

Amnesty International News Access Tape

Amnesty International Research Mission on South-Kivu, Zaire (filmed in Tanzania, Dec 1996)

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10:00:00:00 Amnesty international logo

10:00:05:00 Clock

10:00:00:00 Dope sheet - Section 1: AI researchers in Tanzania

Interview: Ar Agnes Callamard

Interview: Innocent Balemba Zahina

10:01:10:00 Entrance plaque to Amnesty International Tanzania National Secretariat

10:01:15:00 Amnesty International (AI) research delegation meeting at AI Tanzania

10:01:46:00 AI delegation driving on dirt track around Kasulu.

10:02:41:00 Dr Agnes Callamard and Rein Odink, interviewing refugees in National Milling Cooperation transit camp.

10:02:57:11 Interview: Dr Agnes Callamard, Research and Policy Coordinator, Amnesty International

The part of Eastern Zaire, where the conflict took place, is not accessible right now [not only] for Amnesty International but also for most international actors. We already have a team in Rwanda doing research and a team in Kinshasa in the part of Zaire which has not been touched by the current conflict. At the same time, a lot of refugees from Zaire have been fleeing Eastern Zaire, south Kivu and entering into Tanzania along lake Tanganyika in the Kigoma region. So it appears that this region was the most appropriate one to conduct research because people just arriving from the war zone and they could give us testimonies about the situation, the evolution and what had happened

10:03:54:20 Rein Odink gathering testimonies in the National Milling Cooperation transit camp

10:04:08:09 Joseph Muganda gathering testimony from Zairian refugee (face disguised)

10:04:24:11 Set-up shots of Innocent Balemba Zahinda, member of "Héritiers de la Justice" who fled from South-Kivu at Amnesty International in London.

10:04:35:13 Interview: Innocent Balemba Zahinda

Bien, dans la crise de l'est du Zaïre il y a eu de multiples violations des droits de l'homme dont les populations civiles ont été victimes. De part et d'autre des parties belligérantes. Donc, là je vais parler des arrestations arbitraires, des extorsions de populations. Mais carrément, Il y a eu, il y eu des tueries dont les populations civiles ont été victimes par les belligérants, quoi.

In the crisis of Eastern Zaire the civilian population became victims of multiple human rights violations from all sides of the conflict. I'm talking about arbitrary arrests, the exhortion of populations. But really, the civilian population was the victim of killings by belligerents.

10:05:18:00 Dope sheet: Section two: Amnesty International researcher, Rein Odink, interviewing Zairian refugee, December 1996.

Please note: most of the refugees that were interview were not willing to be filmed by Amnesty International on mission. The refugee in this testimony agreed to have his testimony recorded. The interview lasts 3:10 minutes, and we have provided 3 minutes of footage (see below) which could be used in conjunction.

Je suis zaïrois. Je suis parmi les Zaïrois qui ont pris fuite vers la Tanzanie et qui se trouvent ici à Kigoma présentement. Si, nous avons pris fuite c'est suite aux événements sanglants qui se sont déroulés dans notre zone de Fizi dont je suis originaire. Compte tenu des tueries qui se sont déroulés là-bas, nous avons préféré prendre exile, venir rester ici en attendant la fin de la guerre. Le jour de l'occupation de la ville de Mboko il y a eu beaucoup de tueries. Les gens sont morts de part et d'autre surtout du côté de la population. Il y a eu beaucoup de morts à Mboko.

Q: Est-ce que vous avez vu ça personnellement où vous avez décidé de prendre fuite dès que vous avez entendu des coups de feu?

R: A Baraka, j'ai vu moi-même, j'ai vu des morts parce que j'étais là. Il y a eu des morts justement, après une heure après nous avons eu la chance d'échapper et nous sommes sortis de la ville. A Baraka, il y a eu des morts.

Q: il y a eu.. c'était une attaque où?

A: C'était une attaque des rebelles Banyamulenge. Ils ont attaqué la ville de Baraka Et le combat a duré 2 jours. Et finalement ils ont délogé nos militaires qui étaient faibles à ce moment là, qui avaient déjà pris fuite d'ailleurs un jour avant. Mais les volontaires, les combattants, ce sont eux qui avaient lutté pendant 2 jours. Mais parce qu'ils n'avaient pas de renforts, pas suffisamment de munitions, ils ont reculé. Et la ville a été occupé par les rebelles Banyamulenge.

