

Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada

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> Responses to Information Requests

Responses to Information Requests

Responses to Information Requests (RIR) respond to focused Requests for Information that are submitted to the Research Directorate in the course of the refugee protection determination process. The database contains a seven-year archive of English and French RIRs. Earlier RIRs may be found on the UNHCR's [Refworld](#) website. Please note that some RIRs have attachments which are not electronically accessible. To obtain a PDF copy of an RIR attachment please email Basesdedonnees.DatabaseUnit@irb-cisr.gc.ca.

29 June 2012

RWA104124.FE

Rwanda: Treatment by society and by authorities of family members of people who were convicted by a gacaca court

Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa

Information on the treatment by society and by authorities of family members of people who were convicted by a gacaca court was scarce among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate.

During a 15 June 2012 telephone interview with the Research Directorate, the Rwandan issues representative of the Great Lakes Region Human Rights League (Ligue des droits de la personne dans la région des Grands Lacs, LDGL) stated that his organization was not familiar with any case in which a family member of a person who was convicted by a gacaca court was the victim of poor treatment by the authorities or by fellow citizens. In addition, during an 18 June 2012 telephone interview with the Research Directorate, an advisor to the Central African Media Organization (Organisation des médias d'Afrique central, OMAC) stated that he was not familiar with any case in which a family member of a person who was convicted by a gacaca court had a [translation] "particular problem" with the government authorities or other members of society. The OMAC is an NGO that brings together officials from professional media organizations and freedom of the press associations, executives from news organizations and professional journalists from Central Africa (OMAC 18 June 2012). The OMAC advisor stated that the situation is [translation] "generally calm" given that since the genocide, the authorities have deployed many members of the security forces, in particular to dissuade the survivors of the genocide from engaging in acts of revenge against family members of people who were convicted of genocide, pointing out, nevertheless, that it is not 100 percent safe (*ibid.*). This information could not be corroborated among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate.

However, during a 15 June 2012 telephone interview with the Research Directorate, a journalist from the daily *The New Times* from Kigali pointed out that although some genocide survivors and family members of people who were convicted by the gacaca courts have been implicated in the settling of accounts, these incidents are generally considered to be isolated cases. The journalist did not provide details about these incidents. This information could not be corroborated among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate.

Furthermore, a 19 March 2009 article published by the Syfia Grands Lacs news agency states the following about the wives and children of prisoners who had been accused of genocide: [translation] "At the end of the genocide, some of them-wives of prisoners-and their children, were sworn at and even beaten by the survivors. With the gacaca courts, society understands that they were generally not associated with their husband's crimes." Syfia Grands Lacs is a project of Syfia International, an association that brings together 10 news agencies (Syfia International n.d.). Moreover, a May 2000 article published by Syfia International on the people imprisoned after the genocide pointed out that the survivors of the 1994 genocide did not easily [translation] "agree to live with the released prisoners and return their goods to them"; the article added that the former prisoners were concerned about their safety (Syfia International 1 May 2000). In that article, Syfia

International specified that, in February 2000, after a former prisoner was released, he was shot and killed and, after a grenade attack, his wife, son and servant were [translation] "seriously" injured (ibid.). In another incident a few days earlier, another former prisoner's home was set on fire and all of the property destroyed (ibid.); the article provides no further details about the perpetrators of these acts. Furthermore, Syfia International explained that cases of revenge against the detainees after their release were [translation] "frequent" (ibid.). This information could not be corroborated among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate.

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

References

Journalist for *The New Times*. 15 June 2012. Telephone interview.

Ligue de droits de la personne dans la région des Grands Lacs (LDGL). 15 June 2012. Telephone interview with Rwandan issues representative.

Organisation des médias d'Afrique centrale (OMAC). 18 June 2012. Telephone interview with an advisor.

Syfia Grands Lacs. 19 March 2009. Fulgence Niyonagize. "Rwanda : le courage des femmes de prisonniers." <<http://www.syfia-grands-lacs.info/index.php?view=articles&action=voir&idArticle=1332>> [Accessed 14 June 2012]

Syfia International. 1 May 2000. Lucie Umukundwa. "Rwanda : liberté dangereuse après la prison." <<http://www.syfia.info/index.php5?view=articles&action=voir&idArticle=923>> [Accessed 14 June 2012]

_____. N.d. "Syfia International." <<http://syfia.com/activites.php>> [Accessed 28 June 2012]

Additional Sources Consulted

Oral sources: Attempts to contact representatives of the following organizations were unsuccessful: Agence Hirondelle; Association des rescapés du génocide (Ibuka); Association rwandaise pour la défense des droits de la personne et libertés publiques; Collectif des ligues et associations de défense des droits de l'homme au Rwanda; Kigali Independent University; Ligue rwandaise pour la promotion et la défense des droits de l'homme; National University of Rwanda; Rwanda – Rwanda Correctional Services, Service national des juridictions gacacas; SOS Village d'enfant du Rwanda; *Le Soir*; Tilbur University – Department of Criminal Law; United Nations Development Programme; Université internationale au Rwanda; Université laïque adventiste de Kigali; Université libre de Kigali; Université de Paris 1; University of London – School of Oriental Studies and African Studies.

Internet sites, including: Africa Governance Monitoring and Advocacy Project; Africultures; Afrik.com; Afriquinfos; Agence France-Presse; Agence rwandaise d'information; Agence Xinhua; AllAfrica.com; Amnesty International; Anti-Defamation League; British Broadcasting Corporation; Centre d'études africaines et de recherches interculturelles; Centre national de la recherche scientifique; Centre de services de justice réparatrice; Coalition pour les droits des femmes en situation de conflit; *Courrier international*; Crime and Society, a Comparative Criminology Tour of the World; Échos Grands Lacs; Factiva; Fédération internationale des ligues des droits de l'homme; Forced Migration Online; France24; Freedom House; Global Rights; GlobalSecurity.org; GrandsLacs.info; Grandslacs.net; Grands Lacs TV; Human Rights Watch; International Crisis Group; Inter Press Service; Internal Displaced Persons; International Committee of the Red Cross; *Jeune Afrique*; *Kigali Today*; Louvain coopération au développement; Médecins sans frontières; Mémoire online; Migration Policy Institute; Minority Rights Group International; *Le Monde diplomatique*; *The New York Times*; *Le Nouvel Observateur*; Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa; Organisation internationale de la francophonie; Organisation de la presse africaine; Organisation suisse d'aide aux réfugiés; Panapress; *La Presse*; Radio France internationale; Radio Netherlands Worldwide; RCN Justice & Démocratie; Reporters sans frontières; Réseau des défenseurs des droits humains en Afrique centrale; Réseau documentaire international sur la région des Grands Lacs africains; Reuters; Rwanda – Bureau of Information and Broadcasting, Ministry of Local Government, Good Governance, Community Development and Social Affairs; Slate Afrique; Union interafricaine des droits de l'homme; United Nations – Integrated Regional Information Networks, United Nations Children's Fund, United Nations Development Program, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, United Nations News Centre; United Kingdom – Border Agency; United States – Department of

State; Université de Montréal – Réseau francophone de recherche sur les opérations de paix; University of Minnesota – Human Rights Library; World Organization Against Torture.

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