

In regard to the defence in genocide trials, the accused and the victims are too numerous for all to benefit from the services of a lawyer. Eighty-eight people are about to complete a training programme organised by the Danish Human Rights Centre that will qualify them to provide a defence for both victims and the accused. Their deployment could very adequately resolve the problem in regard to representation and defence at trials. This should serve to increase the symbolic weight of an effective defence.

The respectful but uncompromising approach of *Avocats Sans Frontières* has largely contributed to improving the quality of legal proceedings. Its representatives are the best placed to ensure that those acting on behalf of the defence are given a practical training. As the organization has opted to gradually disengage from direct involvement, it could instead begin to take on the supervision of those acting for the defence. However, the presence of expatriate lawyers depends on the president of the Bar Association, who grants them the right to speak for the defence. So far, the Bar Association has not shown any great enthusiasm for the new category of judicial staff. *Avocats Sans Frontières* should remain active in Rwanda, but if it is to do so, the government will have to demonstrate a clear and unambiguous commitment to their continuing presence. They might eventually become involved in providing help to deal with the regions in which the justice system is not yet able to operate because of the insecurity problems.

To be fully effective, it is not enough that a justice system should simply be a 'good' system; it must also be acknowledged as such by the government and the people. The previous Minister of Justice was usually abandoned by his colleagues and left to stand alone in the firing line of criticism from those calling for a more rapid dispensation of justice. In January 1999 the Minister, a Hutu like his predecessors in this position, was sufficiently discouraged to quit the country. A new Minister, Jean de Dieu Mucyo, has been nominated in his place. It seems that the country's higher authorities are prepared to demonstrate greater support for the new man. It is certain that a more public commitment towards the justice system by senior political figures would considerably increase its impact and political effects.

A special unit within the Ministry of Justice has initiated campaigns aimed at raising awareness about how the justice system is operating. This work should be given a greater priority. However, the unit needs to develop a more effective communications strategy.

3. Reconstructing the judicial system

A considerable amount of investment has quite rightly been devoted to putting the judicial system back on its feet. Laws have been passed to create and organize new institutions. However, work still needs to be done on the rehabilitation of buildings housing the judicial machinery at the most immediate local level, and the European Union has agreed to finance this work. The Swiss development co-operation agency has supported a training programme for magistrates in these local courts. This was a very basic course that still has to be perfected.

Continuing training programmes are on the agenda and they should help to make judicial staff more effective. This will give them qualifications that will