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Weekly bulletin « ITEKA N'IJAMBO » n° 103 of the Burundian League of Human Rights "ITEKA"

Week from 19 – 25 March 2018



In memory of Madam Marie Claudette Kwizera, Treasurer of Iteka, reported missing since December 10, 2015. From December 2015 to 25 March 2018, Iteka has documented at least 472 cases of enforced disappearances.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

BRARUDI : *Burundi Brewery Company*

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

DCE : *Communal Direction of Education*

DPE : *Provincial Direction of Education*

FNL : *National Liberation Front*

MSD : *Movement for Solidarity and Democracy*

OPJ : *Judiciary Police Officer*

PAFE : *Immigration Police*

PN : *National Police*

PNB : *Burundi National Police*

PSG : *Security Guarding Company*

SNR : *National Intelligence Service*

USA : *United States of America*

0. INTRODUCTION

Allegations and violations of human rights were recorded during this reporting period: at least 5 persons killed including 3 corpses, 1 person abducted and reported missing, 6 tortured and 44 arbitrarily arrested.

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 Gisagara commune, Cankuzo province

On March 19, 2018, on Ruramba hill, Camazi zone, Gisagara commune, Cankuzo province, a body of Medard Bitariho of the Twa social component was found in his house. Sources on site indicate that this body was suspended on the victim's house roofing. The body was in a kneeling position and arms tied behind the back.

A body found in Rutovu commune, Bururi province

On March 23, 2018, a body of Alexandre Batungwanayo from Gihanga hill, Rutovu commune, Bururi province was found on Kigira River Bridge. On-site sources indicate that the perpetrators of the crime as well as the reason of the murder are not known. An unknown sum of money as well as a mobile phone were stolen by his killers. Bururi police say investigations have started.

I.1.2. PEOPLE KILLED BY POLICE

A person died following torture in Cendajuru commune, Cankuzo province

Information received by Iteka Ligue on 19 March 2018 indicates that on 17 March 2018, Simon Bizimana of Gisoro hill, Twinkwavu zone, Cendajuru commune, Cankunzo province, died after being tortured by Cankuzo SNR agents. According to local sources, he was arrested on 14 February 2018 in Cendajuru and detained in an isolated jail that was controlled only by the SNR and the provincial police commissioner. According to sources, the prosecutor and his substitutes did not have access to this isolated jail as well as the OPJ. He was provisionally released from prison by the prosecutor on 14 March 2018 at the request of his family and taken directly to the hospital where he died 3 days

later. According to the same sources, the police officers who guarded him left after noticing he was in coma.

A person killed in Ntakangwa commune, Bujumbura City

On 21 March 2018, at Quarter IX of Ngagara zone, Bujumbura city, Michel Ndereyimana, aged 28, was shot dead by police officers at night. Sources on site reveal that this person was killed by police accusing him of stealing REGIDESO cables. The victim had just been released from prison following the presidential pardon.

1.2. PEOPLE ABDUCTED AND REPORTED MISSING

A person abducted in Ngagara urban zone , Bujumbura city

Information received on March 19, 2018 indicates that on March 3, 2018, around 9:00 am, Jean Marie Vianney Arakaza, 30, student and agent of PSG Security Company was abducted by Joseph Mathias Niyonzima alias Kazungu, SNR agent. According to sources on site, he reportedly answered a call from his friend before being arrested just when he arrived near BRARUDI Company in Ngagara urban zone, Ntakangwa commune, Bujumbura city. Jean Marie Vianney Arakaza is a native of Bisoro commune Mwaro province and was living in Mutakura 12th avenue number 3, Cibitoke urban zone, Ntakangwa commune, Bujumbura city. Jean Marie Vianney's family indicates that it sought him in all the cells of the capital city in vain.

