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Weekly bulletin « ITEKA N'IJAMBO » n° 102 of the Burundian League of Human Rights "ITEKA"

Week from 12 – 18 March 2018



In memory of Madam Marie Claudette Kwizera, Treasurer of Iteka, reported missing since December 10, 2015. From December 2015 to 18 March 2018, Iteka has documented at least 471 cases of enforced disappearances.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

BRARUDI : *Burundi Brewery Company*

CDS : *Health Center*

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

DPE : *Provincial Direction of Education*

ECOFO : *Fundamental School*

FAB : *Burundi Armed Forces*

FNL : *National Liberation Front*

OBR : *Burundi Revenue Authority*

SNR : *National Intelligence Service*

TGI : *High Court*

VBG : *Gender Based Violence*

0. INTRODUCTION

Allegations and violations of human rights were recorded during this reporting period: at least 3 persons killed including 1 corpse, 1 person abducted and reported missing, 4 tortured, 10 arbitrarily arrested and 1 GBV victim.

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

The phenomenon of corpses found across the country is still observed.

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

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 UNIDENTIFIED PERSONS

A body found in Muhanga commune, Kayanza province

Information received by Iteka League on March 12, 2018 indicates that on March 8, 2018, on Jimbi hill, Muhanga commune, Kayanza province, a body of Yadagu, of the Twa social component was found in a river.

Yadagu had left for Ndava hill, Muhanga commune, Kayanza province to visit his friends. He came from Mubuga zone of Ngozi commune. Arriving on Ndava hill, he was registered at the hill head as required by administration and the hill head kept his identity papers. The next day he went for a walk on Nyamwera hill and was arrested by the head of this hill, named Seconde, because he did not have his ID. Yadagu explained to her that Ndava hill head had them and that he was registered there. To verify Yadagu's statements, Seconde went with him to Ndava hill head. The latter confirmed Yadagu's statements and told Seconde that as she doubted on him she could take him to the commune office. They then went to the commune and he was jailed. Then Seconde asked that he be released and brought back to Nyamwera hill and be responsible for what might happen to him. He was released late at night and left with Seconde. The next day he was found dead on Jimbi hill. According to our sources, he was killed by Imbonerakure by order of Seconde. The Batwa went with the body in front of the communal Administrator office to express their frustration, but Seconde and the administrator were all absent for they had gone to celebrate the women day of March 8th. They then went to bury the body.

1.2. PEOPLE ABDUCTED AND THEN REPORTED MISSING

A person abducted in Ngozi commune and province

On 13 March 2018, at around 10:00 pm, an ex-FAB soldier named Pascal Ngendakumana from the 421st Karuzi Battalion, assigned to Rukoko, Gihanga commune, Bubanza province, was abducted and reported missing. According to sources on site, Pascal Ngenadakumana was abducted by unidentified people near Ngozi province office when he had just separated from his friends with whom he had just shared a drink at Shika Bar in Ngozi. He then took the road to Kinyami quarter where he lived with his family. Since that night, he has been without a trace and his phone is off. Police have announced that one person was arrested for investigation.

1.3. PEOPLE TORTURED BY IMBONERAKURE AND POLICE

A person tortured in Musaga urban zone , Bujumbura city

On March 16, 2018, around 11:00 pm, plainclothes policemen entered a bar commonly called "Chez Nihorimbere" located near Musalac CDS in Musaga urban zone, Muha commune, Bujumbura city, and beat Sudi. According to sources on site, he is accused of having frequented the bar late. He had been threatened to join the group of Imbonerakure of Musaga led by Lewis, a MP elected in Bujumbura city and former conductor of the same zone.

A person tortured in Murwi commune, Cibitoke province

On March 13, 2018, on Ngoma hill, Murwi commune, Cibitoke province, 22-year-old Samuel Bizimana, a farmer and CNDD-FDD party member, was beaten up by three young Imbonerakure headed by a man named Jacques in a banana wine bar. According to our sources, he reportedly said that some officers from Cibitoke province do not support the "YES" in the next referendum.

Two people tortured in Gahombo commune, Kayanza province

On March 15, 2018, on Rukago hill, Gahombo commune, Kayanza province, Sylvestre and Richard, two goat vendors, were beaten up by Imbonerakure and demanded 30,000 Bif for no reason and no receipt.

