
AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL NEWS SERVICE 231/94

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NEWS SERVICE ITEMS: EXTERNAL - BURUNDI (This item is being sent to targeted media by the IS tomorrow morning (Wednesday 5 October))
INTERNAL - HAITI (note about video footage)

EFAI PLEASE NOTE: The enclosed item on Burundi is for priority translation. Please could you e-mail me a copy of the translated text as soon as it is ready. Thanks - Dina S.

INTERNAL

INTERNATIONAL NEWS RELEASES

France - 0001 hrs GMT 12 October - PLEASE NOTE EXACT EMBARGO TIME SEE NEWS SERVICE 137/94

Rwanda - 14 October - SEE NEWS SERVICE 230/94

Burundi - 21 October - SEE NEWS SERVICE 230/94

Algeria - 25 October - PLEASE NOTE NEW DATE. SEE NEWS SERVICE 137/94

APEC - 3 November -SEE NEWS SERVICE 212/94

Iraq - 29 November - SEE NEWS SERVICE 212/94

TARGETED AND LIMITED NEWS RELEASES

**** Turkey - 24 OCTOBER **** - PLEASE NOTE NEW EMBARGO DATE. SEE NEWS SERVICE 181/94

News Service 231/94

INTERNAL

AI INDEX: AMR 36/WU 19/94

4 OCTOBER

HAITI: VIDEO FOOTAGE

The London-based video production company Making Waves Television - which provided us with material for the recent Haiti ENR - has indicated that a considerable amount of new material on human rights themes will also be available shortly. This has been shot within the last week and apparently includes footage from Port-au-Prince, such as: a body in Cite Soleil of person shot since American forces arrived; the family of victim grieving by body; refugees being repatriated from US base at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba; general scenes of American forces; a pro-Aristide demonstration. Also included are interviews with Pierre Esperance, National Coalition for Refugees at scene of repatriations; repatriated refugees who allege they were told that it was safe and that if they did not return they would be forcibly repatriated; and Father Gerard Jean-Juste, speaking about how those guilty of human rights abuse should not be granted amnesty.

Other footage, from Gonaives in Haiti, includes: a police station and shots of the grim interior of empty cell; an interview with a local priest, on need for justice and anger of local people; and interviews with residents in a shantytown, who demand there should be no amnesty but justice instead.

All interviews with named individuals are in French, others are in Creole.

Although the IS Press Office and Haiti researcher have not yet viewed this footage and assessed it in detail, some sections may be interested in purchasing the right to distribute this material to local TV stations. The material would come in the form of a 10-15 minute Betacam tape, together with a translation and guide script. Each section would separately negotiate an appropriate rate to pay for distribution in their country with Making Waves Television.

We would be grateful if you could indicate your level of interest in obtaining this material as soon as possible, so the production costs in making this video available to sections can be determined. Please respond by phone or fax to the Press Office by the end of this week (7 October).

News Service 231/94

AI INDEX: AFR 16/WU 11/94

4 OCTOBER 1994

BURUNDI: AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL CONCERNED ABOUT KILLINGS AND RECENT "DISAPPEARANCES" BY SOLDIERS

At least 13 unarmed people are reported to have been killed by Burundi's security forces in mid-September, and five others were reportedly "disappeared" after being arrested between 9 and 16 September.

Amnesty International condemns the killings, which took place on 14 September, and urges the authorities to promptly establish an independent and impartial public inquiry into the killings with a view to identifying and bringing the perpetrators to justice.

Four of the 13 victims have been positively identified as Alexis Bandyatuyaga, a radio and television journalist, Marc Ndikumana, a medical student, Pasteur Ndikumana, a driver at the Presidency, and Dr Innocent Sindayihabura, a medical doctor.

They were among several hundred civilians assembled by the security forces at the *Ecole technique supérieure* (ETS) playground in Bujumbura's Kamenge suburb, for a "screening" exercise -- reportedly supervised by the army's legal department -- to try and identify those suspected of involvement in armed opposition. Heavy fighting occurred in Kamenge last April and apparently flared again in September.

On 16 September, members of a local human rights group found the 13 bodies near Bujumbura international airport, a few kilometres from the capital. Eyewitnesses have said that the bodies were dumped by two Gendarmerie vehicles driven by soldiers on the afternoon of 14 September. The bodies bore signs of severe beatings and torture on their abdomens and chests, and had been assaulted with bayonets or other sharp weapons. The heads of three of the victims had been smashed, two others had been completely crushed, and others were covered in cloth.

Relatives of some of those killed have contacted the army Chief of Staff who reportedly responded by saying that the cases were not his responsibility. "We are extremely surprised by such a response to these killings, particularly since the army Chief of Staff is responsible for all the armed forces," Amnesty International said.

Amnesty International is also urging the authorities to establish and make public the whereabouts of the five people who have "disappeared", and to bring to justice any officials responsible for unlawful secret detentions or "disappearances", and to take effective measures to prevent any further "disappearances".

"Our concern for the safety of the five "disappeared" people has been heightened following the reported arrest and killing of the 13 unarmed men in Bujumbura," Amnesty International said today.

Although the exact circumstances surrounding the "disappearance" of the five are not known, the arrests occurred at a time when the security forces were clamping down on suspected supporters of armed opposition groups in the capital, Bujumbura.

Similar operations have led to the "disappearance" and killing of hundreds of unarmed civilians belonging to the majority Hutu ethnic group in Bujumbura this year, apparently at the hands of the army. Many more have been arbitrarily arrested or detained.

Some of those arrested in September have been tortured. For example, Célestin Wakarerwa, a radio announcer, was severely tortured on 13 September when he was arrested and accused of trying to grab a soldier's gun. He was handcuffed, blindfolded and pulled on the ground at the time of his arrest. He was again severely beaten while in custody. He was released on 16 September without charge or trial. No action is known to have been taken against the security officials who tortured him.

Violence engulfed most of Burundi in the aftermath of an attempted coup in last October during which the country's first democratically elected president, Melchior Ndadaye, was killed by soldiers. Between October and December last year, at least 50,000

defenceless people were killed. Many Hutu civilians were extrajudicially executed by the security forces, some of them in reprisal for the killing of thousands of Tutsi by Hutu gangs.

Although the violence had abated by the end of 1993, frequent killings of Hutu by members of the security forces have continued. Killings have been reported in particular in Bujumbura's northern Kamenge suburb in April 1994 and again in mid-September. Armed Hutu have also been responsible for the killing of Tutsi civilians and members of the security forces.

ENDS