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## **MEDIA ADVISORY: African family reunites at Logan Airport May 18**

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May 13, 2005

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**WHAT:** Students at the University of New Hampshire and members of local charity Danny's Team join Mariana Bitondo Mwisimbwa as she reunites with her husband and four children after being separated for nearly five years because of political violence in the Congo.

**WHEN:** Wednesday, May 18, 2005. The family will arrive on an Ethiopian Airlines flight at 2:30 p.m.

**WHERE:** Boston's Logan Airport, international terminal.

**BACKGROUND:** The Committee on Rights and Justice (CORAJ), a group consisting of UNH students and faculty as well as community members, has been working since January to raise the more than \$5,000 needed to bring Mariana Bitondo Mwisimbwa's husband and four children to the United States thanks to fundraising concerts, community donations and a loan from Danny's Team. Fundraising efforts continue. Anyone wishing to make a donation can mail a check to Danny's Team, P.O. Box 606, Durham, NH 03824.

Five years ago Mwisimbwa fled the Congo after being raped, tortured and imprisoned because her law firm represented a member of the political opposition. She was granted political asylum in 2001, and has been working since then as a machine operator at a Manchester factory so she could support her family while they waited for visas. Her husband was unable to find work after her political trouble. Mwisimbwa was highly respected as a legal secretary, and hopes to improve her English and find ways to retrain in her field once her family is settled.

In anticipation of her family's arrival, Mwisimbwa moved into a three-bedroom apartment in Manchester last week, and five trucks went into four states over two days to collect items donated to the family to help furnish the apartment.