

## **BURUNDIAN LEAGUE OF HUMAN RIGHTS "ITEKA"**

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***Weekly bulletin « ITEKA N'IJAMBO » n°60 of the Burundian League of Human Rights "ITEKA"***

**Week from 22 to 28 May 2017**



***In memory of Madam Marie Claudette Kwizera, Treasurer of Iteka, reported missing since December 10 2015. From December 2015 to 28 May 2017, Iteka has documented at least 426 cases of enforced disappearances.***

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## **ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

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

**CPP:** *Code of Criminal Procedure (CCP)*

**PJ :** *Judicial Police*

**TGI:** *High Court*

**FAB:** *Burundi Armed Forces*

**CDS :** *Health center*

**MSD:** *Movement for Solidarity and Democracy*

**FNL :** *National Liberation Front*

**OPJ :** *Judicial Police Officer*

**SNR:** *National Intelligence Service*

**VBG :** *Gender Based Violence*

## ***0. INTRODUCTION***

Allegations and violations of human rights were recorded during this reporting period: at least 9 persons killed, 2 reported missing, 7 tortured, 7 arbitrarily arrested and 2 people were GBV victims.

The phenomenon of corpses is also reported. At least 3 corpses were recorded in this reporting period.

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

This bulletin protests against intimidation committed by Imbonerakure youth and the impunity of crimes granted to those close to CNDD-FDD party.

The security context is characterized by cases of assassination, arbitrary arrests and torture, committed against alleged opponents to the regime.

This bulletin recommends the government to change the precarious human rights situation in the country.

## ***1. ALLEGATIONS AND VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS***

### ***1.1. ALLEGATIONS OF VIOLATIONS OF THE RIGHT TO LIFE***

#### ***1.1.1. CORPSES FOUND IN BUSH AND/OR IN RIVERS***

##### **A dead body found in Ngagara urban zone, Ntakangwa commune, Bujumbura mayorship**

On May 24, 2017, in urban zone, Ntakangwa commune, Bujumbura mayorship, a visibly strangled 29-year-old Jackson Michel Nimenya, a native of Rugombo commune was found on Mwambutsa Avenue separating Kigobe quarter and quarter VI of Ngagara urban zone. According to our source, Jackson Michel Nimenya was a student at Buyenzi Regional Medical Institute. The population of the area claimed to have heard gunfire at around 3:00 am and believed that the gunfire was related to the assassination. The family of the victim indicates that the young boy had left home around 4:00 pm on May 23, 2017 for Kamenge urban zone. The police say the perpetrators are still unidentified. However, investigations have begun to discover the criminals.

### **A dead body found in Rusaka commune, Mwaro province**

On 22 May 2017, around 6:00 am, a dead body of an unidentified man aged between 30 and 35 was found on Bisha hill, in Makamba zone of Rusaka commune, Mwaro province, according to sources.

### **A corpse found in commune and province Bubanza**

Information received by Iteka League on 22 May 2017 indicates that at about 3:00 pm on 21 May 2017, on Rugunga hill, Buvyuko zone, Bubanza commune and province, a dead body of a 24-year-old girl Rose Ndayishimiye was found in Kadakama River by the population of the area. According to our sources, the victim had disappeared since May 15, 2017.

## ***1.1.2. PERSONS KILLED FOLLOWING MOB JUSTICE AND/OR SETTLING OF ACCOUNTS***

### **One person killed in Gatara commune, Kayanza province**

The information received by our office on May 27, 2017 indicates that on May 21, 2017, on Mudahara hill in Gatara commune, Kayanza province, the woman named Aline was beaten to death by her husband Claver. She was his second wife. The reason of this murder remains unknown.

### **One person killed in Muyinga commune and province**

On May 24, 2017, Jacqueline Munezero, from Rusengo hill, commune and Muyinga province was strangled by her husband, 1<sup>st</sup> Sergeant Major Jean Claude Nzitonda of Mukoni camp. According to sources on the spot, the reason of this murder would be linked to a land conflict. The couple was scheduled the next day at TGI Muyinga for a public hearing on the case. The alleged murderer was arrested.

### **One person killed in commune and province Rumonge**

On the evening of May 28, 2017, on Mugomere hill, in Rumonge city, Elysée Nkurunziza was killed with a hoe. Local sources indicate that the victim had gone to visit his girlfriend living on the same hill when she was knocked out by the girl's brother, hostile to the relationship of this young boy with his sister. The perpetrator was immediately arrested by the police. Accused of premeditated murder, he was detained in Rumonge police cell. The victim's relatives said Elysée Nkurunziza had gone to borrow a notebook from this girl. The victim was in 9<sup>th</sup> form at Rumonge Urban Communal School.

### **One person killed in Giheta commune, Gitega province**

On May 25, 2017, Margueritte Nzobonimpa, aged 74 was murdered by the population of Ruhanza hill, Giheta commune, Gitega province, accused of sorcery.

### ***1.1.3. PERSONS DIED DUE TO NEGLECT BY PRISON AUTHORITIES AND/ OR SUICIDE***

#### **The death of a detainee in Muyinga Central Prison**

On May 25, 2017, Jef Niyongabo, detained in Muyinga Central Prison died on the way to hospital where he was being treated. According to his friends at Muyinga Central Prison, the victim died as a result of neglect by prison authorities. For several days, his health was in poor condition, confirms the same source before adding that he suffered from intense diarrhea and vomiting. The victim was prosecuted for a rape case.

#### **A person suicide in Muyinga commune and province**

On May 24, 2017, a young laureate of the technical humanities residing on Ngogomo hill, Gasorwe commune, Muyinga province was found hung on a tree. According to sources on the spot, this young person would have committed suicide due to daily life worries.

