



The First Arrest of a Rwandese Genocide Suspect in Germany Augustin Ngirabatware in Detention

Kigali, London, Brussels, 20 September 2007. *African Rights* and REDRESS, two human rights organizations committed to ending impunity for serious international crimes, including genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and torture, commend German authorities for their decision to arrest Augustin Ngirabatware in Frankfurt, Germany, which came to light today.

Ngirabatware was arrested at the request of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), which issued a warrant for his arrest in 2001 on charges related to the 1994 genocide of Tutsis in Rwanda. Ngirabatware was the Minister of Planning in the interim government which prepared, incited and implemented the policy of massacres, and was one of the 50 founding shareholders of Radio Télévision Libre des Mille Collines (RTLM). RTLM played a critical role in articulating and disseminating anti-Tutsi propaganda both before and during the mass killings, and incited and encouraged the massacre of Tutsis, the looting of their property, the burning of their homes and the confiscation of their land.

“The arrest of a leading Rwandese genocide suspect by German authorities, a first, is an important step that reflects the growing determination in Europe to ensure that it does not become a sanctuary for fugitives fleeing genocide justice”, said Rakiya Omaar in Kigali, the director of *African Rights*. Jürgen Schurr, the Brussels-based coordinator of a joint project by REDRESS and *African Rights* to encourage European Union countries to address the presence of Rwandese genocide suspects in the EU, also welcomed the move, commenting: “Thirteen years on, and still the efforts of victims and survivors to obtain justice and redress have been all too ineffectual”.

German authorities are now faced with the question of how to ensure that Ngirabatware is brought to justice; they can surrender him to the ICTR, which is in the process of winding down its operations, or also have the possibility of trying him in Germany, under the principle of ‘universal jurisdiction’, which allows third countries to try perpetrators of the most serious crimes irrespective of the location of the crime and the nationality of the perpetrator or the victims.

For additional information, please contact:

Jürgen Schurr (Brussels) for REDRESS: juergen@redress.org; Tel.: +32 2 609 4424
Mob.: +32 484 931 735

Rakiya Omaar (Rwanda) for African Rights: rakiya@afrights.org Tel:+ 250 580238:
(Mob) + 250 08480755