

REPUBLIC OF BURUNDI



OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL AND SPOKESPERSON OF THE GOVERNMENT

MESSAGE FROM THE GOVERNMENT OF BURUNDI ON THE OCCASION OF THE SECOND YEARLY COMMEMORATION OF THE FOILED COUP D'ETAT OF 13 MAY 2015.

1. On this 13th of May 2017, two years have elapsed since the enemies of Democracy in Burundi tried to overthrow the democratically elected institutions and consequently plunge Burundians into mourning once again.
2. You all know this since you have been following the events on a daily basis. These enemies of democracy consisting of a small group of Burundian criminals supported by some foreigners dug a tomb to bury Burundi while God was preparing an escape route for our country.
3. It is not the first time that such a criminal group comes to the limelight; it started working out its macabre plans long ago. It has become evident that whenever elections took place, it showed up before, during and after them. As a matter of fact, one might mention the years 1961, 1965, 1993, 2005, 2010 and 2015 which were all characterized by the disruption of peace and security and the shedding of blood of many Burundian citizens, starting with the leaders.

Let us recall what happened in 1961 when Prince Louis RWAGASORE, Hero of Independence was assassinated, in 1965 when many elected leaders were killed, in 1972 when more than 300,000 innocent people were massacred while others were forced into exile, and in 1993 when the Hero of Democracy, His Excellency President Melchior Ndadaye and his close aides were brutally murdered for the sole crime of having won the elections.

4. This group of criminals has always implemented its evil plans with the complicity of some countries and organizations in order to sabotage the common interest of Burundians; and every time their criminal plan failed, they were given everything they needed in terms of money and shelter, and as you can see today, things have always worked the same way.
5. Based on the foiled plan to overthrow the democratically elected institutions, it is clear that this is a continuation of what happened in 2010, when small groups of

criminals attacked Cankuzo, Cibitoke and other districts. Since then, over 15 gangs intending to destabilize the country have been dismantled.

6. However, what happened on May 13 last year is very different from what happened before inasmuch as it was the first time the Defence and Security Forces condemned and even thwarted the coup plot whose aim was to take the people of Burundi years back. This is a good opportunity for the Government to reiterate its gratitude to these Forces, congratulating them for having done an outstanding work that honours them and the country.
7. The sentiment of gratitude also goes to all the people who refused to listen to these criminals whose modus operandi was first of all to confuse and divide Burundians, starting with the Defence and Security Forces. But they failed to cut the thread that holds the unity of Burundians who now very well distinguish the good from the evil.
8. If the Government takes this opportunity to thank particularly the defence and security forces, it is because they have been the spearhead of the institutions set up by the people from whom they emanate.
9. The Government wishes to remind the opinion that the issue over the term of His Excellency President Pierre NKURUNZIZA was never the real motive of the failed coup d'état on 13 May 2015. It was just a pretext.
10. Indeed, if one tries to reminisce, it is clear that these enemies of democracy never gave up their evil plan after the 2005 elections.

From 2005 until today, the enemies of democracy have always concocted plans based on rumours, lies, demonization and manipulation of public opinion to tarnish the image of the Government with the aim of overthrowing it. By way of illustration:

- Since 2010, after local elections, a group of political parties got together and formed a coalition called **ADC-Ikibiri**; an illegal political grouping as coalitions of parties are allowed only during election campaign, as provided by the law.
- Exactly as today, this coalition then joined forces with some NGOs, some Church leaders and some media (local and foreign) and began to openly fight the government projects.
- Again today as always, one of their plans was a smear campaign against the government and the ruling party, accusing the latter of collaborating with the Government in distributing fire arms to Imbonerakure, the Youth wing of the ruling party. And at present they go so far as to foresee the worst, claiming that there is genocide under preparation.

- The public opinion remembers the stories of Kiriba Ondes, a town in the east of the DRC, when the government was accused day and night of training young Imbonerakure in the use of weapons, when the same groups, together with some foreigners, were forming groups of combatants who subsequently attacked Burundi in December 2014 in Murwi and Bukinanyana in the province of Cibitoke, just before the elections scheduled for May 2015, elections that should be absolutely prevented according to the confessions of the captured assailants.
 - To this was added the spread of rumors to raise panic among the population among others, stories about mysterious men with long coats (Ba Rukoti), stories of tearing of teeth, needle stings. By 2015, it is these rumors that have caused thousands of Burundians to take the road to exile to neighboring countries, some in Tanzania, fortunately more than 50 thousand have already returned, others in Rwanda, where many are still taken hostages in refugee camps where young people receive military training to disrupt security in Burundi.
- 11.** The year 2015 was marked by the implementation of their pre-conceived plans of preventing elections from taking place and overthrowing the democratically established institutions. The crimes they committed during the elections are common knowledge: killing and burning innocent people whom they piled up in mass graves; maliciously destroying houses; looting or burning people's or State vehicles; fabricating false stories, and many other nameless crimes.
 - 12.** Fortunately, Burundians who stood up together as one man, especially the Defense and Security Forces, which have done an unparalleled job by stifling the attempt to overthrow the institutions on May 13, 2015 "Burundi Bwacu warahabishijwe ntiwahababuka". Dear Burundi, you have been tempted but you have not shown serenity.
 - 13.** These enemies of democracy have not disarmed as they have tried other means by continuing to solicit the sending of foreign troops to Burundi to help them achieve their evil plan to destabilize the country and overthrow democratically elected Institutions by the people of Burundi.
 - 14.** To further convince international opinion of the necessity of sending foreign occupation forces, a new strategy based on a macabre terrorist plan was developed in collaboration with certain foreign countries. It consisted, and still remains, of organizing the killings of targeted personalities, the most targeted being chiefly police and army officials accused of being responsible for the failure of their project by refusing to plunge the country into chaos, as well as political leaders.
Firing grenades in public places, such as churches, markets, pubs, households hosting family functions and elsewhere, were part of this strategy to prove that

insecurity is a reality and hence convince the public of the necessity of sending these foreign troops. The Government warmly takes this opportunity to thank the people of Burundi who, in all its diversities, have risen as one man to oppose this shame in its history.

