



Réseau international des Femmes pour la Démocratie et la Paix asbl
(RifDP)

International Women's Network for Democracy and Peace asbl (IwnDP)

Internationale Netwerk van Vrouwen voor Democratie en Vrede (InvDV)

PRESS RELEASE

The International Women's network for Democracy and Peace (IwnDP) condemns the Rwandan government's persistent inhumane treatment of Victoire Ingabire Umuhoza.

Victoire Ingabire Umuhoza is a wife, mother of three, and grandmother whose peaceful struggle for genuine reconciliation, democracy, human rights, the rule of law, and development for all in Rwanda has received international recognition.

Her persecution begun immediately after she has challenged the Rwandan government's reconciliation policy in 2010. She was arrested and, in 2013, sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment by the Rwandan Supreme Court in politically motivated legal processes. The Rwandan authorities subsequently held her in solitary confinement for five years which was not part of her sentence.

When the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights (AfCHPR) cleared Victoire Ingabire Umuhoza and ruled that Rwanda had violated her right to freedoms of expression and an adequate defence in 2017, the Rwandan government refused to acknowledge the decision.

She was released from prison by presidential order in 2018 under conditions including to request permission from the Minister of Justice each time she wishes to leave Rwanda. Her repeated requests to visit her family in the Netherlands were acknowledged by the Minister of Justice but never answered. Consequently, Victoire has missed numerous family milestones, including her children's weddings and the births of her grandchildren.

For the past 16 years, the Rwandan government has repeatedly and deliberately prevented Victoire from travelling to the Netherlands to be reunited with her family — the worst possible pain for a mother.

On 19 June 2025, Victoire Ingabire Umuhoza was arrested again in connection to a legal case that the United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detention (UNWGAD) had deemed illegal. This latest arrest is part of Victoire's ongoing persecution at the hands of the Rwandan government. She is being held in conditions

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that do not meet international standards, including not being allowed to communicate with her family in the Netherlands.

The continued inhumane treatment of Victoire Ingabire Umuhuza by the Rwandan government not only confirms its refusal to embrace democratic norms based on political inclusivity, freedom of expression and of opinion, but also demonstrates that Rwanda, a country that has built a reputation as a champion of women and families, only provides protection for women who adhere to the ideology of the Kagame's regime. Those who oppose its policies are routinely deprived of protection, as confirmed by Ms Victoire Ingabire Umuhuza's case.

The IwnDP calls on the global human rights community, particularly organisations that empower women and protect those who advocate for democracy, to condemn the inhumane treatment that Victoire Ingabire Umuhuza has endured at the hands of the Rwandan government for the past 16 years to this day, and to demand that the Rwandan authorities comply with their national and international obligations with regard to her treatment.

Done in Brussels on July 17, 2025.

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