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### **PRESS RELEASE PP No. 04/APR/10**

## **STRONG CONDEMNATION OF RDF ATTACK AGAINST RWANDAN REFUGEES IN NORTH-KIVU, EASTERN DRC**

Our organization has just learned that the Rwandan Defense Forces (RDF) elements have once again attacked Rwandan refugees who have been living in North Kivu, Eastern DRC during the last few days. The information at our disposal indicates direct MONUC logistical support to such invading forces who are engaged in systematic destruction of property, crops, and human lives. Contrary to all international treaties and other legal frameworks governing the treatment of the refugees, Rwanda refugees have been systematically abandoned by the same institutions that are supposed to protect and assist them. Hence, we are assisting to the manhunt of the most vulnerable of them including women, children, and elderly.

It is ironic that such attack took place after President Kagame's shocking and despicable public statements in which he compared refugees to human waste and acknowledged deliberate killings of Rwandan refugees in DRC by the Rwandan Patriotic Army (RPA) elements. Such statements do not leave any doubt; one may only conclude that the main purpose of the current operation is to annihilate Rwandan refugees wherever they are especially those who have been living in precarious conditions in Eastern DRC. In addition., recent events in our homeland have clearly shown that the current regime is neither interested in the establishment of a democratic system nor finding a genuine solution to the on-going problem of Rwandan refugees scattered throughout the Great Lakes region.

While the problem of Rwandan refugees in DRC and the region will neither be solved by force, we would like to remind the MONUC and the International Community that such heavy handed tactics have continuously shown their limits. This is why keen and independent observers have indicated that the operations conducted in Eastern DRC for more than a year have failed to produce any tangible results.

As the RUD-Urunana and RPR coalition has always pointed out, the Rwandan problem is political in nature and requires political solutions. It is time to tackle the Rwandan enigma and genuinely find lasting solutions to the overall problem of our homeland. Therefore, it is important that the root causes of the political instability be resolved. It is our firm conviction that as long as the underlying causes of the Rwandan political problems would not genuinely be addressed, the region will neither enjoy lasting peace nor sustainable development and prosperity.

In order to foster a reconciliatory Justice system, the only foundation of genuine Reconciliation, our coalition will continue to call for the organization, under the auspices of the International Community, of an Inter-Rwandan Dialogue. In addition, such process would set up a "Truth, Justice, and Reconciliation" Commission that would help heal a traumatized society.

We remain convinced that only this Dialogue would lead to lasting peace, stability, and the establishment of new political, judiciary, and security institutions that would meet the legitimate aspirations of all the constitutive groups of the Rwandan society. Rud-Urunana and RPR have vied to accompany the Rwandan people in this long and enduring process.

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