

PUBLIC

AI Index: AFR 47/18/99

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Further information on UA 199/96 (AFR 47/16/96, 8 August 1996) and follow-ups (AFR 47/19/96, 15 August 1996; AFR 47/21/96, 13 September 1996; AFR 47/15/97, 30 April 1997; AFR 47/16/97, 16 May 1997; AFR 47/24/97, 30 June 1997) - Fear for safety / fear of ill-treatment / arbitrary arrest / possible extrajudicial execution / possible prisoner of conscience

RWANDAAmiel Nkuriza, journalist

Amiel Nkuriza, editor-in-chief of the newspaper *Le Partisan* and director of the newspaper *Intego*, was provisionally released from Kimironko prison on 18 August 1999, two weeks after his official release date.

He is reportedly facing charges of *atteinte à la sûreté intérieure de l'Etat* (endangering the internal security of the State) in connection with articles published in *Le Partisan*. It is not known when he will be tried.

He had been detained without trial since his arrest on 13 May 1997 for articles published in *Le Partisan* perceived to be critical of the government.

Since his release he has been required to report to the authorities on a regular basis.

Amiel Nkuriza believes that protests by local and international non-governmental organizations and media may have been instrumental in his release.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In the last few years several journalists in Rwanda who have criticized the government have been victims of human rights violations, including arrests, ill-treatment and killings, as well as threats and other forms of intimidation. On 27 April 1997, Appolos Hakizimana, a journalist working for *Intego*, was shot dead in Kigali. His killing is not known to have been the subject of any conclusive investigation by the authorities.

On 26 February 1999, John Mugabi, news editor of the English-language newspaper *The Newslite*, was arrested on accusations of libel. These related to an article he had written which alleged that a senior official in the Ministry of Defence had been involved in corruption. He was put under pressure to reveal his sources for the article. He was provisionally released on 22 May.

No further action is requested at present. Many thanks to all who sent appeals.