

BURUNDIAN LIGUE OF HUMAN RIGHTS "ITEKA"

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Weekly bulletin « ITEKA N'IJAMBO » n° 150 of the Burundian Ligue of Human Rights "ITEKA"

Week from 18-24 February 2019



In memory of Madam Marie Claudette Kwizera, Treasurer of Iteka, reported missing since December 10, 2015. From December 2015 to 24 February 2019, Iteka has documented at least 523 cases of enforced disappearances.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CAP	: <i>Board of Support to the Party</i>
CDS	: <i>Health Centre</i>
CNDD-FDD	: <i>National Council for the Defense of Democracy</i>
CNL	: <i>National Congress for Liberty</i>
DCE	: <i>Communal Direction of Education</i>
ECOFO	: <i>Fundamental School</i>
FAB	: <i>Burundi Armed Forces</i>
INSS	: <i>National Institute of Social Security</i>
ISABU	: <i>Institute of Agronomic Sciences of Burundi</i>
PJ	: <i>Judicial Police</i>
RDC	: <i>Democratic Republic of Congo</i>
SNR	: <i>National Intelligence Service</i>
TGI	: <i>High Court</i>
UPRONA	: <i>Union for National Progress</i>
VBG	: <i>Gender Based Violence</i>

0. INTRODUCTION

Allegations and violations of human rights were recorded during this reporting period: at least 13 persons were killed including 7 corpses found, 6 tortured, 5 arbitrarily arrested and 3 GBV victims.

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, soldiers, policemen, SNR agents, and administration officials are blamed as the alleged perpetrators of most of human rights violations.

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

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 person killed in Butaganzwa commune, Kayanza province

On 21 February 2019, on Gahise hill, Butaganzwa commune, Kayanza province, CNL member Astère Minani was killed at his home by unidentified people. According to sources on site, the victim had often been asked to join the ruling party or be killed.

A person killed in Gisuru commune, Ruyigi province

On 18 February 2019, at around 8:00 pm, on Ntende hill, Gisuru commune, Ruyigi province, Marc Nyamizi, aged 80, was killed at his home by machete by unidentified people. According to sources on site, the reasons for this murder are not yet known.

A body found in Buhiga commune, Karuzi province

On the night of 21 February 2019, on Ramvya hill, Rutonganikwa zone, Buhiga commune, Karuzi province, the body of 18-year-old Mohammad, a cow-keeper to Charles Shima's home on the same hill, was found hanged on a tree. According to local sources, the body was wounded almost everywhere, especially on the arms and legs, showing that the victim had been tortured. According to the same sources, he was in conflict with his previous employer named Ezekiel, aged 38, which is at the origin of his death. On February 22, 2019, Ezekiel was arrested by the police and taken to the province police station cell in Karuzi for investigation.

Five bodies found in Busoni commune, Kirundo province

On February 22, 2019, five unidentified bodies were seen floating on Rweru Lake on Senga hill side, Nyagisozi hill, Busoni commune, Kirundo province. According to local sources, four bodies were tied to a tree trunk while another body was free. According to the same sources, the population was prohibited by the administrator of Busoni commune Marie Claudine Hashazinka to recover them. But these bodies were recovered overnight and then buried in an unknown place.

A body found in Mbuye commune, Muramvya province

Information received by Ligue Iteka on February 18, 2019 indicates that on the morning of February 17, 2019, a body of Brillant Irishura, aged 4, was found on Mubuga hill, Gasura zone, Mbuye commune, Muramvya province. According to local sources, the victim had traces showing that he was strangled. His father, who had denied paternity, was arrested and taken to Muramvya prison.

A person killed in Bukemba commune, Rutana province

On 24 February 2019, at night, on Ruranga hill, Bukemba commune, Rutana province, Noé Buregeya, aged 60, guard at ISABU Bukemba was killed by unidentified men armed with knives. According to local sources, the victim was stabbed in the head and genitals with knives and other sharp objects. His

dying body was dumped in Rubirizi cemetery not far from Bukemba commune. According to the same sources, he was evacuated to Gihofi Hospital before succumbing to his injuries.

