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UNITED NATIONS
HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
FIELD OPERATION IN RWANDA



NATIONS UNIES
HAUT COMMISSAIRE AUX DROITS DE L'HOMME
OPERATION SUR LE TERRAIN AU RWANDA

HRFOR

**ATTACK IN SATINSYI COMMUNE, GISENYI PREFECTURE, AND KILLING OF 22
PERSONS, INCLUDING 17 STUDENTS AND A 62-YEAR-OLD BELGIAN NUN,
ON 28 APRIL 1997**

Status report as at 7 May 1997

On 28 April, at around 1:20 a.m., a group of approximately 100 unidentified armed individuals wearing military uniforms attacked several locations in Gitwa Sector, Satinsyi Commune, eastern Gisenyi Prefecture, including the *Ecole d'Economie of Muramba*. A group of around 50 assailants attacked the school and requested that the students separate themselves according to ethnic origin. When the students refused, the assailants opened fire, killing 17 students, all female, and injuring a further seven students. The Director of the *Ecole Normale Primaire* in Gitwa Sector, a 62-year-old Belgian nun, and four other persons were also killed during the attack.

According to several eyewitnesses, a group of approximately 50 assailants attacked the *Ecole d'Economie of Muramba*, where around 300 female students are enrolled. Around 20 of the assailants entered one of the dormitories and told the students to go outside on the stairs. The assailants subsequently requested one of the students to identify the students of Tutsi origin. When she refused, the assailants shot and killed her. The assailants then stated that they would identify the students according to their ethnic origin. Another student stood up and stated that there were no Tutsis or Hutus amongst them but that they were all Rwandese. She was severely beaten before being shot and killed. The assailants then opened fire on the students. Shortly after, the assailants returned to the dormitory and asked the survivors to stand up so that they could be protected. Several students stood up and the assailants again opened fire. A total of 17 students were killed and a further seven severely injured during the incident. The assailants threatened that they would return to kill any Tutsi survivors of the incident. The attack reportedly lasted until 2:45 a.m. The RPA military position, located in the vicinity of the *Ecole d'Economie of Muramba*, was also reportedly attacked.

RPA soldiers subsequently arrived at the scene of the incident and transported the injured to the medical centre of Muramba prior to their transfer to Ruhengeri hospital.

A number of other locations in Gitwa Sector were also attacked. A group of unidentified armed individuals attacked the *Ecole Normale Primaire* of Muramba in Gitwa Sector. The Director of the school, a 62-year-old Belgian nun who had lived in Rwanda since 1960, was killed. According to reports, no students were injured during the incident. No further information on the circumstances of this attack are available to date.

HRFOR/STRPT/51/1/7 May 1997/E

A group of four unidentified armed individuals attacked the residence of the *Conseiller* of Rucano Sector, Satinsyi Commune. The *Conseiller's* wife, two children, and a civilian, were shot and killed. A fifth person was injured during the attack.

According to several eyewitnesses, one of the assailants was killed during the course of the attacks. According to prefectural authorities, one person was arrested and reportedly confessed to having participated in the attack.

On 18 March, a group of approximately 15 unidentified armed men in military uniform of the former *Forces Armées Rwandaises (ex-FAR)* attacked the *Ecole Normale Primaire* of Nyange, Kivumu Commune, in eastern Kibuye Prefecture. The assailants asked the students to separate themselves according to ethnic origin. When the students refused, the assailants opened fire, killing six students and injuring a further twenty.¹

HRFOR deeply deplores and strongly condemns the recent attacks against students and the killings of persons on the basis of their ethnic origin.

HRFOR urges Rwandan authorities to investigate the killings and to bring the responsible parties to justice in the context of full respect for human rights.

¹ For details, see status report "Attack on a Primary School in Kivumu Commune, Kibuye Prefecture, and Killing of Six Students and a Night Guard, on 18 March 1997," HRFOR/STRPT/48/1/2 April 1997/E.