December 18, 2020

President Paul Kagame  
Republic of Rwanda  
Urugwiro Village  
Kigali, Rwanda

Dear President Kagame,

We are writing to urge you to return Paul Rusesabagina, a U.S. Lawful Permanent Resident and Presidential Medal of Freedom honoree, safely to the United States to be reunited with his family. As Members of the U.S. Congress who have a strong interest in U.S. – Rwandan relations, we believe that releasing Mr. Rusesabagina on humanitarian grounds is both justified and appropriate, since he is a cancer survivor in the midst of the COVID pandemic who suffers from several chronic medical conditions.

Moreover, we write to express our grave concern with the manner in which your government extrajudicially transferred Mr. Rusesabagina from the United Arab Emirates to Rwanda and then immediately placed him in solitary confinement and charged him with multiple crimes, including terrorism. As your government is aware, U.S. deportation law provides a clear, legal procedure to deport persons for various crimes, including engaging in acts of terrorism. The U.S. deportation process complies with due process while enabling the United States to deport those who should face criminal prosecution in another country. In fact, it is our understanding that over the past two decades, the United States has deported four people to Rwanda and will deport four more to Rwanda after they complete their U.S. criminal sentences. Given this record of Rwandans being deported from the United States when the legal standards are met, your government’s resort to the extrajudicial transfer of Mr. Rusesabagina demonstrates a disregard for U.S. law and suggests a lack of confidence in the credibility of the evidence against him.

We wish to underscore the breadth of bipartisan support in the U.S. Congress for your government to return Mr. Rusesabagina. Our government is monitoring his condition closely. Because it is in the strong interest of U.S. – Rwandan relations and Rwanda’s international reputation, and there are compelling humanitarian grounds for your government to return Mr. Rusesabagina to his family in the United States, we urge you to do so expeditiously.

Sincerely,

JAMES E. RISCH  
United States Senator

ROBERT MENENDEZ  
United States Senator

JAMES P. MCGOVERN  
Member of Congress

CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH  
Member of Congress

PATRICK LEAHY  
United States Senator

JOHN CORNYN  
United States Senator