



THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

Your Excellency,

I have received your letter of the 4<sup>th</sup> of December, 2018 and I thank you so much for it, especially for its candor in expressing the real sentiments of Your Excellency and your Party, the CNDI. I have not yet, of course, consulted the other EAC members in responding to your letter. That will be done on the 27<sup>th</sup> of December, 2018, when we have our Ordinary Session, if the Summit agrees. However, in the interim, I will, with equal candor, give Your Excellency my tentative responses to some of the pillar points you have raised in your letter in only 2 capacities: the President of Uganda and Chairperson for the Inter-Burundi dialogue ever since it started with Mwalimu Nyerere on the 19<sup>th</sup> of June, 1998, in Mwanza.

First and foremost, your letter does not bring out the fact that, after a very long period of suffering, starting with the assassination of Rwagasore on the 13<sup>th</sup> of October, 1961, the basis for resolving the chronic Burundi problem was laid by the Arusha Accord signed on the 28<sup>th</sup> of August, 2000. This Accord was guaranteed by the EAC. In fact, it is the EAC, against the obstructions of the Western Powers in particular, that was part of the decisive pressure that forced the Buyoya Government to accept the Agreement. Yes, your Party, the CNDI, was engaged in an armed struggle which, no doubt, was part of the pressure on the Buyoya Tutsi Government. Nevertheless, the CNDI did not capture Bujumbura by arms. It, along with other exiles, came to Bujumbura by negotiations led by the EAC. Therefore, the EAC intervened in the internal affairs of Burundi to bring about "Democracy and security for all" in the place of the Tutsi monopoly of power in the interests of "group security" as Mwalimu summarized the issues at Mwanza. Of course, this distortion of the Tutsi quest for monopoly of power had, to some extent, been provoked by the earlier criminal massacres of the Tutsi in Rwanda in 1959 organized by the Belgians together with the reactionary Hutus, like Gregory Kayibanda.



THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

That is how some of the Tutsi elements, led by Michel Micombero, took the line that the Tutsis of Burundi would never be massacred like the ones of Rwanda and, in order to guarantee their group security, they had to monopolize power and marginalize the Hutus. That is what the EAC, led by Mwalimu, rejected and put forward the Arusha formula of: "Democracy and security for all". This formula was promoted by the EAC and all the democratically minded people in Burundi and guaranteed by the Region.

Burundi, using this formula, experienced peace until October, 2015 when some arguments about term limits, etc., started. That is when the EAC, again, tried to find out what was happening. Therefore, your line of saying that the EAC is usurping the sovereignty of the Burundian people by wanting to know the latest in the evolution of the political situation in Burundi, may not be correct. There is the historic Treaty of Arusha which the Region guaranteed. What does "guarantee" mean? It means that you take interest to be sure that what was agreed is on course..It may not be correct for only one Party, the Burundi Government, to tell all the others (the EAC) and some Burundi elements that are even living outside that everything is on course and you have no right to inquire. Respecting inter-state agreements, even when they impact internal situations, may not be interference. It is only what was agreed. Following the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War, up to today, there are American and British forces stationed in Germany. Is Germany a weak country? Has it taken away the sovereignty of Germany? Not at all! That is what was agreed at a certain historic moment. If some of the parties want to terminate that arrangement, consultations can take place and we agree on the way forward.

However, for one party to declare the end of the interaction unilaterally may not be correct. It may also undermine the credibility of both the internal and the regional actors. Who, then, will take seriously the "guarantees" by the Region in future in other situations?



THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

This may not be good for Africa at all. As far as the internal actors are concerned, it may also amount to manipulation — use the region when it suits you and discard it when it does not.

The other pillar issue in your letter is the issue of accountability and peace building — punishing the mistake makers and not tolerating impunity. You even ask me whether I would sit down with the coup-makers and terrorists, etc. The answer is, actually, "yes". Uganda would never have been saved if the revolutionary forces led by myself for the last 53 years (Student Movements, Fronasa, NRM, etc.) had not both fought against and negotiated with the coup-makers, terrorists, etc. The first coup was in 1966, led by Obote; the second was in 1971, led by Amin; the 3<sup>rd</sup> was the rigged elections of 1980; etc. The actors in most of these events or their followers are now part of our government. That is how Uganda was stabilized. It is actually part of the revolutionary strategy: fight when necessary and negotiate when necessary. However, in the case of Burundi, the facilitator did not insist on the coup-makers sitting in the negotiations. What, then, is the problem? I negotiated with Kony who had killed thousands, cut off people's ears so that they do not hear his atrocities, cut off their lips so that they have no mouths with which to report his activities, etc. It is him that, in the end, refused to sign. That is when we went after him in Congo and CAR.

