

# Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/burundi-imprisoned-journalist-awaits-26-12-2012,43834.html>

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Africa - Burundi

Ruling awaited

## Imprisoned journalist awaits decision on his appeal

26 December 2012

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Reporters Without Borders reiterates its support for imprisoned Burundian journalist **Hassan Ruvakuki** in the run-up to his appeal verdict, as did the head of French External Broadcasting, Marie-Christine Saragosse, during a visit to Burundi last week.

A reporter for *Radio France Internationale's* Swahili service and *Bonesha FM*, a local station, Ruvakuki has been detained for nearly 13 months. A court in the central city of Gitega is due to issue a decision on his appeal by 8 January.

He was sentenced to life imprisonment last June on a charge of terrorism for contacting Burundian rebels. The hearings in his appeal were held in October and November. The defence has asked for his conviction to be overturned while prosecutors want the sentence upheld.

"Burundi's Hassan Ruvakuki is one of the 193 journalists who, according to the annual roundup our organization published last week, are currently imprisoned worldwide in connection with their work – a figure that has never been so high," Reporters Without Borders secretary-general Christophe Deloire said.

"The Ruvakuki case has dragged on for too long and has done the country's image enough damage already. I am convinced that the Burundian justice system, through the head of the Gitega appeal court, will demonstrate its independence and its ability to issue a ruling in a free manner.

"The defence clearly explained the specifics of journalist work. A reporter who interviews a rebel chief is not a rebel. Ruvakuki was just doing his job. Contrary to what has been alleged, he killed no one and was not an accomplice in any attack. We expect a favourable outcome to this long ordeal. We expect Ruvakuki to be freed in the next few days."

[All the information about the Ruvakuki case.](#)

[Learn more about media freedom in Burundi.](#)

Picture : *Hassan Ruvakuki (RM)*

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You can download those documents on our website :

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