

Rwandan opposition figure Ingabire Umuhoza Victoire has challenged prosecution allegations that she was linked to an armed opposition coalition and sought to remove Rwanda's government through force.

Ingabire was responding on Monday to allegations made by prosecutors in the High Court in Kigali, where she and nine others are facing charges related to an alleged plan to overthrow the government.

Prosecutors have said Ingabire founded and led FDU-Inkingi, which later joined the P5 coalition, and linked the coalition to attacks in Musanze in October 2019.

They have also alleged that she established DALFA Umurinzi in 2019 after the Musanze attack in an effort to separate herself from FDU-Inkingi, while maintaining similar activities.

Ingabire disputed those claims. She said P5 was established in June 2016, while she was in prison, and that she therefore had no role in its creation.

She also said FDU-Inkingi's rules did not allow the party to join an armed coalition such as P5, which prosecutors say was organised militarily under former Rwandan army officer Kayumba Nyamwasa.

On the Musanze attack, Ingabire denied involvement and said she was among those who condemned it publicly.

She further rejected prosecution claims concerning training sessions attended by people prosecutors said were predominantly members of DALFA Umurinzi. According to prosecutors, the sessions were presented as English-language training but were allegedly intended to advance a plan to overthrow the government.

Ingabire told the court there was no evidence linking the 26 participants to DALFA Umurinzi or showing that she attended or was connected to the training.

She also challenged the prosecution's argument that she should be treated as a repeat offender, referring to her 2013 conviction and subsequent proceedings before the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights.

Ingabire said she believes political change should be pursued through democratic, non-violent means.

The trial resumes on October 1, with Ingabire expected to continue her defence.