Why doesn't President Kagame negotiate with the Interahamwe? Well, obviously, I am not a spokesman for President Kagame. However, on quick reflection, there may be a difference between coup-makers and genocidaires. Coup-makers want power by undemocratic means. Genocidaires want to exterminate a people, part of the African people. Between 1966 and 1986, about 800,000 Ugandans were killed extrajudicially. We have, however, never used the word genocide to describe what Obote, Amin and Okello were doing in Uganda at that time. They did not aim at exterminating Baganda or Banyankore, etc. They were killing our supporters to get rid of opponents and to intimidate the rest into sub-mission.



THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

I totally agree that the tension between Rwanda and Burundi should be discussed. This is the logic of the Common Market. The Common Market means the free flow of goods and services and the free movement of persons. How will this happen sustainably if there is tension and suspicion among member States. The present African leaders need to remind themselves of two targets: "the prosperity of our people and the strategic security of the African people". How can the families, the businesses, the companies of Africa be "prosperous"? They can only be prosperous, if they sell, on a large scale, goods and services. That is how they will get money to get rid of poverty, create jobs, access technology and expand the tax-base. Failing to realize this and generating tensions, is to let down the African people. The real danger to the strategic security of the African people is imperialism (foreign imperialism). Failing to realize this and engaging in secondary fights is a mistake.

Your Excellency, the happy news that Burundi is totally peaceful, is a very pleasant phenomenon. It does not, however, answer the issue of principle. The principles are that the chronic problem of Burundi was ended by the inter-Burundian Arusha Agreement guaranteed by the region. It is a matter of elementary courtesy and wise strategy for the principal internal actor to interact with the guarantors and some skeptical elements within Burundi to be sure that events are on course. It may not be principled to simply say: "This is my home. You neighbours you have no right to comment". Even in the past, Burundi was the home of the Burundi, not of Museveni or anybody like that. However, for some historical reasons, we had to come in, promote a formula and guarantee it. What, then, did we guarantee?

Finally, although it was not part of your letter, I must bring it to your attention that accountability is not only for the people in government. Even Liberation Movements must be held accountable. A revolutionary Movement is distinguished from a terrorist organization, not only by the cause it pursues which must be a just one, but also by the methods it uses.



THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

A group that uses violence indiscriminately (killing women, children, non-combatants, etc.), its just cause notwithstanding, is ipso facto a terrorist organization. I have not been following, in the last twenty years, the detailed goings on in Burundi.

In 1972, however, I directly witnessed the criminal irresponsibility of the Hutu rebels, working with the bankrupt Mulellists of Congo, cutting children, women and non-combatants with machetes and calling themselves freedom fighters. I had actually advised Selius Mpasha, Bunaame and Biyolelo not to start a sectarian effort and not to start fighting until they had created a disciplined and ideologically clear core. The use of violence in a Revolution is like the use of the knife in surgery. If you misuse the knife, you can become a butcher instead of being a surgeon. Given the convoluted history of our countries (Uganda, Burundi, Rwanda, Kenya, South Sudan, etc.), the more the reason for, sometimes, using flexibility in handling these simple situations but complicated by mismanagement.

  
Yoweri Kaguta Museveni

**PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA/  
CHAIRPERSON REGIONAL INTER-BURUNDI DIALOGUE**

**PO/11**

8<sup>th</sup> December, 2018

His Excellency Pierre Nkurunziza  
**PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF BURUNDI**

**Copy to:** His Excellency Uhuru Kenyatta  
**PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA**  
His Excellency Dr. John Pombe Joseph Magufuli  
**PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA**  
His Excellency Paul Kagame  
**PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF RWANDA**  
His Excellency Salva Kiir Mayardit  
**PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH SUDAN**