

PUBLIC

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16 March 2004

Further Information on UA 99/03 (AFR 47/003/2003, 11 April 2003) - Fear for safety/ Possible "disappearance"/ incommunicado detention

RWANDA Major Félicien Ngirabatware (m)
Damien Musayidizi (m)
Dr. Leonard Hitimana (m)

New names: Augustin Cyiza (m)
Elizier Runyaruka (m)

Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of those named above, who were targeted in the run-up to the 2003 presidential and parliamentary elections, partly because they were believed to pose a threat as opposition candidates or campaigners to the current Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) government.

Major Félicien Ngirabatware was arrested on 1 April 2003 and is feared "disappeared", though he is rumoured to be held incommunicado at the Kami military camp in the capital Kigali. He has reportedly not been charged with an offence, nor has he appeared before a judge. His family are being denied access to him and are concerned for his welfare. Police and military spokespeople have both indicated that he was still alive, but have declined to give further details. Upon enquiring about his fate, Amnesty International was referred to the chief military prosecutor, who was not available for comment at the time.

Other former or serving military officers, government officials and prominent members of civil society linked to opposition political parties have also "disappeared". Augustin Cyiza, formerly an army officer, Vice-President of the Supreme Court, President of the Cassation Court, and founding member of two human rights organizations, disappeared on 23 April 2003. He was accused of being in league with the former President, Pasteur Bizimungu who has been detained at Kigali Central Prison since May 2002. In the week before his "disappearance", Augustin Cyiza was called to the office of the Rwandese President, Major General Paul Kagame, though the topic of their conversation is not known.

Augustin Cyiza was driving back from a law course he had given at the Université Libre de Kigali, with law student and cantonal judge, Elizier Runyaruka when they both "disappeared" on 23 April 2003. The Rwandese police have alternately claimed that Augustin Cyiza's car was left at the Ugandan border or in Nkumba district. Eyewitnesses however, report seeing his car in the evening at Kanombe military camp on the day of his "disappearance".

Local human rights groups fear Damien Musayidizi, Dr. Léonard Hitimana, Augustin Cyiza and Elizier Runyaruka are all dead as it is unusual for there to be no news of their whereabouts after such a long time. The Government of Rwanda has not made public any investigation into their "disappearances" in the face of international pressure for them to do so. Though the police claim to be investigating the "disappearance" of the four men, they have yet to release any findings.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in French, English or your own language:

- expressing concern for the safety and continued incommunicado detention of Major Ngirabatware;
- calling for his whereabouts to be established and his safety guaranteed;

- calling for a full and impartial investigation into the reason for his continued detention without charge, with the results made public and those responsible brought to justice;
- expressing concern for the safety of Damien Musayidizi, Dr. Leonard Hitimana, Augustin Cyiza and Elizier Runyaruka;
- calling for a full and impartial investigation into their "disappearances", with the results made public and those responsible brought to justice.

APPEALS TO:

President Paul Kagame
President of the Republic of Rwanda
P.O. Box 15
Kigali
Rwanda

Fax: +250 572431

Salutation: Dear President / Monsieur le Président de la République

Major General Marcel Gatsinzi
Minister of Defence
Ministry of Defence and National Security
BP 23
Kigali
Rwanda

Fax: +250 576969 (If someone answers, say "le fax, s'il vous plaît")

Salutation: Dear Minister/ Monsieur le Ministre

COPIES TO:

Prosecutor General
Jean de Dieu Mucyo
P.O. Box 2886
Kigali
Rwanda

Salutation: Dear Prosecutor General / Monsieur le Procureur Général

and to diplomatic representatives of Rwanda accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 27 April 2004.