

EXTERNAL

AI Index: AFR 16/12/97

21 April 1997

Further information on UA 75/97 (AFR 16/06/97, 19 March 1997) and follow-up (AFR 16/10/97, 26 March 1997) - Fear of ill-treatment / Torture / Possible prisoners of conscience / Health concern

BURUNDI Reverend Emmanuel Ndayizia
Reverend Eliezer Ntunzwenimana
Another pastor, name not known

The Reverend Eliezer Ntunzwenimana of the *Union des Eglises baptistes du Burundi*, Union of Baptist Churches in Burundi, who was arrested in Bujumbura around 7 March 1997 remains in detention at the *Brigade spéciale de recherche* (BSR), Special Investigation Unit. As a result of ill-treatment he is reported to be unable to walk without crutches. Amnesty International has received reports that his ill-treatment - which appears to be an attempt to extract a confession - is continuing, and the organization remains concerned for his safety.

Reverend Eliezer Ntunzwenimana is not known to have been charged with any offence although he was accused of providing assistance - medical care and blankets - to Hutu armed groups after medical supplies and blankets were found at his compound. He appears to have targeted on account of the welfare work of his church among the local population.

The Reverend Emmanuel Ndayiziga, also of the *Union des Eglises baptistes du Burundi* was arrested in Rohero district, Bujumbura on 15 March and released uncharged on 19 March, although he still has to report to the BSR.

Amnesty International is still investigating reports that a third unnamed pastor also of the *Union des Eglises baptistes* was arrested on around 16 March 1997.

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

- calling for urgent measures to guarantee the safety of Reverend Eliezer Ntunzwenimana, held by the *Brigade spéciale de recherche* (BSR) in Bujumbura, and seeking assurances that he will be provided with immediate and adequate medical care;
- urging that he be allowed full access to his family and to legal counsel and representatives of humanitarian organizations;
- seeking clarification of the reasons for his arrest and continued detention, and for the basis of the accusation against him;
- calling for his immediate and unconditional release if he is a prisoner of conscience, imprisoned for his non-violent opinions or activities;
- urging that the allegations of ill-treatment be immediately investigated and, if confirmed, that those responsible be brought to justice in accordance with international standards for fair trial.

NOTE: no mail is getting through to Burundi at present.

APPEALS TO:

Minister of Justice
Gervais RUBASHAMIHETO
Ministre de la Justice et Garde des sceaux
Fax: 257 22 2148

Telegrams: Ministre Rubashamiheto, Bujumbura, Burundi
Salutation: Monsieur le Ministre/Dear Minister

Minister of Interior

Lieutenant-Colonel Epitace BAYAKANAKANDI

Ministre de l'Intérieur

Fax: + 257 222148 / 213055

Telegrams: Ministre de l'Intérieur, Bujumbura, Burundi

Salutation: Monsieur le Ministre/Dear Minister

Procurator General

Monsieur Jean-Bosco BUTASI

Procureur Général

Fax: 257 222148

Telegrams: Procureur General, Bujumbura, Burundi

Salutation: Monsieur le Procureur Général / Dear Procurator General

Head of the BSR

Commandant de la Brigade spéciale de recherche

Fax: 257 22 21 48

Telegram: Commandant, BSR, Bujumbura, Burundi

Salutation: Monsieur le Commandant / Dear Commander

COPIES TO:

President

Major Pierre BUYOYA

Président de la République

Fax: 257 22 7490

Minister for Human Rights

Madame Christine RUHAZA

Ministre des Droits de la Personne

Fax: + 257 216102

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 5 June 1997.