

PUBLIC

AI Index: AFR 16/003/2009

21 April 2009

UA 104/09 Unlawful killing
BURUNDI Ernest Manirumva

Ernest Manirumva, the vice-president of the non-governmental anti-corruption organization, the Observatory for the Struggle against Corruption and Economic Embezzlement (*L'Observatoire de Lutte contre la Corruption et les Malversations Economiques*, OLUCOME) was stabbed to death by unidentified men at his home in Bujumbura, the capital, on the night of 8 April. Local media and human rights defenders reported that up to eight men were looking for documents in Ernest's possession which uncovered government corruption.

Immediately prior to his death, Ernest Manirumva had been investigating police corruption, in particular that police officials were claiming salaries for posts which allegedly did not exist. He had also been investigating corruption within private companies.

The police are currently investigating his death. However, civil society organizations have serious questions about the police's conflict of interest because of Ernest Manirumva's work. Civil society in Burundi has called for an independent investigation. The UN Independent Expert on the human rights situation in Burundi called on the Burundian authorities to "bring [the] perpetrators to justice."

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

OLUCOME staff members have been regularly subjected to harassment, intimidation, including anonymous phone calls and letters threatening to kill them.

Gabriel Rufyiri, OLUCOME's president was arrested on two occasions in 2004 and 2006. Each time, Amnesty International considered him to be a prisoner of conscience detained solely for non-violently expressing his beliefs (please see AFR 16/018/2006 and AFR 16/001/2007 for further information).

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in English, French, Kirundi or your own language:

- Calling on the Burundian authorities to create an independent commission comprised of an independent observer, judicial officials and national police to investigate Ernest Manirumva's murder.
- Ensure that the perpetrators are promptly brought to trial that complies with international fair trial standards.
- Calling on the Burundian authorities to provide public assurances that all OLUCOME staff members and Burundian human rights defenders can work freely, independently and with the full support and protection from the state authorities.

APPEALS TO:

The Prosecutor of the Republic
Monsieur Elyse Ndaye
Procureur Générale de la République
Parquet Général
BP 105

Bujumbura, Burundi
Fax : +257 22 25 88 44
Salutation: Monsieur le Procureur / Dear Procureur

President
Pierre Nkurunziza
Président de la République
Présidence de la République
Boulevard de l'Uprona
Rohero I
BP 1870
Bujumbura, Burundi
Fax: +257 22 22 74 90
Salutation: Monsieur le Président/Excellence

Minister of Justice and Keeper of Seals
Monsieur Jean-Bosco Ndikumana
Ministre de la Justice et Garde des Sceaux
Ministère de la Justice et Garde des Sceaux
BP 1880
Bujumbura, Burundi
Fax: +257 22 21 86 10
Salutation: Monsieur le Ministre

First Vice-president
Monsieur Yves Sahinguvu
Premier Vice-président
Présidence de la République
BP 1870
Bujumbura, Burundi
Fax: +257 22 22 74 90
Salutation: Monsieur le Premier Vice-président/Excellence

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 2 June.