

Zamda, a suspected member of an armed opposition group, was amongst at least 40 people arrested by members of the Burundian armed forces between 22 and 25 November 2001 in the southern province of Makamba. He is being held at Mabanda military camp, Makamba province, where he is at serious risk of torture or ill-treatment, which are widely used in the early stages of detention.

Zamda had recently returned to live in Burundi from a refugee camp in Tanzania. He is suspected by the military authorities of having links with the armed opposition group, *Conseil national pour la défense de la démocratie - Forces pour la Défense de la Démocratie* (CNDD-FDD), National Council for the Defence of Democracy - Forces for the Defence of Democracy. The authorities have reportedly accused him of having previously bought arms for the CNDD-FDD from members of the armed forces in Makamba province. The CNDD-FDD is particularly active in southern Burundi and along the border with Tanzania.

The Burundian armed forces began arresting people on 22 November at a camp for the internally displaced at Nyantakara, Kayogoro commune, Makamba province. Further arrests took place at Kayogoro market, where four people were reportedly beaten as they were arrested, and at a church in the area. At least 40 people, including four women and several *Gardiens de la paix*, Peace Guards (unpaid government militia), were apparently arrested on suspicion of collaborating with the CNDD-FDD. They were detained in Makamba *brigade* (gendarmerie post), Mabanda military camp and the offices of the 5th Military Region, Makamba province. Most of those arrested are, however, now reported to have been released.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Conflict has increased in many areas of Burundi since the signing of a peace agreement in August 2000, to which neither of Burundi's two main armed opposition groups, including the CNDD-FDD, are party. Since the investiture of a transitional government on 1 November 2001, provided for under the peace agreement, fighting has again escalated. Serious human rights abuses, including scores of extrajudicial executions by members of the armed forces and unlawful killings by armed opposition groups, have also been reported.

People suspected of links with armed opposition groups are particularly vulnerable to torture and other forms of ill-treatment, and are systematically subjected to beatings, tied in excruciating positions, deprived of food and threatened with death. Several detainees are known to have died in custody this year as a result of torture. The problem is particularly acute as detainees are often held incommunicado and access to families and humanitarian and human rights organizations denied.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in French or your own language (please check that postal services are operating to Burundi from your country):

- expressing concern for the safety of Zamda, currently detained in Mabanda military camp, Makamba province, on suspicion of links with the CNDD-FDD;
- calling for immediate steps to be taken to protect him from torture, "disappearance", extrajudicial execution and other human rights;
- seeking clarification on the whereabouts of at least 40 people, arrested at Nyantakara, Kayogoro commune, Makamba province, between 22 and 25 November;
- urging the authorities to protect any of those arrested, who remain in military or gendarmerie detention in Makamba and Mabanda, from torture and other forms of ill-treatment, and for them to be given immediate access to their families, medical care and to humanitarian and human rights organizations;
- calling on the authorities to clarify the basis for their arrest, make public their identities and for them to be released if they are not to be promptly

charged with a recognizably criminal offence for which there is substantiating evidence.

APPEALS TO (Please note, it can be difficult to get through on the numbers given below, and you may be told by the operator that they are temporarily out of order. Please be patient and keep trying):

Head of State
Son Excellence

Major Pierre BUYOYA
Président de la République
Présidence de la République
BP 1870 Bujumbura, Burundi

Telegrams: President, Bujumbura, Burundi

Faxes: + 257 22 74 90

Salutation: Monsieur le Président de la République / Dear President

Minister of National Defence
Général-Major Cyrille NDAYIRUKIYE
Ministre de la Défense Nationale
Ministère de la Défense Nationale
BUJUMBURA, Burundi

Telegrams: Ministre Defense, Bujumbura, Burundi

Faxes: + 257 22 56 86

Salutation: Monsieur le Ministre / Dear Minister

Minister of Justice
Monsieur Fulgence Dwima BAKANA
Ministre de la Justice et Garde des Sceaux
Ministère de la Justice
BP 1880 Bujumbura
Burundi

Telegrams: Ministre Justice, Bujumbura, Burundi

Faxes: + 257 21 86 10

Salutation: Monsieur le Ministre / Dear Minister

Procureur Général de la République
Monsieur Gérard NGENDABANKA
Procureur Général de la République
Bujumbura
Burundi

Telegrams: Procureur general, Bujumbura, Burundi

Fax: + 257 24 15 03

Salutation: Monsieur le Procureur général de la République / Dear State Public Prosecutor

COPIES TO:

Minister for Human Rights, Institutional Reform and Relations with the National Assembly

Monsieur Alphonse BARANCIRA, Ministre des droits de la Personne humaine, des réformes institutionnelles, et des relations avec l'Assemblée nationale, Ministère des droits de la Personne humaine, des réformes institutionnelles, et des relations avec l'Assemblée nationale, Bujumbura, Burundi

Fax: + 257 21 38 47

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 10 January 2002.