



MEMORANDUM FOR LAUNCHING A POLITICAL ORGANIZATION

People's Initiative for Democratic Alliance

Initiative du Peuple pour l'Alliance Démocratique – IPAD-RWANDA

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UNITY, SOLIDARITY AND JUSTICE: BUILDING SUSTAINABLE PEACE AND DEMOCRACY IN RWANDA

1. On this day of August 4th, 2018, we hereby establish a new political organization named IPAD-RWANDA (*Initiative du Peuple pour l'Alliance Démocratique*) in French, (*People's Initiative for a Democratic Alliance*) in English.

2. **Motto** of the party: **UNITY – SOLIDARITY – JUSTICE**

3. **VALUES: HUMANITY, INTEGRITY, RESPECT FOR NATIONAL DIVERSITY, and TRANSPARENCY.**

4. **Vision:** Transform Rwanda into a peaceful and prosperous country.

Mission: Establish a Rwanda where truth, justice, and equal rights constitute pillars for sustainable development.

5. The genesis of the idea for this political organization comes from two dates of historical importance for Rwanda:

I. **August 4, 2017** – A date and, a symbol that represents disrespect for laws. On this day, rigged presidential elections were held in Rwanda. The incumbent president was re-elected to a third seven-year term with 98.79 % of the vote. This followed the expiration of his constitutional two seven-year terms provided by the 2003 constitution. In 2015, the constitution was amended in a "referendum" that allowed the president to run again in 2017. Opposition to this so-called "referendum" strengthened the commitment of many Rwandans to build a country with honest men and women, endowed with a selfless patriotism, who can lead the country on a path toward democracy and peace.

The election of August 4, 2017 also demonstrated the need for *real* and total independence for Rwanda. The decolonization movement and the recovery of sovereignty cannot be complete without the recovery of freedom. All citizens must have the right to fully express themselves on the affairs of their country, and have the freedoms which are indispensable for their well-being and self-actualization.

This election demonstrated the need for Rwandans to have the kind of “independent spirit” which can free them from the oppressive regimes imposed on them. Rwandans must be liberated from the mercantile oligarchies that have grabbed all their national resources while the majority of the population still lives in extreme poverty.

The August 4th, 2017 election proved to everyone that now is the time for Rwanda to demonstrate its commitment to genuine democratic governance, where truth and justice are the driving forces for good governance so the country is not constantly exposed to periodic instabilities. The genocide that Rwanda suffered is just the worst example of what poor leadership and governance can do to a country. Leaders who are not concerned about the inalienable rights of their citizens cannot guarantee them a better future.

II. August 4, 1993 – Another date, another symbol. This was the day 25 years ago when the Arusha peace agreement was signed. Despite some imperfections, this agreement created some hope that the violence and calamities resulting from the war years would soon come to an end. Three years of deadly clashes displaced hundreds of thousands of Rwandans and forced them to live in temporary camps, particularly in Nyacyonga. Hundreds of thousands of other Rwandans had lived under harsh conditions in exile for more than 30 years. These exiles — and other Rwandans had aspirations of a new and better era. Average Rwandans did not understand the causes of this fratricidal war, and placed all their hopes in the Arusha agreement. Instead of bringing peace, August 4, 1993 has unfortunately come to represent disrespect for agreements.

After Arusha, some people believed that the political troubles and displacement were going to end. Ethnic and regional divisions, the refugee question, nepotism and clientelism were all the result of undemocratic governance and disrespect for people’s rights. The hope was that the victims of these various forms of abuse would recover their freedom and rights in a new kind of Rwanda.

People honestly believed that the bloodthirsty brutality and dreadful crimes committed during the war years would become an old memory. They had high hopes that a definitive resolution to the refugee problem was finally at hand. But the failure of Arusha wiped out all prospects for a better future.

Twenty-five years have passed since the Arusha accord was signed. The hope for a more peaceful Rwanda that had started to enter people’s hearts and minds soon vanished. The justification for using armed forces to address political concerns reemerged and sometimes became even more radical. The current regime is essentially seeking to use all its means for the service of the dictatorship. It is a tyranny that enthroned nepotism, clientelism, ethnic division, seizing public and private property, oppressive and mafia-style practices, targeted assassinations and displacing a large number of people.

