

HIGHLY INCLUSIVE INTER RWANDAN DIALOGUE (HIIRD)

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**The Highly Inclusive Inter Rwandan Dialogue,
prior to the peace in Rwanda and in the Great
Lakes Region of Africa**

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Introduction

Fifteen years after the Rwandan tragedy that claimed the lives of innocent Rwandan population continues to suffer from aftermath of a very bloody war which began in October 1990. The social fabric is very torn out, faces a highly contentious reconciliation initiated by the regime. Rwandans continue to flee their country.

1. Framework:

Under the initiative of a number of Rwandans who, beyond the academic controversy, note and accept the existence of the Hutu-Tutsi-Twa as a social reality of Rwanda, several meetings were attended by 120 of Rwandese between 2004 and in 2009. The initiative group has defined the framework as an Intra-Rwandan Dialogue (DIR) to establish contacts for a genuine dialogue leading to genuine reconciliation between Rwandans from all sides.

2. Participants:

The first exploratory meeting was held in Estellencs 2004, Mallorca, Spain (DIR-04). While acknowledging that there was a difference of interpretation of the history of Rwanda, the participants agreed that this should not be an obstacle to building a common destiny for the benefit of all Rwandans.

Continuing this momentum, a second edition of the Intra-Rwandan Dialogue (DIR-06) held in Barcelona, Spain in June 2006. Participants came from two main ethnic groups in Rwanda (Hutu and Tutsi), members of major political parties and civil society organizations of the Rwandan diaspora from Belgium, Canada, France, Holland, Italy, Switzerland and the USA. Three participants from inside Rwanda were invited but only one person was able to participate. It is worth emphasizing that each participant was asked to personally taking into account its own commitments on the search for lasting peace in Rwanda.

At the end of this edition, one of the recommendations emphasized the expansion of dialogue at all levels of the Rwandan population. It has urged all participants to strive for more support to Highly Inter-Rwandan dialogue (DIRHI).

In this spirit, during 2007, were held platforms dialogue (DIR-07) Washington DC (USA), for participants from the USA and Canada, in Amsterdam (Holland) for participants from Holland, Belgium and Germany, and Orleans (France) for participants coming from France and Italy. Two other platforms of dialogue for Rwandan Women (DIR-08) took place in the year 2008 in Barcelona. The choice of

participants followed the same approach in 2006. These different platforms have nominated representatives who were to meet in a sitting representative.

However in The Scandinavia due to the lack of financial means we haven't yet held the session for intra dialogue for Rwandese Diaspora.

It is in this context that a new edition of the Intra-Rwandan Dialogue was held in Palma de Mallorca from 01 to 03 May 2009. This important meeting brought together 30 representatives of all Rwandan ethnic (Hutu, Tutsi, Twa) from political organizations and civil society in the dialogue of Intra-Rwandan (DIR-09) and representatives platforms took place from 2007 to 2008 in different countries. It was followed closely by 14 international observers, accompanied by 3 mediators including 2 professionals. Participants discussed the problems that Rwanda faces and hampering the true reconciliation.

3. Key findings of the various meetings of Intra-Rwandan Dialogue (DIR)

Participants noted that the central issue is power. Participants noted a recurrent pattern of logic to gain power by using violence as springboards ethnicities, which explains the cyclical conflicts in Rwanda. That is why it is more obvious and imperative that the DIR at the national level is an Inter-Rwandan Dialogue Highly inclusive (DIRH) to:

- Give the floor to the oppressed people to be able to decide on governance that suits him;
- Helping Rwandans to build viable democratic institutions that secure and reassure everyone
- Finding solutions to the problem of security guarantees for a peaceful coexistence between Rwanda themselves and neighboring Rwanda, especially the Democratic Republic of Congo, because in many ways, Rwanda is at the root of the crises in the region Africa Great Lakes

This dialogue should involve not only the various political actors but also civil society, and must also be a space of expression available to all victims of the Rwandan tragedy. The DIRH will therefore include all strata of Rwandan society and lead to an effective reconciliation between Rwandans.

Participants proposed that the following issues be included on the agenda of the Inter-Rwandan Dialogue Highly Inclusive namely:

- The identity crisis in Rwanda and the constitution of a team of experts independent historians to write the history of Rwanda that can serve as basis for the interpretation of all chronological events that occurred in Rwanda;
- The necessary guarantees to reassure and secure all components of the Rwandan society;
- The establishment of a fair and impartial justice for all victims of crimes

committed in the region, as well as the establishing of a collective memory that doesn't exclude any of the victims;

- The establishment of a truth and reconciliation commission;
- The problem of social equity and equal opportunities;
- The establishment of an independent mechanism to promote, protect and monitor human rights;
- The women and education roles in conflict prevention;
- Respect for the national sovereignty of countries in the region and relations of good- neighbourhood and peaceful coexistence;
- The economic transnational development projects and the free movement of persons and goods in the region;

Therefore the participants recommended, inter alia, the mobilization of all means possible to hold an Inter-Rwandan Dialogue Highly Inclusive (DIRH) by early 2010. This DIRH in which participation of various representatives of civil society and political parties from inside and outside Rwanda, with the participation of observers, is the only framework for the building of trust between ethnicities and indispensable to the effective reconciliation, peace and sustainable development in the Great Lakes.

We would like to address our gratitude to the " la Fundacion S'Olivar" and its chairman Juan Carrero Saralegui and his team who have mobilise all the association within RIVERA (Réseau International pour la Vérité et la Réconciliation en Afrique Centrale) to support the DIR. Our gratitude goes also to the Spanish Government through AGENCIA ESPAÑOLA DE COOPERACIÓN INTERNACIONAL which gives us financial support to the project.

