

EXTERNAL

AI Index: AFR 02/32/97

20 November 1997

Further information on EXTRA 156/97 (AFR 02/29/97, 14 November 1997) -  
Refoulement / Fear of refoulement / Fear for safety

**BURUNDI/DRC/RWANDA** Over 2,000 Burundi and Rwandese refugees in eastern  
Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

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Up to 2,000 Burundi and Rwandese refugees have now been forcibly returned to Burundi and at least 745 Rwandese refugees are now known to have been forcibly returned to Rwanda from South Kivu province in eastern DRC since 8 November 1997 in what appears to be a coordinated military operation by troops from the three countries.

The forcible returns are continuing and there are unconfirmed reports of similar operations taking place in other parts of the country. Amnesty International is concerned that thousands more Burundi and Rwandese in DRC face imminent forcible return or other threats to their safety.

At least 745 Rwandese refugees were forcibly returned to Rwanda on or around 12 November. They include refugees who have been in DRC for 30 years, and some 330 Congolese nationals. They are reported to have been taken to the Rwandese border in trucks commandeered by the Congolese security forces. Rwandese soldiers are also reported to have been involved in rounding up the refugees and in their subsequent forcible return.

**In addition to continuing appeals based on the recommended actions set out in original EXTRA which remain valid, please send telegrams/faxes/express/airmail letters in French, English or in your own language to the Rwandese authorities:**

- expressing concern at the forcible expulsion of thousands of Rwandese and Burundi refugees from DRC by the Congolese authorities, reportedly with the assistance of the Rwandese and Burundi security forces;
- calling on the Rwandese authorities to give immediate orders stopping the *refoulement* and to recall any Rwandese state agents involved in the *refoulement*;
- calling on the Rwandese authorities to ensure the safety of refugees already returned to Rwanda;
- seeking assurances that Congolese nationals who were amongst those forcibly expelled to Rwanda, will be allowed to remain in Rwanda, should they wish to do so, while the situation in their own country remains unsafe.

**APPEALS TO:**

Adviser to the President and Chair of the Committee on Repatriation

Dr Ephraim Kabaija

Adviser to the President and Chair of the Committee on Repatriation

Office of the President

BP 15

Kigali, Rwanda

**Faxes: +250 84390**

**Telegrams: Presidential Adviser Kabaija, Kigali, Rwanda,**

**Salutation: Monsieur Kibaija / Dear Mr Kibaija**

Vice-President and Minister of Defence

Général Major Paul KAGAME

Vice-Président de la République et Ministre de la Défense

Ministère de la Défense

BP 23 KIGALI, Rwanda

**Faxes: +250-76969/72431**

**Telegrams: Vice-President Kagame, Kigali, Rwanda**

**Salutation : Monsieur le Vice-Président**

Minister of the Interior, of local development and social reintegration

Monsieur Cheikh Abdul Karim HARELIMANA

Ministre de l'Intérieur, du Développement communal et de la réintégration sociale

BP 446 KIGALI, Rwanda

**Faxes: +250-83374 / 84373**

**Telegrams: Ministre Interieur, Kigali, Rwanda**

**Saluation : Monsieur le Ministre**

**COPIES TO:**

President of Burundi

Major Pierre Buyoya, Président de la République (faxes only)

**Faxes: +257 22 7490**

Minister for Reintegration and Resettlement of the Displaced and Returnees

Monsieur Pascal NKURUNZIZA

Ministre à la Réinsertion et à la Réinstallation des Déplacés et des Rapatriés, Burundi (faxes only)

**Faxes: +257 21 82 01**

Head of State, DRC

Son Excellence Laurent-Désiré KABILA

Président de la République

Présidence de la République

Kinshasa-Ngaliema, Democratic Republic of Congo

and to diplomatic representatives of Burundi/Democratic Republic of Congo and Rwanda accredited to your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 20 December 1997