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#### **RWANDAN REFUGEES FORCED REPATRIATION: RECIPE FOR A NEW HUMANITARIAN DISASTER**

Our organization has learned that the governments of Rwanda and Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) have agreed in Nairobi, Kenya to deal with the current instability in Eastern DRC. However, it is important to remind the Rwandan and Congolese people, and the International Community that the current on-going instability and misery in North Kivu (DRC) has been the work of the renegade General Laurent Nkunda who has been waging a war against the congolese army (FADRC).

The presence of Rwandan refugees in the DRC has always been used as an excuse by the government of Kigali to militarily occupy, either directly or through proxies, Eastern Congo in order to ensure, according to Kigali, the security of its territory. The latest of this scheme is the support of Kagame's regime to the renegade Laurent Nkunda. In fact, our organization has information on how Kagame's army has been actively supplying Nkunda with arms, ammunitions, and troops. The rwandan government went even to the extent of helping in the recruitment of demobilized elements of the Kagame's army into Laurent Nkunda's troops. Meanwhile, every time the FADRC cornered Laurent Nkunda elements, the latter found sanctuary in the Northwest region of Rwanda under the protective eye of the rwandan regime.

It is our firm conviction that, to reach lasting peace and stability in the Great Lakes region in general and in Rwanda in particular, one must address the root causes of this tragedy whose epicenter is in Rwanda. Therefore, any solution will have to take into account the following principles:

- The Rwandan crisis that has been going on since Oct. 1, 1990 is political in nature and its solution must be political. However, any political solution is only viable if it is fair, equitable and preserves the interests of all the components of the Rwandan society;
- All solution aiming at the repatriation of the refugees, whether forced or not, will have to take into account the political aspirations of the Rwandan society as a whole while giving political and security guarantees to both the Congolese people and the Rwandan refugees in the DRC. Otherwise, any attempts to forced repatriation will certainly lead to events similar to the humanitarian tragedy of 1996-97. It is during this manhunt that war crimes, crimes against humanity and acts of genocide were committed by the Rwandan Patriotic Army (RPA) against Rwandan refugees and under the indifferent eye of the International Community. These crimes remain unpunished to this day.
- The international Community must recognize that instead of national reconstruction, the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) has put in place an autocratic and repressive system supported by a bloody war machine. The Rwandan people live in fear; arbitrary arrests

are common; the disappearances and/or assassinations of people suspected of criticizing the regime or the RPF ideology have become the way of life. Political and economical rights, rights of opinion or association are reserved only to the members and sympathizers of the ruling party, RPF.

- The current Government of the Rwanda must, without delay and/or conditions, free all the political prisoners and/or of opinion and genuinely liberalize the political activities. It must be ready to resolutely engage itself in a frank political dialogue with the opposition and must stop to interfere in internal affairs of neighboring countries.
- The Inter-Rwandan Dialogue should be organized and held in conditions guaranteed by the International Community. We strongly believe that such process is likely to provide the country with consensual and stable democratic political institutions that will reflect the will of all the components of the Rwandan society.
- Under these conditions, the opposition political organizations would cooperate in the repatriation of the refugees and the disarmament of their respective fighters in the framework of the formation of a true army that meets the aspirations of the Rwandan people.
- The Inter-Rwandan Dialogue will also create a « Truth, Justice, and Reconciliation Commission » with the goal of a reconciliatory and healing Justice system in Rwanda. To end the circle of impunity, all criminals must be prosecuted regardless of their ethnic group, national origin, region, religion, or any other criteria.

Within this framework, RUD-Urunana is ready to engage in any discussions that would lead to lasting peace, stability, and development beneficial to all the people of the Great Lakes region.

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