

EXTERNAL

AI Index: AFR 16/15/95

16 August 1995

Further information on UA 129/95 (AFR 16/10/95, 8 June 1995) - Fear of further extrajudicial executions

BURUNDI Civilian population of suburb of Kamenge

Amnesty International has continued to receive frequent reports of extrajudicial executions of unarmed civilians by the Burundi army in the Kamenge suburb of the capital, Bujumbura. The organization is concerned that the recommendations it made to the Burundi authorities to prevent further killings have not been heeded, and is once again calling for immediate measures to prevent further loss of life of unarmed civilians.

Several clashes between the Burundi armed forces and Hutu militia were reported in mid-July and early August. The Hutu militia are reported to be initiating attacks on government soldiers, some of whom have been killed or wounded. Reports from Bujumbura indicate that after brief clashes between government forces and the militia, the latter flee the area and unarmed Hutu civilians, particularly the aged, children and women who stay behind, are killed by the armed forces.

In early July, civilians were allowed to return to Kamenge on condition that they obtained residence permits from military authorities. This measure is seen as discriminatory against the Hutu population. It has not been imposed on Tutsi residents of Bujumbura, although Tutsi militia too have been responsible for human rights abuses including deliberate and arbitrary killings of unarmed Hutu civilians. The permits could be used to identify and target residents of Kamenge accused by members of the security forces of supporting the Hutu militia.

The armed forces are taking the same measures as in June to prevent any independent witnessing to the violations which they perpetrate. As a result, it has been practically impossible to establish how many unarmed civilians have been victims of extrajudicial executions by soldiers or deliberate and arbitrary killings by the militia.

Each time there are military operations in Kamenge, the suburb is cordoned off and humanitarian organizations and independent journalists are refused access to the area. For example, Pamphile Simbizi, a Hutu journalist with Burundi government-owned radio was killed on 7 June by a soldier in Gasenyi, near Kamenge. No action is known to have been taken by the authorities in connection with the journalist's extrajudicial execution. Even government and judicial officials are not allowed into the suburb.

FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express/airmail letters in French or in your own language:

- expressing concern at the reports of extrajudicial executions of unarmed civilians by government soldiers in Kamenge;
- pointing out that you understand the need for soldiers to defend themselves when they are attacked by militia, but that this does not justify any extrajudicial executions of unarmed civilians and other human rights abuses by soldiers;
- urging the authorities to allow independent human rights and humanitarian organizations, and other observers access to Kamenge and other areas where human rights abuses are reported. Further urging the authorities to use

information from such independent witnesses to take action to prevent abuses, such as bringing perpetrators to justice;

- expressing concern at the extrajudicial execution of a Burundi radio journalist, Pamphile Simbizi, and urging the authorities to order an immediate independent investigation into his death and to bring those responsible to justice;

- expressing concern that the residence permits imposed on Hutu living in Kamenge are discriminatory as similar permits are not required for Tutsi residents of Bujumbura and could be used to perpetrate human rights violations against their holders, and asking the authorities to withdraw the measure without further delay.

APPEALS TO:

1) President:

Son Excellence

le Président Sylvestre NTIBANTUNGANYA

Président de la République

Présidence de la République

BP 1870

Bujumbura, République du Burundi

Telegrams: President NTIBANTUNGANYA

Telexes: 5036 PRESIBU BDI

Faxes: +257 22 6424; 23 3059

Salutation: Monsieur le Président de la République/Dear President

2) Minister of Defence:

Major Firmin SINZOYIHEBA

Ministre de la Défense Nationale

Ministère de la Défense

BP 1870

Bujumbura, République du Burundi

Telegrams: Ministre Sinzoyiheba

Faxes: +257 22 21 48

Salutation: Monsieur le Ministre/Dear Minister

3) Army Chief of Staff:

Lt-Col Jean BIKOMAGU

Chef d'Etat-major général des Forces armées

Etat-major général des Forces armées

Ministère de la Défense nationale

Bujumbura, République du Burundi

Telegrams: CEMG Bikomagu

Faxes: +257 22 21 48

Salutation: Monsieur le Chef d'Etat-major/ Dear Chief of Staff

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

1) Prime Minister

Monsieur Antoine NDUWAYO

Premier Ministre

Présidence de la République

BP 2800, Bujumbura, République du Burundi

Faxes: +257 22 64 24

2) Gendarmerie Chief of Staff

Colonel Pascale SIMBANDUKU
Chef de l'Etat-major général de la Gendarmerie
Etat-major général de la gendarmerie
Ministère de la Défense nationale
Bujumbura, République du Burundi

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 4 October 1995.