Dr François Xavier Kalinda has been elected President of the Rwandan Senate by his peers to replace Dr Augustin Iyamuremye who recently resigned due to illness.

Following the resignation of Dr. Augustin Iyamuremye, President Paul Kagame appointed Dr. Kalinda as a senator from PSD who was later elected President of the Senate and was sworn in this Monday, January 9, 2023. He becomes the number two in the country's leadership hierarchy after the Head of State.

Dr Francois Xavier Kalinda, 60, is a former member of the East African Legislative Assembly who completed his term in the legislative body of the East African community at the end of last year. He served two terms in the Regional Assembly until 2022.

In his acceptance speech, Kalinda said, "I want to thank the president for entrusting me with these new responsibilities as a senator. I promise to respect the commitments that I have set out by taking an oath. I will work with all institutions to continue serving Rwandans.»

He added, "I thank my fellow senators for entrusting me with the task of leading them as President of the Senate. I promise my utmost commitment and cooperation with everyone. I will seek advice and listen to everyone in order to better serve Rwandans. »

Kalinda is deputized by two vice presidents including Esperance Nyirasafari, vice president in charge of legislation and government control, and Alivera Mukabaramba, vice president in charge of economic affairs.

The Senate of Rwanda is made up of 26 members who serve for a term of five years, renewable once. Kalinda was elected unanimously, garnering all 26 votes, after Senator Umuhire Adrie's candidacy withdrew.

The new president of the senate is a member of the Social Democratic Party (PSD) like his predecessor, Dr. Augustin Iyamuremye. The ceremony was chaired by the Head of State, President Paul Kagame.