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Weekly bulletin « ITEKA N'IJAMBO » n° 100 of the Burundian League of Human Rights "ITEKA"

Week from 26 February – 4 March 2018



In memory of Madam Marie Claudette Kwizera, Treasurer of Iteka, reported missing since December 10, 2015. From December 2015 to 4 March 2018, Iteka has documented at least 470 cases of enforced disappearances.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

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

ECOFO : *Fundamental School*

FNL : *National Liberation Front*

OPJ : *Judicial Police officer*

RANAC : *Rally for National Change*

SNR : *National Intelligence Service*

WFP : *World Food Programme*

0. INTRODUCTION

Allegations and violations of human rights were recorded during this reporting period: at least 6 persons killed including 3 corpse, 5 tortured and 13 arbitrarily arrested.

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

The phenomenon of corpses found across the country is reported in this bulletin.

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

Arbitrary arrests linked to control of household notebooks and to the referendum vote for the change of the constitution, intimidation linked to the control of receipts of enrolment to the referendum and the 2020 elections is reported in this bulletin

Iteka League 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 POLICE

A person killed in Buhiga commune, Karuzi province

Information received by Iteka League on February 26, 2018 indicates that on February 25, 2018, at about 8:00 pm, on Buhinyuza hill and zone, Buhiga commune, Karuzi province, Yampabire, a police officer assigned to Karuzi province police post killed his colleague named Christian. According to local sources, Yampabire was back from a bar after a misunderstanding with those who were there accusing them of stealing his phone. Arrived at home, he chased his wife and children, shooting in the air. The police intervened and he rushed into his room and shot at one of the policemen who died straightaway. He was arrested the next day as he was short of ammunition. Three days later, he was sentenced to life after a flagrancy trial.

I.1.2. PERSONS KILLED BY UNIDENTIFIED PEOPLE

A person killed in Cankuzo province

On February 27, 2018, around 8:00 pm, Philippe Nteziriba, from Murehe hill, Minyare zone, Cankuzo commune and province was killed by unidentified people with a machete and knives as he returned home. According to the OPJ Cankuzo and the prosecutor, Leonard Sindayigaya, the cause of this assassination remains unknown.

Two dead found in Busoni commune, Kirundo province

Information received by Iteka League on February 26, 2018, dated 25 February 2018, on Cimbogo hill, Gatete hill, Gatatare zone, Busoni commune, Kirundo province, a body of René Pacifique Ntwari, son of Hanyagimfura and Ndere, displaced from Kabanga site since 1993 and another unidentified body were found just off the Rwandan border. According to local sources, Imbonerakure arrested Rene Pacific Ntwari the day before from Mahama camp. Since he did not have a pass, he had passed through a clandestine way and met Imbonerakure who gave him a phone to call his family to tell them to send money to save him. By the time his family was looking for ways to transfer the money, they learnt he had been murdered. René Pacifique Ntwari was killed by Imbonerakure stationed in Murehe Nature Reserve where they perform paramilitary training. These Imbonerakure are from communes of Busoni, Gitobe and Bwambarangwe. The same sources add that these Imbonerakure stationed in Murehe reserve of are illegally supplied with food by ECOFO directors. This food is donated by WFP in partnership with Action Agro-Allemande to the school feeding program.

A person killed in Bugendana commune, Gitega province

On February 26, 2018, at around 2:00 am, on Mutoyi hill, Bugendana commune, Gitega province, Evariste Ngenzi, CNDD-FDD party representative in the area was murdered by two soldiers of the Burundi army. These are Chief Warrant Officer Janvier Ndashagameye, Mutoyi post head and Corporal Jonas Uwimbabazi, both from the 212th Commando Battalion of Gitega. The two soldiers appeared on February 27, 2018 before the court of Gitega. They were sentenced to life imprisonment and 5 million Bif for compensation to the family. A lady named Sabine accused of complicity was sentenced to 20 years in prison. These two soldiers responded to aggression from armed young Imbonerakure of this hill. This was mentioned but Gitega court did not wish to investigate on these revelations and just sentenced these soldiers.

