

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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LegalConcern/Fear of Ill-treatment

21 February 1991

RWANDA

Emmanuel Havugimana, teacher at Rwankeri College

Justin Kanamugire

Laurent Karugaram ) both students at the Adventist University

Ezekiel Ngoboka ) of Central Africa, near Gisenyi

Amnesty International has received information that the four people named above, all members of Rwanda's minority Tutsi ethnic group, were arrested in late January and early February 1991 in the northwestern Rwandese town of Gisenyi. They were arrested following a rebel incursion and brief occupation on 23 January 1991 of the nearby town of Ruhengeri. They are reported to be held at Gisenyi prison and are reportedly accused by the authorities and members of the majority Hutu ethnic group of links with the Tutsi-dominated rebel group known as the *Front patriotique rwandais*.

Emmanuel Havugimana was reportedly assaulted and severely beaten by local Hutu on 26 January in Gisenyi region's Rwankeri district (commune). His attackers left him unconscious by the roadside, where Justin Kanamugire found him and took him to Rwankeri dispensary. As Emmanuel Havugimana was beginning to recover from his injuries at the dispensary, both he and Justin Kanamugire were arrested by soldiers on the night of 30 January. The places of their detention have not been revealed by the authorities to their families but they are believed to be held at Gisenyi prison.

Laurent Karugarama and Ezekiel Ngoboka were arrested on 3 February 1991 at the Adventist University campus in northwest Rwanda where several other students were arrested between 2 and 5 February but have subsequently been released. Virtually all those arrested were subjected to beatings or other violence by local people and members of the Rwandese security forces. Ezekiel Ngoboka is reported to have been slashed on the face with a machete and also sustained an injury on the leg. Laurent Karugarama is reported to have sustained bruises on most of his body.

Since their arrest these detainees are reported to be receiving virtually no medical attention and to have been refused visits by their relatives. They are also said to be sleeping on bare floors without blankets. On 2 February 1991 a Roman Catholic priest was detained by members of the security forces because he tried to deliver a blanket to another student detained in Gisenyi prison. He was released on 9 February when his Superior intervened but the Superior was himself detained until 15 February. The student continues to be held.

Amnesty International is concerned that several dozen Tutsi have been arrested in northwest Rwanda since the rebel attack on Ruhengeri on 23 January 1991, apparently because of their ethnic origin rather than because there is evidence of their involvement in rebel activities. The organization is also concerned that the authorities are not known to have taken any action to punish or prevent beatings and ill-treatment of those arrested by local people and members of the security forces and thus appear to be condoning such abuses. Those arrested are not known to have been charged with any offence and are not allowed to receive visits by their relatives.

#### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Following the rebel attack by Uganda-based Rwandese exiles in October 1990, thousands of people were arrested, most of them members of the Tutsi ethnic group. Several weeks after the first arrests the Rwandese Government set up a commission to screen detainees and order the release of those against whom criminal charges could not be brought. The government

later announced that nearly 4,000 detainees had been released. The work of the commission was suspended at the end of November 1990 before most of the detainees had appeared before it. Between 3,000 and 4,000 detainees are believed to be still held, most of them without charge.

Twenty-five people were tried by the State Security Court between 28 December 1990 and 1 February 1991 in connection with the rebellion. Eight have been sentenced to death.

The media in Rwanda is reported to have been advocating revenge and violence against the Tutsi. Hutu vigilantes have been involved in violent attacks on Tutsi. The frequency of new arrests, which had fallen, increased after the 23 January attack on Ruhengeri town.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION: Telegrams/telexes/faxes/express and airmail letters, in FRENCH, if possible:**

- expressing concern at reports that the four people named above, and possibly many others, have been arrested in northwest Rwanda principally because they are Tutsi, and that they have been severely beaten or ill-treated by local people and members of the security forces at the time of their arrest;
- requesting to be informed if the four people are still held and, if so, whether they have been charged with any specific offences;
- urging the authorities to establish rapidly whether these detainees have committed any criminal offences and to ensure that people arrested on account of their ethnic origins are released without delay;
- urging that no-one should be taken into custody unless there is evidence that they have committed a crime and calling on the authorities to give clear instructions to the public and the security forces that no-one should be detained solely because they belong to the Tutsi ethnic group;
- calling on the authorities to make it clear to the public and the security forces that it is illegal to subject suspected criminals to assaults, beatings and other violence and that those responsible for using unlawful violence will themselves be brought to justice;
- seeking assurances that the four detainees named above and others are being allowed full access to medical attention and visits by their relatives and that those who have been deliberately injured will receive compensation.

**APPEALS TO**

Son Excellence

Président Juvénal HABYARIMANA

Président de la République

BP 15

Kigali, République Rwandaise

**Telegrams: President Habyarimana, Kigali, Rwanda**

**Telexes: 22517**

**Faxes: + 250 74583**

Monsieur Faustin MUNYAZESA

Ministre de l'Intérieur et du développement communal

Ministère de l'Intérieur

BP 446

Kigali, République Rwandaise

**Telegrams: Ministre Munyazesa, Kigali, Rwanda**

**Telexes: 22502**

Monsieur Sylvestre NSANZIMANA

Ministre de la Justice

Ministère de la Justice

BP 160  
Kigali, République Rwandaise  
**Telegrams: Ministre Nsanzimana, Kigali, Rwanda**  
**Telexes: 22502**

Monsieur le Docteur Casimir BIZIMUNGU  
Ministre des Affaires étrangères et de la coopération  
Ministère des Affaires étrangères  
BP 179  
Kigali, République Rwandaise  
**Telegrams: Ministre des Affaires etrangeres, Kigali, Rwanda**  
**Faxes: +250 72902 or +250 72904**

Monsieur le Rédacteur-en-Chef, Imvaho, BP 83 Kigali, République Rwandaise  
Monsieur le Rédacteur-en-Chef, Kinyamateka, BP 761, Kigali, République Rwandaise  
Monsieur le Rédacteur-en-Chef, La Relève, Office rwandaise d'information, BP 83,  
Kigali, République Rwandaise

and to diplomatic representatives of Rwanda in your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat or your section office if sending appeals after 4 April 1991.