

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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UA 361/94 "Disappearance" / Extrajudicial executions 30 September 1994

BURUNDI **Benoît NTIYANOGEYE**
 Jacqueline MUTAMULIZA (f)
 Elysée SIRIBA
 NZORUBARA, Public Security Police driver

 Jean-Baptiste TUGIRISONI, Burundi Central Bank employee

Following the reported extrajudicial execution of 13 men on 14 September 1994 by members of the security forces in Bujumbura, there is grave concern for the safety of those named above who are reported to have "disappeared" after being arrested between 9 and 16 September.

The exact circumstances of their "disappearance" are not known. The arrests appear to have occurred in the context of the ongoing struggle between the security forces and armed opposition groups. This struggle has led to the "disappearance" and extrajudicial execution of hundreds of unarmed civilians belonging to the majority Hutu ethnic group in Bujumbura this year, apparently at the hands of the army. Many more have been arbitrarily arrested.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The 13 men who were extrajudicially executed - four of whom have been positively identified as Alexis Bandyatuyaga, a journalist, Marc Ndikumana, a medical student, Pasteur Ndikumana, a driver at the Presidency, and Dr Innocent Sindayihebura, a medical doctor - were among several hundred people assembled by the security forces at the *Ecole technique supérieure* (ETS) playground in Bujumbura's Kamenge suburb, for a screening exercise to identify those suspected of involvement in armed opposition. The operation was reportedly supervised by the Military Procurator General. The victims were reportedly executed soon after their arrest on the same day.

On 16 September, members of a local human rights group found the 13 bodies near Bujumbura international airport, a few kilometres from the capital. Eye-witnesses have said that the bodies were dumped by two Gendarmerie vehicles driven by soldiers on the afternoon of 14 September. The bodies bore signs of severe beatings and torture on their abdomens and chests, and had been assaulted with bayonets or other sharp weapons. The heads of three of the victims had been smashed, two others had been completely crushed, and others were covered in cloth.

Relatives of some of those killed have contacted the army Chief of Staff who is reported to have responded by saying that the cases were not his responsibility. The nine others who have not yet been identified are thought to be René Ndirabika, a teacher at Ecole indépendante, Pierre-Claver Sindarishira, driver, Pascal Kwizera, public transport employee, Marius Nsengiyumva, Christian Mujakazi, Laurent Mujakazi, Boniface Nzigamasabo, taxi driver, Pierre-Claver Ndizeye and Juma Rwansekwama.

Violence engulfed most of Burundi in the aftermath of an attempted coup in October 1993 during which the country's first democratically elected president, Melchior Ndadaye, was killed by soldiers. Between October and December 1993, at least 50,000 defenceless people were killed. Many Hutu civilians were extrajudicially executed by the security forces, some of them in reprisal for the killing of thousands of Tutsi by Hutu gangs. Although the violence had

abated by the end of 1993, frequent killings of Hutu by members of the security forces have continued. Killings have been reported in particular in Bujumbura's northern Kamenge suburb in April 1994 and again in mid-September.

Armed Hutu have also been responsible for the killing of Tutsi civilians and members of the security forces.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express and airmail letters either in French, English or in your own language:

- expressing deep concern at reports that the five people named above are reported to have "disappeared" following their arrest between 9 and 16 September 1994, and calling on the authorities to establish their and to make public their place of detention ;
- urging the authorities to bring to justice any officials responsible for unlawful secret detentions or "disappearances", and to take effective measures to prevent any further "disappearances";
- condemning the extrajudicial execution of 13 unarmed civilians, naming the four identified, by members of the security forces on 14 September, and urging the prompt setting up an independent and impartial public inquiry into these killings with a view to identifying and bringing the perpetrators to justice;
- expressing surprise at reports that the army Chief of Staff responded to inquiries by victims' relatives that investigation of the killings was not his responsibility, when in fact he has responsibility for all the armed forces.

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 Ntaryamira, Bujumbura, Burundi

Telexes: 5036 PRESIBU BDI

Faxes: 257 22 6424

Salutation: Monsieur le Président de la République/Dear President

2) Minister of Defence:

Col. Gédéon FYIROKO

Ministre de la Défense Nationale

Ministère de la Défense

BP 1870, Bujumbura

République du Burundi

Telegrams: Ministre Fyikoro, Bujumbura, Burundi

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, Bujumbura, Burundi

Faxes: 257 22 21 48

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

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

1) Minister of Interior and Public Security

Monsieur Jean-Baptiste MANWANGARI

Ministre d'Etat chargé de l'Intérieur et de la Sécurité publique

Ministère de l'Intérieur

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 11 November 1994.