

# Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/rwanda-radio-presenter-held-pending-trial-11-05-2012,42613.html>

---

Africa - Rwanda

Disproportionate punishment

## Radio presenter held pending trial after slip of the tongue

11 May 2012

---

Reporters Without Borders deplores community radio presenter **Habarugira Epaphrodite's** detention since 24 April in the main prison of Gitarama, the capital of Muhanga district, on a charge of "minimizing" the 1994 Tutsi genocide and "spreading genocide ideology."

Epaphrodite was arrested because, while reading a report about ceremonies marking the 18th anniversary of the genocide on community radio Huguka's morning new broadcast on 22 April, he mixed up the Kinyarwanda words for "victims" and "survivors," making it sound as though he approved of the genocide.

His colleagues say it was just a slip of the tongue, pointing out that he read the same the news item the day before without any mistake. The radio station nonetheless fired him on 23 April and he was arrested the following day.

"Without defending what Epaphrodite said, we condemn the fact that he was placed in pre-trial detention for something he said on the air," Reporters Without Borders said. "The prosecutor's 30-day detention order is out of all proportion to the offence. It will inevitably have the effect of intimidating all journalists and that is unacceptable.

"We urge the judicial authorities to free him so that he can prepare his defence for the trial, which we hope will be fair and impartial. His dismissal by his radio station on disciplinary grounds was already a severe punishment. The authorities do not need to add imprisonment."

Reporters Without Borders continues to press for the decriminalization of media offences in Rwanda.

Photo: Harabugira Epaphrodite

---

You can download those documents on our website :

- , (JPEG - 52.7 kb)
-