Without the good will of the above mentioned individuals and organisation we could not achieve the preliminary step toward the HIRD.

Excellencies, Dear friends of Rwanda,

While the idea of a Dialogue Inter Rwanda continues to grow in political circles as well as in the Rwandan civil society, both domestically and within the Diaspora, we want to reaffirm our commitment in the favor of an inter-Rwandan debate, which, in our view, is the appropriate framework to discuss problems accumulated throughout the dramatic history of our countries and lasting solutions. This dialogue is an essential step in the normalization of the socio-political life in the country.

To gain support of the Rwandan and international opinion to the urgent necessity of holding such a highly inclusive dialogue, we want to make clear the motivations and objectives taking into account the specificities related to the socio-political moment.

1. Why an inter-Rwandan dialogue?

The war which began in Rwanda in October 1990 has dramatically brought to light serious unresolved political problems often hidden by poor political practices based on ethnic dominance and / or regional. Thus, after thirty years of exile, Rwandan refugees, mostly Tutsi, who had fled their country in particular following the 1959 Revolution, had forced the door back to his native land, the latter resulting in a conflict whose consequences proved catastrophic genocide, massacres, war crimes and other crimes against humanity.

Note also that the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo for more than twelve (12) years is largely the result of the Rwandan crisis unresolved. It would now be irresponsible for us to take lightly the issue with the presence of tens of thousands of Rwandan refugees in neighboring countries of Rwanda, a situation that could in the longer term, lead to a situation similar to that of October 1990.

But the methods and mechanisms put in place until now have shown their limits in the standardization of the socio-political life in Rwanda, making hypothetical stabilization of the entire sub-region. These methods are far from reassuring nor the Rwandans themselves or neighboring peoples, nor the international community as a whole. In the ostensible purpose of inhibiting the debate to overshadow their responsibilities in the national tragedy, one often resort to diabolisation and globalization on crime of genocide and massacres that occurred in Rwanda. It is now established that the Rwandan people had still not a fair and impartial justice.

Given the urgency of defusing rising tensions related to the frustrations accumulated by all Rwandans throughout their history, we urgently appeal to all Rwandese (politicians, civil society) in general and the regime in particular, to realize the magnitude of problems, and to be ready to participate in a frank and constructive dialogue to be held without delay. Otherwise, the current situation can only lead to further disasters.

2. Dialogue Inter Rwandans should not be seen as a strategy to take power but as an opportunity to unravel a complex crisis.

Far from being a forum where different political parties will be competing for the few positions in state institutions, like that was the case in other countries, this framework will be an opportunity for a dignified and peaceful debate where the forces of the nation united will discuss critical issues of the country, to rebuild on a sound footing, instead of resentment and any thirst for revenge.

Inter Rwandans Dialogue will be the opportunity to review the errors of successive political regimes, from monarchy to a republic, not in order to identify the culprits but to prevent repeating the same mistakes in the future. In the same spirit, Inter Rwandans Dialogue should reopen the debate about the persistent institutional form (Republic or Monarchy) of the Government of Rwanda and to allow Rwandan people to

decide independently through a referendum on the issue.

3. Inter Rwandans Dialogue will not be a court but a framework to provide mutual guarantees.

We are confident that the major obstacle to holding such a dialogue is due to the fact that one does not want to recognize the value it represents for them and are not secure about their socio-political in their own future.

However, we remain convinced of the positive impact that such debate is bound to have on relations between government and citizens. One of the purposes of this dialogue will be to provide security assurances to the public authority whatsoever to end the state apparatuses that criminals do not hesitate, in the selfish interest of those in power to lead the whole society in a collective suicide.

The atmosphere in which this dialogue will take place should be devoid of any animosity. It should be marked by the single desire to harmonize views on the factors Rwandan evil and remedy. Only the atmosphere of good faith and patriotism will promote the recognition and rehabilitation of all victims and will be able to help rebuild confidence between different segments of Rwandan society. At this stage of the crisis, no one in Rwanda can claim to be master of its security. No group, whether political or social, can build its own security on the insecurity of others. Moreover, in the Rwandan tradition, after disasters like the one recently struck our nation, the authority had to appeal solemnly for calm (GUTANGA I HUMURE).

In contrast approaches too many politicians, Inter Rwandan Dialogue is the moral authority that has so failed our country. This dialogue has to be indeed dedicated to identifying the causes and circumstances of the tragedy in Rwanda, to facilitate confessions and pardons, to establish a system of reparations for victims, and mechanisms for disaster reduction in the future.

It will put in place, through the establishment of a "Truth and Reconciliation Commission", the groundwork for restorative and reparation justice in the context of a society still in shock.

4. Inter Rwandans Dialogue will contribute to rebuilding the social fabric torn.

To do this, this forum will focus on positive approaches to recreate the same cohesion between different communities traumatized by the national tragedy. The inter-Rwandan dialogue will work to harmonize the understanding of the tragedy so that Rwandans in all categories can have the same references and the same perceptions. This dialogue should, for genocide and all other crimes, lay the foundations for a genuine national memory forever prohibiting the negative practices of selective memory, interested or separatist. This dialogue is expected to spend the recognition and rehabilitation of all victims.

Finally we once again make an urgent appeal to all Rwandans to be ready to participate in this great event in the history of our country and its people.

We call upon to all friends of Rwanda, particularly the Danish Government and rest of Scandinavia to support us and to provide multifaceted assistance which we need for being able to achieve this noble goal.

Thank you for your attention.

Gérard Karangwa Semushi.

Coordinator for HI I RD.