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Weekly bulletin « ITEKA N'IJAMBO » n° 94 of the Burundian League of Human Rights "ITEKA"

Week from 15-21 January 2017



In memory of Madam Marie Claudette Kwizera, Treasurer of Iteka, reported missing since December 10, 2015. From December 2015 to 21 January 2018, Iteka has documented at least 476 cases of enforced disappearances.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CDF : *Family Development Centre*

CDS : *Health Centre*

CNDD-FDD : *National Council for the Defense of Democracy*

DPAE : *Provincial for Agriculture and Livestock Direction*

ECOFO : *Fundamental School*

FAB : *Burundi Armed Forces*

FNL : *National Liberation Front*

FRODEBU : *Front for Democracy in Burundi*

MSD : *Movement for Solidarity and Democracy*

GBV : *Gender based Violence*

PJ : *Judicial Police*

SNR : *National Intelligence Service*

0. INTRODUCTION

Allegations and violations of human rights were recorded during this reporting period: at least 7 persons were killed including 4 corpses, 19 arbitrarily arrested and 1 GBV victim.

The Imbonerakure of CNDD-FDD ruling party's youth, SNR agents, policemen and administration officials are blamed as the perpetrators of most of human rights violations.

This bulletin reports cases of killings and arbitrary arrests of the alleged President Pierre Nkurunziza's 3rd term opponents.

Cases of gender based violence are also reported.

The phenomenon of mob justice and settling of scores is reported in different in the country.

Arbitrary arrests and intimidation linked to the referendum vote for the change of the constitution is reported in this bulletin

The bulletin rejects impunity of crimes that is granted to pro CNDD-FDD party. Members of this party involved in different crimes enjoy impunity from public complicity.

I. ALLEGATIONS OF VIOLATIONS AND VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS

I.1. ALLEGATIONS OF VIOLATIONS OF THE RIGHT TO LIFE

I.1.1. PEOPLE KILLED BY IMBONERAKURE

A body found in Butaganzwa commune, Kayanza province

On January 15, 2017, at about 7:00 am, on Nkango hill, Butaganzwa commune, Kayanza province, the body of Jacques Nzoyisaba, FNL member of Agathon Rwasa's wing, was found tied up with belts, in Nkokoma River. According to sources on site, he was killed by Imbonerakure because he told people to vote for "NO" in the referendum for the change of the Constitution of the Republic of Burundi.

I.1.2. PERSONS KILLED BY UNIDENTIFIED PEOPLE

A corpse found in Vugizo commune, Makamba province

On January 18, 2018, a body of Martin, a former policeman and ex-FAB, was found in Gasamari, Kiyazi hill, Vugizo commune, Makamba province. According to sources on site, he was reportedly killed while returning home from Makamba province city. The same source adds that he had fled the young Imbonerakure from his home village of Rutegama who wanted to arrest him.

A corpse discovered in Bwiza urban zone, Bujumbura city

On January 16, 2018, a body of 30-year-old Buraza-born Joachim Ndayisaba was found strangled in a gutter near the “Eglise Vivante” of Jabe, Bwiza urban zone, Mukaza commune, Bujumbura city. According to police sources, the victim would be a thief and that he would have been murdered by his colleagues when sharing the loot (a phone) they had just stolen not far from the crime scene. According to Burundi police, five people were arrested for investigation.

A body found in Ruyigi province

Information received on January 15, 2018 indicates that on January 14, 2018, a body of Anastasie Ntahompagaze was found in a bush of Rusengo High School grounds, Ruyigi province. His 2 children including his son and daughter Fabiola, disabled, but also his 6-year grandson were arrested. According to sources on site, she came from the market and everything she had bought was next to the corpse. The alleged perpetrators have not been identified. According to these sources, the three persons arrested were released without conditions on 19 January 2018.

A body found in Ruyigi commune and province

On January 16, 2018, an unidentified body of a woman was found on Ntunda hill 5 km from Rusengo zone, Ruyigi commune and province. The perpetrators remain unknown.

