

PRESS STATEMENT: Colonel Patrick Karegeya's assassination

Johannesburg 03 January 2014

The Rwanda National Congress, a political movement against the dictatorship in Rwanda, is deeply saddened to announce the assassination of Col Patrick Karegeya on 31 December 2013 at the Michelangelo Towers in Sandton, Johannesburg.

The South African police is investigating the circumstances surrounding his killing. Meanwhile it has emerged that Col Patrick Karegeya last communicated with his nephew, Mr David Batenga for the last time at around 19:46 on the same night. Col Patrick Karegeya was still in the company of Mr Appollo Kiririsi Gafaranga, a businessman from Rwanda who it was claimed was in South Africa for business meetings.

Col Patrick Karegeya knew Mr Appollo Kiririsi Gafaranga from the time he was still head of external intelligence in President Paul Kagame's government. Even when Col Patrick Karegeya's misfortunes began and was jailed and ultimately had to flee the country, he kept the relationship with Mr Appollo Kiririsi Gafaranga and hosted him in his house on the latter's previous visits to South Africa. However on his recent visit, Mr Appollo Kiririsi Gafaranga informed Col Patrick Karegeya that he would have busy meetings and that it would be improper to hold those meetings at Col Patrick Karegeya's house. He asked Col Patrick Karegeya to book him a hotel in an easily accessible area, which Col Patrick Karegeya did, as he had done with many other guests. He chose the Michelangelo Towers for him.

Mr Appollo Kiririsi Gafaranga and Col Patrick Karegeya intermittently met on 29 and 30 December 2013. They were again together on 31 December 2013 and Col Patrick Karegeya last communicated with his nephew, Mr David Batenga around 19:46 confirming that he was indeed with Mr Appollo Kiririsi Gafaranga and all was well. As the year was ending that night and people exchanged New Year wishes, Col Patrick Karegeya's family calling from overseas was surprised that he was not answering his phone. Although Mr David Batenga called and got no response he told the family not to worry as he knew where and who he was with.

The morning of 01 January 2014, Mr David Batenga who regularly communicates with his uncle, was surprised that Col Patrick Karegeya had not left any message. He suspected that something may have gone wrong and decided to go and see his uncle at his house since all his phones were off and the landline rang without an answer. He could not get in the house and did not see his uncle's car. He therefore went to the Sandton hotel to inquire as he knew it is where he could probably be with his guest Mr Appollo Kiririsi Gafaranga. But due to hotel protocol Mr David Batenga was not allowed to access the room but he insisted that the hotel calls the police. He remained at the hotel until the police arrived. The hotel receptionist informed him that the guest was dead. Mr David Batenga was later allowed to get in the room around 19H30 to 20H00 and recognised the body as that of his uncle, Col Patrick Karegeya.

Col Patrick Karegeya was a founding member of the Rwanda National Congress and a key figure in the Rwandan opposition to President Paul Kagame. Rwandan opposition key figures have been a target in South Africa and the rest of the world. Gen Kayumba Nyamwasa, another founding

member of the Rwanda National Congress survived two assassination attempts in Johannesburg in June 2010. Investigations have found overwhelming evidence of the involvement of Rwanda intelligence operatives in those assassination attempts.

Col Patrick Karegeya was a courageous soldier who died on the battlefield. His vision for an inclusive and free Rwandan society earned him the admiration and respect of most Rwandan political actors, both in the predominantly Tutsi ruling party and in the predominantly Hutu opposition political parties. It is this leadership that played a crucial role in the formation of the Rwanda National Congress, a political movement that brings together both Hutu and Tutsi political activists and has strategic alliances with other key opposition political groups, such as the FDU Inkingi and the Amahoro People's Congress.

By killing its opponents, the criminal regime in Kigali seeks to intimidate and silence the Rwandan people into submission. Examples of those assassinated abound, Mr John Sengati (murdered in Rwanda), Col Theoneste Lizinde and Mr Seth Sendashonga (killed in Nairobi, Kenya), Col Shabani Rutayisire and Mr Gratién Munyarubuga, Dr Assiel Kabera, Mr Andre Kagwa Rwisereka and many others (killed in Rwanda), Ms Regina Uwamaliya and Mr Juvenal Uwilingiyimana (murdered in Brussels, Belgium), journalist Charles Ingabire (assassinated in Kampala, Uganda) and Mr Pasteur Musabe (killed in Cameroon),.... the list is endless. Rwandans however are not deterred in their quest for freedom, rule of law and democracy. Such criminal activities make Rwandan people even more determined to struggle to remove Kagame's dictatorship.

The security of exile Rwandans will remain a concern as long as Kagame's quest for the annihilation of dissenting voices, to the extent of hunting them down, is not properly dealt with by the countries hosting Rwandan refugees. Rwanda National Congress petitions the South African government to double efforts to protect Rwandan refugees on its soil, particularly to mitigate the threat posed by Rwandan government's operatives within the republic.

Details of Col Patrick Karegeya's memorial services as well as funeral arrangements will be communicated soon.

For further details:

Dr Theogene Rudasingwa, Coordinator, Rwanda National Congress

Email: ngombwa@gmail.com

Mr David Batenga, Family member

Tel: 0794544651, Email: muriisab@gmail.com

Mr Frank Ntwali, Chairman, Rwanda National Congress South Africa

Tel: 0767778735, Email: ntwali4justice@gmail.com

Mr Etienne Mutabazi, Deputy Chairman, Rwanda National Congress South Africa

Tel: 0827273756, Email: emutabazi64@gmail.com