A person killed in Gihanga commune, Bubanza province

On the morning of February 27, 2018, a body of Dieudonné Ngendakumana was found in Ninga, Gihanga zone and commune, Bubanza province. According to sources on site, Dieudonné had been seen the day before in a bar of prohibited drinks of the area. Those who killed him also stole more than 400,000 Bif. Five people who were with him in the bar the day before were arrested for investigation.

1.2. PEOPLE TORTURED BY IMBONERAKURE AND ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS

A person tortured in Rango commune, Kayanza province¹

On February 2, 2018, on Rusave hill, Rango commune, Kayanza province, Jean Paul Niyonkuru was beaten up by Imbonerakure, including Jean, Barazira, Rwamo and another nicknamed Kidasha. He was accused of being a member of Amizero y'abarundi. He is being treated at CDS Gasenyi in the same commune.

¹ In our bulletin No 96, instead of Jean, Barazira, Rwamo, it is rather Jean alias Rwamo

A person tortured in Gitaramuka commune, Karuzi province

On February 28, 2018, on Ntunda hill and zone, Gitaramuka commune, a man named Venant Coyitungiye was beaten up by Imbonerakure including Nduwimana and Bucumi Eric. According to sources on site, he was accused of working for General Godefroid Niyombare and he was ransomed of 13,000 Bif not to be jailed. Venant Coyitungiye was slandered for stealing his money, add the same sources.

A person tortured in Gitaramuka commune, Karuzi province

On March 2, 2018, on Gitaramuka hill, zone and commune, a teacher named Pascal from Kigozi hill in the same zone was beaten up by Nyaruhinda zone head named Clement. According to sources on site, Pascal was accused of having said that officials should line up separately for the reception of fertilizer at the commune office. He beat him telling him that officials do not vote favorably for the ruling party and that they must be corrected.

A person tortured in Gitega province

The information received by League Iteka on February 26, 2018 indicates that on the evening of February 24, 2018, Désiré Sindayihebura alias Musoni, Iwacu journalist, was beaten by Valentin Kubwimana, nurse in Karusi and Jean Berchmans, a volunteer on "Ijwi ry'umukenyezi" radio, both Imbonerakure from Giheta. The crime was committed on Gisuru hill, Giheta commune at Micheline's bar. They were arrested by the police and then jailed in Giheta commune cell. The two Imbonerakure were released on 1 March 2018 on the intervention of CNDD-FDD party representative in Giheta commune.

A person tortured in Butaganzwa commune, Kayanza province

On 2 March 2018, a man named Simon from Nkango hill, Butaganzwa commune, Kayanza province, was beaten when back home by 3 Imbonerakure, Claude Nduwimana alias Ziryezose, Jean Marie Itangishaka and a man named Ezekiel. According to sources on site, he was accused of not having his receipt for enlisting in the constitutional referendum. Imbonerakure often in police uniform at night have set a curfew in different hills of Butaganzwa commune and no one can move after 6:00 pm without receipt. In this same commune, acts of intimidation against the population are observed. Even audience with administration officials are conditioned by the presentation of these receipts.

A person tortured in Rango commune, Kayanza province

On March 2, 2018, at Kabuye hill, Rango commune, Kayanza province, Simon Ndayizeye, FNL member of Agathon Rwasa's wing, was beaten at home by Imbonerakure including Emmanuel Muniho, Ngaruko and Philbert. They asked for the receipt for enlisting in the referendum and he presented it to them. Despite this, they beat him because they demanded him to join CNDD-FDD party, which he refused. In Rango commune, eight young Imbonerakure raid in households to ask people suspected of being opponents "abakeba" receipts for enrollment in the referendum.