Q: La route que vous avez pris, vous l'avez pris à pied?

Nous avons pris la route à pied. Un trajet vraiment. Nous avons quitté Mboko; Mboko Baraka 38 km à pied; Baraka jusqu'à Kasimiya, il y a plus ou moins 60 km toujours à pied. Et là, nous nous sommes reposés un peu et nous avons attrapé une embarcation qui nous a amené jusqu'ici en Tanzanie.

Q: Et pour l'avenir, votre espoir: est ce que vous avez encore l'espoir de rentrer?

Nous sommes prêts à rentrer. Mais, vraiment, avec la situation qui règne au Zaïre pour le moment, nous attendons parce que vraiment on ne voit pas tellement clair pour le moment. Nous préférons rester ici.

I'm Zairean. I'm one of the Zaireans who fled to Tanzania and who are here in Kigoma right now. Yes, we fled at the time of the bloody events which took place in the area of Fizi, where I'm from. Given the killings that were going on there, we preferred to go into exile, to come here to await the end of the war. On the day of the occupation of the town of Mboko there were many killings. People died on both sides, especially the [civilian] population. There were many deaths in Mboko.

Q: Did you see this personally or did you decide to flee as soon as you heard the firing? In Baraka I saw, I saw the deaths because I was there. There were deaths, right after...one hour after we were able to escape and we left the town. In Baraka there were deaths.

Q: There were..was it an attack or?

It was an attack by the Banyamulenge rebels. They attacked the town of Baraka and the war, the fighting lasted for 2 days, 2 days. And finally, they dislodged our military who were weak at the time and who had fled anyway the day before. But the volunteers, the "combattants", they fought for two days. But because they didn't have reinforcements, not enough ammunition, they retreated. And the town was occupied by the Banyamulenge rebels.

Q: And the route you took, was it on foot?

We went on foot. A real journey. We left Mboko; Mboko to Baraka, 30 km on foot; Baraka to Kasimiya, that was about 60 km. Still on foot. And there we rested a while and we got on a boat which brought us here to Tanzania.

Q: And for the future: Do you have any hopes of returning?

We're ready to return. But really, with the situation which is going on in Zaire at the moment, we're waiting because really it is not very clear at the moment. We prefer to stay here.

**10:08:45:10 Dope sheet: Section three: General views including Lake Tanganiyka,
National Milling Cooperation transit camp
Interview: Dr Agnes Callamard**

- 10:08:50:10 truck transporting refugees
- 10:09:08:17 Refugees at the shore of lake Tanganiyka
- 10:09:14:00 General views of Lake Tanganiyka (Rwanda in distance)
- 10:09:46:07 AI researchers arriving on the shore and walking inland
- 10:10:32:07 Rein Odink gathering testimonies
- 10:10:47:19 General views of transit camp, National Milling Cooperation
- 10:11:14:03 Refugees inside National Milling Cooperation
- 10:11:55:00 Refugees at the dispensary
- 10:12:09:24 General views of refugees
- 10:13:03:09 Interview: Dr Agnes Callamard

The individuals we talked to and interviewed have just fled a war-like situation. They've lost family members, a number of them have no news about their families. In the course of the flight

they got lost. Some of them moved maybe 200 metres away from others and there was a huge crowd moving at once. So the people we meet and talk to are usually very strong people but at the same time they've gone through tremendous pain and they are still going through tremendous pain because they don't know what has happened to their family, to their friends, to their neighbours. They are living in a foreign country with a foreign language. Their living conditions are not great because they are refugees who arrived in an emergency-like situation so the conditions of life are very rudimentary.

10:14:09:00 Dope sheet: Section four: Interview with Albert Kwokwo Barume

Albert Kwokwo Barume is a lawyer who works with "Héritiers de la Justice" (Inheritors of Justice) which is a church-based human rights and conflict resolution group which was working throughout South-Kivu. Accused of being pro-Tutsi, he was forced to flee his home in Bukavu, Zaire in October 1996. He and others walked for 29 days, over 700 km, to try and reach safety when the war broke out.

10:14:17:20 Set-up shots of Albert Kwokwo Barume

10:14:28:00 Albert Kwokwo Barume pointing out where he fled on map.