1.3. PEOPLE TORTURED BY IMBONERAKURE

A person tortured in Nyabikere commune, Karuzi province

On March 19, 2018, at Nyabikere market, Nyabikere zone and commune, Karuzi province, Janvier, originally from Butamenwa hill, Rugwiza zone of the same commune, was beaten by two Imbonerakure, including Bienvenu and the nicknamed Rujane, accusing him of having urinated behind the market. According to sources on site, these two Imbonerakure, at the time of the torture, also accused him of having refused to join CNDD-FDD party, which must therefore be corrected like other opponents. After the torture, they took him to Nyabikere commune cell.

A person tortured in Gahombo commune, Kayanza province

Information received by Iteka League on 19 March 2018 indicates that on 12 March 2018, on Rukago hill, Gahombo commune, Kayanza province, a teacher named Bosco was beaten by an Imbonerakure named Ismael. The latter accused him of having said that "Iyi reta yarambiye abantu ntibazobona irabavuyeko", people are tired of this government and wish it could leave.

A person tortured in Gahombo commune, Kayanza province

On March 20, 2018, on Rukago hill, Gahombo commune, Kayanza province, Josephine Ntahombaye, FNL member of Agathon Rwasa's wing, was beaten up by an Imboberakure named Obede. He

accused her of helping a person run away while she was fighting. The door of his house was even smashed because Obède thought that this person was hidden inside.

Two people tortured in Busoni commune, Kirundo province

On March 20, 2018, Jean Népomuscène Bimenyimana and Elias Barakamfitye, both FNL members of Agathon Rwasa's wing were beaten by Imbonerakure including Nsengiyumva Abraham alias Nahaman and Mukerwa hill head, Leopold Biziragakuba. According to local sources, Jean Népomuscène Bimenyimana's house was destroyed and Elias Barakamfitye's cassava and cocoyam crops were uprooted. The two victims are alleged to have denounced the mistakes made by the hill head and one of the Imbonerakure who spread terror in Busoni commune. According to the same sources, Nsengiyumva Abraham was released after sentence for killing a woman from Mwenya hill named Kampenda Claire in 2002 and other acts of terrorism.

1.4. PERSONS ARRESTED BY POLICE AND IMBONERAKURE

A person arrested in Mukaza commune, Bujumbura city

On the afternoon of March 22, 2018, Clement Nkurunziza was arrested by an OPJ from PJ Bwiza, Mukaza commune, Bujumbura city. According to sources on site, Clément had just been returned from the USA that had refused him an asylum. Arriving at Bujumbura airport, SNR agents told him to go and sign papers at PJ and he was detained there.

Eight people arrested in Ngagara urban zone , Bujumbura city

On 19 March 2018, in quarter VI, Ngagara urban zone, Ntahangwa commune, Bujumbura city, police officers and soldiers carried out a search to secure "Nyabagere Conference Center" where the moralization campaign by President Pierre Nkurunziza was going to take place for the population of Ntahangwa commune. According to local sources, they checked the household notebooks and eight people were arrested and taken to Ngagara zone office and gave a ransom of 5,000 Bif to be released.

Eight people arrested in Bujumbura city

On 18 March 2018, around 6:00 pm, police in an A 266 A PN pickup truck broke into the queues of buses going north of the capital and arrested eight young people waiting for the bus. They embarked them and placed under the rear tray of the pickup truck to an unknown destination. According to sources on site, people in civilian clothes circulated in the ranks and showed the police by signs the people to arrest.

Seven people arrested in Cibitoke urban zone, Bujumbura city

On March 20, 2018, a search was carried out by soldiers and police officers in Mutakura-Kinyankonge quarter, Cibitoke urban zone, Ntahangwa commune, Bujumbura city. According to sources on site, it was during the control of household notebooks and garbage collection receipts in households that seven people were arrested and jailed in Cibitoke zone office, accused of not having

receipts for the payment of garbage collection fees. They were released after giving a ransom of between 5,000 and 10,000 Bif.

Fifteen people arrested in Cibitoke urban zone, Bujumbura city

On March 22, 2018, police officers and soldiers carried out a search, checking household notebooks and garbage collection receipts from 8th to 10th Avenue of Cibitoke zone, Ntahangwa commune, Bujumbura city. According to sources on site, fifteen people accused of not having receipts for the payment of garbage collection fees or household notebooks were arrested and taken to Cibitoke zone office, while these notebooks no longer exist in the commune stock where they should be bought. Along the way, according to the charge against each, they gave the police ransom between 2,000 and 10,000 Bif to be released.

