU-Inkingi calls on all Rwandans to join them in their struggle to free Rwanda from the dictatorial yoke of the RPF and to establish justice for all, true reconciliation, democracy, freedom, and equality of rights for all, which are sorely lacking for the Rwandan people. The RPF, responsible for mass crimes, is incapable of reconciling the Rwandan people and leading them on this path.

In addition to the terror it imposes on Rwandans, the RPF destabilizes neighbouring countries through proxy rebellions (Red Tabara in Burundi, M23 in the DRC, etc.), which have been massacring and mutilating local populations for almost 30 years. Only the courage, determination, and collaboration of the peoples of the Great Lakes Region of Africa can put an end to this terrible megalomania and morbid thirst for the minerals of eastern DRC at the cost of the blood of the Congolese.

Done in Brussels, January 27, 2024.

Placide Kayumba,

President of FDU-INKINGI.