After the genocide, the RPF-Inkotanyi regime was expected to lead the effort to rebuild a country committed to eradicating its old evils. However, while the regime carried on with abundant preaching and self-glorification, it was unable to guarantee a better future. The top-down governance approach has produced weak institutions, and the promise of peace and social cohesion that were promised ended up as nothing more than wishful thinking. The regime has not been accountable to the public, it failed to become a government of the people, by the people for the people. Instead the current regime has become autocratic and totalitarian.

III. What future for the Rwandan people? A pressing need for a national pact of peace, tranquility and social harmony.

6. A country like Rwanda that experienced both an atrocious war and genocide needed to have a special programme for national reconciliation, and should have made it its new political agenda. Independent and fair justice could have paved this path to national recovery. Many people who maintained their humanity and did not participate in the genocide could have been the basis of building a new country based on unity and reconciliation. But most of them have been disappointed, and have had to endure various kinds of humiliation and persecution. It was crucial to have a frank and inclusive social dialogue to peacefully discuss Rwanda’s most controversial problems, particularly the question of

ethnicity, national historiography and governance. The RPF-Inkotanyi, as an architect of post-genocide governance, was unable to do this. On the contrary, it transformed Rwanda into a country where RPF businesses could flourish. The regime manages the country like a product acquired at an auction.

7. The genocide caused enormous human and material damage. But it could have been used to begin a dialogue that would establish sustainable unity and peace among all Rwandans. This legacy of peace and unity would have been much more likely to produce a better future than gigantic buildings and clean roads. It is obvious to more than one that tall buildings will not create a lasting peace if the hearts and minds of the people are not yet peaceful.
8. The ideology of the ruling party has proven to be extremely sectarian and lacks political ethics. The regime is deeply involved in oppression, murder and persecution. It uses trials and tribunals to punish people, and passes rigid laws designed to silence any dissenting opinion. To strengthen its dictatorship, it uses the history of the genocide to divide people, it practices ethnic discrimination and marginalizes part of the population through collective criminalization. This is the real spirit behind the unfair laws of "negationism" and the "ideology of genocide." The RPF-Inkotanyi leadership has not managed to evolve over time and is still focused on historical grudges and resentment.
9. This explains why the official narrative of the ruling party continues to blame others, accusing others of being responsible for our own ills. For example the regime accuses the colonial powers—the Belgians and the French, the Catholic Church, and the Hutus for our national troubles. The regime is incapable of self-criticism or critically examining our past. It does not have the capacity to be contrite and to interpret facts and events without bias, or to recognize the urgent necessity of adapting our governing system to the society's new needs. That is why it continues pointing a finger at the international community, and lacks a fair appreciation of the positive contribution resulting from the ideological and societal mutations inherited from this community. This has resulted in ideological stagnation and a rejection of democratic values. The regime sometimes even uses hate propaganda to disguise and rewrite national history in its own way.
10. The RPF leadership has destroyed the hope of many Rwandans that their country would follow the path of democracy. It is now crystal clear that its aims cannot coexist with democracy. It governs by terrorizing and maintaining a state of permanent war. Assassinations, forced disappearances, imprisonment, confinement, illegal practices, persecution, deprivation of liberty and confiscation of civil and political rights are the main features of its mode of government. It is sad and distressing that even though the current regime is largely made up of former refugees, it is intent on exiling so many of its compatriots and using all sorts of denigrating labels to insult them.
11. The RPF-Inkotanyi regime, as a former belligerent force, did not have the honesty to recognize its own responsibility in the Rwandan tragedy. On the contrary, it behaved in a triumphalist fashion, portraying itself as a victim and a savior to hide its role in the tragedy that befell the country. While its contribution in rebuilding the country is recognized, no sensible and responsible Rwandan should remain silent about the past and current serious human rights abuses committed by this regime.
12. For all these reasons, a new political orientation is needed. A frank and constructive social dialogue is necessary to identify, defuse and eradicate forever the distant causes of our quarrels and successive crises, as well as the feelings of hatred and mistrust among its various groups. The country urgently needs to lay the foundation for a government that can guarantee a better life for all citizens and leave a better legacy for future generations.
13. A new way of doing politics must be opened. The time is ripe for a political program that guarantees peaceful coexistence among the different social groups in the Rwandan society to ensure that national diversity is respected. It is imperative to build a rule of law which will lead to the well-being of the population. The government must have independent institutions that can check and balance each other and be strong enough to prevent any government branch from being above the law. It is necessary to have an honest governance that will be accountable to the citizens.

