

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

AI Index: AFR 47/05/93

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Please draw this action to the attention of the person responsible for outreach work in your section as it is felt that appeals from religious groups (Seventh Day Adventists) might be particularly effective

UA 46/93 "Disappearance"/Fear of extrajudicial execution

24 February 1993

RWANDA: Alphonse NKUNZURWANDA, student

Céléstin PALIMEHUTU, student

Emmanuel HAKIZIMANA, student

Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of the above three students who were arrested on 13 February 1993 but whose whereabouts are unknown. They were arrested by soldiers accompanied by local policemen at the Université adventiste de Mudende, Seventh Day Adventist University of Mudendi, near Gisenyi in northern Rwanda. Their fellow-students and human rights activists have not been able to find out where they were taken after their arrest and now fear that they may have been extrajudicially executed.

The persecution of people suspected of supporting the rebel Front patriotique rwandais (FPR), Rwandese Patriotic Front, which has been conducting a guerrilla war in the north of the country, has intensified since the beginning of January 1993. People mainly from the minority Tutsi ethnic group and members of political parties in opposition to President Juvénal Habyarimana's Mouvement républicain national pour la démocratie et le développement (MRND), the former ruling party in a one-party state, have been targeted both by extremist Hutu vigilante groups belonging to the MRND and by the security forces. Road blocks and identity checks have been set up to establish people's ethnic origin or party affiliation.

The three students appear to have come under suspicion after being stopped from departing from the university campus to go on holiday, on the grounds that they were not simply returning to their homes in Mutara commune. It is not known whether they are Hutu or Tutsi. These arrests appear to be similar to others which occurred the same day in Kigali, the capital of Rwanda. At least 18 people are believed to have been extrajudicially executed at a military barracks in Kigali after having been arrested by security forces following an identity check (see UA 41/93, AFR 47/03/93, 18 February 1993).

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In October 1990 rebels belonging to the FPR attacked Rwanda from neighbouring Uganda. Most FPR fighters are Tutsi. Following the attack, some 7,000 people were arrested, most of them Tutsi or people known to be critical of the government; virtually all were subjected to severe beatings and some were killed or died before most were released uncharged six months later. Since the rebel attack about 2,000 people, most of them Tutsi regarded as possible supporters of the FPR, and Hutu members of opposition

parties, have been killed by Hutu gangs of MRND supporters and members of the security forces. The authorities have so far not brought anyone responsible for the killings to justice. Fighting has been continuing in some parts of northern Rwanda, and cease fires have regularly broken down.

Since the beginning of January 1993, hundreds of unarmed civilians, mainly from the Tutsi ethnic group, have been killed in attacks carried out by vigilante groups of MRND or CDR supporters. The authorities say nearly 100 have been killed. These attacks are reminiscent of attacks in January and February 1991 when hundreds of members of the Tutsi Bagogwe clan in northeast Rwanda were

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reportedly killed. Similar killings occurred on a smaller scale in several districts in 1992.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express and airmail letters either in French, English or in your own language:

- expressing concern at the arrest on 13 February 1993 of Alphonse Nkunuzurwanda, Céléstin Palimehutu and Emmanuel Hakizimana at the Université adventiste de Mudende by soldiers apparently on the basis of unsubstantiated suspicions that they might be supporters of the armed opposition FPR;

- expressing concern at their subsequent "disappearance" and urging that an immediate investigation be conducted to determine their whereabouts;

- seeking assurances that, if they are in custody, they be humanely treated and allowed immediate access to their relatives, independent legal counsel and members of appropriate international humanitarian organizations, such as the ICRC, and Rwandese human rights organizations;

- requesting the authorities to issue clear public instructions to all members of the security forces that subjecting prisoners to detention in secret or outside the terms of the law is a violation of human rights and that those found responsible for such abuses will be brought to justice.

APPEALS TO

1. President:

Son Excellence
Monsieur le Général-Major

Salutation: Monsieur le Président de la République / Dear President

Président HABYARIMANA Juvénal
Président de la République
Présidence de la République
BP 15, Kigali, République rwandaise
Telegrams: President Habyarimana, Kigali, Rwanda
Telexes: 22517
Faxes: + 250 74583

2. Prime Minister:

Monsieur NSENGIYAREMYE Dismas
Premier Ministre
Présidence de la République
BP 15, Kigali, République rwandaise
Telegrams: Premier Ministre, Kigali, Rwanda
Telexes: 22502
Faxes: + 250 72902, + 250 72904

Salutation: Monsieur le Premier Ministre / Dear Prime Minister

3. Minister of Defence:

Monsieur GASANA James
Ministre à la Présidence pour
la Défense et la Sécurité
BP 15, Kigali, République rwandaise
Telegrams: Ministre Defense, Kigali, Rwanda
Telexes: 22517
Faxes: + 250 74583

Salutation: Monsieur le Ministre /
Dear Minister

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

1. Minister of Foreign Affairs:

Monsieur NGULINZIRA Boniface
Ministre des Affaires étrangères et de
la Coopération
Ministère des Affaires étrangères
BP 179, Kigali, République rwandaise

and the following newspapers:

Monsieur Vincent Rwabukwisi
Rédacteur-en-Chef

Journal Kanguka
BP 2119, Kigali, Rwanda

and to diplomatic representatives of Rwanda accredited to your country

2) Chief of Staff:

Chef d'Etat - major des forces armées
Deogratias NSABIMANA
BP 15, Kigali, République rwandaise

Faxes: + 250 74583

Abbé André SIBOMANA

Rédacteur-en-Chef

Journal Kinyamateka
BP 761, Kigali, Rwanda

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 7 April 1993.