

## **ADDRESS BY THE AMBASSADOR OF BURUNDI TO THE KINGDOM OF THE NETHERLANDS**

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen members of the Burundian diaspora living in the Netherlands,

Distinguished guests friends of Burundi,

Any protocol observed,

TUGIRE AMAHORO N'INTAHE YO KWIKUKIRA.

1. We are here to celebrate the 56th anniversary of the Independence of our beloved Motherland. As you know, we celebrate this holiday every 1st of July and for logistical reasons, we moved it for this day. We consider that the symbol remains entirely. The theme chosen for this year is: "Reinforce the independence gained from Burundi by unity and work, source of development".

2. On behalf of the Government of Burundi and on my own behalf, it is my pleasure to welcome you to this Hall and I wish you a happy Independence Day. As pointed out by HE Pierre NKURUNZIZA, President of the Republic of Burundi, uwukómōrewe ahimbarwa kurusha uwugabanye. That's the reason for this holiday we celebrate every year.

Dear compatriots,

Ladies and gentlemen,

3. The struggle for Independence saw the loss of many lives of our valiant Heroes. Prince Louis Rwagasore, Pierre Ngendandumwe and their fellow soldiers paid the ultimate sacrifice so that today, you, and all Burundians, are free and independent. Restaurant thus the dignity flouted Burundians and registering our dear Fatherland in the concert of the Nations.

4. Independence, however, has not been appreciated by everyone. From the colonial politics of divide and conquer, an animosity was born between Burundians.

Ethnic conflicts will erupt especially in the years 61, 65, 72, 88, 93 and even after, still carrying innocent lives. It is more than necessary therefore that all Burundians feel invested with the mission to make sure to keep this dearly acquired independence.

Dear compatriots,

Ladies and gentlemen,

5. Since 1962, Burundi has made progress despite the challenges ahead. Burundians elected their leaders, all the institutions function normally. This celebration comes as we have just adopted our Constitution through the efforts of the people and without the help of the West among whom our former colonizers. It is therefore a symbol because we are gradually out of tutelage and this fits well with the theme of this year.

Dear compatriots,

Ladies and gentlemen,

6. The Government of Burundi's policy of unity and work challenges all of us. We have seen that without unity, our country has fallen repeatedly into the throes of ethnic division and war. Our country was bruised but thanks to God we got up. We have also seen that without unity, work can not lead to tangible results. We invite you to always preach this unity that allows work, source of sustainable development.

Dear compatriots,

Ladies and gentlemen,

7. The diaspora is an important player in the development of a country, but it is clear that some of us have unfortunately forgotten where we come from. We urge you to have the love of the homeland that saw you born. Let us work in unity so that together we can develop our dear Fatherland. Let us remember the Kirundi

saying that "Iwabo w'umuntu niho heza" and that "Amaherezo y'inzira ni mu nzu". I therefore urge all members of the diaspora here present to work hard for unity among all Burundians living in the Kingdom of the Netherlands. I encourage you to bring your cornerstone to the building of this nation that has seen you born. Thus, we will have strengthened our Independence by Unity and Work which are the source of Sustainable Development. It is in this perspective that I appeal to the friends of Burundi who joined us to celebrate our Independence, to play their role of faithful partner to accompany us in our determination to strengthen our Independence on all fronts. I take this opportunity to acknowledge their presence here and express my sincere thanks. That they feel among theirs.

Dear compatriots,

Ladies and gentlemen,

8. Before closing, let me express my heartfelt thanks to the diaspora team who organized this beautiful and colorful day. That they find in the success of this festival, the honors of having served the Homeland and all the Burundian community of the Netherlands. I also thank the Government of Burundi, which continues to challenge us to think of the country and honor it as much as possible. I wish you all a beautiful Independence Day and once again, together, "Reinforce the Independence gained from Burundi by Unity and Work, Source of Development"