

HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH/AFRICA

Formerly Africa Watch

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December 13, 1994

His Excellence Pasteur Bizimungu
President of the Republic of Rwanda
by fax 011 250 84769

Dear President Bizimungu,

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I enclose a copy of the latest Human Rights Watch/Africa report on Rwanda.

In it we point out the continuing human rights abuses of soldiers of the Rwandan Patriotic Army and civilians associated with them. These include summary executions and other killings, arbitrary arrest, and detention in irregular facilities and in inhumane conditions. We call upon your government to take effective measures to halt these abuses immediately.

We note that the government of Rwanda has arrested a number of soldiers charged with having committed such abuses and we recommend that you proceed as quickly as possible to fair and public trials of those so accused.

We express concern over the lives lost in closing the camps of displaced persons and urge the Rwandan government to take all necessary steps, in cooperation with agencies of the United Nations and nongovernmental organizations, to prevent further loss of life as other camps are closed in the near future.

We urge the international community to assist Rwanda immediately in establishing a civilian administration and an effective judicial system. We hope that such aid will soon be forthcoming and that the government of Rwanda will be able to use it promptly and efficiently to prosecute the thousands now imprisoned on accusations of genocide and other crimes. We strongly recommend that all civilian detainees be transferred to official prisons under the supervision of the Ministry of Justice. We urge also that the cases of those detained without charge be reviewed quickly and that those who have clearly been falsely accused be released. We call, in particular, for prompt action on

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Human Rights Watch is a not-for-profit organization monitoring and promoting human rights in Africa, the Americas, Asia, the Middle East, and among the signatories of the Helsinki accords.

the cases of Judge Gratien Ruhorahoza, former burgomaster Antoine Sibomana, and former ambassador Sylvestre Kamali, all of whom we believe to be arbitrarily detained.

I regret that we were unable to meet during my last mission to Rwanda, but I look forward to seeing you on my next visit.

Sincerely,



Alison Des Forges