

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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UA 05/92 "Disappearance"

6 January 1992

BURUNDI: Joseph Bagalwa, a photographer in Bujumbura's Cibitoke zone
Justin Bucumi, husband of teacher at Rohero College in Bujumbura
Jean Ciiza, Male Nurse at Kiremba Hospital
Dominique Kazimiri, an employee of Ntamagendero in Bujumbura
Paul Mbonayo, a director of Muyange Primary School in Rumonge
~~Edi-Diomède Nijimbere, an employee of Bank of Burundi (BRB)~~
Joseph Ntahombaye, an employee of Libère Barankitse
Ferdinand Ntamagendero, a trader in Bujumbura
Joël Ntahonshikiye, an employee of Ferdinand Ntamagendero
Audace Simbizi, an employee of Ministry of Public Service

The ten people mentioned above are reported to have "disappeared" in custody either in the Burundi capital, Bujumbura, or in other parts of the country after they were arrested in late November or early December 1991 by members of the Burundi security forces. Those who have "disappeared" appear all to belong to Burundi's majority Hutu ethnic group, whereas the security forces are dominated by the Tutsi minority. They were arrested in the aftermath of the violent attacks which started on 23 November 1991 on military and other installations in Bujumbura and the northwestern provinces of Cibitoke and Bubanza. The authorities blame a clandestine political organization for the attacks. Most of the "disappeared" are said to have been held at Mura barracks and the paratroopers barracks in Bujumbura. Others allegedly "disappeared" while in custody at the headquarters of the Brigade spéciale de recherche (BSR), the Gendarmerie's Special Investigation Brigade, in Bujumbura.

Relatives of those reported to have "disappeared" have tried and failed to trace them and in most cases the authorities are reported to have denied having arrested them. The Burundi security forces are reported to have carried out hundreds of extrajudicial executions since the end of November 1991 and independent sources have expressed concern that at least 30 prisoners who have "disappeared" may have been executed extrajudicially.

Amnesty International is concerned that the Burundi authorities have not made public the whereabouts of these ten prisoners and others and that this exposes them to a risk of being executed extrajudicially. The organization is concerned that there has been no official investigation to establish what may have happened to those reported to have "disappeared" and is urging that if they have been executed extrajudicially or subjected to other forms of human rights violations, those responsible be brought to justice.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Amnesty International has received numerous reports of serious human rights violations carried out by members of the Burundi security forces in the aftermath of violent attacks which started on 23 November 1991. The reports concern arbitrary arrests, torture and other forms of ill-treatment, extrajudicial executions and "disappearances". Many of the abuses appear to have been carried out as reprisals or on the basis of no evidence that the victims had been involved in armed opposition.

These human rights violations, especially the extrajudicial executions, resemble those

committed on several occasions in the past, particularly in 1965, 1969, 1972 and, most recently, in 1988. Following thousand of killings by the army in 1988, the government refused to take action to bring soldiers responsible for human rights violations to justice, although at a political level steps were taken to bring about reconciliation between Hutu and Tutsi.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Telegrams/telexes/express and airmail letters in FRENCH, if possible:

- expressing concern at the reported "disappearance" in late November and early December 1991 of the 10 people named above (naming some) and others and asking the authorities for information of their whereabouts;
- asking if the authorities have investigated such reports and, if so, what the results of the investigations are;
- urging the authorities, if no investigation has occurred, to order an independent and impartial investigation into the reports and to bring those found responsible for subjecting prisoners to unlawful and secret detentions or other violations of human rights to justice;
- requesting assurances that those reported to have "disappeared" have not been ill-treated or executed extrajudicially and, if in custody, will be allowed immediate access to their relatives, independent legal counsel and members of independent humanitarian organizations, such as representatives of human rights organizations in Burundi and the International Committee of the Red Cross;
- requesting the authorities to issue clear public instructions to all members of the security forces that subjecting prisoners to secret detention is a violation of human rights and an offence against Burundi's own laws and that those found responsible for such abuses will be brought to justice.

APPEALS TO:

1. President:

Son Excellence Major Pierre Buyoya
Président de la République
Présidence de la République BP 1870,
Bujumbura, République du Burundi

Telegrams: President Buyoya, Bujumbura, Burundi

**Telexes: 5039 presibu bdi or
5049 mnd bdi**

**Monsieur le Président /
Dear President**

2. Prime Minister:

Monsieur Adrien Sibomana
Premier Ministre et Ministre de la Planification
Présidence de la République BP 1870
Bujumbura, République du Burundi

Telegrams: Premier Ministre Sibomana, Bujumbura, Burundi

Telexes: 5039 presibu bdi

**Monsieur le Premier Ministre /
Dear Prime Minister**

3. Minister of Justice:

Monsieur Sébastien Ntahuga
Ministre de la Justice
Ministère de la Justice BP 1880
Bujumbura, République du Burundi

Telegrams: Ministre Ntahuga, Bujumbura, Burundi

Telexes: via Ministry of Foreign Affairs: 5065 minirext, attn Ministre Ntahuga

**Ministre Ntahuga /
Dear Minister**

COPIES TO:

1) Minister of the Interior:

Monsieur Libère Bararunyeretse

Ministre de l'Intérieur et du
Développement des collectivités locales
Ministère de l'Intérieur, BP 1910
Bujumbura, République du Burundi

2) Governor of Bubanza:

Monsieur Balthazar Kirubusa
Gouverneur de la Province de Bubanza
Hôtel de ville, Bubanza
République du Burundi

3) General Administrator of National
Security:

Monsieur Laurent Niyonkuru
Administrateur Général de la Sûreté
nationale
Ministère de la Défense nationale
Bujumbura, République du Burundi
and to diplomatic representatives of Burundi in your country.

4) President of Human Rights Organization:

Monsieur Eugène Nindorera
Président
Ligue burundaise des droits de l'homme
BP 177, Bujumbura
République du Burundi

5) Newspaper Editor:

Monsieur le Rédacteur-en-Chef
Le Renouveau
BP 2870, Bujumbura,
République du Burundi

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 17 February 1992.