

BURUNDIAN LIGUE OF HUMAN RIGHTS "ITEKA"

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Weekly bulletin « ITEKA N'IJAMBO » n° 148 of the Burundian Ligue of Human Rights "ITEKA"

Week from 4 -10 February 2019



In memory of Madam Marie Claudette Kwizera, Treasurer of Iteka, reported missing since December 10, 2015. From December 2015 to 10 February 2019, Iteka has documented at least 522 cases of enforced disappearances.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AVDP : *Voluntary Association for the Defense of Prisoners' Rights*

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

DPE : *Provincial Direction of Education*

FAB : *Burundi Armed Forces*

FDD : *Front for Defense of Democracy*

FNL : *National Liberation Front*

FRODEBU : *Front for Democracy in Burundi*

ISCAM : *High Institute for Military Officials*

OIM : *International Organization for Migration*

OPJ : *Judicial Police Officer*

PJ : *Judicial Police*

PNB : *Burundi National Police*

SNR : *National Intelligence Service*

0. INTRODUCTION

Allegations and violations of human rights were recorded during this reporting period: at least 11 persons were killed including 4 corpses found, 2 persons abducted, 5 tortured and 6 arbitrarily arrested.

Among the victims are 2 women and 2 minors killed.

The phenomenon of corpses is still observed across the country and is worrying for its increasing number.

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

Forced contributions and intimidations are reported throughout the country.

The bulletin also notes cases of killings, torture and arbitrary arrest of opponents and alleged opponents of President Pierre Nkurunziza's regime particularly FNL party members of Agathn Rwasa's wing.

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 Mukaza commune, Bujumbura Mairie

On February 5, 2019, at Muyinga Avenue, in front of Rohero zone Office, Mukaza commune, Bujumbura Mairie, Jonas Ndayishimiye, taxi-bike driver, was shot dead at the head, by a policeman. According to sources on site, this police officer shot the victim after trying to grab his bike. According to the same sources, the next day, Pierre Nkurikiye, the PNB spokesman, during a press briefing, said that Jonas was a victim of a stray bullet and that he was also at fault for having going over the University Avenue entering Rohero zone, which is prohibited for bicycle taxi drivers.

I.1.2. PEOPLE KILLED BY UNIDENTIFIED PERSONS

A body found in Muha commune, Bujumbura Mairie

On the morning of February 10, 2019, body, Sworo Patrick Samuel Gonda, 35-year-old, an IOM employee from South Sudan, was found in his bedroom in Kinanira III neighborhood, Kinindo zone, Muha commune, Bujumbura Mairie. According to local sources, the body of the victim was taken to the morgue of "Kira Hospital", and the circumstances of his death remain unknown.

A body found in Ntakangwa commune, Bujumbura Mairie

On February 10, 2019, a body of 24-year-old Audrine Ntirampeba was found in her home at No. 19, 1st Avenue, Buterere 2 B, Buterere urban zone, Ntakangwa commune, Bujumbura mairie. According to local sources, Pacific Bakanibona, who was with the victim at about 3:00 am, was arrested for investigation reasons. According to the same sources, the body of the victim had injuries to his arms and neck.

A person killed in Mutimbuzi commune, Bujumbura rural

On February 10, 2019, a head of an unidentified decapitated person was found in Gatunguru quarter, Mutimbuzi commune, Bujumbura rural, at the water catchment station under construction. According to local sources, the victim was a mason working on a construction site of a basin that will serve to retain the waters of Gasenyi River in case of heavy rains. Police say they started investigations.

Three people killed in Bukinanyana commune, Cibitoke province

On February 9, 2019, at around 3:00 am, on Burimbi hill, Masango zone, Bukinanyana commune, Cibitoke province, unknown persons burned the house of Frederic Niyonsaba, a widower, CNDD-FDD party member and his two children. According to sources on site, Frédéric Niyonsaba and his two children succumbed on the spot. According to the same sources, the neighbors accused him of sorcery.

A person killed in Nyarusange commune, Gitega province

On February 8, 2019, at around 9:00 pm, on Muyange hill, Nyarusange commune, Gitega province, Charles Ndayisaba, 27 years old, pupil in 3rd form post-fundamental, at Nyarusange Communal High School, was shot dead by unidentified people. According to sources on site, the victim was a watchman on the antenna of the mobile phone company, Lumitel. According to the same sources, the generator that supplied this antenna was burned by these gunmen.

