

AUGUST 2, 2010

Rwanda

Attacks on freedom of expression, association, and assembly in the run-up to presidential elections

January to July 2010

The following is a chronology of violations of the right to freedom of expression, association, and assembly in Rwanda, and related events, from January through July, 2010, leading up to presidential elections on August 9. Human Rights Watch documents listed at the end of the chronology provide additional information on some of these cases.

The chronology focuses primarily on selected incidents affecting members of opposition parties, journalists, and nongovernmental organizations. It is not an exhaustive list, and Human Rights Watch has documented additional incidents that are not included.

January 16	Victoire Ingabire Umuhiza, president of the FDU-Inkingi opposition party, returns to Rwanda after 16 years in exile.
January to April	Ingabire is summoned by the police on numerous occasions and interrogated in relation to alleged collaboration with armed groups, in particular the <i>Forces démocratiques pour la libération du Rwanda</i> (FDLR). The FDLR is an armed group active in the Democratic Republic of Congo, consisting in part of individuals who carried out the genocide in Rwanda in 1994. She is also questioned in relation to her public statements criticizing the government, leading to accusations of genocide ideology and incitement to ethnic divisions. These accusations relate, in part, to statements she made at the genocide memorial in Kigali, in which she called for massacres of Hutus to be acknowledged – in addition to the genocide – and for justice for these crimes.
January to May	Local authorities repeatedly deny the Democratic Green Party (another opposition party) and the FDU-Inkingi permission to hold their congress meetings, one of the conditions for registering as a political party. Both parties are unable to register.
February 3	FDU-Inkingi member Joseph Ntawangundi is beaten outside the local government office in Kinyinya, Kigali.
February 4	Frank Habineza, president of the Democratic Green Party, is threatened by an unknown man at a Kigali restaurant.
February 6	Ntawangundi is arrested on charges of having participated in the genocide.
February 21	Meeting of the PS-Imberakuri opposition party is disrupted violently by members of a dissident faction.
February 22	Court finds three journalists of the independent newspaper <i>Umuseso</i> – the editor, Didas Gasana; a former editor, Charles Kabonero; and Richard Kayigamba, a reporter – guilty of defamation in relation to an

article published in their newspaper, in a case that began in 2009. Kabonero is sentenced to a year in prison, Gasana and Kayigamba to six months each. Each is fined a million Rwandan francs (approximately US\$ 1,755).

- February 28 Former Rwandan general, Faustin Kayumba Nyamwasa, goes into exile in South Africa and begins speaking out against the Rwandan government and President Paul Kagame.
- March 3 Deogratias Mushayidi, former journalist and exiled opponent of the government, is arrested in Burundi.
- March 5 Burundian police hand over Mushayidi to the Rwandan authorities.
- March 10 Immigration authorities cancel the work visa of Human Rights Watch's senior researcher on Rwanda, Carina Tertsakian.
- March 17-24 Ntawangundi, of FDU Inkingi, appears before a *gacaca* court – a community-based court set up to try genocide cases. After initially pleading not guilty, he changes his plea and confesses to participating in the genocide. He is sentenced to 17 years in prison.
- March 17 A dissident faction of the PS-Imberakuri names Christine Mukabunani the new party president in an effort to oust Bernard Ntaganda, the party's founder and president.
- March 19 Mushayidi is brought before a court and accused, among other things, of endangering state security, collaboration with terrorist groups, minimizing the genocide, genocide ideology, and divisionism.
- March 23 Ingabire is stopped by the police at Kigali airport and prevented from traveling abroad.
- April 5 In a Senate hearing, members of the Senate Political Commission claim that accusations of genocide ideology against Ntaganda are well-founded. The Senate had summoned Ntaganda on two occasions in late 2009 to answer accusations of genocide ideology in relation to his public statements criticizing government policies.

- April 13 The Media High Council suspends the two independent newspapers *Umuseso* and *Umuvugizi* for six months.
- April 21 The *Umuvugizi* editor, Jean-Bosco Gasasira, flees Rwanda after receiving repeated threats.
- April 21 Ingabire is arrested on charges of genocide ideology, divisionism, and collaboration with terrorist groups, including the FDLR.
- April 22 Ingabire is released on bail, but not allowed to leave Kigali.
- April 23 Appeal court finds Gasasira guilty of defamation in relation to articles published in his newspaper in a case that began in 2009. He is sentenced to a large fine and damages.
- April 23 Tertsakian's second work visa application is rejected, the day before her legal stay in Rwanda is due to expire. She has to leave the country on April 24.
- May 24 The *Umuseso* editor, Didas Gasana, flees Rwanda after receiving repeated threats.
- May 28 Peter Erlinder, Ingabire's American defense lawyer, is arrested on charges of denying and minimizing the genocide, and malicious spread of rumors that could threaten national security.
- June 7 Erlinder is denied bail.
- June 17 Erlinder is released on bail on medical grounds.
- June 19 Attempted murder of Kayumba Nyamwasa, the dissident former general, in South Africa.
- June 24 Ntaganda is arrested.
- June 24 Several PS-Imberakuri members are arrested outside the US embassy and several FDU-Inkingi members are arrested outside the Justice Ministry in Kigali.

