



STAND FOR OUR PARENTS (SFOP)

Association of the families of ICTR / IRMCT Acquitted, Released and Detainees

PRESS RELEASE - BRUSSELS, 8 JUNE 2026

UN Security Council faces June deadline on acquitted held five years in Niger; families reject any transfer to Rwanda

Three of the acquitted and released persons held in Niger have already died waiting. Funding ends 31 December.

BRUSSELS — Families of persons prosecuted by the UN's Rwanda tribunal — including the acquitted and released are held in safe house in Niamey Niger since 2021 and 23 still serving sentences in Benin and Senegal — have urged the United Nations Security Council to rule out any transfer to Rwanda ahead of a decisive vote this month on the tribunal's Residual Mechanism (IRMCT).

All letters available at www.standforourparents.org/documents

The June session is the last realistic window for action: the Mechanism's own judge has set a financial deadline of **31 December 2026**, after which funding for the persons concerned will end. Three of the persons held in Niger have already died waiting for a country to accept them. The average age of the UN detained persons in Benin and Senegal is 71; the oldest is 87. They have opposed their transfer to Rwanda by letters sent to the UN Security Council President, the IRMCT President, and the UN Secretary-General.

Concerns over Rwanda extend well beyond the families. In May 2026, Rwandan academic Aimable Karasira died in custody on the day of his scheduled release; Human Rights Watch and the Committee to Protect Journalists called for an independent inquiry. The UK Supreme Court (2023) and the Dutch Supreme Court (2023) have each blocked transfers to Rwanda on documented risk grounds. Reporters Without Borders ranks Rwanda 139th of 180 for press freedom.

Security Council Resolution 2740 (2024), paragraph 7, requires that the consent or objections of those concerned be taken into account. To date, no relocation country has been identified for the four acquitted.

"We call upon the UN which created the Rwanda Ad hoc tribunal to assume its continuing responsibility on the fundamental rights of our parents. Nothing can justify prioritising budgetary savings over life and human dignity, which are under the



*protection of the United Nations. The Security Council has weeks, not years, to act — and Rwanda is not the option" said **Jean De Dieu Nsanzabandi**, SFOP spokesperson.*

SFOP asks the Security Council to: (i) rule out Rwanda as a destination for any of the persons concerned (ii) secure durable solutions for the persons concerned in Niger, Benin and Senegal who have formally refused the option of Rwanda; (iii) ensure the families' voice is heard in deliberations on the Mechanism's future.

About SFOP — Stand For Our Parents is an association in formation under Belgian law, representing the families, relatives and support committee of persons acquitted, released and detained by the ICTR / IRMCT. It operates strictly within the framework of international law.

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Available for interviews in English and French.

Press file available at www.standforourparents.org/documents: SFOP open letter to the UN Secretary-General (8 May 2026); open letter from international defence counsel (26 May 2026); detainees' letters from Benin (6 April 2026) and Senegal (20 April 2026), Legal Memorandum on transfer risks (27 May 2026) available upon request.

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