A person tortured in Gitega province

The information received by Iteka League on February 26, 2018 indicates that on the evening of February 24, 2018, Désiré Sindayihebura alias Musoni, journalist of Iwacu, was beaten by Valentin Kubwimana, nurse in Karusi and Jean Berchmans¹, a volunteer on radio "Ijwiry'umukenyezi", 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. Both Imbonerakure were released on 1st March 2018 on the intervention of CNDD-FDD party representative in Giheta commune.

¹ Jean Berchmans was not released but was taken to Gitega prosecutor and transferred to Gitega central prison

1.4. PERSONS ARRESTED BY POLICE, MILITARY, SNR AGENTS, IMBONERAKURE AND ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS

A person arrested in Rutegama commune, Muramvya province

On 12 March 2018, Steve, a milk vendor from Cumba hill, Rutegama commune, Muramvya province, was arrested by Melance, an Imbonerakure and Rutegama commune accountant assistant, accusing him of not selling milk to him. He was jailed in Rutegama commune cell.

A person arrested in Nyabikere commune, Karuzi province

On 16 March 2018, on Ngugo hill, Maramvya zone, Nyabikere commune, Karuzi province, Ezekiel Nigendako was arrested by 2 Imbonerakure, including Bienvenu. He was taken to the commune cell accusing him of having expressed his joy, singing that the commune administrator Leonidas Nakumuryango is jailed. This arrest was carried out after a meeting held on March 5, 2018, at the home of an Imbonerakure named Nkurunziza Jean Claude, for the purpose of killing all those who were happy with the imprisonment of Nyabikere commune administrator.

A person arrested in Nyabihanga commune, Mwaro province

On March 15, 2018, Nyabihanga commune administrator arrested a driver of a truck distributing BRARUDI products to Nyabihanga accusing him of banging a wall of the market. The driver asked to make quotations to repair the breaks but to no avail. According to sources on site, the administrator waited for the owner of BRARUDI products store named Bazompora to arrive at the commune center. He was told to contribute to the 2020 elections because he trades in his commune. The driver and the truck were released 3 days later, add the same sources on site.

Three people arrested in Cibitoke urban zone , Bujumbura city

On March 14, 2018, around 7:00 pm, soldiers on patrol arrested three young boys on 12th Avenue in Cibitoke zone, Ntawangwa commune, Bujumbura city. According to local sources, they are accused of being criminals for sitting in an unenlightened place while they were near their homes. They were all taken to Cibitoke zone cell.

A person arrested in Musaga zone, Bujumbura city

On 16 March 2018, around 7:00 pm, police arrested a man named Jado living near CDS Musalac, Musaga zone, Muha commune, Bujumbura city. According to sources on site, he is accused of listening to RPA Humura program. He was taken to Musaga zone cell where he remained until 17 March 2018.

A person arrested in Mutimbuzi commune, Bujumbura rural province

On March 17, 2018, Salvator Niyokindi was arrested by Imbonerakure on Mushasha I hill, Gatumba zone, Mutimbuzi commune, Bujumbura Rural Province. According to our sources, these

Imbonerakure accused him of passing close to where they were gathered at this hill. He was taken to Rubirizi zone police post by Jérémie, SNR head in Mutimbuzi commune.

A person arrested in Nyarusange commune, Gitega province

On March 12, 2018, Gerard Bigirimana, teacher of ECOFO Muzima and FNL member of Agathon Rwasa's wing, Nyarusange commune, Gitega province, was arrested by Blaise Ngomirakiza, SNR head in that province. According to sources on site, Gérard Bigirimana went to DPE office located in Gitega province town. According to the same sources, he is alleged to have participated in the murder of Vénérand Ntikazohera's father, CNDD-FDD influential trader. After being questioned at Gitega prosecutor's office, Gérard Bigirimana was taken to Gitega prison.

A person arrested in Muramvya commune and province

On 15 March 2018, Ildephonse, a 6th form teacher at ECOFO Ryarusera in Bugarama zone, Muramvya commune and province, was arrested by police officers while on his daily activities. Sources on site indicated the police arrested him in front of his students and handcuffed him. His arrest disrupted the activities of this school, continues our source. He would be accused of sensitizing the population to vote for "NO" at the next constitutional referendum.

