

3 October 2000

Further information on UA 273/00 (AFR 62/21/00, 8 September 2000) - Fear of "disappearance" / Fear of ill-treatment and torture / Possible prisoners of conscience

DRC/RWANDA Bonheur Badesire Isungu, civil servant

**Released: Gervais Chirhalwira Nkunzimana, lecturer
Paulin Bapolisi, lecturer
Aloys Muzalia Wakyebwa, lecturer
Régine Mutijima(f), former school director
Lusambo wa Karume, lawyer
Safari wa Karume, medical doctor**

Six of the seven people held unlawfully by a Rwandese-backed armed opposition group have been released without charge.

Gervais Chirhalwira Nkunzimana, Paulin Bapolisi, Aloys Muzalia Wakyebwa and Régine Mutijima were released without charge on 29 September after being detained for several days in the northeastern town of Kisangani. The four civil society activists had been arrested on 29 August in Bukavu, in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), by the armed opposition group the *Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie - Goma* (RCD-Goma), Congolese Rally for Democracy. There are no reports that they were ill-treated.

Dr Safari wa Karume and his brother Lusambo wa Karume were released without charge on 9 September. They had been arrested in Rwanda on 3 August and were later transferred to Bukavu. Lusambo wa Karume is a diabetic, and Dr Safari wa Karume was on his way to Nairobi for a medical check-up when arrested. Their health deteriorated as a consequence of their detention, and both need continuing medical treatment. RCD-Goma have not said why they were arrested.

Bonheur Badesire Isungu continues to be detained in Kalemie, a town in southeastern DRC. He has reportedly been severely ill-treated in custody. He was arrested in Bukavu on 5 June and is accused of having links with local armed groups known as *Mayi-Mayi*, who are opposed to RCD-Goma.

RCD-Goma, which controls parts of eastern DRC, is supported by the government of Rwanda, and the Rwandese security forces were involved in all of the above arrests. Amnesty International believes that the Rwandese authorities can secure the release of people detained by RCD-Goma, including Bonheur Badesire Isungu.

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

- welcoming the release of the six people named above by the RCD-Goma, but expressing concern that the arrests were arbitrary, and that Dr Safari wa Karume and Lusambo wa Karume are suffering health problems as a result of their detention;
- expressing concern at reports that Bonheur Badesire Isungu has been severely ill-treated in custody, and calling on the authorities to guarantee his safety, and to ensure that he receives any medical treatment he requires;

- urging that he is promptly returned to Bukavu, where he can be visited by his relatives, doctors, lawyers and human rights or humanitarian organisations;
- urging his immediate and unconditional release if he is not to be charged with a recognizably criminal offence.

APPEALS TO:

President

Major General Paul KAGAME
Président
Présidence de la République
BP 15, KIGALI
Rwanda

Telegrams: President, Kigali, Rwanda

Fax: + 250 84769/84390

Salutation: Dear President / Monsieur le Président

Minister of Justice and Institutional Relations

Monsieur Jean de Dieu MUCYO
Ministre de la Justice et des Relations institutionnelles
Ministère de la Justice
BP 160 KIGALI
Rwanda

Fax: + 250 87051

Telegrams: Ministre Justice, Kigali, Rwanda

Salutation: Dear Minister / Monsieur le Ministre

President, RCD Goma

Dr Emile Ilunga
Président du Rassemblement Congolais pour la
Democratie
Goma
Democratic Republic of Congo

Fax: + 871 761850629 (please note that you may have difficulty getting through to this number)

Salutation: Monsieur le Président / Dear President

COPIES TO:

Gasana Ndobu
President of the National Human Rights Commission
BP 269, KIGALI
Rwanda

Fax: + 250 82702

and to diplomatic representatives of the DRC and Rwanda accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 14 November 2000.