

FACSIMILE COVER SHEET

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**TO: All Section Campaign Coordinators
(please copy to: Rwanda Coordinators and CAFRAN Coordinators)
AI EU office, Paris Research Office, AI UN Office Geneva**

FROM: Patrick Earle, IS Crisis Team

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BURUNDI AND RWANDA CRISIS RESPONSE

ACTION NO. 1: ARMY KILLINGS IN KIBEHO CAMP, RWANDA

AFR 02/01/95 (Internal)

(for use with News Service item AFR 47/09/95, 24 April 1995. For further background information refer to "Rwanda-Crying Out for Justice" AFR 47/05/95)

PURPOSE:

- To persuade the Rwandese Government to agree to an independent investigation into the killings in Kibeho camp on 22 April;
- To prevent further extrajudicial executions in the course of the army's attempts to close Kibeho and other camps and movement of internally displaced persons;
- To persuade the Rwandese President and the Chief of Staff of the Rwandese Army to publicly issue clear instructions to the military on the use of lethal force, to demonstrate its commitment to independent investigations of reports of human rights violations by RPA troops and to bring to justice those found responsible for these violations.

END RESULTS:

- Direct communication of these calls to the Rwandese authorities from the Amnesty International membership;
- Publicity for these calls within Rwanda;
- Adoption of these calls by governments and non governmental organisations (ngos);
- An independent inquiry into the killings;
- Clear and public instructions as outlined above.

BACKGROUND:

It is still not possible to verify the actual number of people killed in Kibeho camp on Saturday 22 April - with government officials claiming a

figure of 360 and United Nations and other estimates ranging from 2000 to 8000.

The Rwandese Government's reaction to the killings adds to Amnesty International's grave concern over the killings. The government has acknowledged that at least hundreds of civilians were killed, but has sought to justify the killings, describing them as legitimate action and claiming that troops acted in self-defence.

This marks a significant departure from its past reactions to reports of killings by its soldiers, where it has either denied specific incidents or described them as isolated occurrences and has promised to investigate them. It is feared that this could signal a new "tough" policy that could lead to further extrajudicial killings by the Rwandese Patriotic Army (RPA).

It is therefore particularly important that there is a strong international reaction to the killings.

Some people remain in Kibeho camp, with the possibility of further killings within AI's mandate and there are reports of shootings as people are being moved around, though it is not clear who is responsible.

NB. Attached at the end of this fax is a one page EXTERNAL sheet, adapted from the media release, that you may find useful in the actions below or in other outreach work.

ACTION REQUESTED:

Appeals to the Rwandese Government.

All sections are asked to send at least one, but no more than five, letters to the Rwandese President, Vice-President (who is also Minister of Defence), Prime Minister and Army Chief of Staff. Where possible the letters should come from the President, Director or Board of Amnesty International on behalf of the membership of AI in your country.

Points for appeals

- Amnesty International's shock at the reports of the killings, and the shock and concern in your community - perhaps mentioning the wide publicity the killings have received, the cross section of community concern represented by your membership;
- Amnesty International's hopes for respect for human rights under the new government following the genocide/trauma of last year;
- Amnesty International's work to give a basis for these hopes by working to ensure that the genocide of last year is not forgotten and actively working to remind the international community of its role in bringing those responsible to justice.
- The importance of the government upholding the principle of no impunity in relation to their own troops in order to obtain international commitment to holding to account those responsible for the killings of 1994.
- The need for the government and army to demonstrate its commitment to human rights by publicly issuing clear instructions to the military on the use of lethal force and its commitment to independent investigations of reports of human rights violations.
- The importance of announcing an independent investigation into the killings in Kibeho camp, particularly a forensic investigation which would determine the exact number of people killed and the cause of their death. (see news release for details)
- Appeal to the government to ensure that internally displaced persons are protected from further human rights violations.

In countries where there is a Rwanda Embassy

- Letters as above to the Ambassador seeking a meeting to discuss the issues of concern.
- If you think it would add weight to your appeals and claims of community concern, encourage your membership to write to newspapers in your country adapting the points above (enclosing published copies to the Ambassador).

Approaches to your Government

There has been wide publicity of the killings and many governments have already publicly and forcefully expressed their concerns, individually as well as through the UN and the OAU. It is suggested that you approach your government and discuss with them the action they may already have taken and if it has included the suggestions AI is making above. Ask whether they have communicated these concerns formally, through correspondence, calling on the Rwanda ambassador (if there is one), or asking their ambassador in Kigali to contact the Rwanda Government and what the response of the Rwanda Government has been to these expressions of concern. Ask how your government intends pursuing these issues. Ask if your government has offered to meet any of the technical or financial resource requirements of an independent investigation. (Apparently a number of governments have already supported calls for an investigation and some have sent personnel to Kibeho).

Please let the IS know what responses you receive as this will be very valuable in determining follow up strategy.