- June 24 An *Umuvugizi* journalist, Jean-Léonard Rugambage, is shot dead outside his home in Kigali in the evening. That morning, the online edition of *Umuvugizi* had published an article, based in part on information received by Rugambage, alleging the involvement of senior Rwandan officials in the attempted murder of Kayumba Nyamwasa in South Africa.
- June 25 Police release some PS-Imberakuri and FDU-Inkingi members, but three FDU-Inkingi members and six PS-Imberakuri members, including Ntaganda, remain in detention. Several PS-Imberakuri and FDU-Inkingi members report being beaten by the police.
- June 27 Another PS-Imberakuri member is arrested.
- June 27 Didace Nduguyangu and Antoine Karemera are arrested in connection with the murder of Rugambage. The authorities later announce that the two men confessed to planning to kill Rugambage to avenge a murder that he allegedly committed during the genocide.
- July 2 Deadline for submission of presidential candidacies to the National Electoral Commission (NEC). The PS-Imberakuri, Democratic Green Party, and FDU-Inkingi are unable to submit candidates, as the PS-Imberakuri president is in prison and the other two parties have been unable to register.
- July 6 Ntaganda is brought before a court and accused of several offenses, including organizing demonstrations without official permission, endangering national security, and inciting ethnic divisions – the latter two in relation to his public statements criticizing government policies.
- July 8 Agnès Nkusi Uwimana, editor of the newspaper *Umurabyo*, is arrested in connection with articles published in her newspaper.
- July 9-13 The remaining FDU-Inkingi and PS-Imberakuri members are released, with the exception of Ntaganda.

July 10-12	Saidati Mukakibibi and Patrick Kambale, journalists with <i>Umurabyo</i> , are arrested. Kambale is released. Mukakibibi remains in detention.
July 13	André Kagwa Rwisereka, vice president of the Democratic Green Party, is reported missing. His car is found near the southern town of Butare.
July 14	Rwisereka's mutilated body is found on the outskirts of Butare.
July 16	Police arrest Thomas Ntivugurizwa, allegedly the last person to see Rwisereka, on suspicion of his murder.
July 20	Official start of presidential election campaigns. The candidates are Paul Kagame, the incumbent (Rwandan Patriotic Front), Prosper Higiro (Parti Libéral), Jean-Damascène Ntawukuriryayo (Parti Social Démocrate), and Alivera Mukabaramba (Parti du Progrès et de la Concorde).
July 21	Ntivugurizwa is released.
July 21	Five PS-Imberakuri members are arrested in the party's offices.
July 24	Two FDU-Inkingi members are arrested outside Ingabire's house.
July 27	Mushayidi's trial begins in Kigali.
July 28	Copies of the first edition of <i>The Newslime</i> , an English-language newspaper produced by <i>Umuseso</i> journalists from exile, are seized at the Uganda-Rwanda border. Rwandan police arrest the driver and conductor of the bus transporting the newspapers. The driver is released a few hours later. The conductor is detained for two days; he is released on July 30, but reportedly re-arrested the following day.
July 29	Three PS-Imberakuri members are released.
August 9	Presidential elections.

For further information, please see the following Human Rights Watch documents, all available at www.hrw.org/africa/rwanda

“Rwanda: Allow Independent Autopsy of Opposition Politician” (July 21, 2010 news release), <http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2010/07/20/rwanda-allow-independent-autopsy-opposition-politician>

Human Rights Watch’s submission on Rwanda for the Universal Periodic Review (July 5, 2010), <http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2010/07/05/universal-periodic-review-rwanda>

“Rwanda: Stop Attacks on Journalists, Opponents” (June 26, 2010 news release), <http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2010/06/26/rwanda-stop-attacks-journalists-opponents>

“Rwanda: Allow Human Rights Watch to Work” (April 23, 2010 news release), <http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2010/04/23/rwanda-allow-human-rights-watch-work>

“Rwanda: End Attacks on Opposition Parties” (February 10, 2010 news release), <http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2010/02/10/rwanda-end-attacks-opposition-parties>