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THE FDLR CATEGORICALLY DENY THE LOSS OF TROOPS AND ANY INVOLVEMENT IN THE DEATH OF CIVILIANS IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO (DRC) AS REPORTED BY THE MEDIAS AND THE MONUC.

On April 21 2004, during a joint operation of the Rwandan Patriotic Army (RPA) and elements of the Rassemblement Congolais pour la Democratie (RCD) in South Kivu, eastern of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), the FDLR forces (FOCA) valiantly resisted against the invasion and later decided to leave their positions in order to prevent casualties of the local and refugee population. In fact, some of Mubele inhabitants sought FOCA protection since they were threatened by RCD and RPA troops. RCD and RPA suffered several casualties.

As a reprisal, the RPA and RCD troops occupied villages, and burned and destroyed several houses. It is during these operations that RCD and RPA elements killed civilians who were unable to flee. As a reminder, RCD troops are under the direct command of RPA officers or officers in direct intelligence with the RPA army.

After sending troops disguised as Rwandese speaking herdsmen and farmers in the areas of BIHAMBWE – RUBAYA – NGUNGU – KATOYI in North Kivu, over the last several months, the RPA and its allies launched during the last four days massive attacks aimed at hunting down Rwandan refugees and any local population that have refused to subscribe to Kigali propaganda. This operation is mainly centered in RUTCHURU-MASISI area. Subsequent to amassing troops in KATALE-KITOYI, the Rwandan army has deployed on two main axes namely HOMBO-WALIKALE-CHAMBUCHA and GOMA-RUTCHURU-PARK LUINDI. One of the Rwandan army supply routes is IDJWI island in the middle of the Lake Kivu which is used as a staging point towards KALEHE – KATANA – RUMBISHI ET MASISI (NGUNGU).

Inside Rwanda, the RPA has intensified, over the last two weeks, the harassment and the mistreatment of the Rwandan innocent civilians in the regions of Ruhengeri and Gisenyi bordering the Birunga Park and in Butare, Gikongoro, and Cyangugu, around the Nyungwe forest, accusing the population of supporting the FDLR.

The FDLR denounce in the strongest terms the killing of innocent people and the machiavellian plan of the Kigali regime aimed at hunting down and annihilate

Rwandan refugees still living in the DRC. The FDLR will exert their right of self-defense in order to protect the local and/or refugee population.

The FDLR remain convinced that the Rwandan problem is of political nature that requires political solutions. For this reason, the FDLR and its partners have consistently called for a highly inclusive Inter-Rwandan Dialogue which will pave the way of creating optimal conditions leading to new political, democratic, and security institutions reflecting the will of the people. Instead of demonizing, oppressing other Rwandans, or hunting down Rwandan refugees in neighboring countries, the Kigali's regime should be engaging actively into dialogue with the opposition and civil society in order to find a durable solution to the Rwandan crisis.

Such a Dialogue is the required way towards establishing the right conditions for an equitable justice, true reconciliation, an everlasting peace, and development both in Rwanda and the Great Lakes Region of Africa.

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