

URGENT ACTION

PASTOR'S DAUGHTER ARBITRARILY DETAINED

Jackie Umuhoza, daughter of exiled pastor Deo Nyirigira, was arrested on the morning of 27 November 2019 in Kigali, Rwanda. On 28 November, after her family and friends raised the alarm on social media, the Rwanda Investigation Bureau confirmed on Twitter that Jackie Umuhoza had been arrested on 27 November on suspicion of treason and espionage. She remains in detention without having been brought before a judge.

TAKE ACTION: WRITE AN APPEAL IN YOUR OWN WORDS OR USE THIS MODEL LETTER

Col. Jeannot Ruhunga
Secretary General
Rwanda Investigation Bureau
KN5 Rd, Kamukina
Kigali
Rwanda
Email: info@rib.gov.rw

Dear Col. Jeannot Ruhunga,

I am writing to you regarding the case of Jackie Umuhoza who was arrested on 27 November 2019. The Rwanda Investigation Bureau confirmed through a tweet on 28 November that Jackie Umuhoza was in their custody pending investigations into accusations of treason and espionage, offences that carry sentences of up to 25 years imprisonment. More than three weeks later, the public prosecution has not confirmed a case against her, nor has she been brought before a judge to confirm her continued detention. The law relating to criminal procedure provides that a suspect can only be held for up to five days after their arrest. Further provisional detention after that time can only be decided by order of a judge on request by the public prosecution if they find serious grounds to bring a case.

Unless she is charged with an internationally recognisable criminal offence, Jackie Umuhoza must be immediately released from arbitrary detention. Pending her release, I urge you to ensure that Jackie Umuhoza's rights as a suspect are respected, including regular access to her family, any healthcare she may require and private communication with her legal counsel. She must be protected from torture and other ill-treatment in detention.

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Jackie Umuhoza is the daughter of Deo Nyirigira, pastor of Agape Community Church in Mbarara, Uganda. Deo Nyirigira and his family left Rwanda in 2001 for Uganda, citing persecution. More recently, Deo Nyirigira has been accused in pro-government media of recruiting for the Rwanda National Congress (RNC), an opposition group in exile. His daughters Lilian Umutoni, Axelle Umutesi and Jackie Umuhoza returned to Rwanda from Uganda in 2013, 2014 and 2016 respectively after completing their university education. The family reported that the sisters had been repeatedly summoned for questioning about their father's activities since late 2017 and were arrested and detained for one week in March 2019. At that time, their Ugandan national identity cards and passports were confiscated, in addition to their Rwandan national identity cards and passports, which were retained in 2018. Lilian Umutoni and Axelle Umutesi were arrested on the evening of 27 November 2019 (the day of Jackie Umuhoza's arrest), detained overnight and released the following day.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: English

You can also write in your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: 30 January 2020

Please check with the Amnesty office in your country if you wish to send appeals after the deadline.

NAME AND PREFERRED PRONOUN: Jackie Umuhoza (she/her)

LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: n/a