

URGENT ACTION

ARBITRARILY DETAINED JOURNALIST RELEASED

Burundian journalist **Floriane Irangabiye** received a presidential pardon on 14 August 2024 and was released from prison on 16 August 2024. She had been serving a 10-year sentence for “threatening the integrity of the national territory” on account of comments made on an online radio show in August 2022.

NO FURTHER ACTION IS REQUESTED. MANY THANKS TO ALL WHO SENT APPEALS.

On 14 August, President Evariste Ndayishimiye signed a decree granting **Floriane Irangabiye** a full pardon. It was published the next day and Floriane Irangabiye was released from prison on 16 August.

Floriane Irangabiye, a journalist, had been in detention since her arrest on 30 August 2022, while on a visit home to Burundi from Rwanda. She was held for more than a week at the National Intelligence Service, where she was questioned without the presence of a lawyer, before being transferred to Mpimba Prison. In late September 2022, she was transferred to Musinga Prison where it has been reported that the damp and smoky conditions of detention aggravated her asthma and her health deteriorated badly. After official requests for a transfer and international pressure, including mobilization by Amnesty International activists, Floriane was transferred in October 2023 to Bubanza Prison, which is closer to Bujumbura.

She was convicted by the Mukaza High Court in Bujumbura on 2 January 2023 of endangering the integrity of the national territory and sentenced to 10 years in prison, in addition to a fine. The prosecution failed to provide credible evidence during her deeply flawed trial and her conviction was based on comments made during a radio show for Radio Igicaniro, an online platform in exile that she co-founded in 2019, in which she and other guests were highly critical of the Burundian government.

On 2 May 2023, the Court of Appeal of Mukaza upheld the conviction. The court found that her initial interrogation by the SNR violated the Criminal Procedure Code because it was conducted without a lawyer present and without informing her of her right to remain silent, but it did not offer a remedy because interrogation by the SNR was not one of the circumstances in which the law explicitly provides for nullifying the procedure. Her lawyers filed a further appeal at the Cassation Chamber of the Supreme Court, but the court ruled against her on 13 February 2024 and upheld the conviction. Following the Supreme Court’s February decision, a request for revision was lodged with the Minister of Justice.

Amnesty International activists have campaigned tirelessly on her behalf. Speaking to the media immediately after her release, Floriane Irangabiye made a special mention of Amnesty International’s support, among other organisations who had campaigned for her release.

NAME AND PRONOUN: Floriane Irangabiye (she/her)

THIS IS THE FIFTH AND FINAL OUTPUT FOR UA 13/23

LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr16/7120/2023/en/>