- 15.** Moreover, the Government of Burundi is pleased that even at the international community level, some of those who at a time were about to lend them a helping hand have already found that they had been misled.

One could mention, as a matter of example, the AU high level delegation which, after visiting Burundi and seeing firsthand that security prevails throughout the country, has informed the African union about the actual situation in Burundi, and which finally took a good and wise decision not to support the sending of MAPROBU to Burundi.

- 16.** The Government particularly thanks members of the UN Security Council who anticipated such wisdom before adopting the Resolutions 2248 and 2279, which not only respect the sovereignty of Burundi but specify that only “peaceful stakeholders” shall be invited to Interburundian Dialogue.
- 17.** The Government commends the youth who were misled by the ringleaders of these evil plans to destroy the country, and later discovered and understood the danger they were faced with by taking drugs provided by the above gang leaders, enrolling in criminal gangs. After realizing that they were jeopardizing their future, they decided to turn their back against the crime and embraced peace. The testimony of these repented young men was followed by the national and international community.
- 18.** In order to enforce the laws governing our country, the Ministry of Justice has worked hard to prosecute and punish criminals who had been apprehended in accordance with the law. This is evidenced by the judgement rendered against those who attempted to overthrow elected institutions during the failed coup of 13 May 2015.

For its part, the Administration, particularly the Ministry of the Interior and Patriotic Training, has also done a good job in taking appropriate measures with regard to certain so-called civil society organizations which have helped and abetted these enemies of democracy.

- 19.** As we commemorate the second anniversary following the attempted coup aimed at overthrowing people-appointed leaders, the Government would like to thank in a particular way whosoever, Burundians and foreigners, contributed significantly to promote and safeguard peace and security in Burundi.

- First and foremost, we should give thanks to Almighty God who intervened to protect Burundi. In fact, Burundi was faced with devastating danger that only God could defeat.
- As it has always done, the Government once again expresses its thanks to all those who, at the internal or external level, have played a decisive role in helping Burundi to ensure it is governed until now by democratically elected institutions like all the sovereign states and peoples of the world. And these thanks go particularly:
 - To the Defense and Security Forces which were the first to defeat with much sacrifice, the putschists and their strategies of destabilization before, at the moment of and even later after the diabolical attempt of May 13th 2015, during the attack in Kabarore on 10 July 2015 and particularly during the attack against some military installations on 11 December 2015.
 - To all the people of Burundi who have remained united and preoccupied with the development of the country, making the production increasing even if there are some countries which have taken unjust sanctions against Burundi.
 - To all those who have dissociated themselves from this group of criminals especially the young people who once violent changed into peace and development artisans.
 - The Burundian political parties and civil society organizations which have understood that only the path of democracy through the ballot box remains the only path that leads the people to their legitimate sovereignty.

20. The Government of Burundi once again asks all Burundians and foreigners who still somehow support the putschists and their allies who are still dreaming of the transitional regimes in order to share political positions to stop supporting these illusions because they have become useless.

The Government invites them to realize that Burundians are already imbued with democratic principles and that backtracking is no longer possible. Instead, the government asks them to return to their homeland to prepare for the 2020 elections if they are still interested in running for power.

21. The Government once again requests the countries hosting criminals who are under international arrest warrants for having dug a tomb to bury Burundi, in this case Belgium which harbors the brains of the coup, and Rwanda which has become a sanctuary for terrorists who constantly plunge Burundian families into

mourning to bring them to justice, instead of continuing to give them complicit support which impedes the region's efforts to achieve stability in Burundi.

22. The Government appeals to all its partners who have suspended cooperation as a result of misinformation and manipulation by crooks with no vision of the future or their country and even less of their people, to consider achievements in terms of peace, security and stability of the institutions and to reconsider their decision for better relations with the people of Burundi.
23. To local administration, the Governors of Provinces, to the Communal Administrators, to the Heads of Zones and to the elected local councilors, the Government asks to implement all the measures to consolidate security, among others the follow-up of household records keeping and the foreign registry in order to discourage possible infiltration of criminals.
24. Before concluding, the Government once again appeals to all the compatriots who fled the country because of the unfounded rumors spread by those with selfish interests, to return to the country and their households. They will be welcomed with open arms and they should know that all their belongings have been protected.
25. In conclusion, the Government of Burundi informs national and international opinion that a National Day dedicated to Democracy in Burundi will be instituted. The celebration of this Day will be an opportunity to remind the Burundians what Democracy is and to blame any power not derived from the will of the people whether in Burundi or elsewhere. What happened in Burundi should serve as a lesson for Burundians and for the entire international community.
26. Finally, the Government of Burundi would like to thank all the Burundians who kindly responded to the call to march in support to the democratically elected institutions organized throughout the country on 13 May 2017. They have displayed a highly patriotic spirit.

Done at Bujumbura, 13 May 2017

Philippe NZOBONARIBA

Secretary-General and Spokesman of the
Government.-