

HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH

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February 18, 1994

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His Excellency Juvenal Habyarimana
President of the Rwandan Republic
Fax: 250 74583

Your Excellency:

Human Rights Watch/Africa Watch, a U.S.-based human rights organization, is very disturbed to learn about recent attacks on two human rights activists in Rwanda.

On January 11, Mr. André Katabarwa, one of the legal representatives of the Association des Volontaires de la Paix (AVP), a human rights organization, was wounded by a grenade attack outside his home in Kigali. The unidentified attacker was able to escape on a motorcycle without registration plates, despite the proximity of several Rwandan police who could not have failed to notice the attack.

On January 23 at about 4:00 p.m., Mme. Monique Mujawamariya was stopped at an illegal road block in the Gitega section of Kigali. The barricade was manned by members of the Interahamwe, the militia of the MRND political party, of which you are the leading spokesperson. Members of Interahamwe threatened to kill her; one waved in her face a large knife with blood on it. Fortunately, Mme. Mujawamariya managed to frighten the crowd by telling them that help was on the way. They then fled, which allowed her to escape.

On the morning of January 26, Mme. Mujawamariya encountered another barricade at Gishushu in Kigali. Once again, she was recognized and her vehicle was stoned by members of the militia. The windshield and other windows of her car were broken, but she escaped unharmed.

On February 3, an unidentified person cut the telephone wires outside Mme. Mujawamariya's residence.

As you may know, Mme. Mujawamariya has recently been honored both by President Clinton and by Human Rights Watch/Africa Watch for her outstanding record as a defender of human rights. Attempts to injure her or

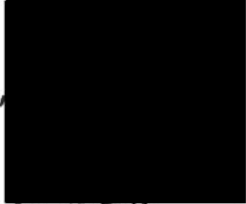
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to discourage her from continuing her human rights work will therefore attract considerable international attention.

These attacks are only the latest in a long series of attempts to kill, injure, and intimidate human rights activists in Rwanda. Other examples include the following: the attack in November on Alphonse-Marie Nkubito of the Rwandan Association for Human Rights; the attacks in May on Ignace Ruhatana and another on Carpophore Gatera, both of whom are with the human rights group Kanyarwanda; and the attack in April on Gakwaya Rwaka of the Christian League for the Defense of Human Rights in Rwanda.

We ask that your Excellency insist that those responsible for all these attacks be brought immediately to justice and that you personally guarantee the safety of those involved in defending human rights in Rwanda.

Sincerely,


Abdullahi An-Na'im
Executive Director