

URGENT ACTION

RELEASE OPPOSITION PARTY LEADER AND MEMBERS

Opposition politician and President of political party, Development and Liberty for All (DALFA-Umurinzi) Victoire Ingabire, eight DALFA members and a journalist have been arbitrarily detained and are facing subversion charges for their legitimate peaceful political activities. Victoire Ingabire was arrested in June 2025 and accused of conspiring with the others, arrested in October and December 2021 and accused among other charges of “forming or joining a criminal organization, conspiring to commit crimes against the government, and inciting unrest or disorder among the population”. Rwandan authorities must immediately release all the ten individuals as they are detained solely for the peaceful exercise of their human rights.

TAKE ACTION: WRITE AN APPEAL IN YOUR OWN WORDS OR USE THIS MODEL LETTER

President of the Republic of Rwanda

Paul Kagame

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Copies to: Minister of Justice /Attorney General

Email: info@minijust.gov.rw

Mr. President,

I am writing to express serious concern about the ongoing arbitrary detention and prosecution of President of opposition political party Development and Liberty for All (DALFA-Umurinzi), **Victoire Ingabire** along with eight DALFA party members, **Hamad Hagenimana, Emmanuel Masengesho, Alphonse Mutabazi, Marcel Nahimana, Jean Claude Ndayishimiye, Alexis Rucubanganya, Sylvain Sibomana, Claudine Uwimana**, and journalist **Théoneste Nsengimana**.

Victoire Ingabire – who remains held in arbitrary detention after being denied bail on 15 July 2025 – was arrested at her home in the capital Kigali on 19 June 2025. The next day, in a tweet confirming the arrest, the authorities launched an investigation against her into her alleged subversion for communicating with the 8 DALFA party members and journalist Théoneste Nsengimana, who were arrested in October and December 2021 (and are now awaiting the end of their trial, which began in November 2024) for taking part in a training on non-violent action and campaign planning. They all face serious charges - which they have denied, including “forming or joining a criminal association” and “conspiring to commit offences against state authority”, with potential sentences up to life imprisonment and 10 years of prison for the journalist.

Their prosecution occurs within a broader context where the authorities have adopted authoritarian practices – particularly against political opposition, civil society, independent media houses and journalists who face the most severe restrictions as authorities continue to stifle peaceful dissent and criminalise the rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly. The Rwandan authorities must uphold the rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly, as guaranteed under the Rwandan Constitution and human rights treaties including the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights to which the country is a state party.

In light of the above, I urge you to ensure the immediate and unconditional release of Victoire Ingabire and the nine other individuals as they are detained solely for the peaceful exercise of their human rights. I urge you to ensure that all the charges against them are immediately dropped.

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

On 16 January 2026, Rwanda's Supreme Court agreed to hear a constitutional petition from Victoire Ingabire, who is challenging Article 106 of the criminal procedure law. Victoire Ingabire contends that this provision, which was used to justify her investigation and detention, violates constitutional rights and should be annulled. The Court determined that her petition presents substantive constitutional issues that merit a full hearing. The Supreme Court hearing is to hold a hearing on 4 March 2026.

In January 2010, Victoire Ingabire returned to Rwanda from exile in the Netherlands to participate in the presidential elections. Victoire Ingabire was barred from running and arrested on charges including "genocide ideology" and "divisionism."

On 10 September 2025, a European Union Parliament resolution stated that Victoire Ingabire's arrest is part of a broader crackdown on political opposition, journalists, and civil society. Since 2017, at least five members of Victoire Ingabire's former party, FDU-Inkingi, have died or disappeared under suspicious circumstances. The opposition, civil society, and media face severe restrictions on the rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly, as well as threats, arbitrary detention, prosecution on fabricated charges, unlawful killings, and enforced disappearances. Independent civil society and media also experience attacks, intimidation, harassment, and other reprisals for their work.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: English, Kinyarwanda

You can also write in your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: 2 July 2026

Please check with the Amnesty office in your country if you wish to send appeals after the deadline.

NAMES AND PRONOUNS: Victoire Ingabire (She/Her), Hamad Hagenimana (He/Him), Emmanuel Masengesho (He/Him), Alphonse Mutabazi (He/Him), Marcel Nahimana (He/Him), Jean Claude Ndayishimiye (He/Him), Theoneste Nsengimana (He/Him), Alexis Rucubanganya (He/Him), Sylvain Sibomana (He/Him), Claudine Uwimana (She/Her)