



MECANISME POUR L'INITIATIVE DE LA RECHERCHE DE LA PAIX LE DEVELOPPEMENT

MI-RPD STATEMENT WITH THE AIM OF CHALLENGING THE INTIMIDATION OF THE SO CALLED EX COMBATANTS TOWARDS THE CITIZENS WHO ARE NOT IN FAVOR OF THE THIRD MANDATE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC

After the so called ex combatants warned that they will not tolerate those who are not in favor of the third mandate of the president of the republic, MI-RPD organization, which has been working especially in the domain of peace and security for quite a long time declares the following to Burundians, the foreigners residing in Burundi and all those who follow closely the Burundi problems especially during these election period:

In the declaration released at Meridian Hotel on March 31st, 2015, the so called ex combatants warn every individual who would oppose himself to the third mandate to the presidency to which his Excellency Pierre Nkurunziza.

As most of the people residing in Burundi were disturbed by that statement, we take this opportunity to share with you the investigations that we carried out and to set at rest every person's mind who was disturbed by the words said by the so called ex combatants.

When we heard about that statement, we immediately contacted some of the ex combatants as well as some bigger organizations of the ex combatants and even the organizations that follow up ex combatants, either the ex from CNDD-FDD, from Palipehutu FNL, those from CNDD of Léonard Nyangoma, FLORINA of Joseph Karumba, the FNL dissidents, ex Burundi Armed Forces and many others.

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Our aim was to know exactly whether the plan that had just been announced of intimidating the people was known. In few words, we realized that that statement was only a dream of a small group having the intention of making themselves the spokespersons of those who had not mandated them and who wanted to incite the ex combatants to the killing and other kinds of violence for all those people that we questioned are neither for that plan nor support it.

There are even people who do not know how the ex combatants existed, to which ministry they are answerable and how they can be deployed by the government when needed and in the respect for the law.

1. The number of the ex combatants exceeds 60,000 and are divided into different categories that we are going to enumerate here: those who were physically handicapped either from the governmental army of that time or from armed groups and their disability was certified by authorized doctors; the ex combatants from different armed groups who were not able to integrate the National Defense Forces (FDN) and the integrated police in accordance with the World Bank's arrangement which brings in a considerable support, but all these must have passed before the mixed team of Burundian and foreign military in order to verify whether they are really soldiers using military techniques confirming, by using the finger prints of all the five fingers as a sign of breaking with every act likely to compromise peace and security during all their life. To those groups adds those who retired from the army or the police as well as those who were excluded from the army and the police following the blunders connected with misbehavior at work, however, going through the demobilization center of non suspended ex combatants in accordance with the arrangements of the court of law.
2. All those are under the coordination of general head office within the Ministry for Local Defense. Up to now, there is no other organ either in national or international having the right to follow the ex combatants or involve them in whatever activity than the Ministry for Local Defense.
3. We should remind that among the ex combatants, there are different high personalities of our country. At this point we can mention His Excellency the President of the Republic Pierre NKURUNZIZA, Col.

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Gélase NDABIRABE, Hon. Jérémie NGENDAKUMANA, Hon. Hussein Radjabu, Hon. Manassé NZOBONIMPA, Col. Jean Bosco NDAYIKENGURUKIYE, Lieutenant General RWASA Agathon, and many other high personalities who are not on this list. All those personalities that we have mentioned above have taken the oath to never infringe peace and security in any way. They sealed it with their finger prints of all their five fingers. If we consider the content of the warning statement which has just been published by the so called ex combatants, it is difficult to admit that they are really ex combatants who took the oath or whether it is another group that might have carried on with military activities discreetly.

4. Another surprising fact the statement was not released by the army spokesman or the minister for local defense, but by a mere organization without even inquiring whether the ex combatants shared the same point of view.
5. Also, from the fact that the statement was not signed by the high personalities mentioned above, that is a proof that those who released it do not know the problems that the ex combatants encountered with during the last ten years since the country has been being governed by the organs elected by the people themselves.
6. The ex combatants' organizations that we contacted such as **ANACOH, RAPACODIBU, CEDAC, AJIEC, AMINA, ADMH**, organizations that we could say they are functional and which are better known either on the national and the international plan, neither of them was informed and they know nothing about the statement.
7. Another thing to mention is that in case there is necessity for the ex combatants to intervene in peace restoration or consolidation, they would be summoned by the local defense minister's ordinance. In that case, according to the practices of the other countries, that would require that the police can no longer control the situation and thus ex combatants would come to reinforce the army's work. Normally, that kind of the minister's appeal to the ex combatants takes place when it is about external attack or a disaster or other occasions causing the country

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to enter into exceptional moments initially proclaimed by the president of the republic.

Considering all we have mentioned above, no ex combatant has the right to warn the population or intimidate them on any basis. Concerning what is being said that there might be some individuals who will go into the streets to challenge the president of the Republic's third mandate, that task of challenging, warning and forbid illegal demonstrations is the responsibility of the ministry for public security.

We should note that neither the national constitution nor other country's legislations no article mentions the task specifically conceived for ex combatants except that they can collaborate with the remaining of the population in certain activities related to peace, security, development and others. Another thing is that the law on the ex combatants has not yet been voted by the parliament since a period of ten years.

In conclusion,

We close this statement thanking ex combatants on their daily care for solidarity without considering their ethnic differences, their former warring groups and encourage them to continue supporting one another avoiding any personality who could subject them to manipulation in pursuing their selfish interests. We comfort the Burundians and the nations that no ex combatant will destabilize security for the ex combatants' major worry is not war but rather poverty and other different problems. Anyone who would do it will be responsible himself together with the one who will have mandated him.

Very soon we shall see the minister for local defense to require of him that the people who published this statement be summoned to apologize for they betrayed the ex combatants.

We shall soon ask the Ombudsman's office to carry out investigations in order to know the person who drove those so called ex combatants to release that statement.

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Bujumbura April 6th, 2015

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