

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Health/Legal Concern

15 November 1990

RWANDA: Anne-Marie HABIMANA

Alphonse MUNYANEZA, son of former government minister

Fidèle MUNYANGABE

Marie-Rose MURORUNKWERE, secretary at Kigali prefecture HQ

The four people named above, who are held at Kigali central prison, are among more than 1,000 detainees held in overcrowded detention centres whose health is reported to have deteriorated since their arrest in early October 1990. More than 4,500 people were arrested in and around the capital, Kigali, and other parts of Rwanda in connection with an armed invasion by Ugandan-based Rwandese exiles on 1 October 1990. The government announced in early November that it had released nearly 3,000 of the detainees.

Anne-Marie Habimana is said to be needing a special diet for an unspecified illness and Alphonse Munyaneza is reportedly suffering from amoebic dysentery. Fidèle Munyangabe needs constant treatment for diabetes and Marie-Rose Murorunkwere is said to be suffering from asthma and gastritis.

There have been consistent reports that many other such detainees who were ill before or have fallen ill since their arrest have not received prompt or adequate medical care. At least one detainee who was ill before he was arrested died in custody in early October. Some of the detainees are being held in places unknown to their relatives, leading to fears that they may have been killed. Captured rebels are also reported to be held in secret and there are fears that they may be subjected to cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment.

Amnesty International is concerned that the detainees, particularly those who were already ill at the time of their arrest, should get adequate medical care and that the conditions in which they are held do not put their lives at risk. The organization is also concerned at reports that the Rwandese authorities have refused to allow visits to some of the detainees or inform their families where they are held. Some of those still held may be prisoners of conscience held on account of their suspected non-violent criticism of the government and its policies, or of their relationship with the attackers.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The current attack launched on northeast Rwanda at the beginning of October resembles several others carried out in the early 1960s by Rwandese refugees based in Uganda and other neighbouring countries. The attacks followed the overthrow in 1959 of the Tutsi monarch by Hutu politicians and subsequent intercommunal violence which led to the killing of hundreds and the flight to exile of tens of thousands of Tutsi.

These exiles were responsible for the attacks in the early 1960s and also for this October attack. As a result of a major incursion by Tutsi insurgents in 1963, prisoners supporting the Tutsi cause who were already in detention were executed extrajudicially: it also provoked mass killings of Tutsi throughout the country. More than 50 political prisoners, members of a government overthrown in 1973 and others, including Augustin Munyaneza, a former Minister of External Relations and Cooperation and father of Alphonse Munyaneza, were killed in the mid-1970s.

At the end of October government troops took control of most of the towns occupied by the rebels at the beginning of the fighting. The rebels are now reported to have dispersed to various parts of northern Rwanda.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Telexes/telegrams/airmail letters, in French if possible:

- expressing concern about the reported ill-health of the four people named above, who are being held in conditions likely to put their lives at risk;
- expressing concern at reports that they have not been allowed adequate medical care and that sick detainees who need hospitalization continue to be held in overcrowded and unhygienic conditions;
- requesting the authorities to ensure that all detainees have access to medical treatment, including hospital admission where needed;
- urging that the authorities should review promptly the cases of all detainees with a view to either bringing recognizably criminal charges against them or releasing them without delay;
- urging the authorities to allow immediately all detainees to receive visits by their relatives, legal representatives and humanitarian organizations, and provide assurances that they are not being subjected to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment;
- appealing for the release of any held solely for their opinions or solely because of family relationship to any government opponents.

APPEALS TO:

Son Excellence
Président HABYARIMANA Juvénal
Président de la République
BP 15
Kigali, République Rwandaise

Telegrams: President Habyarimana, Kigali, Rwanda
Telexes: 22517

Monsieur MUGEMANA Jean-Marie Vianney
Ministre de l'Intérieur et du développement communal
Ministère de l'Intérieur
BP 446
Kigali, République Rwandaise

Telegrams: Ministre Mugemana, Kigali, Rwanda
Telexes: 22502

Monsieur MUJYANAMA Théoneste
Ministre de la Justice
Ministère de la Justice
BP 160
Kigali, République Rwandaise

Telegrams: Ministre Mujyanama, Kigali, Rwanda
Telexes: 22502

Monsieur NGENDAHAYO Placide
Ministre de la Santé publique et des affaires sociales
Ministère de la Santé publique
BP 84
Kigali, République Rwandaise

Telegrams: Ministre Ngendahayo, Kigali, Rwanda
Telexes: 22502

COPIES TO:

- Rédacteur-en-Chef, Imvaho, BP 83, Kigali, République Rwandaise
- Rédacteur-en-Chef, Kinyamateka, BP 761, Kigali, République Rwandaise
- 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 27 December 1990.