



**Honorable Mrs. Domitila Mukantaganzwa**  
Executive Secretary of the National Service of Gacaca Jurisdictions  
B.P. 1874 Kigali  
RWANDA

February 8, 2010  
N° 011/PK/P/110

**Object:** Arrest of Mr. Joseph Ntawangundi

Honorable Executive Secretary;

It is with dismay that we learned the arrest this Saturday, February 6, 2010 of Mr. Joseph Ntawangundi, collaborator of Mrs. Victoire Ingabire Umuhoro, presidential candidate of 2010. This arrest comes on the day of publication in the daily pro-governmental The New Times of an article reporting that Mr. Ntawangundi was sentenced by the Gacaca courts to 19 years in prison for killing two students of the school where he was Director.

Honorable Executive Secretary, the information available to the Organization for Peace, Justice and Development in Rwanda (OPJDR) show that Mr. Joseph Ntawangundi was not in Rwanda during the genocide in 1994. Indeed, he would have left Rwanda in 1986 to undertake university studies in Poland. He reportedly returned to Rwanda in 1992 and has worked with the Central Workers Union of Rwanda (CESTRAR) before being hired in 1993, by ICFTU - AFRO (International Confederation for Free Trade Unions, African Regional Organization) based in Nairobi (Kenya) where he worked until 2002. Also during the genocide in 1994, Mr. Ntawangundi was in training in Sweden on behalf of the organization for which he worked. Moreover, according to the eyewitnesses, the person has never worked in the education sector, let alone run any school.

Honorable Executive Secretary, the case of Mr. Ntawangundi recalls the story of the mother of Mrs. Ingabire named Mrs. Dusabe in which you have personally told the same daily The New Times, that Mrs. Dusabe had been condemned by the Gacaca courts for killing babies in the health center of Butamwa in the Western Province!. Mrs. Victoire Ingabire is a public figure well known for several years and we were surprised that this story was made public two weeks after his arrival in Rwanda. But also, the OPJDR, believes that criminal responsibility is individual.

In the same vein, the OPJDR recalls that the same Gacaca courts have sentenced Mr. Nzabakikante Melanie, brother of the assassinated President Juvénal Habyarimana for "looting cows of Tutsi in 1994" while he died in 1989 , five years earlier! Your Services did not make any comments on that issue.

It is now confirmed that the Gacaca courts have been used by the government led by the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) including getting rid of its real or imagined opponents as it has been raised by several organizations defending human rights, such as Human Rights Watch (see Annual Report 2009), the Center for the Fight against Impunity and Injustice in Rwanda and other informed observers of the current policy in Rwanda.

Also the OPJDR wondered if these trials Gacaca has really taken place or are invented to suit the prevailing conditions. Many inconsistencies in these allegations are indeed troubling. For example, the articles in The New Times locate the health center of Butamwa where Mrs. Dusabe has worked in Western Province while it is in Kigali suburb. Also the Secondary School of Gitwe where Mr. Ntawangundi has supposed to teach is located by the reporter in Kibungo in Eastern

province, while in reality Gitwe is located in former Gitarama Prefecture, currently Southern Province.

OPJDR unreservedly condemns the behavior of Rwandan authorities and particularly the Service of Gacaca Courts and some state media, especially The New Times and Radio Rwanda, which are being used to do the "dirty work" of the RPF to intimidate and to physically eliminate any political dissent, real or imagined.

OPJDR requests that your services immediately release Mr. Joseph Ntawangundi, as it appears that his arrest is politically motivated. He was not in Rwanda in 1994 and therefore he is innocent for all charges against him. The OPJDR remains convinced that only tolerance, respect for others and especially the truth about the Rwandan tragedy will reconcile the Rwandan people with himself.

Sincerely,



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