

1 August 2017

Burundi: Detention of human rights defender Germain Rukuki

On 26 July 2017, human rights defender **Germain Rukuki** was moved to Ngozi prison after being held for fourteen days by the Service National de Renseignement - SNR (National Intelligence Service) in Burundi without being informed of the charges against him.

[Germain Rukuki](#) is a human rights defender working for **Association des juristes catholiques du Burundi – AJCB** (Association of Catholic Jurists of Burundi). He previously worked for **Action des chrétiens pour l'abolition de la torture – ACAT-Burundi** (Action by Christians for the Abolition of Torture) which fights for the respect of human dignity in Burundi, and particularly for the abolition of torture and the death penalty. ACAT-Burundi was suspended by the government in November 2015 as part of its clampdown on civil society organisations.

On the evening of 26 July 2017, Germain Rukuki was transferred from the SNR to Ngozi prison, without appearing before a magistrate to hear the charges against him. Ngozi prison reportedly has a reputation for holding political prisoners and for torture. Germain Rukuki had been held for fourteen days by the SNR following the search of his home and his arrest by police without a warrant on 13 July 2017.

Front Line Defenders is deeply concerned by the detention of Germain Rukuki which it believes is directly linked to his peaceful and legitimate work as a human rights defender in Burundi.

Front Line Defenders urges the authorities in Burundi to:

1. Immediately and unconditionally release Germain Rukuki, as Front Line Defenders believes that he is being targeted solely as a result of his legitimate and peaceful work in the defence of human rights;
2. Take all necessary measures to guarantee the physical and psychological integrity and security of Germain Rukuki ;
3. Ensure that the treatment of Germain Rukuki, while in detention, adheres to the conditions set out in the 'Body of Principles for the Protection of All Persons under Any Form of Detention or Imprisonment', adopted by UN General Assembly resolution 43/173 of 9 December 1988;
4. Cease all targeting of human rights defenders in Burundi and guarantee in all circumstances that they are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisals and free of all restrictions including judicial harassment.