

PUBLIC

AI Index: AFR 16/018/2001

19 March 2001

Further information on UA 58/01 (AFR 16/013/2001, 14 March 2001) and follow-up (AFR 16/016/2001, 15 March 2001) - Incommunicado detention / fear of torture / ill-treatment / prisoner of conscience

BURUNDI Gabriel Nikundana, journalist
Abbas Mbanzumutima, journalist

Gabriel Nikundana and Abbas Mbanzumutima were released on 16 March, after paying a fine of 100,000 Burundian francs (US\$100) each.

The charges against them, of belonging to an armed opposition group and violating Article 44 of the Burundian press law by broadcasting enemy propaganda in a time of war ("*informations faisant la propagande de l'ennemi de la nation burundaise en temps de guerre*") have now been dropped.

Both men work for the independent Burundian radio station *Bonesha FM+*, which broadcast an interview with the commander of a Burundian armed opposition group.

Many thanks to all those who sent appeals. If possible, please send a final round of telegrams/telexes/faxes/express/airmail letters, in French, English or your own language (please check that postal services are operating to Burundi from your country):

- welcoming the unconditional release of prisoners of conscience Gabriel Nikundana and Abbas Mbanzumutima, who were arrested solely for carrying out their legitimate work as journalists;
- expressing concern that they have been fined, and asking for this money to be returned to them;
- expressing concern at what appears to be a growing pattern of attacks on journalists and freedom of expression, and calling for the assault on Léon Masengo to be investigated and those responsible brought to justice.

APPEALS TO (Please note, it can be difficult to get through on the numbers given below, and you may be told by the operator that they are temporarily out of order. Please be patient and keep trying):

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 Internal Affairs and Public Security

Col. Ascension TWAGIRAMUNGU

Ministre de l'Intérieur et de la Sécurité Publique

Ministère de l'Intérieur

Bujumbura, Burundi

Telegrams: Ministre Interieur, Bujumbura, Burundi

Faxes: + 257 22 19 82

Salutation: Monsieur le Ministre / Dear Minister

Minister of National Defence

Colonel 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

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**

COPIES TO:

Minister for Human Rights, Institutional Reform and Relations with the National
Assembly

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

Fax: + 257 21 38 47

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 30 April 2001.