

EXTERNAL

AI Index: AFR 16/18/97

6 June 1997

Further information on UA 73/97 (AFR 16/04/97, 19 March 1997) and follow-ups (AFR 16/13/97, 25 April, AFR 16/15/97, 21 May) - Fear of ill-treatment / Torture / Medical concern and Death in custody and New concern: Fear of "disappearance"

BURUNDI Commandant Ndabacekure, army officer

Captain Nziyimana, army officer

Isaac Nitereka, engineer with Brasserie du Burundi, member of the executive board of PARENA and PARENA representative for urban Bujumbura

Alexis Simbavimbere, Burundi Batteries Industries financial manager, PARENA member

Laurent Bimenyumuremyi, deputy provincial representative PARENA representative in Gitega

Emmanuel Manzi (also known as Paul Mugambage), Rwandese national, ex-member Rwandese Patriotic Front, Rwanda

Isidore Rufyikiri, senior PARENA official

Jean Paul Bizimana

Léonidas Ntakaye, member of the executive board of PARENA

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Deep concern has arisen for the safety of one of the detainees named above, Laurent Bimenyumuremyi, whose current whereabouts are unknown and whom Amnesty International fears may have "disappeared". A week after his arrest he was reportedly taken to the *Documentation nationale*, intelligence unit, in the capital, Bujumbura, where he was reportedly seen with a head wound. He has not been seen since, although he was reported to have been transferred to Muramvya prison, Muramvya province. There has been no official confirmation of his place of detention. According to information received by Amnesty International, the authorities have variously said that he is held in the Mpimba central prison, Bujumbura, Gitega central prison, Gitega province, and in Muramvya.

Another of the detainees, Isidore Rufyikiri, is reported to have been tortured in Rumonge prison. Reports indicate that his teeth have been broken and that he has been moved to the military hospital in Bujumbura.

Amnesty International remains concerned for the safety of all the detainees named above, the majority of whom are reported to have been tortured in the early stages of their detention. On or around 11 May 1997, one detainee, Lt-Col Pascal Ntako, died in custody, apparently as a result of denial of medical care (see previous update).

Torture and ill-treatment of detainees is routine in Burundi and Amnesty International has documented numerous cases of "disappearance" or death in custody. Detainees are especially vulnerable to such abuses in cases such as these when legal procedures are not followed and safeguards protecting detainees, such as making public the place of detention, are not implemented or adhered to.

The men named above are accused of being behind a series of mine explosions in Bujumbura, and of involvement in a plot to assassinate president Major Buyoya. None are known to have been charged.

**FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/faxes (currently no mail to Burundi) in French or in your own language:**

- expressing particular concern at reports of the possible "disappearance" of Laurent Bimenyumuremyi and of the torture of Isidore Ruffykiri;
- urging the authorities to urgently establish and make public the whereabouts of all the detainees and to take immediate steps to guarantee their safety including allowing access to doctors, legal counsel, their families and humanitarian organizations;
- calling on the authorities to promptly investigate the situation of these detainees and to bring to justice, in accordance with international standards of fairness, officials who have carried out or condoned human rights violations, including arbitrary arrest and torture, and to take effective measures to prevent any such human rights violations in the future;
- seeking clarification of the legal status of the detainees and of the basis of the accusation against them and calling for legal procedures to be fully adhered to. Urging that they be released if they are not to be charged with a recognizably criminal offence and brought to trial in accordance with international standards of fairness.

**APPEALS TO:**

Minister for Internal Affairs and Public Security  
Lt-Col. Epitace BAYAGANAKANDI  
Ministre de l'Intérieur et de la Sécurité Publique  
Ministère de l'Intérieur  
**Telegram: Ministre Interieur, Bujumbura, Burundi**  
**Fax: 257 22 21 48 / 257 21 30 55**  
**Salutation : Monsieur le Ministre**

Minister of Justice  
Monsieur Terence SINUNGURUZA  
Ministre de la Justice et Garde des sceaux  
Ministère de la Justice  
**Fax: 257 22 21 48**  
**Telegram: Ministre Justice, Bujumbura, Burundi**  
**Salutation : Monsieur le Ministre**

Minister of Defence  
Lieutenant-Col. Firmin SINZOYIHEBA  
Ministre de la Défense Nationale  
Ministère de la Défense  
**Fax: 257 22 39 59**  
**Telegrams: Ministre Defense, Bujumbura, Burundi**  
**Salutation: Monsieur le Ministre**

**COPIES TO:**

President  
Major Pierre Buyoya, Président de la République, Présidence de la République  
**Fax: 257 22 7490**

Minister for Human Rights, Social and Womens Affairs  
Madame Christine RUHAZA  
Ministre des Droits de la Personne humaine, de l'Action sociale et de la Promotion de la femme  
**Fax: 257 21 61 02**

and to diplomatic representatives of Burundi accredited to your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 23 July 1997.