I.2. PERSONS ARRESTED BY IMBONERAKURE, POLICE AND ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS

Two people arrested in Matana commune, Bururi province

Information received dated 21 January 2017 indicates that on 9 January 2017, Karibwami Augustin from Gishubi commune, Gitega province and Nzovu Augustin were arrested in Matana commune by Imbonerakure in collaboration with the police of this area. According to sources on site, they were beaten up accusing them of irregulars and being fighters. They were taken to Matana commune cell.

Ten people arrested in Rumonge province

On 16 January 2018, ten young people on a bus were arrested in Magara, Bugarama commune, Rumonge province by police and taken to Rumonge provincial police station cell. According to local sources, they were heading to Tanzania in search of work. All of these young people originate from Ruteme and Maramvya hills of Mukike, Bugarama and Burambi communes which participated in protests against President Nkurunziza's third term in 2015. They are accused of wanting to travel into this country without travel documents. But the charge was subsequently changed and they were accused of joining armed groups.

Three people arrested in Ngagara urban zone, Bujumbura city

On January 18, 2018, police officers led by Aaron in a pickup without plate searched the homes of two brothers, Pacifique Butoyi and Thierry Ciza. According to sources on site, no weapon or other suspicious object was found in this house located in quarter IV, Ngagara urban zone, Ntakangwa commune, Bujumbura city. These two brothers and their shopkeeper were arrested without a warrant and taken to SNR cell in Rohero urban zone. The reason for their arrest remains unknown.

A person arrested in Nyabikere commune, Karuzi province

The information received by League Iteka on January 16, 2018 indicates that on January 14, 2018, Dusabe, aged 13, from Ngugo hill, Maramvya zone, Nyabikere commune was arrested by the police from Maramvya when he came to buy medicine at the pharmacy. The latter accused her of selling fraud drugs. He spent 3 days in the commune cell before being released.

Two people arrested in Gasorwe commune, Muyinga province

On January 20, 2017, on Kinama hill, Gasorwe commune, Muyinga province, Charles Bacamurwanko, communal council member and teacher at ECOFO Kagugo and Samuel Maniragaba, both members of FNL of Agathon Rwasa's wing were arrested by Chartiere, Nsamirizi and Barumwete, all Imbonerakure, then taken to Gasorwe commune police cell. Charles Bancamurwako, the communal representative of FNL of Agathon Rwasa's wing in Gasorwe was severely beaten. The victim still shows signs of caning in the face and back. They were suspected to be agreeing on the promotion of "NO" to the change of the constitution.

A person arrested in Muyinga commune and province

On January 20, 2018, Zacharie Nduwimana, Frodebu Nyakuri activist and community health worker, resident of Nkoyoyo hill, was arrested on the night of January 20, 2018 by Muyinga zone head, Isaac Nibigira and Nkoyoyo hill head, Mutabazi Asmani. The victim spent the night at Nkoyoyo police post. He was transferred in the morning of January 21, 2018 to PJ Muyinga cell. He is accused of propaganda to vote for "NO" to change the constitution.

1.3. GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

A girl raped in Buhiga commune Karuzi province

Information received by League Iteka on January 16, 2018 indicates that on January 13, 2018, on Buhinyuza hill and zone, Buhiga commune, Karuzi province, an 11-year-old girl named D. was raped by Gérard Nkurunziza, DPAE Karuzi agent. Gérard was arrested and jailed in Karuzi provincial police station cell. Representatives of CDF Karuzi called for a flagrant trial, but Karuzi judicial authorities did not react.

II. OTHER FACTS REPORTED

A person reported missing in Nyabikere commune, Karuzi province

Information received by Ligue Iteka on January 16, 2018 indicates that a girl named Ndereyimana of Ruhuma hill, Rugwiza zone, Nyabikere commune, Karuzi province has not been found since January 7, 2018. The alleged perpetrator of her disappearance is Audace Nkurunziza from the same hill. He was arrested on 14 January 2018 and taken to Nyabikere commune cell.

