

EXTERNAL

AI Index: AFR 16/37/97

24 October 1997

Further information on UA 328/97 (AFR 16/35/97, 21 October 1997) - Fear of ill-treatment and torture

**BURUNDIA At least 3,000 Burundian and Congolese nationals**

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An estimated 3,000 detainees at the Brigade de Gatumba, gendarmerie station, Gatumba, Rural Bujumbura province were released on 20 October 1997. They were among the 10,000 people arrested by members of the security forces during the night of 18-19 October 1997. All those arrested are now reported to have been released.

At least eight people are reported to have died during the detention, including seven children who are reported to have died as a result of suffocation and dehydration. Other detainees are reported to have been beaten and ill-treated.

According to government officials, the arrests were to facilitate identity checks by the civilian and military authorities to counter an increase in attacks by armed opposition groups and armed robberies in the area.

Other parts of the AI membership will be taking up the cases of the deaths in custody and ill-treatment. No further action is required by the Urgent Action Network. Thanks to all those who acted on this request for action.