1.5. GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

A girl raped in Gashoho commune, Muyinga province

Information received by Iteka League on March 15, 2018 indicates that on March 10, 2018, at Gisanze Crafts School, Gashoho commune, Muyinga province, a 17-year-old girl named J.A.K. was raped by his teacher Evrard Nininahazwe. According to local sources, medical tests confirmed the rape and the alleged perpetrator was arrested by the police and taken to Gashoho commune police post.

II. VIOLATION OF THE RIGHT TO PROPERTY

Destruction of a house in Rutana province

On March 13, 2018, at about 9:00 am, on Rutamba hill, Muzye zone, Giharo commune, Rutana province, Antoine Kayoya's house was destroyed by Imbonerakure youth of CNDD-FDD party, including Didas Kabunda, Ndayikengurukiye, Claude Njejimana and Gilbert Hakuzimana. According to local sources, they accused him of not participating in community work every Saturday and they were not harassed.

III. OTHER FACTS REPORTED

Two people injured in Nyabihanga commune, Mwaro province

On March 14, 2018, at night, on Gitaramuka hill, Munago zone, Nyabihanga commune, Mwaro province, Fabrice Bikorimana entered Niyomuco Pacifique's house and severely wounded him with a

machete at the neck. Neighbors came to rescue and the alleged perpetrator was beaten and seriously injured. Afterwards, the wounded were rushed to Kibumbu Hospital.

A clandestine cemetery and guarded in Muyinga commune and province

Information received by Iteka League on 14 March 2018 indicates that since January 2018, on Musenga hill, Cumba zone, Muyinga commune and province, a clandestine cemetery used at night and guarded by 4 Imbonerakure was observed. According to local sources, though its use was discovered recently, this cemetery was clandestinely initiated in February 2017 by Shabani Nimubona, Cumba zone head and provincial head of Imbonerakure Youth League. According to the same sources, burials are exclusively done at night. According to our sources, a vehicle and motorcycles parked at this place as well as people digging are observed. The next day, the soil is found freshly stirred and a few days later, cassava cuttings were planted there. But when the vehicle passes at night, the soil is found flattened the next day and a few days later, new cassava cuttings are planted there.

IV. SECURITY FACTS

Illegal possession of weapons in Mutimbuzi commune, Bujumbura rural province

On March 13, 2018, Ferdinand Ntaconayigize, Imbonerakure of Kigwati I hill, Rukaramu zone, Mutimbuzi commune, Bujumbura rural province, was arrested by soldiers on Bujumbura-Cibitoke road in possession of a pistol. According to our sources, inhabitants of the locality called Mpanda, Maramvya zone, Mutimbuzi commune saw this Imbonerakure in possession of this gun. Ferdinand Ntaconayigize was taken to SNR cell in Bujumbura by Salvator, SNR head in Bujumbura rural province.

A newborn killed in Muramvya commune and province

On 13 March 2018, on Gatebe hill, Bugarama zone, Muramvya commune and province, a widow named Sabine Nsengiyumva, a farmer from Mpehe hill in the same commune and province, strangled her newborn. The alleged perpetrator was arrested by police officers and taken to Muramvya province police post and transferred to Muramvya central prison.

A person killed in Gashikanwa commune, Ngozi province

On the 13th of March 2018, at about 11:00 pm, on Buhoro hill, Gatobo zone, Gashikanwa commune, Ngozi province, Leopold Kayobera, head of the same hill was killed with a machete. According to sources on site, Leopold Kayobera was killed when he tried to intervene to prevent a marital conflict related fight. According to the same sources, Ciza and his son left a bar in Buhoro. Arriving at home, Ciza's son fought with his wife. The hill head who was not far away intervened and advised them to stop the conflict. Ciza's then hit him with machetes. This administration official cried for help but the neighbors came late. Ciza then escaped and his father was arrested for investigation reasons.

IV.1. INTIMIDATION ACTS

Intimidation in Kabarore commune, Kayanza province

On March 15, 2018, on Ngoma hill, Kabarore commune, Kayanza province, the Minister of Energy and Mines held a meeting at the center called Bukanya. This meeting was about illegal sale of coffee and minerals into Rwanda. The Minister ordered the police to shoot at anyone caught in this trade.

