

# Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/rwanda-mixed-feelings-about-court-s-06-04-2012,42273.html>

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Africa - Rwanda

Still in jail

## Mixed feelings about court's decision to cut jail time for two women journalists

6 April 2012

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Reporters Without Borders has "mixed feelings" about yesterday's supreme court decision to significantly reduce the long jail sentences being served by **Agnes Uwimana Nkusi**, the editor of the privately-owned bimonthly *Umurabyo*, and **Saidat Mukakibibi**, one her reporters, who have been held since July 2010 on charges of inciting civil disobedience, causing divisions and denying the 1994 genocide of the Tutsis.

"The reduction in the length of the jail terms is obviously to be welcomed as they were very harsh, but this is not the good news we wanted," Reporters Without Borders said. "Ever since the day of their arrest, we have been saying these two women should be freed and the charges dropped. We are particularly worried about Nkusi, whose health is incompatible with a long stay in prison.

"The modest reforms announced by the Rwandan government – a new media freedom law that is currently before parliament and the planned overhaul of the Rwandan Information Office – will not make a big difference to freedom of information as long as journalists continue to be kept in prison because of their opinions."

The supreme court cut Nkusi's combined 17-year sentence to three years on a charge of "attacking state security" and one year on a charge of defaming President Paul Kagame, for a total of four years, and cut Mukakibibi's seven-year sentence to three years for "attacking state security."

Their convictions on the other two charges – minimizing the genocide and inciting divisions – were quashed. Supreme court president Sam Rugege said the prosecution had failed to produce evidence to support the genocide minimization charge. The defence's request for the jail sentences to be suspended was rejected.

[More information about Nkusi and Mukakibibi](#)

Rwanda is ranked 156th out of 179 countries in the 2011-2012 Reporters Without Borders press freedom index while President Kagame has been on [the Reporters Without Borders list of "Predators of Press Freedom"](#) for years.

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