

Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/burundi-unrelenting-court-gives-journalist-08-01-2013,43869.html>

Africa - Burundi

Deep disappointment

Unrelenting court gives journalist three-year jail term on appeal

8 January 2013

Reporters Without Borders is deeply disappointed to learn that an appeal court in the central city of Gitega today imposed a three-year jail sentence on the journalist **Hassan Ruvakuki** instead of overturning his conviction.

The court changed the charge on which Ruvakuki is convicted to "participation in an association formed with the aim of attacking persons and property." In June, a lower court sentenced him to life imprisonment on a charge of terrorism.

Reporters Without Borders regards today's decision as a sign that certain Burundian officials were determined to punish Ruvakuki at all costs. Several sources in Gitega reported that the appeal court had been under heavy pressure from the state security apparatus not to acquit him.

In response to this incomprehensible verdict, Reporters Without Borders is launching a petition for the release of Ruvakuki, who was working for *Bonesha FM*, a local radio station, and the Swahili service of *Radio France Internationale* at the time of his arrest in November 2011. [Sign the petition.](#)

Ruvakuki was accused of complicity with a rebel group when all he did was his duty as a journalist to anticipate the news. Shortly before his arrest, he went to neighbouring Tanzania to cover a Burundian rebel group that was being formed there.

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

[Read Radio France Internationale's reaction \(in French\)](#) to Ruvakuki's conviction.

[Find out more about media freedom in Burundi](#)

Picture: Hassan Ruvakuki (Alexandre Niyungeko)

You can download those documents on our website :

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