

## **Rwanda--leaders accused of genocide must be arrested**

December 13, 1996--Human Rights Watch and the International Federation of Human Rights Leagues (FIDH) today called for the arrest of leaders who are suspected of having played major roles in the Rwandan genocide that killed more than half a million people two years ago. With the destruction of their strongholds in refugee camps in eastern Zaire, military, civilian and political leaders of the former Rwandan government are reported to be dispersing to Kinshasa (Zaire), to Brazzaville (Congo) and perhaps to other destinations. The two human rights organizations urged prompt action to arrest these persons before they go into hiding elsewhere.

Among these persons are:

\*\* Augustin Bizimungu, a major general in the former Rwandan army (Forces Armees Rwandaises, FAR), who reportedly fled the defeat of his forces in eastern Zaire and now is believed to be in Kinshasa. Named chief of staff of the FAR ten days after the start of the genocide in 1994, Bizimungu commanded the army and the national police force that both participated in genocidal massacres and directed killings by civilian militia.

\*\* Mathieu Ndirumpatse, president of the National Republican Movement for Democracy and Development (MRND), who is said to have fled from Kinshasa and to be in Brazzaville. He headed the MRND, party of the late President Juvenal Habyarimana, during the time when its militia, the Interahamwe, was trained and armed. The party organization as well as the militia led the campaign to exterminate the Tutsi minority and Hutu moderates. Ndirumpatse represented the MRND on the committee that installed the government that carried out the genocide.

\*\* Theodore Sindikubwabo, president of Rwanda during the genocide, who was first reported to have been killed in the attack on Bukavu in November 1996, but who has more recently been reported in Kinshasa. During the week of April 17, 1994, Sindikubwabo incited the people of the southern part of Rwanda to "get to work," meaning to kill Tutsi. He visited the commune of Nyakizu, where local groups were massacring Tutsi who had taken shelter in Cyahinda church, and reportedly encouraged the killers. In a famous speech in the town of Butare, he insisted that everyone must be involved in ridding Rwanda of the enemy. His government then removed the

prefect (governor) of Butare, who was opposed to the slaughter, and widespread massacres followed immediately throughout the region.

In addition, Hassan Ngeze and Georges Ruggiu, two of the leading propagandists of the genocide, who are reported to be in Kenya.

Human Rights Watch and FIDH insist that authorities in Zaire, Kenya and the Congo detain these persons and hold them for investigation by the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda. Given that they no longer benefit from the protection of the ex-FAR and militia, as they did in eastern Zaire, their detention can now be carried out without difficulty.

Human Rights Watch and FIDH also called on Cameroon to deliver to Tribunal authorities Col. Theoneste Bagosora, who is in their custody. Colonel Bagosora, chief of the administrative staff at the Ministry of Defense, effectively directed military operations at the start of the genocide and engineered the creation of the civilian government that administered the country throughout the period of slaughter. One of the first to distribute weapons to civilians, Col. Bagosora helped create the "civilian self-defense" units that killed Tutsi.

The two human rights organizations urged all governments to implement resolution 955 of the United Nations Security Council which called upon member states to assist the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda in locating and apprehending former Rwandan authorities against whom there is credible evidence of involvement in the genocide.

The Tanzanian government, which has announced its intention to send home Rwandan refugees in its country by December 31, has reportedly proposed separating some 200 former authorities and militia members from other refugees in order to facilitate the repatriation. Among the 200 may be Jean-Baptiste Gatete, formerly burgomaster of Murambi, and Sylvestre Gacumbitsi, formerly burgomaster of Rusumo, both of whom have been identified by witnesses as leaders of massacres in their communes. Human Rights Watch and FIDH called on other governments to provide Tanzania with whatever assistance it might require to isolate the former authorities and to detain Gatete, Gacumbitsi and any others who are suspected of involvement in the genocide.

Human Rights Watch/Africa

Human Rights Watch is a nongovernmental organization established in 1978 to monitor and promote the observance of internationally recognized human rights in Africa, the Americas, Asia, the Middle East and among the signatories of the Helsinki accords. Kenneth Roth is executive director and Robert L. Bernstein is the chair of the board. Its Africa division was established in 1988 to monitor and promote the observance of internationally recognized human rights in sub-Saharan Africa. Peter Takirambudde is the executive director and William Carmichael is the chair of the advisory committee.

#### Federation Internationale des Ligues des Droits de l'Homme (FIDH)

The International Federation of Human Rights is an international nongovernmental organization for the defense of the human rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948. Created in 1922, it includes 89 national affiliates throughout the world. To date, FIDH has undertaken more than a thousand missions for investigation, observation of trials, mediation or training in some one hundred countries. FIDH enjoys consultative status with the United Nations, UNESCO, the European Council and observer status with the African Commission of Human and Peoples' Rights. Antoine Bernard is the executive director. Patrick Baudouin is president; Pascuale Bandiera, Helene Cidade-Moura, Rene Degni-Segui, Enoch Djondang, Michael Ellman, Oswaldo Enriquez, Carmen Ferrer Pena, Cecilia Jimenez, Haytham Manna, Gerald McKenzie, Sabine Missistrano, Francisco Soberon, Robert Verdier, Vo Van Ai and Saadeddine Zmerli are vice-presidents; Odile Sidem Poulain, Claude Katz and William Bourdon are secretary generals; and Philippe Vallet is treasurer of the international board. Catherine Choquet is deputy secretary general and Eric Gillet is coordinator for Burundi and Rwanda.

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Gopher Address: <gopher://gopher.humanrights.org:5000/11/int/hrw>

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