

# 30 Days for Freedom

4 April - 3 May 2014

#FreethePress

WAN-IFRA [www.worldpressfreedomday.org](http://www.worldpressfreedomday.org)

His Excellency President Paul Kagame  
President of the Republic of Rwanda  
Kigali, Rwanda

@PaulKagame

7 April 2014

Your Excellency,

We are writing as part of the global online campaign '30 Days for Freedom' to call for the release of Agnès Uwimana Nkusi, imprisoned in Rwanda since 10 July 2010.

Ms. Uwimana was arrested along with her colleague Saidati Mukakibibi after articles criticising Your Excellency were published in the bi-monthly Kinyarwanda-language *Umurabyo* newspaper.

The Rwandan High Court charged Ms. Uwimana with endangering national security, genocide denial, defamation of the president, and divisionism – charges which brought an initial sentence of 17 years, reduced to four years on 5 April 2012.

This was not the first time your government had pursued Ms. Uwimana. In January 2007, the journalist was imprisoned for one year after publishing an anonymous letter criticising the authorities. Despite pressure from the government-appointed Media Council, Ms. Uwimana had resisted calls to 'tone down' her reporting, refusing to be silenced.

Your Excellency, we are deeply concerned that Agnès Uwimana Nkusi should not have been imprisoned for her work. The heavy punishments that accompany vaguely defined 'crimes' risk stifling investigative reporting into issues of genuine public interest. They send a chilling effect throughout the profession and encourage journalists to self-censor in order to protect themselves.

We therefore urge you to respect a free and independent press and call on you to free Agnès Uwimana Nkusi.

Sincerely,

**#FreethePress**  
**The 30 Days for Freedom campaign**

Organised by the World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers (WAN-IFRA) and the World Editors Forum, the '30 Days for Freedom' campaign aims to highlight the plight of imprisoned journalists worldwide in the 30 days leading up to 3 May, World Press Freedom Day.

[www.wan-ifra.org](http://www.wan-ifra.org) / [www.worldpressfreedomday.org](http://www.worldpressfreedomday.org)