

Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/burundi-radio-reporter-will-spend-burundi-29-06-2012,42916.html>

Africa - Burundi

No cause for celebration

Radio reporter will spend Burundi's 50th independence anniversary in jail

29 June 2012

Two days before the start of celebrations on 1 July marking the 50th anniversary of Burundi's independence, Reporters Without Borders renews its unequivocal support for jailed radio journalist **Hassan Ruvakuki**.

A reporter for *Bonesha FM* and the Swahili service of *Radio France Internationale*, he is held in the central city of Muramvya where he will be taking no part in the patriotic festivities organized by the authorities.

"All devotees of freedom and justice know there is nothing to celebrate when they look at what is happening in Burundi today," the press freedom organization said.

"Hassan Ruvakuki has been sentenced to an unbelievably harsh penalty, yet he did not benefit from a fair trial and there is no proof that he was guilty. He was just doing his job," Reporters Without Borders added.

"We call on Burundi's partners attending the 50th anniversary in Bujumbura to raise Hassan's case with the highest state authorities. To remain silent would be a crime."

The organization noted that Burundi is celebrating the anniversary by becoming a member of the exclusive club of countries prepared to jail journalists for life.

[Ruvakuki received a life sentence on 20 June for "participating in acts of terrorism"](#).

In another case, **Eloge Niyonzima**, a reporter for *Radio Publique Africaine* in the north-western city of Bubanza, was attacked by members of the youth league of the ruling CNDD-FDD party on the night of 26 June. The station's manager, **Eric Manirakiza**, said about 10 youths beat the journalist with clubs, injuring him on the head and back. His head injury required several stitches.

Photo : Hassan Ruvakuki (Iwacu - Les Voix du Burundi)

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