IV. IPAD – RWANDA, home of hope for the oppressed

14. Considering all the arguments discussed above, the founders of IPAD-Rwanda invite all Rwandans longing for peace and justice to join this organization to realize this noble ambition: building a society governed by rule of law, based on independent institutions, that respects national diversity and protects all citizens; a State that upholds the values of truth, integrity, humanism and justice, in order to guarantee equity before the law and equal access to resources and opportunities without discrimination.
15. IPAD-Rwanda desires to bring a peacemaking and reconciliatory approach for all Rwandans who have suffered successive atrocities. It wants to be an oasis of peace and harmony and eliminate harmful ideologies based on sectarianism, ethnicity, regionalism or affinities of origin. Its political agenda intends to introduce a new pact of peace, justice and brotherhood while governing and leading the country to its destiny. IPAD-Rwanda **intends to inspire the people with innovative political convictions, free from any remorse, grudges and resentment resulting from historical clashes.**
16. It intends to cooperate with other Rwandans to search for a firm and sustainable solution to issues such as: justice, inequality, refugees' concerns; social injustice; favoritism; greed; as well as lack of fundamental rights and freedoms. Its main objectives are to:
- A. **Build a country that upholds the rule of law and guarantees fundamental rights and freedoms**
 - B. **Promote inclusive peace and security;**
 - C. **Promote unity and reconciliation**
 - D. **Build a competitive economy and integrated development;**
 - E. **Adopt national policies to revive the education system, promote its quality and initiate inclusive social welfare.**
17. IPAD-Rwanda's political program will be based on the principle of truth, which will lead toward reconciliation. This will be possible only when the national community is willing to engage in a frank dialogue on major historical dividers including ethnic and regional divisions, and country of origin discriminations which are new but strong labels of exclusion at this time.
18. This is why IPAD-Rwanda's top priority is the unity and reconciliation of the Rwandan people to establish national cohesion. The party intends to eradicate all kinds of discrimination and exclusion that are an obstacle to social peace and concord. Its members believe that Rwandans have an obligation to remember (devoir de memoir) the victims of the genocide, crimes and atrocities committed in Rwanda. However, they believe that it is not appropriate to remember only one group of victims, and force the other group to remain silent. There is certainly a moral obligation to commemorate the genocide victims laid in Nyange and Nyarubuye, Ntarama and Bisesero, Murambi and Kicukiro, Musha and Mibilizi and many other genocide memorial sites across the country. Nevertheless, for IPAD-Rwanda, it is equally important to remember the victims of massive killings and cruelties in places such as Kamarashavu (in the vicinity of Rwanpanga and Nasho lakes) and Nyagakombe (in the former commune of Mukingi, Gitarama) during unexpected meetings; Kibeho and Gakurazo, Shabunda and Tingi-Ting in former Zaïre, and many other locations where similar barbaric acts were committed and took lives of many Rwandans. Turning a blind eye to the sorrow of families that lost members during those bloody atrocities would be endorsing divisions in Rwandan society and distort historical reality.
19. Overall, IPAD-Rwanda wants to promote the fundamental values of humanism, integrity, respect for diversity and transparency. It believes that if those values are embedded in the collective consciousness, they will serve as pillars for a productive and inextricable solidarity among Rwandans. It aims to inspire a program for social cohesion and harmony as well as promote a harmonious regional cooperation and peaceful neighborhood.
20. IPAD-Rwanda comes to join forces with all fellow Rwandans who are determined to leave behind a one-party dictatorship, with leaders that claim the right to lead the country indefinitely and manage it as one would manage an individual property. IPAD-Rwanda wants to help end this new feudalism, and let all Rwandans live and flourish in a country that allows them to have a brighter future.

Washington DC, August 4th, 2018

Gilbert MWENEDATA

Chairman

Charles MUSABYIMANA

General Secretary