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Rwanda: President Kagame's inauguration - an opportunity for strengthen human rights protection

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As President Kagame takes the oath of office today following his victory in the 25 August presidential elections Amnesty International is urging him to guarantee basic human rights for all Rwandese.

"President Kagame should exercise the mandate he has won to guarantee the freedom for all Rwandese and for all sectors of society to express their views, in particular with respect to the ongoing campaign for parliamentary elections scheduled for 29 September through 2 October, " the organization urged.

Amnesty International welcomes the positive steps taken by the current government in the post-genocide transition period. "The accomplishments of adopting a new Constitution, introducing legislation concerning the administration of political life and the management of presidential elections are significant."

The vast majority of Rwandese people participated peacefully in the 25 August presidential elections. However, not all Rwandese were able to fully exercise fundamental civil and political rights in the last months of Rwanda's post-genocide transition period.

In the run up to the constitution referendum and, more significantly, during the presidential poll, election monitors noted numerous incidents, acts of harassment and intimidation and the arrests and "disappearances" of members of the political opposition. It would be unfortunate if the same allegations were to mar the ongoing parliamentary campaigns and forthcoming elections.

Amnesty International calls for a transparent investigation of all acts of harassment and intimidation and arrests of alleged members of the political opposition.

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