10:15:04:10 Interview: Albert Kwokwo Barume

C'est franchement avec beaucoup de regret, beaucoup de remords que nous étions obligé de quitter, obligé de quitter parce qu'il y avait la guerre qui éclatait. A travers cette guerre, plusieurs positions avaient été prises de part et d'autres, et à travers différentes positions, nous étions,... on se sentait insécurisé, franchement sur tous les plans. Nous pensions qu'on ne pouvait pas continuer à travailler dans ces conditions là au risque de perdre la vie. Parce que nous savions que nous le travail que nous étions en train de faire ne nous laissaient pas inconnus. C'était un travail qui était assez perceptible sur le terrain et à ce titre nous avons réalisé que c'était dangereux dans la mesure où il y avait déjà des faits, beaucoup de faits, qui montraient que nous pouvions être une cible pour les uns et pour les autres.

It's frankly with a lot of regret, a lot of remorse that we were forced to leave because the war broke out. Throughout this war, many positions were taken on one side or another, and amongst these positions we were, we felt insecure, frankly on all levels. We thought that we couldn't continue to work in such conditions at the risk of losing our lives. Because we knew that the work that we were doing didn't allow us to be anonymous. It was work which was quite perceptible on the ground and in this way we realised that it was dangerous in the sense that that there were already facts, many facts which showed that we could be a target.

10:16:11:00 Interview: Albert Kwokwo Barume

Lorsque il y a eu, ces événements ont commencé. Nous, en tant qu'organisme de défense des droits de l'homme nous nous sommes posés beaucoup de questions... Nous avons profondément réfléchi sur l'attitude qu'il fallait avoir, sur la norme de conduite qu'il fallait avoir. Et au bout d'une longue, franchement d'une très très longue réflexion, nous nous étions dits que nous devions rester activistes des droits de l'homme, malgré la vague. Autrement dit, rester à l'arrière garde des violations des droits de l'homme. Rester intègres dans notre voie. Donc nous restions en train de dire que quelque soit la situation, les droits de l'homme devaient être respecter. C'est

très important. Même en tant de guerre, il y a une norme des droits de l'homme. Je ne sais pas mais c'est même une théorie des droits de l'homme qui le dit. C'est vrai, on peut parler de circonstances exceptionnelles en matière des droits de l'homme. Ça existe. Mais la théorie des droits de l'homme elle nous dit que même en circonstances exceptionnelles il y a de ces droits auxquels on ne peut pas porter atteinte. Et nous nous avions dits que il fallait que de part et d'autres, c'est à dire les belligérants, les parties en conflit, que ce soit les Bandes armées que ce soit la partie Zaïroise qui s'estimait agressée, il fallait que de part et d'autres on respecte les droits de l'homme.

When the events started, we, as an organisation which defends human rights, we asked ourselves many questions. We thought profoundly about the attitude that we should have, about the norms of conduct that we should have. And, at end of a long, frankly a very very long reflection, we said to ourselves that we should remain human rights activists despite this wave. In other words, in the face of human rights violations, keeping to our path. Therefore, we stayed, saying that whatever the situations, human rights should be respected. This is very important. Even in war, there is a norm for human rights. I don't know. There is even a theory of human rights which says this. It's true, you can talk about exceptional circumstances on the subject of human rights. This exists. But human rights theory tells us that even in exceptional circumstances these rights can't be undermined. And we said that all sides, that is the belligerents on [all] sides of the conflict, whether it be armed groups or the Zairian side which felt attacked, all should respect human rights.