A body found in Shombo commune, Karuzi province

Information received by Ligue Iteka dated February 5, 2018 indicates that on February 3, 2019, in the morning, on Shombo hill and commune, Karuzi province, a body of an unidentified woman was found by rice farmers in Ndurumu River. According to sources on site, the body had wounds on the neck, arms and head. The commune administrator named Pierre ordered the surrounding population to bury him immediately.

A person killed in Busoni commune, Kirundo province

On 6 February 2019, Simon Ndururutse, a 67-year-old CNDD-FDD member from Kararire sub-hill, Kagege hill, Mukerwa zone, Busoni commune, Kirundo province, was killed at night in a grenade attack by unidentified people as he was returning home. According to local sources, four people including Mbitegamatwi and Kayitare are jailed at Kirundo PJ jail for investigation reasons.

1.2. PERSONS ABDUCTED AND / OR REPORTED MISSING

A person abducted in Mukaza commune, Bujumbura Mairie

Information received by Ligue Iteka on 7 February 2019 indicates that on 31 January 2019 Major Herménégilde Basabose, a former member of FNL movement, residing in Gatunguru quarter, Mutimbuzi commune, Bujumbura rural, was reported missing. According to sources on site, the victim went to work at General Staff in Rohero zone, Mukaza commune, Bujumbura Mairie, aboard a military bus but he did not return. According to the same sources, on February 4, 2019, the victim's wife went to the General Staff to announce the facts and request the return of military equipment at home. On February 5, 2019, a group of soldiers retrieved the equipment.

A missing person in Ngozi commune and province

Information received by Ligue Iteka on February 6, 2019 indicates that since the evening of January 21, 2019, Jean Nayabagabo, AVDP representative in the north of the country, cannot be found. According to sources on site, he was missing after visiting the cells of the provinces of Kirundo, Muyinga and Ngozi as well as the prisons of these last two. According to the same sources, his phone has been unreachable since the day he was missing, and his family members searched all places of detention but to no avail. Jean Nayabagabo had received death threats from anonymous phones for giving an interview to one of the online radio stations two years ago.

A person abducted and reported missing¹

An ISCAM student arrested and reported missing in Burambi commune, Rumonge province. On August 10, 2016, Jean Claude Nkengurutse, finalist student of ISCAM at the faculty of economics, from Burambi commune, Rumonge province, was arrested at his home by soldiers without warrant, around 12:00 am. According to our sources, this student was a victim of the elimination plan against members of the defense and security forces who are alleged to be against President Pierre Nkurunziza 3rd term. He was reportedly taken to an unknown destination.

1.3. PERSONS TORTURED BY IMBONERAKURE AND SNR AGENTS

A person tortured in Matongo commune, Kayanza province

Information received by Ligue Iteka on 9 February 2019 indicates that on 3 February 2019, at night, on Kijuri hill, Burarana zone, Matongo commune, Kayanza province, Jean Paul Havyarimana, a police officer from this hill was disarmed and beaten up by nine Imbonerakure because he prevented them from whistling at night. According to sources on site, other police officers intervened afterwards and shot in the air. The next morning, the provincial authorities namely Meroe, provincial commissioner and Anicet Ndayizeye, Governor of Kayanza province went on the scene to calm down the situation. According to the same sources, after these Imbonerakure handed the rifle pieces to the authorities, they were arrested and jailed in Kayanza provincial cell while Jean Paul was hospitalized in Musema in Butaganzwa commune.

A person tortured in Kibago commune, Makamba province

On January 4, 2019, at about 11:00 am, Elie, a student at Jimbi Communal High School, was severely wounded in the head with a machete by two Imbonerakure, Come Niyungeko and Radjabu. According to local sources, the latter also stripped him of a small can of gasoline he had with him. According to the same sources, his father complained to the police and the communal administration, but the alleged perpetrators were only heard and not prosecuted.

Two people tortured in commune and province Rumonge

On 4 February, 2019, on Gatete hill and zone, Rumonge commune and province, Fidele Nkurunziza, ex-combatant of FDD movement and Zachée Nshimirimana, Sahwanya FRODEBU party member, all from the same hill, were arrested then taken to the SNR office, in Rumonge commune and province where they were tortured by Bucumi and Nzobaza, both SNR agents. According to sources on site, accused of collaborating with rebels, the victims were released on February 8, 2019. According to the same sources, traces of torture were visible on their bodies.

¹ Jean Claude Nkengurutse, reported by Ligue Iteka as abducted and reported missing in the annual report from November 2015 to November 2016, was found in Gitega prison.

