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THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

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UGANDA.

In any correspondence on
this subject please quote No.

Statement by the Minister of Foreign Affairs Hon Sam Kutesa on the Rwanda/Uganda Situation

There have been recent press reports on the relations between Uganda and Rwanda, attributed to some senior officials in the Government of Rwanda.

1. Alleged Hosting of Elements Fighting Rwanda

It is false that Uganda hosts any elements fighting Rwanda. Rwanda knows this very well as it has been a matter of confidential communication at the highest level of the two countries. Uganda does not and cannot allow anyone to operate from its territory that threatens a neighbor as alleged. This is a principled position. We are fully aware that our own development and transformation cannot take place without peace and security in the region. It is for this reason that Uganda has continued to champion closer collaboration and coordination within regional frameworks like EAC, ICGLR, IGAD and even at the Continental level.

2. Alleged arrest, torture and harassment of Rwandans

It is not true that Uganda arrests, tortures and harasses Rwandans. It is well known that Uganda welcomes and maintains an open door policy for people of all nationalities, including Rwandans wishing to visit the country. Rwandans are welcome to visit Uganda. It is not by mistake that Uganda continues to be the largest refugee host country in the continent. However, Uganda expects that all visitors to the country including Rwandans to remain law abiding because those who act contrary to the law, are dealt with in accordance with the law. Therefore anyone including Rwandans visiting Uganda have nothing to fear, if they are law abiding.

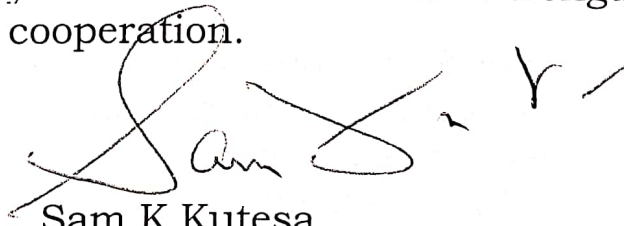
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'S. Kutesa'.

As a country that has been a target of terrorist attacks with the assassinations of Moslem Sheiks, State Attorney Joan Kagezi and Member of Parliament Hon Ibrahim Abiriga and others, we remain vigilant. In this regard, the Government of Uganda remains committed to protecting the security of its citizens and its borders and will act accordingly against local or foreign threats.

3. Restricting of Business with Rwanda

Uganda has been a vocal advocate for regional integration and building closer connectivity in trade between us and our neighbors including Rwanda, because it is essential for our common prosperity. It is therefore unfortunate that the movement of goods and people across our common border with Rwanda, has been restricted. This harms our economies and social interaction and also threatens our integration efforts under the East African Community, which we have all worked hard to build. Uganda is committed to addressing any trade related issues, because we are convinced that doing so strengthens our regional integration and also helps us integrate faster into the global economy.

Finally, Rwanda is a brotherly country and Uganda remains ready to address any issues in order to strengthen our bilateral relations and cooperation.



Sam K Kutesa

Minister of Foreign Affairs

Kampala: 5 March 2019