A person arrested in Bwambarangwe commune, Kirundo province

Information received by League Iteka on 19 March 2018 indicates that on 16 March 2018, Felix Buzoya, aged 35, from Mutarishwa, Bwambarangwe commune, Kirundo province, was arrested on his way from Rwanda through Giteranyi in Muyinga province by the Imbonerakure of Bwambarangwe and stole a sum of 120,000 Bif. According to sources on site, the SNR head in Bwambarangwe came to take him accusing him of being a rebel.

A person arrested in Kayanza commune and province

On 24 March 2018, at Kanyaru River on the Burundian-Rwandan border, a driver named Jean d'Amour Nsengiyumva nicknamed Kadogo was arrested by the Burundian police. On-site sources indicate that this driver was in a Probox-type vehicle with customers from Kigali to Bujumbura. When he arrived at Kanyaru border, he entered the Burundian PAFE office for entry arrangements and was arrested by the police head in Kanyaru. The SNR head in Kayanza province came and took him into his vehicle to an unknown destination. According to the same sources, Jean d'Amour Nsengiyumva is from Gitega province with a Rwandan nationality and was transporting Kigali-Bujumbura passengers.

A person arrested in Buganda commune, Cibitoke province

On 21 March 2018, at Kaburantwa hill, Buganda commune, Cibitoke province, 52-year-old PNB pensioner Alexis Ntaguzwa, a driver and MSD party member, was arrested by Imbonerakure youth from that locality. According to our sources, he was accused of having commented against the next referendum. He is jailed in Buganda commune police cell.

Two people arrested in Musigati commune, Bubanza province

On the morning of March 19, 2018, in Musigati commune, Bubanza province, two members of the AMIZERO y'Abarundi coalition, known as Herman Ntakirutimana, teacher, and Anatole Bayubahe were arrested by police officers and jailed in Musigati commune police cell. According to our

sources, they are suspected of having nightly attacked with grenade a household of this locality near Musigati center. The political reason is the core of this arrest, according to the same sources.

II. OTHER FACTS REPORTED

People dead following an unidentified illness in Ntega commune, Kirundo province

Information received indicates that in Ntega commune, Kirundo province, more than 88 people have already died since January 2018 until March 25, 2018. According to sources on site, they suffer from an epidemic not yet identified. Patients suffer from headache and die after two days, but the administration did not report anything and the population laments for no intervention is observed.

III. SECURITY FACTS

A body found in Giheta commune, Gitega province

On March 21, 2018, on Gasunu hill, Giheta commune, Gitega province, the body of an unidentified girl aged between 12 and 15 was found in Ruvyironza River. The corpse was blocked at the mouth of the canal driving water running the Ruvyironza hydroelectric dam.

Grenade attack in Kinama urban zone, Bujumbura city

On March 23, 2018, around 9:00 pm, a grenade was thrown by unidentified people in Bubanza quarter, Kinama urban zone, Ntahangwa commune, Bujumbura city. Two people were injured.

IV. INTIMIDATION ACTS

Teachers intimidated in all communes of Karuzi province

Since March 21, 2018, in all the communes of Karuzi province, meetings have been held by the DCE or their advisers for all CNDD-FDD party teachers, to campaign them for voting "YES" to the next constitutional referendum. According to local sources, these meetings were planned by provincial authorities and the DPE. In Bugenyuzi commune, the meeting was held in the meeting room, headed by a DCE counselor named Zephyrin. In this meeting, he ordered the CNDD-FDD member teachers to organize themselves to monitor and arrest anyone who will vote for "NO" for an exemplary punishment. This causes a climate of panic among non-member CNDD-FDD teachers who have been informed by their colleagues attending these meetings.

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 administrative officials from CNDD-FDD party is a source of threats to the population.