

# Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/rwanda-rugambage-murder-trial-one-21-09-2011,41036.html>

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Africa - Rwanda

Case not solved

## Rugambage murder trial – one defendant gets 10 years, other acquitted

21 September 2011

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Reporters Without Borders is very sceptical about the verdicts that a high court issued on 15 September in the trial of two men accused of the murder of [Jean-Léonard Rugambage](#), the deputy editor of the bimonthly magazine [Umuwugizi](#), who was shot four times at close range outside his Kigali home on 24 June 2010.

One of the defendants, Didace Nduguyangu, was convicted and given a 10-year jail sentence. The other, police officer Antoine Karemera, was acquitted. The trial has not done much to resolve doubts about their guilt or innocence or the ability of the Rwandan justice system to function independently.

"The court's verdicts raise more questions without providing any answers," Reporters Without Borders said. Why was one of the suspects convicted and the other acquitted? Why were both kept in pre-trial detention if only one of them confessed to the murder? Is Nduguyangu really guilty and if he was, was his sentence adequate?

"After Rugambage was killed, we asked the French government, which was restoring diplomatic relations with Rwanda at the time, and the European Union delegation in Kigali to ensure that an independent investigation was carried out into this murder. Nothing was done in response to this request. The investigators considered only the hypothesis of personal revenge and ignored the possibility that Rwandan officials were involved."

Just before his death, Rugambage published an article blaming the Rwandan authorities for the attempted murder of exiled army general Kayumba Nyamwasa on 19 June 2010 in Johannesburg. [Umuwugizi](#) editor [Jean-Bosco Gasasira](#) accused the government of [masterminding Rugambage's murder](#), a claim that was dismissed as "without foundation" by foreign minister Louise Mushikiwabo.

After the arrest of the two suspects on 28 June 2010, the authorities reported that Nduguyangu had confessed to the murder, and that he had told the police that he did it to avenge Rugambage's supposed murder of his brother during the 1994 genocide, which targeted Rwanda's Tutsi population.

Arrested in 2005 on a charge of murder during the genocide, Rugambage was sentenced to a year in prison for contempt of court and spent a total of 11 months in detention before finally being acquitted on the murder charge in 2006.

Reporters Without Borders raised the lack of media freedom in Rwanda during President [Paul Kagame](#)'s visit to France on 12 and 13 September. The organization challenged Kagame on the issue at a news conference and staged a [protest](#) outside the Ritz Hotel in Paris, where he was receiving a delegation of French businessmen.

[More information on media freedom in Rwanda](#)

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