

Fra: Victoire Ingabire Umuhoza [<mailto:victoire.ingabire@dalfa.org>]

Sendt: 24. juni 2021 16:07

Til: Bertel Haarder <Bertel.Haarder@ft.dk>

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Emne: Re: Situation in Rwanda

Dear Mr Haarder,

On 04 May 2021, I sent you a correspondence in which I raised concerns over the governance in Rwanda. I mentioned that I had a proposal on how Rwanda can reform its governance and how your country can support it. A copy of the subject correspondence is attached for your reference.

I am reaching out to share with you our proposal on how governance reform in Rwanda can be achieved through inter Rwandan dialogue between the government of Rwanda and dissenting voices as well as civil society organisations operating in Rwanda and in exile. The subject proposal is attached for your attention. We have already submitted the proposal to the Rwandan government for consideration.

It is important to note that our proposed dialogue is in line with the United Nations (UN) Strategy for Peace Consolidation, Conflict Prevention and Conflict Resolution in the Great Lakes Region adopted in December 2020. The Strategy points out that effective and sustained dialogue among citizens is crucial to fostering trust, addressing underlying grievances and facilitating collective action towards the common objective of peace, stability and prosperity in the Great Lakes.

Considering numerous reports on the involvement of Rwanda particularly in the conflict in the eastern Democratic of Congo published frequently by the UN over the past two decades, our proposed inter Rwandan dialogue aims to discuss and agree on how - going forward - good relations between our country and our neighbouring countries should be restored to bring about peace in the Great Lake Region. Given especially that instability in the region is linked to lack of inclusive political processes in our country and exacerbates our economic challenges.

As a case in point, the political tensions between our country and Burundi as well as Uganda that have been going on for some time now, are as a result of Rwandan government accusing the two countries to support dissenting voices wanting to topple its leadership by means of force. Accusations that Burundi and Uganda have denied. The situation has led to the closure of borders between Rwanda and Burundi and Rwanda and Uganda. This continues to affect Rwanda economy. The proposed inter-Rwandan dialogue aims to tackle the issue of lack of political inclusiveness in Rwanda and like that removes any tensions or mistrust between our country and our neighbouring countries in the African Great Lakes region.

I hereby request that you urge your country leadership to advocate and support our proposal within the international community, at United Nations and European Union levels as well as through diplomatic channels to the United States, the United Kingdom and individual countries members of the African Great Lakes region and via partnership you may have with the African Union, the Southern African Development Community as well as the East African Community so that the proposed inter Rwandan dialogue is realised.

Do not hesitate to reach out to me should you have any question.

Regards

Mrs Victoire Ingabire Umuhoza
President of DALFA UMURINZI
Tel: +250 784 113 846

On Mon, May 3, 2021 at 10:07 PM Victoire Ingabire Umuhoza <victoire.ingabire@dalfa.org> wrote:

Dear Mr Haarder,

My name is Victoire Ingabire Umuhoza, a political figure and opponent to the government in Rwanda. In 2010, I returned to Rwanda from exile to register my political party and run for presidential election. Instead I was sentenced 8 years imprisonment by the High Court of Rwanda in a politically motivated judicial proceeding. I appealed to the Supreme Court of Rwanda and my sentence was increased to 15 years imprisonment. I took it to the African Court on Human and People's Rights. The African court cleared me with any offence and held that Rwanda violated my right to freedom of opinion and expression as well as the right to an adequate defence. After 8 years of imprisonment including 5 years in isolated confinement I was released by presidential grace in 2018. The year that followed, I received the 2019 International Human Rights award by the Association for Human Rights of Spain (APDHE).

Today, I have no right to leave Rwanda. I can not visit my family - who I have not seen for over 10 years - in the Netherlands. The conditions are that I should obtain authorization to leave Rwanda from the Minister of Justice. The two times I made an attempt to do so - including when I wanted to travel to Spain and receive the APDHE award - I obtained no response from Rwandan authorities.

I am writing as one of the victims of human rights abuse in Rwanda and a determined advocate of democracy in my country, to express our concerns over the situation in Rwanda and present viable solutions to improve governance in my country. These are highlighted in the attached letter addressed to you for the attention of all members of The Foreign Affairs Committee.

I look forward to hearing from you

Regards

Mrs Victoire Ingabire Umuhoza
President of DALFA UMURINZI
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