1.2. PEOPLE TORTURED BY IMBONERAKURE AND POLICE

Four people tortured in Bubanza commune and province

On February 21, 2019, around 5:00 pm, four people, including two students from Bubanza High School, Adoratte Gikundiro of the 2nd Scientific B and Spéciose Nsengiyumva of the 4th Pedagogy, Esperance Kwizerimana, a 3rd Pedagogy and another unidentified person were beaten by CNDD-FDD party executive secretary Marcel Ndimubansi. According to sources on site, the victims were suspected of stealing phones when they went to visit a classmate, Esperance Kwizerimana, sister of Marcel Ndimubansi's wife. According to the same sources, the four victims were tied up, lying on the ground before being beaten. Adoratte Gikundiro was taken to CDS Trinity of Bubanza, in critical condition.

A person tortured in Rumonge commune and province

On February 20, 2019, Estron Vyemero of Mugara hill, Gatete zone, Rumonge commune and province, was beaten up by police officers. According to sources on site, the victim is accused of being the team leader of the sorcerers of this hill. After being beaten up, Estron confessed to bewitching someone from Mugara hill and agreed to heal the victim but also to show what he was using to bewitch his neighbors. A fragrance trial against Vyemero was held at TGI Rumonge on February 22, 2019 and sentenced to 20 years in prison.

A person tortured in Giharo commune, Rutana province

Information received by Ligue Iteka on February 18, 2019 indicates that on February 17, 2019, at about 8:00 pm, on Butezi hill, Giharo zone and commune, Rutana province, Nicaise Kabura, a merchant from this locality and CNDD-FDD party member, was beaten by young Imbonerakure including Nicaise Muyige and Bebe, accusing him of not participating in night patrol with other Imbonerakure. According to local sources, the victim was taken to Giharo police station, where he spent one night. He was released on February 18, 2019.

1.3. PERSONS ARRESTED BY POLICE, SNR AGENTS AND ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS

A person arrested in Mukaza commune, Bujumbura Mairie

On the morning of 21 February 2019, Colonel Joseph Nsabimana, retired ex-FAB, was arrested by two SNR agents at his home in INSS quarter, Rohero urban zone, Mukaza commune, Bujumbura Mairie. According to sources on site, they asked him to talk with them outside his home and forcibly embarked him into their car they had parked outside. The same sources add that he was taken to PJ at Jabe and interrogated on his firearms license before being released.

A person arrested in Mutimbuzi commune, Bujumbura rural province

On February 20, 2019, on Budahigwa hill, Maramvya zone, Mutimbuzi commune, Bujumbura rural province, Jean Bahizi, son of Pierre Bahizi and Pascasie Gakobwa, native of this hill, CNL party member

was arrested by Imbonerakure of this hill led by their leader Jean Claude Havyarimana, Rubirizi zone, Mutimbuzi commune. According to sources on site, he was accused of passing close to Imbonerakure who were in a meeting of "Sangwe" cooperative. Jean Bahizi was taken to the police station cell in Rubirizi zone, Mutimbuzi commune, Bujumbura rural province. According to the same sources, at about 9:00 am on 21 February 2019, Patassé, head of SNR in Mutimbuzi commune, and Gérard Ndayisenga, head of SNR in Bujumbura rural province, came to the police station in Rubirizi zone to take Jean Bahizi. These SNR officials said they will transfer him to SNR prison in Bujumbura near Regina Mundi Cathedral. At 2:00 pm the same day, a member of Jean Bahizi's family went to SNR cell to see him but he was not there.

A person arrested in Bururi commune and province

On February 23, 2019, at about 1:00 pm, Nestor Nyata, from Coma hill, Mugamba commune, Bururi province, member of UPRONA party communal bureau in this commune, and member of the party's CAP in Bujumbura, was arrested by Jean Gentil Nizigiyimana, deputy provincial police commissioner in Bururi. According to local sources, Nestor Nyata was arrested at the former bus park in Bururi while he was walking with other UPRONA party members during the visit of the first vice-president Gaston Sindimwo and the party's president. UPRONA, Albert Gashatsi. According to the same sources, a policeman without a warrant arrested him on the orders of the Governor of Bururi province and was taken aboard a vehicle of the "Mutuelle de la Fonction Publique" and jailed in the police station in Bururi. The reason for his arrest remains unknown, add the same sources.

A person arrested in Cankuzo commune and province

On 21 February 2019, Claude Ngabire, teacher at ECOFO Karago, DCE Cankuzo, residing on Nyakerera hill, near Mutukura military camp, was arrested and jailed at Cankuzo police station, under the command of Major Pierre Bizimana, commander of Mutukura camp, accusing him of destroying Mutukura camp fence. According to sources on site, Claude was arrested when he participated in an activity of delimitation of their property bordering this camp. Claude was released in the evening of February 22, 2019, add the same sources.

