

UA 46/02

Fear of t**BURUNDI Raphaël (m)**

NTIRUMERA (m) and his wife, Christiane (f)
Zacharie NTAHOSHIKIRA (m)
Marie NDI TIJE (f)
Martin NIJIMBERE (m)
NIYIRANGABO (m)
Appollinaire NDEYIMANA (m), primary school teacher
Emile SIBOMANA (m), businessperson
Ferdinand NTUMWIZERE (m), teacher
Frédéric (m)
Antoine (m)
Libère BUHURAGUZA (f)
Up to seven others

The people named above are currently detained on suspicion of belonging to or collaborating with an armed opposition group. They are being held at the *Brigade* (gendarmerie post), Bururi, Bururi Province, southern Burundi. Amnesty International is concerned for their safety, as there have been frequent reports of torture and ill-treatment of detainees at this Brigade.

A man known only as "Raphaël" was arrested by gendarmes on 17 January in Songa commune, Bururi Province, southern Burundi. He is suspected of being a combatant of the *Conseil National pour la Défense de la Démocratie - Forces pour la Défense de la Démocratie* (CNDD-FDD), National Council for the Defence of Democracy - Forces for the Defence of Democracy, a Hutu-dominated armed opposition group active in Burundi, particularly the south. Following his arrest, up to 20 other people have been arrested on suspicion of collaborating with the CNDD-FDD, apparently on the basis of incriminating allegations made by Raphaël. Amnesty International is not aware whether the allegations have been substantiated. All those arrested are reported to be members of the *Front pour la Démocratie au Burundi* (FRODEBU), Front for Democracy in Burundi, the main Hutu-dominated political party. The local authorities have apparently indicated that further arrests will be made.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

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, including the CNDD-FDD, 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 also been reported.

Torture and ill-treatment are rife in the early stages of detention in Burundi. People suspected of links with armed opposition groups are particularly vulnerable to torture and ill-treatment, and are systematically subjected to beatings, tied in excruciating positions, deprived of food and threatened with death. Several detainees are known to have died in custody last year as a result of torture. The problem is particularly acute as detainees are often held incommunicado and access to families and humanitarian and human rights organizations denied. On 27 January 2002, a man, Louis Nzinbagije and his wife, Juliette Habonimana, were reportedly extrajudicially executed at Gayiro

military post, Musigati commune, Bubanza province, northern Burundi, to which they had been taken following their arrest the same day by soldiers. The man was suspected of collaboration with an armed opposition group.

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

- expressing concern for the safety of up to 20 people (please give names) who have been arrested since 17 January in Songa commune, Bururi province on suspicion of collaboration with the CNDD-FDD, and who are currently detained in Bururi 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:

Head of State

Son Excellence

Major Pierre BUYOYA

Président de la République

Présidence de la République

BP 1870 Bujumbura, Burundi

Telegrams:President, 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 Defense, Bujumbura, Burundi

Faxes: + 257 22 56 86

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

Ministère des droits de la Personne humaine, des réformes institutionnelles,
et des relations avec l'Assemblée nationale, Bujumbura, Burundi
Fax: + 257 21 38 47

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 27 March 2002.