Night patrols in Bururi province

Information received on January 21, 2018 indicates that night patrols by Imbonerakure continue to be observed in the communes of Bururi province. According to sources on site, Imbonerakure who head are Bikebesi and Bavariya. They launch hate and divisive messages. Most citizens say they are being asked for huge sums of money and mobile phones. The most targeted people are those who are not the ruling party members including those of FNL of Agathon Rwasa's wing and MSD party. The same phenomenon is observed in Matana commune precisely in the urban center, in Rubanga, Butwe and Gasibe.

Forced Contribution in Gitega Province

On January 7, 2018, the Governor of Gitega province called on the people of his province to contribute to the finishing of the construction of Gitega stadium. It was asked to contribute at least a sum of 200 Bif. Despite this, from January 16, 2018, Imbonerakure take the liberty to force Gitega market traders to pay an amount of 1000 Bif, which causes great anger among the population of Gitega.

A person killed in Bubanza commune and province

On 16 January 2018, at about 4:00 pm, at ECOFO Karinzi, on Karinzi hill, Muramba zone, Bubanza commune and province, a 4th form schoolgirl named Chancelline, aged 15, beat to death Tharcisse Mugisha, 13 years old of the same class. According to our sources, the victim died while en route to CDS Ntamba. The reason for this assassination is not yet known. The perpetrator ran away after committing the crime as well as his family, according to the same sources.

Two children buried alive in Mpanda commune, Bubanza province

Information received by League Iteka on 15 January 2018 indicates that on 14 January 2018, on Kinwanuma sub-hill, Nyamabere hill, Mpanda commune, Bubanza province, two children Egide Bigirimana, 10 years old and Bayisenge were caught with maize stolen in Elias Nyandwi's field. According to sources on site, Elias Nyandwi immediately dug two holes where he buried the two children up to the chest being alive. This man ran away at the passage of a resident of the area who rescued these two children. The administration and police authorities say that the perpetrator is still wanted.

II.1. PEOPLE KILLED DUE TO MOB JUSTICE AND/OR SETTLING OF SCORES

One person killed in Bururi commune and province

On January 18, 2018, Nduwamungu Burimbwa, aged 15, of the Twa social component, from Burarana hill, Bururi commune and province died at his home. According to sources on site, it was following assault and battery by his neighbors on January 16, 2017, accusing him of stealing and slaughtering a goat in the neighborhood.

II.2. INTIMIDATION ACTS

People threatened in Kirundo commune and province

Information received by Ligue Iteka on 21 January 2018 indicates that on 15 December 2017, in Kirundo province, a meeting was held at CNDD-FDD party headquarters, among which participants were Nkurunziza, head of Kanyinya hill, Imbonerakure of Kirundo center including Biseseke, Mayoya and Ezechiel, Kirundo zone head. During this meeting, a list of opponents to be jailed or killed was drawn up, including those who helped to transfer to Ngozi hospital and the funeral of the late Serges Barutwanayo, former administrator of Kirundo commune and member of Provincial committee of UPRONA party of Charles Nditije's wing, assassinated as of November 28, 2017. Sources on site indicate that those on this list know the alleged perpetrators of Serges Barutwanayo's assassination.

Speech of intimidation in Cankuzo province

On January 16, 2018, Governor Njiji Désire, during a meeting in Uprona party headquarters office in Cankuzo, to sensitize the population to vote in favor of the referendum for the change of the constitution of the Republic, pronounced words of intimidation. According to sources on site, he has promised to arrest anyone who will dare criticizing the contents of the draft constitution. He has even warned pastors and priests that he has intelligence agents among the faithful, to verify that political issues are not mentioned.

III. CONCLUSION

Human rights violations and allegations of violations following the deteriorating political context since the start of President Pierre Nkurunziza's third term challenge continue to be recorded in various parts of the country.

Killings, arbitrary and illegal arrests targeted to CNDD-FDD regime opponents especially those of FNL of Agathon Rwasa are also reported.

Intimidation linked to the referendum for the change of the constitution of the Republic, forced contributions by administration officials and Imbonerakure from CNDD-FDD is a source of threats to the population.