NB. Because of your actions on Rwanda over the past year you may have established dialogue with your government on these matters already. If so you will know best how to pursue these issues. If this is the first time you are contacting your government on these issues and would like to discuss them further call Patrick Earle - IS extension 5705 - (or Sophie Lussier after 10/5/95 on the same extension) or send a fax/letter to us asking for advice.

Approaches to NGOs

This aspect of the action is primarily applicable to sections in countries from which international aid NGOs operate. Because of the Rwanda Government's great need for development assistance, sensitively raised concerns from NGOs operating in Rwanda could be influential.

Aid organisations may well have more details of what occurred than AI presently has and may have already expressed concerns to the Rwanda Government and their own government and clearly there needs to be sensitivity towards this. What AI wants:

- the support of these organisations for AI's calls for investigation and for clear instructions on the use of lethal force;
- for this support to be conveyed to your government
- any new information they may have on this or other killings in Rwanda to feed back to the IS
- any new information they may have on reactions from the Rwanda Government to expressions of international concern, views on how best to get an independent inquiry etc.

Please could you supply the IS with the names of organizations in your country who are willing to support AI's initiative.

Important note: aid organizations operating in Rwanda or in refugee camps in neighbouring countries may be reluctant to speak out publicly about human rights violations by the Rwanda Government, for fear of security risks to their own personnel on the ground. AI should respect this concern and not put pressure on NGOs to make public statements if they do not wish to do so. However, these NGOs can be asked to provide AI confidentially with information on the situation in the country or to exchange ideas with AI on the most effective strategy to pursue to prevent further killings.

OTHER ACTION:

It is also suggested that sections, where you have not already done so, begin identifying Rwanda and Burundi country experts in your country, together with economic, cultural and political links between your country and Rwanda and Burundi that may offer avenues for future strategic campaigning. Where you believe these links are potentially of major importance please let the research team at the IS know.

The research team is particularly interested in finding out more about links between Catholic and Protestant Churches and their counterparts in Rwanda and Burundi.

Addresses:

**Son Excellence, Pasteur BIZIMUNGU, Président de la République, Présidence de la République
BP 15, KIGALI, République Rwandaise.**

**Général Major Paul KAGAME, Vice-Président de la République et Ministre de la Défense, Présidence de la République, BP 15, KIGALI, République
Rwandaise.**

Monsieur Faustin TWAGIRAMUNGU, Premier Ministre, Présidence de la République, BP 15, KIGALI, République Rwandaise.

Colonel Sam KAKA, Chef d'Etat-major. de l'Armée Patriotique Rwandaise, RPA General Headquarters, KIGALI.

EXTERNAL RWANDA: THE KIBEHO KILLINGS - THE NEED FOR AN INDEPENDENT INQUIRY

According to the Rwandese Government, over 300 people in Kibeho camp for the internally displaced were killed on 22 April 1995.

Independent witnesses put the number of dead at between 2000 and 8000 and have spoken of government soldiers shooting at clearly unarmed and defenceless civilians. Others are reported to have been killed in the ensuing panic. The true number of dead is not yet known - that is one reason Amnesty International is calling on the Rwandese Government to hold an independent inquiry, including appropriate forensic investigations.

Amnesty International is asking governments and others to support this call, believing there are other compelling reasons for such an inquiry. It would provide a clear indication of the Rwandese Government's concern at such loss of life and could help rebuild the much needed confidence among people in Rwanda and internationally that the Government has not adopted a policy of arbitrary and deliberate killings by its security forces.

Establishing how and why the killings took place could provide vital lessons for preventing further killings if the government continues to implement a policy of closing down camps for the internally displaced.

Establishing an inquiry and holding to account those responsible for extrajudicial killings will strengthen calls by the Rwandese Government and the international community that those responsible for the genocide of 1994 be prosecuted. It is vital that the same standards on impunity be applied to continuing, as well as to past human rights violations, whoever is responsible.

Amnesty International's call for an inquiry provides a practical focus for a strong international response to these killings. It could help prevent human rights violations by the RPA from becoming entrenched. Truth and justice must be at the heart of efforts to restore respect for human rights in Rwanda.

Given reports of hasty attempts to bury many of the dead and hide evidence of the killings, Amnesty International believes that a proper forensic investigation, as part of any overall inquiry into the massacre will be essential to determine the number of people killed, the sequence of events and the cause of death. Amnesty International is asking the international community to offer any necessary assistance for such an investigation.

Amnesty International is also asking governments and others to support its call for the public issuing by the RPA and Rwandese Government of clear instructions to the military on the use of lethal force, its commitment to independent investigations of reports of human rights violations and to holding to account those found responsible in accordance with international standards.

In Rwanda today there is tension, fear and insecurity. Fear of killings and of reprisal killings is fed by failure to act against the killers. This in turn fuels the cycle of violence. International concern and support for programs of prevention, and the need for the Rwandese Government to demonstrate its commitment to upholding human rights is essential.