10:17:38:10 Interview: Albert Kwokwo Barume

C'est à dire que lorsqu'on quittait chez soi, j'ai beaucoup réfléchi, je me suis demandé ce qu'il fallait amener. J'ai beaucoup réfléchi. Pourquoi j'ai beaucoup réfléchi, parce que la fuite n'était pas organisée. Ce n'est pas comme ce que l'on voit souvent à la télévision occidentale ou lorsque il y a guerre, qu'ils sont obligé de fuir, Les pouvoirs prennent ses responsabilités, ils prennent soin de sécuriser les civils pour leur dire fuyez, partez. Non ce n'était pas ça. Ce que nous étions en train de fuir dans une panique. Sur la route, y'avait ce qu'il y avait. C'est à dire tous ceux là qui étaient prêts à vous ravir tout. Moi je pensais que si je devais partir, je n'avais pas le temps, je ne pouvais pas passer chez moi prendre quoi que ce soit, je n'avais que quelques minutes pour quitter. Franchement quelques minutes. Je suis rentré dans ma chambre. J'ai regardé dans ma maison. Qu'est ce qu'il fallait prendre. J'ai pris ma toge, ma toge d'avocat. Je me suis dit. Je ne sais pas, je l'emmène. Est-ce que je l'amène. Je me suis dit je ne sais pas, je l'amène c'est possible je ne quitte pas le pays. Je peux être dans une autre région être avocat. Ou je peux arriver n'importe où. Et peut-être un pays de court terme. En tout cas c'est la seule chose que moi j'ai vu, la plus... qui pouvait m'aider. C'était un instinct. Je ne sais pas comment je l'ai eu mais j'ai réfléchi comme ça.

That is to say when we left our homes I thought a lot. I asked myself what I should take. I thought about it a lot. Why did I think so much? Because the flight was not organised. It's not like what you often see on western television or when there is a war, when people have to flee. The authorities are responsible, they take care of civilians by saying to them: "Flee", "leave". No, it was not like that. We were fleeing in panic. On the road there was what there was. That's to say that there were all those who were ready to steal everything from you. I thought that if I had to leave, I didn't have time. I could go back to my place and take whatever. I only had a few minutes to leave. Frankly, a few minutes. I returned to my bedroom. I looked round my house. What should I take? I took my lawyers robes. I said to myself. "I don't know. I'll take it. Should I take it? I said to myself. "I don't know. I'll take it because it's possible that I won't leave the country.

I could be a lawyer in another region. Or I go wherever, and maybe be in another country for a short while". In any case, it was the only thing that I saw, the most...which could help me. It was an instinct. I don't know how I had it but I just thought like that..

10:18:57:00 Interview: Albert Kwokwo Barume

Dans notre groupe, nous qui marchions parce que chacun avait un groupe. Nous étions un groupe de 6 personnes. Il y avait moi, un collègue de service M Balemba, des amis prêtres, un ami professeur d'université à Bukavu, y'avait son petit frère. Donc nous étions 6. Nous marchions comme ça. Mais sur la route, il y avait beaucoup beaucoup d'enfants. Même des enfants, Des viellards, ceux qui étaient plus aptes. Les gens s'arretaient là où ils ne pouvaient plus continuer.

In our group, we who were walking [together] because each had his own group. We were a group of 6 people. There was myself, a colleague, Mr Balemba, some friends who were priests, a friend who was a lecturer at the University of Bukavu, and his little brother. So, there were 6 of us. We walked like that. But on the road there were many children, even children, old people, those who were most able. People stopped there where they could no longer continue.

10:19:33:03 Interview: Albert Kwokwo Barume

Mais je pense que il faut que les droits de l'homme finissent par triompher. Parce qu'une société qui ne connaît pas un certain niveau de droits de l'homme ne peut vivre que ce que nous sommes en train de vivre. C'est à dire des violences, des conflits. Parce que ce sont en fait, cela arrive lorsque les gens ne savent plus contenir ceux qui sévissent. C'est cela. Je pense que, l'avenir. Moi je n'ai pas l'habitude de perdre espoir, c'est vrai. Je ne suis pas aussi trop optimiste . Je pense qu'il y a un effort à fournir. La responsabilité elle est de notre côté. Je pense que cet avenir, il dépend que de nous. Nous n'avons pas le droit de lâcher à combattre, bien au contraire, Je pense que c'est le moment où jamais de faire un effort pour que les droits de l'homme puissent triompher.

But I think that human rights should triumph in the end. Because a society which doesn't have a certain level of human rights can't live through what we are living through. That's to say, violence, conflict. Because these are in fact, this happens when people don't know how to contain those who are rampant. It's that. I think that the future. I, I don't usually lose hope, it's true. I'm not too much of an optimist. I think that effort must be put into this. It is our responsibility. I think that the future depends on us. We haven't the right to leave this combat behind. On the contrary, I think this is the moment or never, to make an effort so that human rights may triumph.

ENDS