

Declaration on the proposed throughout Rwandan Refugees by the Government of Uganda: The government of Uganda has to withdraw the statement to cancel “Rwandan Refugee Status” in two months from now

Basing on Media Reports and the interviews of the Minister for Relief, Disaster, Preparedness and Refugees Hon. Hilary Onek saying that Uganda will “*cancel Rwandan Refugee Status in three months from now*”,

We Refugee Human Rights Defenders in Uganda signatories to this declaration, are highly concerned with the traditional “*throw away culture*” in Uganda towards refugees, that culture has negatively affected all refugees in Uganda. We highly regret and strongly protest against the government of Uganda to compromise its sovereignty as an independent state since 2008 in order to please the Government of Rwanda through the refugee deal, by giving away Rwandan refugees in Uganda and the failure to ensure that Rwandan refugees are fully protected by the law of this country. Whatever happens to Rwandan refugees does also happen to all refugees in Uganda.

We strongly oppose any move by the government of Uganda to turn Rwandan refugees into human shield for political, diplomatic and economic gains with Rwandan Government and in the International Community. If Uganda can welcome refugees from Israel because of incentives attached how can we send away closely neighbors from Rwanda?

We strongly call upon the government of Uganda to abide with its international and national obligations to ensure the protection of refugees especially Rwandan refugees in Uganda who have been left out to their sake over the years.

We reaffirm our strong convictions and belief that the current Rwandan regime is a dictatorship characterized by serious human rights violations which are one among the reasons of the displacement of Rwandan refugees into Uganda. We reaffirm our convictions that Rwanda is not yet safe for all Rwandans. As Hon. Minister Hilary Onek stated in an interview with journalists “*Rwanda is like a cup of porridge, on top it is cold but inside it may be hot*”.

We therefore reject with the strongest energy the threats by Government of Uganda to freeze the Refugee Status of the 14,000 Rwanda refugees alleged being in Uganda currently. We call upon the government of Uganda to swiftly grant refugee status to all Rwandan refugees who report to Uganda seeking protection and show us strong commitment to ensure the protection of Rwandan refugees here in Uganda which still has a lot to desire,

We commit ourselves from now to work and position ourselves for the protection of all Rwandan refugees in Uganda and for the protection of all refugees, and do seek the support of the Uganda Civil Society, the media, the Religious leaders, the traditional leaders and the entire Uganda population to join our efforts for the protection of refugees. We believe that Uganda can provide

security to the 14,000 Rwandan refugees and we are ready to support the efforts of Uganda towards that cause.

We strongly ask the international community and all those who give humanitarian relief aid to Uganda to support refugees to stand with refugees especially Rwandan refugees and urgently condition the Relief Aide with a strong commitment from Uganda to ensure that protection of all refugees without discrimination.

We understand the situation of great fear and stigma affecting Rwandan refugees but we ask them to be brave enough and come up publically to seek for better protection space and struggle for their well-being in Uganda and minimize the options of “*living into hide*” in Uganda and desist from other copying mechanisms which they have used.

We commit ourselves to start the mobilization of Rwandan refugees, other refugees, the Uganda Society and the International Community to reject the proposal of Uganda, and we are ready from now for a Court Case against the government of Uganda. We call upon our friends and sympathizers everywhere they may be to get ready for diverse actions against the government of Uganda in case this move is not put on hold.

From this date of today up to **January 19th, 2019 at 5:00pm** the government of Uganda should have withdrawn from canceling Rwandan Refugee status and show great commitment to ensure their protection, and if nothing much is done we shall mobilize all refugees to leave Uganda and go to Kenya, Tanzania, Ethiopia and other countries.

Done in Kampala

Nov ember 19th, 2018

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