

UA 190/99 Fear of further extrajudicial executions in Kanyosha commune, Rural
Bujumbura and Bujumbura 29 July 1999

BURUNDI At least 30 unarmed civilians including:

Raphaël, aged 8

Emmanuel, aged 10

Spès, aged 11

Anatole, aged 9

Bizimana, aged 5

Bosco, aged 7

In the last two weeks at least 30 unarmed civilians are reported to have been killed by soldiers in the capital Bujumbura and the surrounding province of Rural Bujumbura. The killings have reportedly taken place during or after a recent escalation of military operations in the area. Amnesty International is concerned that further civilians may be killed as the operations continue.

On 17 July 1999 around 40 cows were stolen from a military position in Kinindo, Bujumbura, reportedly by members of armed opposition groups located in Rural Bujumbura. Since then there have been an increased number of military operations, both to find members of the opposition and to retrieve the cows.

On 18 July, at least five and possibly as many as 12 unarmed civilians were killed in Musaga zone, Bujumbura. Soldiers reportedly accused them of failing to prevent the theft of the cows. At least five people were reportedly burnt in a house.

On or around 19 July, soldiers from two military posts surrounded houses in Gisovu *colline* (administrative unit), Kanyosha commune and shot up to 27 people, including the 6 children named above. The killings apparently took place as people were getting ready to go to work. Most of those killed were reportedly shot at close range. Soldiers are also reported to have looted the area later that day and to have burnt down scores of houses.

On or around 20 July, soldiers reportedly forced women and children in Ruziba, Kanyosha commune, to accompany them on a military operation to look for members of the armed opposition. It is not known whether there were any casualties.

On 26 July, two women were reportedly shot dead by soldiers in Kinuke, Kanyosha commune as they worked in their fields. The population of Kinuke had been evacuated to Ruyaga, Kanyosha commune because of conflict. The women were apparently shot because they had returned to their fields without the authorisation of the soldiers at Ruyaga.

On 29 July, the Governor of Rural Bujumbura told Amnesty International that reports of killings in Gisovu were not correct and that there was no need for an investigation.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Since November 1998, there has been intense activity by armed opposition groups in Burundi, particularly in the province of Rural Bujumbura and the southern provinces of Makamba and Bururi. The targets have been both military and civilian. Reprisals by the armed forces have been brutal and indiscriminate. At least 600 unarmed civilians are reported to have been killed by the armed forces in Rural Bujumbura since then. They appear to be almost exclusively extrajudicial executions as acts of reprisal by the security forces. Virtually

none of the killings have been the subject of impartial independent investigations.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/faxes/letters in French or your own language (please check with your post office whether post is being delivered to Burundi):

- expressing concern at reports of a series of extrajudicial executions in Rural Bujumbura and Bujumbura town (give details);
- calling for immediate steps to be taken to protect unarmed civilians from extrajudicial executions;
- calling for investigations into the reports of extrajudicial executions, and those responsible for any human rights violations to be brought to justice.

APPEALS TO: (Please note it can be difficult to get faxes through. You may be told by the operator that the line is not working or the number is wrong. Please keep trying.)

President

Major Pierre Buyoya
Président de la République
Présidence de la République
BP 1870, Bujumbura, Burundi
Telegrams: Major Buyoya, Bujumbura, Burundi
Faxes: + 257 22 7490
Salutation: Dear President

Minister of Defence

Lieutenant-Col. Alfred NKURUNZIZA
Ministre de la Défense Nationale
Ministère de la Défense Nationale
BP 1870 Bujumbura, Burundi
Telegrams: Ministre Défense, Bujumbura, Burundi
Faxes: + 257 22 39 59 / 21 75 05
Salutation: Monsieur le Ministre / Dear Minister

Military Prosecutor

Colonel BATUNGWAYAYO
Auditeur Militaire
Ministère de la Défense
Bujumbura, Burundi
Telegrams: Auditeur Militaire, Bujumbura, Burundi
Faxes: + 22 39 59 / 21 75 05
Salutation: Monsieur l'Auditeur Militaire / Dear Military Prosecutor

COPIES TO:

Minister for Human Rights

Eugène NINDORERA, 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
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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 9 September 1999.