- Urgent! Letter from Burundi - Stop the IMF, People First by Jean Claude Kundwa

Tuesday, 08 May 2007
Last Updated Wednesday, 21 November 2007

Stop the IMF, People Firstby Jean Claude Kundwa (jckunda2001@yahoo.fr) -M
colleagues, I hope you all are well where ever you are. On the 1st day of May, 2007, the president of the Republic of Burundi decided to celebrate the day by increasing the salary of civil servants by 34%. This was a kind decreasing of a very big burden that is threatening many parents who spend many hours on the job, but always watching their children chased temporarily at school because of lack of school fees. Other children stop going to school due to the threats of unhappy teachers. Everybody ignores how many strikes we have watched, everybody ignores the terrible circumstances that our University is facing to this day. I think no where in the world can you find students spending three years waiting for professors to guide them from memory, just because the government cannot pay them. Today, the professors decided to guide only two students a year. Where is the Burundian youth future? Where is the access to education if teachers are dedicated to hunger and are always frustrated? Where is Burundian future if the government has Power to care for its people, but not permitted? Dear colleagues, you may think of why I am saying this. When the president Peter decided to increase the salaries, the journalist asked if the government asked first the IMF and World Bank, and the answer was, yes, we discussed it with our traditional partner. On the morning of the 3rd of May, I turned on my radio and heard a report from the IMF. “We are very happy of the good management of government finances, but we are very concerned about the increasing of salaries…we will discuss it with Burundian government” What can the expectations be here? Whether the IMF is going to press the government to go back on its word? Will the IMF tell the government to never go any further? Will the IMF go on imposing the cruel conditions, as has been its habit? To all the questions, I can say let’s wait and see. Today our government has begun a 2 days retreat and President Peter is there, we can expect reactions when they finish. Anyway, anyone who is working for peace, human rights and development in Burundi and Africa needs to be involved in this? If the country is trying to rise again, and many projects are working to support those efforts, why would the economic partner not get involved? None ignore that poverty is the basic foundation all conflicts in Burundi. If the IMF cannot agree with saving people from hunger and death from disease, ignorance and other calamities, can we keep hope that tomorrow the Burundian debt will be totally canceled? People first, the IMF may have its own reason to defend its interest in Burundi, the economic philosophies would be talked about, but I do not see any interests that would be more cared about more than saving the lives which are always disappearing in this nation. It is so shocking to see that even more people are dying than the days when we were in the war. I think all of you understand my language, even though I might not have communicated effectively. My joy, and wish will be to see or hear you joining hands together to advocate for widows and orphans. If you have time, let me invite you one day to visit Roi Rhaled hospital. You will find many women and children jailed just because they did not get money to pay. Yesterday, I went there, people were discussing the dead people that have spent 7 months waiting to be buried. Maybe this is not heavy for you if you do not know about Burundian values. It’s horrible. Where is the responsibility of the government which can not deal with people health? Its horrible. Your voices for freedom will contribute to the meeting of donators for Burundi, which will take place in BUJUMBURA on 24th and 25th of this month. You can contribute in convincing the international opinion to accomplish the many promises that Burundi got from donators during Harusha peace process. In the other side, let’s raise our voice to our government to present a clear program, but keep the programs related to what people need as the priority, not what donators need. Your contribution will not only support Burundi, but also will contribute in Africa Neocolonialism liberation. Join our hands to advocate for Frica. Let’s find what the priority is. Thanks, Jean Claude. Jean Claude KUNDWA <jckunda2001@yahoo.fr>