A person tortured in Giharo commune, Rutana province

Information received by Iteka Ligue on 6 February 2019 indicates that on 3 February 2019, at night, on Butezi hill and zone, Giharo commune, Rutana province, Emmanuel Nzisabira, teacher and CNDD-FDD member, was beaten up and injured by a group of Imbonerakure including Fiacre alias Muyige and Dieudonné. According to sources on site, this group of Imbonerakure was implemented by Renovat Hakizimana, CNDD-FDD party commune representative to fight against those who do not support him in this party. The victim complained to an OPJ but the latter was afraid of this representative and did not receive it. According to the same sources, the next day, the head of the police station went to exchange with these Imbonerakure who boasted saying they are serving the nation.

I.4. PERSONS ARRESTED BY SNR AGENTS

A person arrested in Kayogoro commune, Makamba province

On February 4, 2019, at about 3:00 pm, in Kayogoro commune, Makamba province, Emmanuel Nkunuzimana, ex- FAB retired, was arrested by Blaise Ngomirakiza, SNR head in Makamba province, accompanied by Imbonerakure. According to sources on site, the victim was arrested after a search carried out on the same day by the SNR head in Makamba in retired ex-FAB households including Kananiye, Budogonya and Emmanuel Nkunuzimana, all residing in Kayogoro commune city. According to the same sources, two military blankets and a gourd were found at Emmanuel Nkunuzima's house, who was embarked by the SNR head in Makamba and taken to the communal police station cell.

II. SECURITY FACTS

One person killed in Gasorwe commune, Muyinga province

On 9 February 2019, at about 1:00 pm, on Kaguhu hill, Bwasare zone, Gasorwe commune, Muyinga province, Nzisabira, aged 30, was beaten to death by 22-year-old Edouard Nsengiyumva and Gérard Niyungeko, 20 years old, both from the same hill. According to sources on site, the victim claimed from his aggressors a sum of 9,000 Bif that they owed him. According to the same sources, the alleged perpetrators were arrested by police and taken to the commune police station cell in Gasorwe.

Intimidation in Matongo commune, Kayanza province

Information received by Ligue Iteka on 8 February 2019 indicates that on 30 January 2019, on Bandaga hill, Ruganza zone, Matongo commune, Kayanza province, Adelin Ndabarushimana, head of this hill, demanded that all inhabitants from this hill not members of the ruling party must write a letter of explanation to the communal leader of the party on the reasons for their reluctance to join CNDD-FDD party. According to sources on site, he uttered these threats during a meeting organized on this hill.

Forced contributions in Kayanza commune and province

Information received by Ligue Iteka on February 9, 2019 indicates that on January 29, 2019, on the Musave hill, in Kayanza commune and province, Epimaque, Kayanza communal advisor, in charge of development, in a meeting he chaired for all traders of Kayanza market, ordered them to give 5,000 Bif

for the 2020 elections and another 3700 Bif for the purchase of cement for the construction of the province office. These traders complained about these contributions because they had already contributed 1000 Bif for the 2020 elections.

Forced contributions in Ruyigi province

Information received by Ligue Iteka on February 9, 2019 indicates that all civil servants of Ruyigi province, whether members or non-members of CNDD-FDD party, are obliged to pay 2000 Bif monthly as contribution fees for the party's rallies. According to sources on site, everyone contributes in his commune of origin. Furthermore, in addition to these contributions for the gatherings are added for all the staff of DPE Ruyigi, a contribution of 32,000 Bif each for the purchase of a loincloth to wear on March 8, 2019 on the occasion of the international day dedicated to women. Also, in Butaganzwa commune, in addition to these contributions, 4 000 Bif are added, of which 2000 Bif for the construction of the stadium and 2000 Bif for the construction of the Center of Reading and Cultural Animation.

Ransoming in Kibago commune, Makamba province

On February 4, 2019, around 2:00 pm, on Murambi hill border with Tanzania, Kibago commune, Makamba province, Marekabiri alias Romeo and Combo, both Imbonerakure, ransomed Aaron and Bizimungu, all from Kivoga hill, zone and Kibago commune, Makamba province. According to local sources, the victims from the United Republic of Tanzania had their sun panels confiscated, accusing them of being part of the armed movements operating in Tanzania. According to the same sources, Aaron and Bizimungu had to pay a sum of 30,000 Tanzanian shillings to these two Imbonerakure in exchange for their sun panels.

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.

Cases of killings, abduction and/or enforced disappearances, torture, arbitrary and targeted illegal arrests against opponents and alleged opponents of CNDD-FDD party regime are reported.

Forced contributions and intimidations are also reported.

Ligue Iteka protests against the impunity of crimes that is attributed to relatives of CNDD-FDD party. Members of this party involved in various crimes enjoy impunity with a complicity displayed by public authorities.