

PUBLIC

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"Disappearance" / fear of torture  
or ill-treatment

30 May 2002

DEMOCRATIC  
REPUBLIC OF  
CONGO/RWANDA

Zélote FARINI LUENDO SHANDWE (m)  
KIKANDI SHANDWE (m), aged 27, cousin of above  
Bernard BAFULWA BARANGA (m), aged 25

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In the early hours of 27 May, the three men named above "disappeared" after being detained by soldiers of the Rwandese Patriotic Army (RPA) at a house they shared in the city of Goma in the Rwandese-controlled zone of eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

The men were tied up and blindfolded by the soldiers before being driven off in a red 4x4 vehicle to an unknown destination. According to some reports they may be held at a private house in the city, belonging to a Rwandese commander. Detainees are particularly vulnerable to torture and ill-treatment in such unofficial locations.

The reason for the men's detention is not known, although may relate to suspicions that they were in contact with a Congolese armed political group, the *mayi mayi*, which is opposed to the Rwandese presence in the DRC.

Zélote Farini Luendo Shandwe is a member of a local children's organization, *Centre de Réhabilitation et d'Encadrement des Enfants Orphelins* (CERAO), Centre for the Rehabilitation and Training of Orphan Children. He also worked as a driver for an important development non-governmental organisation (NGO) in the region, *Groupe d'Etudes et d'Actions pour un Développement bien défini* (GEAD), Study and Action Group for a well-defined Development.

On 28 May another GEAD worker, Delphine Itongwa, was detained for several hours before being released. Her house, and the offices of GEAD and an associated NGO, *Bureau d'Etudes pour le Développement* (BED), Development Study Bureau, have since been searched by RPA soldiers, and records and computer equipment seized.

On the same day a prominent human rights lawyer in Goma, Maître Joseph Dunia Ruyenzi, was detained after he made enquiries to Rwandese military authorities about the three "disappeared". He was released unharmed after several hours.

#### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Large areas of eastern DRC are controlled by Rwandese forces and an allied Congolese armed political movement, the *Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie* (RCD-Goma), Congolese Rally for Democracy, which has its headquarters in Goma.

Tension in the region is rising, largely as a result of internal divisions within the RCD-Goma. Earlier this month more than 100 people were reportedly killed as a mutiny by RCD-Goma troops in the city of Kisangani was suppressed. Many were civilians who were unlawfully killed. A number of people suspected of supporting the mutiny were extrajudicially executed. Human rights activists throughout the region have been increasingly menaced by the authorities in recent weeks, and some have been forced into hiding.

A number of people, including civil society activists, have been detained in recent days in Goma and Bukavu. Amnesty International is actively pursuing their cases. On 25 May, Pierre Ruyange, president of the Congolese Hutu community in Goma, and his son Lovis, were shot dead by unidentified assailants on the road between Goma and Sake in what is believed to have been a political killing.

Torture and ill-treatment are common in Rwandese and RCD-Goma military detention. Those suspected of involvement in armed political groups opposed to Rwandese and RCD-Goma rule are especially vulnerable. Amnesty International has also documented cases of deaths in military detention. The use of the private residences of military officers to hold suspects is frequently reported. In other cases, Congolese detainees have been secretly and illegally transferred to detention sites inside Rwanda, making the task of tracing them all the more difficult.

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

- calling on the authorities to immediately make public the whereabouts of Zélote Farini Luendo Shandwe, Kikandi Shandwe and Bernard Bifulwa Baranga who "disappeared" on 27 May;
- calling for the men to be protected from torture or ill-treatment while they are detained;
- calling for the men to be allowed immediate access to human rights and humanitarian organizations, to visits by family members and legal representatives;
- calling for the men to be released if they are not to be charged with a recognizably criminal offence;
- calling for them to be held in a publicly-recognized official detention centre, if their detention is to continue;
- calling on the authorities to end the harassment and detention without charge of human rights activists as they pursue their legitimate work.

**APPEALS TO:**

President of Rwanda

President Paul KAGAME  
Office of the President  
PO Box 15, Kigali, Rwanda

**Fax:** + 250 84390

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

**Salutation:** Your Excellency

Army Chief of Staff Rwanda

Brigadier General James KABAREBE  
Acting Chief of Staff  
Rwandese Patriotic Army  
RPA Headquarters  
Kigali, Rwanda.

**Fax:** + 250 72863/ 77992

**Salutation:** Dear Chief of Staff

(These fax numbers may be difficult to get through to, but please keep trying.)

RCD-Goma: Amnesty International does not have working fax numbers for RCD-Goma. Please send an e-mail to [rcdcongo@hotmail.com](mailto:rcdcongo@hotmail.com) or [rcd\\_congo@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:rcd_congo@yahoo.co.uk) and ask for your concerns to be forwarded to:

RCD Head of Justice and Human Rights

Maître Moïse NYARUGABO

Chef du Département de Justice, Droits Humains et Règlement de Conflits  
Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie - Goma

**Salutation: Dear Chef du Département**

RCD Head of Interior

Dr Bizima KARAHA

Chef du Département de l'Intérieur  
Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie - Goma

**Salutation: Dear Chef du Département**

**COPIES TO:** 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 11 July 2002.