

PUBLIC

AI Index: AFR 47/003/2003

UA 99/03

Fear for Safety/Possible "disappearance"/incommunicado detention 11 April 2003

RWANDA

Damien Musayidizi (m)  
Dr. Leonard Hitimana (m)  
Major Félicien Ngirabatware (m)

---

Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of those named above following the on-going parliamentary hearings on the opposition political party, *Mouvement Démocratique Républicain* (MDR), Democratic Republican Movement, and the recent defections to Uganda of senior Rwandese Defence Force officers.

According to information just received, Damien Musayidizi "disappeared" on 3 April on his way home from work. He was the secretary to the former Minister of Defence, Brigadier General Emmanuel Habyarimana, who fled to Uganda with several other Rwanda Defence Forces officers, including Lieutenant Ndayambaje and Lieutenant Colonel Balthazar Ndengeyinka, Army Representative in the Transitional Assembly, on 30 March. According to Major Jill Rutaremara, the Rwandese army spokesman, Brigadier General Emmanuel Habyarimana had been implicated in a Parliamentary Committee report that identified individuals responsible for fuelling the longstanding wrangling in the MDR party.

Dr. Leonard Hitimana "disappeared" on 7 April after visiting a friend in the capital, Kigali. His car was found in Byumba Province near the Rwanda-Uganda border. It is believed that his car was driven to the border in order to make it appear that Dr. Hitimana had fled to Uganda. Dr. Hitimana is a member of the Transitional National Assembly and is affiliated with the MDR. He was also implicated in the current Parliamentary Committee report on the MDR party.

Major Félicien Ngirabatware is allegedly being detained incommunicado at the Kami military detention facility in Kigali after his 1 April arrest. He is the Director of the Ruhengeri Military School and a personal friend of Brigadier General Emmanuel Habyarimana. Family requests regarding his detention have gone unanswered.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The "disappearances" of former or serving military officers, government officials and prominent members of civil society linked to opposition political parties regularly occur in Rwanda. The Rwandese government infiltrates opposition political parties in order to immobilize them. Government authorities are currently targeting individual members of the MDR and the party as a whole. On 2 January 2002, Rwandese authorities detained Pierre Gakwandi, secretary-general of one faction of the MDR party, and interrogated other MDR members, including former deputy Leonard Kavutse and a former ambassador. Pierre Gakwandi is still in detention charged with inciting ethnic division and defaming the government.

The wives of Major Félicien Ngirabatware, Brigadier General Emmanuel Habyarimana, Lieutenant Colonel Balthazar Ndengeyinka and Lieutenant Ndayambaje have been repeatedly interrogated by military intelligence officers.

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

- expressing concern for the safety of Damien Musayidizi and Leonard Hitimana;
- calling for their whereabouts to be established and their safety guaranteed;

- calling for a full and impartial investigation into their “disappearances”, with the results made public and those responsible brought to justice;
- expressing concern at the continued incommunicado detention of Major Félicien Ndirabatware;
- seeking clarification of the charges against him and assurances that his safety is guaranteed, especially as he is at risk of being tortured or killed.

**APPEALS TO:**

President of the Republic of Rwanda

President Paul Kagame

P.O. Box 15

Kigali

RWANDA

**Fax:** +250 84769/84390

**e-mail:** [presirep@rwanda1.com](mailto:presirep@rwanda1.com)

**Salutation:** Dear President / Monsieur le Président de la République

Prime Minister

Bernard Makuza

P.O. Box 1334

Kigali

RWANDA

**Fax:** +250 83714

**Salutation:** Dear Prime Minister / Monsieur le Ministre

**COPIES TO:**

Prosecutor General

Gerald Gahima

P.O. Box 2886

Kigali RWANDA

**Salutation:** Dear Prosecutor General / Monsieur le Procureur Générale

and Diplomatic representatives of RWANDA accredited to your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 23 May 2003.