1.3. PERSONS ARRESTED BY IMBONERAKURE, POLICE, ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS AND SNR OFFICERS

A person arrested in Matongo commune, Kayanza province

Information received by League Iteka on 26 February 2018 indicates that on 20 February 2018, in Matongo commune, Kayanza province, a man named Paul of Kijuri hill, RANAC coalition member, was jailed in Kayanza police cell, accused of recruiting rebels. According to sources on site, he was arrested on the orders of Célestin Minani, CNDD-FDD party representative in the commune.

A person arrested in Gihanga commune, Bubanza province

On 1 March 2018, in Buringa zone, Gihanga commune, Bubanza province, Fundisho Jean Baptiste was arrested by Gihanga police accompanied by Imbonerakure and Buringa zone head. According to our sources, Fundisho Jean Baptiste was arrested when he was preparing to go to teach in DRC. His family searched in Gihanga cells but in vain.

Two people arrested in Kiremba commune Ngozi province

On 1 March 2018 in Kiremba commune, Ngozi province, Cyriaque Nkezabahizi, administrator of Kiremba commune and Michel Mutama, director of ECOFO Kirempera and representative of a football association in the same commune, were arrested by the police and taken to Ngozi central prison. According to sources on site, their arrest is linked to a football match on February 3, 2018 in the same commune between President Nkurunziza's Alleluia FC team and Kiremba commune team. According to the same sources, Cyriaque and Michel were accused of intending to assassinate the President since Michel had recruited in his team Congolese refugees Banyamurenge from Musasa camp.

Eight people arrested in Cibitoke urban zone , Bujumbura city

On March 3, 2018, soldiers and police conducted a search to control household notebooks, receipts for the payment of household waste collection fees and irregulars from 9th to 11th Avenue in Cibitoke urban zone, Ntakangwa commune, Bujumbura city. According to sources on site, eight Congolese nationals, all students at Espoir d'Afrique University, were arrested. They were ransomed between 5,000 Bif and 10,000 Bif to be released, the sources added.

II. OTHER FACTS REPORTED

II. 1. A PERSON KILLED DUE TO MOB JUSTICE

A person killed in Rugombo commune, Cibitoke province

On the night of 2 to 3 March 2018, on the 10th street Cibitoke, Rugombo commune, Cibitoke province, an unidentified man from DRC was killed by the population of this locality accusing him of being among the group of cow robbers. According to our sources, the police and administration authorities did not react. The corpse was quickly buried.

III. SECURITY FACTS

III.1. INTIMIDATION ACTS

Suspicious sports in Mwaro province

Information received by Iteka League on 3 March 2018 indicates that intensive sports by Imbonerakure were observed since 24 February 2018 in Rorero zone, Bisoro commune. According to local sources, these sports start around 5:00 am and these young people interchange hills not to be identified by the population. Some sources say they are mentored by soldiers on leave and others say they are preparing for military recruitment. This sport ends around 6 o'clock in the morning. The administration prefers to zip on this.

Intimidation in Buhiga commune, Karuzi province

On March 4, 2018, in Buhiga commune, on the hills of Shanga, Kajeri and Karuzi province city center, Stanislas Manirakiza, CNDD-FDD party provincial representative, proceeded to the opening of offices of this party. According to sources on site, on Shanga hill this authority announced that those who have not been enlisted in the constitutional referendum are no longer Burundians and that these people must be expelled from the country to thank them for their bad faith.

Intimidation in Busoni commune Kirundo province

Information received by Iteka League on 1 March 2018 indicates that since 20 February 2018, in Busoni commune, Kirundo province, residents who have not been enlisted are beaten by Imbonerakure. According to sources on site, these inhabitants are beaten in the presence of Salvator Muvunyi, former representative of CNDD-FDD in Busoni commune and Vital, Gatare zone head

IV. 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, torture and arbitrary and illegal arrests targeted to CNDD-FDD regime opponents are reported.

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