

UA 202/02

Fear of t

BURUNDIBAYUBAHE (m), head of Gatwe camp for the displaced
Antoine NZIGAMASABO (m), driver
Gerard NIYOGENDAKO (m)]
William KABURA (m)]traders
Gerard BANKINTORE (m)]

The five men named above were arrested in Bigina zone, Kayogoro commune, Makamba province on 29 June. They are detained at the gendarmerie brigade in Gatwe, Bigina zone where they are at risk of torture or ill-treatment.

The men were arrested on suspicion of collaborating with or aiding members of an armed political group. The basis for the accusation against the five is currently unclear. However, sources state that some of the men are suspected of giving a lift to opposition combatants in their vehicle. The reason for their continued detention may be corruption, as the brigade commander has reportedly stated that they will be freed on payment of a large "fine".

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Torture and ill-treatment is rife in the early stages of detention in Burundi. People suspected of links with armed opposition movements are particularly vulnerable to ill-treatment or torture. Many detainees are systematically subjected to torture or ill-treatment in the early stages of detention, including by being beaten, tied in excruciating positions, deprived of food and threatened with death. The problem is particularly acute as detainees are often held incommunicado and access to families and humanitarian and human rights organizations denied. Amnesty International and other human rights groups have documented scores of cases of death in detention as a result of torture.

Conflict increased in many areas of Burundi following the signing of a peace agreement in August 2000, to which neither of Burundi's two main armed opposition groups are party. Since the investiture of a transitional government on 1 November 2001, provided for under the peace agreement, fighting has again escalated. Serious human rights abuses, including scores of extrajudicial executions by members of the armed forces and unlawful killings by armed opposition groups, have taken place.

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

- expressing concern for the safety of the five men named above (please give names) who were arrested on 29 June in Bigina zone, Makamba province on suspicion of aiding and abetting an armed political group and who are currently detained in Gatwe brigade;
- calling for the authorities to protect them from torture and ill-treatment, and for them to be given immediate access to their families, medical care and to humanitarian and human rights organizations;
- calling on the authorities to clarify the basis for their arrest and for them to be released if they are not to be promptly charged with a recognizably criminal offence for which there is substantiating evidence;
- calling for the authorities to ensure that all law enforcement agencies respect arrest and detention procedures and that access to all places of detention is guaranteed, and to take immediate action against any member of the security forces suspected of human rights abuses.

APPEALS TO: Please note, it may be difficult to get through to these numbers but please keep trying.

Head of State

Son Excellence

Major Pierre BUYOYA

Président de la République

Présidence de la République

BP 1870 Bujumbura, Burundi

Telegrams:Président, Bujumbura, Burundi

Faxes:+ 257 22 74 90

Salutation: Monsieur le Président de la République / Dear President

Minister of National Defence

Général-Major Cyrille NDAYIRUKIYE

Ministre de la Défense Nationale

Ministère de la Défense Nationale

Bujumbura, Burundi

Telegrams:Ministre Défense, Bujumbura, Burundi

Faxes: + 257 24 26 36

Salutation:Monsieur le Ministre / Dear Minister

Minister of Justice

Monsieur Fulgence Dwima BAKANA

Ministre de la Justice et Garde des Sceaux

Ministère de la Justice

BP 1880 Bujumbura, Burundi

Telegrams:Ministre Justice, Bujumbura, Burundi

Faxes: + 257 21 86 10

Salutation:Monsieur le Ministre / Dear Minister

Minister for Human Rights, Institutional Reform and Relations with the National Assembly

Monsieur Alphonse BARANCIRA,

Ministre des relations avec l'Assemblée nationale, des réformes institutionnelles et des droits de la Personne humaine,

Ministère des relations avec l'Assemblée nationale, des réformes institutionnelles et des droits de la Personne humaine

Bujumbura, Burundi

Telegrams:Ministre Droits Personne Humaine, Bujumbura, Burundi

Fax: + 257 21 75 49

Salutation: Monsieur le Ministre / Dear Minister

COPIES TO:

Procureur Général de la République

Monsieur Gérard NGENDABANKA

Procureur Général de la République

Bujumbura, Burundi

Telegrams:Procureur general, Bujumbura, Burundi

Fax: + 257 24 15 03

Salutation:Monsieur le Procureur général de la République / Dear State Public Prosecutor

and to diplomatic representatives of Burundi accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 14 August 2002.