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Contact: Kitty Kurth
Phone: 312-617-7288
Email: Kitty@Kurthlampe.com

Rusesabagina Combats Fiction with Facts

Paul Rusesabagina, Founder and President of the Hotel Rwanda Rusesabagina Foundation issued the following statement:

“Today I have been accused in the media by representatives of the Rwandan government of wrongdoing. The accusations come on the heels of physical harassment. While they are baseless, I feel I must respond.

The government has said that I sent money to people who I met many years ago but have not seen or spoken with since the Genocide in 1994. I have not sent money to the Commercial Bank of Burundi or Dar es Salaam. The last time I sent money to Rwanda was in 2002 or 2003, I think 2002, to my younger brother for a brain operation. It was about 500 or 1000 Euros.

Prosecutor Ngoga said that no matter how small the money amount was, it was used for terrorist purposes. I have sent no money to terrorists. On top of everything, no one has ever heard of this alleged terrorist group he accuses me of funding until Victoire’s false arrest in the past few weeks, yet the money he accuses me of sending he says was sent more than a year ago. He is not only lying, but lying with bad logic.

I have been supportive of an open political process in Rwanda. My support for Victoire Ingabire, along with all of the opposition candidates of all parties has been through press releases issued by my Foundation advocating the need for free and fair and open elections without violence or repression of human rights and political freedoms.

This legal action is strictly a smear campaign. It is the latest step in a campaign against me by the Rwandan government that has included public insults, lies and physical harassment. My Foundation is advocating for a truth, justice and reconciliation process to try to foster sustainable peace in Rwanda, not violence of any kind, but anyone who opposes Kagame inside or outside the country is treated with this kind of harassment. There has been no legal contact made with me and this is the first I have heard of such issues.

I came home from the hospital yesterday recovering from surgery. I have been in Brussels receiving medical treatment since April. While I was in the hospital in Belgium last week, on Thursday, someone broke in to my house and stole all my documents, written in Kinyarwanda. I am asking myself what a Belgium thief might want with documents with documents only a Rwandan could read.”

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