Residents abused by Imbonerakure in Bururi commune and province

Information received by Iteka League on March 18, 2018 indicates that Imbonerakure are calling the shots day and night in Bururi Province. On-site sources indicate that every quarter in Bururi city has a group of Imbonerakure youths who attack the residents of these neighborhoods. According to the same sources, they control the movement of residents day and night and force house workers to sports in the afternoons from 15:30. As of March 9, 2018, these residents say that a magistrate of TGI Bururi and an employee of a drinking water production plant in Bururi named Moise were mistreated by Eric Manirakiza, Imbonerakure youth leader. The two victims were forced to sit on the ground before being called criminals by these young Imbonerakure of Kigwati quarter of Bururi province city. The victims were saved by TGI Bururi president after learning about their captivity. Eric Manirakiza was arrested and taken to Bururi prison on March 9, 2018 and released on March 15, 2018 by order of Bururi prosecutor.

In Matana commune, residents of Mwurire and Mugano hills report that Imbonerakure youths are also patrolling at night. During the night, around 3:00 am, residents of these hills claim that these Imbonerakure do sports, paramilitary training and singing CNDD-FDD songs. They praise the regime and threaten opponents. These residents say that paramilitary training is done almost every weekend, every Saturday to Sunday night, around 3:00 am, add the same sources on site.

Imbonerakure substitutes for justice in Bugenyuzi commune, Karuzi province

On March 12, 2018, at around 6:00 am, on Kiranda hill, Bugenyuzi zone and commune, Karuzi province, Imbonerakure commanded by their leader named Népomuscène called another Imbonerakure named Sindyigaya telling him he was accused by a woman named Speciose that he almost raped her the night before. According to sources on site, these Imbonerakure had the accuser and the accused sit down and organized a trial. After an interrogation and analysis of the case, these Imbonerakure decided that the woman committed false charges offense and had to immediately pay compensation to all Imbonerakure by buying a can of banana beer equivalent to 12000 Bif, which Spéciose did fearing for other punishments.

Leaflets found in Gitaramuka commune, Karuzi province

On 12 March 2018, on Vyiniro sub-hill, hill, zone and Gitaramuka commune, Karuzi province, leaflets bearing the names of five persons to be killed accused of sorcery were found. The leaflets indicated if another person died of sudden death in that locality, all five people would be killed. Our sources

indicate that these people are accused of the sudden death of 5 people from the same hill more than 2 months earlier. The same sources add that these leaflets were propagated by local Imbonerakure headed by their leader André Ndereyimana and hill head Jean Gashira. For the moment, families of these people warned are frightened.

Intimidation in Rutegama commune, Muramvya province

Information received by League Iteka on 14 March 2018 indicates that Melance, an Imbonerakure, Rutegama commune accountant assistant, banned Placide, Théogène and Charles both from Munanira hill from continuing the sale of milk to Bujumbura. He wants to have a monopoly on the milk trade and wants local cow farmers to sell the milk only to him. The three people no longer trade for fear of reprisals. Melance even arrested a man named Steve from Cumba hill in Rutegama commune and took him to the cell of the same commune, accusing him of not selling milk to him.

Forced community work in Rugombo commune, Cibitoke province

On March 17, 2018, in Cibitoke province city, many people were beaten by young Imbonerakure led by Tonny, head of Cibitoke zone and head of Imbonerakure youth league in Rugombo commune and Bucumi representing young Imbonerakure in Cibitoke zone. According to our sources, these young Imbonerakure ordered them to participate in community work.

Intimidation in Kirundo commune and province

Information received by Iteka League on March 13, 2018 indicates that, on March 11, 2018, in Runanira III sub-quarter, Murama quarter of Kirundo city center, residents were intimidated by Juma, the head of this sub-quarter. According to sources on site, Juma came very early in the morning, accompanied by two other people including a lady named Léocadie. They checked the receipts by registering the numbers and the owners' names. The one who had none was called opponent "igipinga" and told him he could be hurt (bazomukorerako).

V. CONCLUSION

Violations of human rights and allegations of violations following the deterioration of the political context since the beginning of the challenge of the 3rd term of President Pierre Nkurunziza continue to be recorded in various parts of the country.

Cases of killings, abductions, torture, arbitrary and illegal arrests targeted of opponents and alleged opponents to CNDD-FDD party regime are reported.

Intimidation by Imbonerakure from CNDD-FDD party is a source of threats to the population.