A person arrested in Kayanza commune and province

Information received by Ligue Iteka on 18 February 2019 indicates that on 14 February 2019, at night, on Bubezi hill, Kayanza commune and province, Emmanuel Ndayisaba was arrested by SNR agents and then jailed in SNR cell in Kayanza. According to sources on site, Emmanuel Ndayisaba was accused of returning from rebel groups based in the DRC and then jailed. He was also accused of escaping while he had documents attesting his acquittal by the court. According to the same sources, he would be in critical condition since the cell guards are asking for ransoms to send him food.

1.4. GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

A girl raped in Murwi commune, Cibitoke province

On 23 February 2019, N. of ECOFO Mirombero in 7th form, native of Murwi hill, zone and commune, Cibitoke province, was raped by a young Imbonerakure named Yves of Mirombero hill. According to

local sources, the victim's parents lodged a complaint against this young Imbonerakure but were intimidated by other young Imbonerakure. These young people came massively to the office of the administrator and he sided on their side by releasing Yves the abuser of the girl.

A girl raped in Bubanza commune and province

On the night of 19 February 2019, at about 9:00 pm, in Giko, on Shari I hill, zone, commune and Bubanza province, CN, aged 15, was raped in the bush by 25-year-old Jean Bosco Ndabarushimana, married and father of one child. According to sources on site, this incident occurred when this man was accompanied by this girl after a visit of Jean Bosco Ndabarushimana to the family of the victim. The latter was taken to Seruka center for proper examinations and care. According to the same sources, the Gasereka hill head, Oscar with 6 young Imbonerakure Nestor Horihoze, Nyamarira, Jerome Mbonimpa, Emmanuel Sibomana, Egide Nduwayezu and Melchior Nsavyimana helped Jean Bosco Ndabarushimana to flee. This hill head and these Imbonerakure were not worried.

A girl raped in Nyabikere commune, Karuzi province

Information received by Ligue Iteka on 18 February 2019 indicates that at about 16:00 on 15 February 2019, on Masama hill, Rugwiza zone, Nyabikere commune, Karuzi province, a 9-year-old girl named N. was raped by two neighboring boys named Yamuremye, aged 13, and Girukwishaka, aged 14. According to local sources, they took advantage of the parents' absence when the girl was at home, as the members of the two families often visit each other. The alleged perpetrators were arrested by the police but were released the same day pretexting that they are still minors while the girl was taken to Karuzi Hospital.

II. SECURITY FACTS

A person killed in Kiganda commune, Muramvya province

Information received by Ligue Iteka on 19 February indicates that on 17 February 2019, on Burenza hill, Kiganda commune, Muramvya province, at about 8:00 pm, 34-year-old Pierre Claver Ntakarutimana was killed by his mother, Monique Sinzobakwira, during a fight. According to local sources, family conflicts are at the origin of this fight. Monique Sinzobakwira is jailed in Kiganda commune cell for investigation reasons.

A person killed in Kiganda commune, Muramvya province

Information received by Ligue Iteka on 18 February 2019 indicates that on 17 February 2019, on Nyagisozi hill, Gatabo zone, Kiganda commune, Muramvya province, Mathilde Nibaruta was killed with sticks by her neighbor, Magnus Nzokiranteveye, motorcyclist. According to local sources, the victim was accused of being the perpetrator of a robbery to Magnus while he found nothing with her. The alleged perpetrator was jailed in Muramvya prison.

A person killed in Ruhororo commune, Ngozi province

On the night of 19 February 2019, on Banda hill, Mubanga zone, Ruhororo commune, Ngozi province, Didier Irankunda, aged 20, was killed with sticks and knives by his father, Révérien Ndayikengurukiye. According to local sources, a dispute over the family land management is behind this murder. The alleged perpetrator was arrested the next morning by the police and taken to the commune police cell in Ruhororo.

Intimidations in Kabarore commune, Kayanza province

Since 18 February 2019, in Kabarore commune, Kayanza province, the provincial representative of the CNDD-FDD party, Ferdinand, has held meetings on almost all the hills and ordered everyone to have members cards of the ruling party. According to local sources, there will then be a campaign to check who does not have cards and will be killed. According to the same sources, names were even read in the meeting saying that it was the new members of the party while the concerned were not aware of it.

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, torture, arbitrary and targeted illegal arrests against opponents and alleged opponents of CNDD-FDD party regime are 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.