### ***1.2. PERSONS ABDUCTED AND REPORTED MISSING***

#### **One person abducted in Mpanda commune, Bubanza province**

On May 23, 2017, Eric Ntirandekura, FNL member of Agathon Rwasa's wing was abducted by unidentified people in Rubira zone, Mpanda commune of Bubanza province. According to our source, Eric Ntirandekura was with Desire come to visit him. On their way to Muzinda, they were arrested by Imbonerakure Chadrack, Sébastien and Mafyeri, all friends of Désiré. Arrived in Kinama zone, Désiré was off the vehicle to continue to Cibitoke. A member close to his family specifies that the abductors demand an amount of 300,000 Bif for his release. One of the neighbors said Eric Ntirandekura was abducted for political reasons.

#### **One person arrested and reported missing in Rango commune, Kayanza province**

On May 27, 2017, Florian Ndayikeza, MSD party member was arrested by Imbonerakure on Nyabibuye hill in Rango commune, Kayanza province, in collaboration with the police. He was accused of coming from Rwanda. According to sources on the spot, Florian Ndayikeza was taken to Bujumbura but his family does not know where he is.

### ***1.3. PERSONS TORTURED BY IMBONERAKURE AND SNR AGENTS***

#### **Two detainees tortured in Mpimba Central Prison**

On 24 May 2017, two detainees in Mpimba central prison, Tharcisse Nimbona and Jean Claude Nduwimana, nicknamed Kibago, all ex-FAB soldiers arrested in late 2016 were tortured. The former was accused of collaborating with rebel groups and the latter was co-accused with Colonel Dieudonné Dushimagize in the case of illegal possession of weapons. Our sources say that a group of young Imbonerakure security guards inside the prison have beaten up Tharcisse Nimbona and Jean Claude Nduwimana under the order of Imbonerakure Christophe Ndayizeye, Abdul Mugisha and another nicknamed Satan.

According to the same sources, these Imbonerakure entered the detention cells of these two soldiers to confiscate their phones but the latter resisted. After long discussions, these security officers used force by bringing the two soldiers to the prison grounds where they were tortured for at least 2 hours. Tharcisse Nimbona has injuries from torture and Jean Claude Nduwimana had a fracture on one of his arms.

#### **A person tortured in Gasorwe commune, Muyinga province**

As of May 25, 2017, Caif Sinzinkayo, a brigadier at Muyinga police station and attached to Gasorwe was publicly assaulted by the SNR Provincial officer in Muyinga Province named Gérard Ndayisenga. This brigadier was prosecuted for hiding alleged fraudsters. He was released. The people of Muyinga province as well as human rights defenders denounce the behavior of SNR official who is constantly mistreating people for the sole reason that they are not CNDD-FDD party members.

#### **A person tortured in Busoni commune, Kirundo province**

Information received by our office on May 28, 2017 indicates that on the night of May 18, 2017, on Burara hill, Gatare zone, Busoni commune, Kirundo province, a group of local elected representatives including Nimpagaritse and Mbanziriza as well as Imbonerakure including Mberamiheto, Muvunandinda and Sezibera attacked the family of Innocent Nsengiyumva accusing him of theft. They beat him to death, chest and feet burned, according to sources on the spot. The reason for this disgraceful act is that Innocent Nsengiyumva refused to join CNDD-FDD party. He is currently hospitalized at CDS Burara. The alleged perpetrators are still at large, says our source.

#### **One person tortured in Murwi commune, Cibitoke Province**

On May 26, 2017, around 7:00 pm, on Rwesero hill in Murwi Commune, Cibitoke Province, Bernard Nyandwi was beaten by young Imbonerakure from this area headed by

Birihanyuma. The victim was from a bar, accused by these Imbonerakure of being a political opponent who does not patrol at night.

**An ex-FAB and his wife tortured by Imbonerakure in Kayogoro commune, Makamba province**

As of May 26, 2017, Marekabiri, an ex-FAB pensioner and his wife were beaten up by a group of Imbonerakure on Rubimba hill, Kayogoro commune, Makamba province. They were accused of not paying the so-called development contribution. These Imbonerakure do this collection without receipts and are responsible for torture. Known names of these Imbonerakure are Bucumi, Nyawakira and Nintunze.

***1.4. PERSONS ARRESTED BY IMBONERAKURE, SNR AGENTS, POLICEMEN AND/OR SOLDIERS***

**One person arrested in Rango commune, Kayanza province**

On May 22, 2017, on Nyarusange hill in Rango commune of Kayanza province, an Imbonerakure named Benoit Ndaruzaniye was imprisoned in Rango commune police cell for criticizing the regime. He was released after paying 80,000 Bif.

**One person arrested in Kabarore commune, Kayanza province**

On May 20, 2017, Eric Itangizi was arrested by the Imbonerakure on Songore hill in Kabarore commune, Kayanza province, and imprisoned in the commune police cell. He was accused of having stayed in Rwanda.

**Four people arrested in Ngagara urban zone, Ntahangwa commune, Bujumbura mayorship**

On May 24, 2017, two civil servants and two house workers were arrested by police and soldiers during a search conducted in quarter VI of Ngagara urban zone, Ntahangwa commune, Bujumbura mayorship. This search aimed at weapons and the control of household notebooks.

**A person arrested in commune and province Bubanza**

On May 26, 2017, around 3:00 pm, in Bubanza city center, Venant Havyarimana was arrested by young Imbonerakure including Hakiza, Naphtalie and Nshimirimana, in collaboration with the police. The victim is accused of possessing an Android phone in which he had Inzamba and Humura programs. Venant Havyarimana is detained in Bubanza provincial police station cell.



## ***II. GENDER BASED VIOLENCE***

### **A person raped in Rusaka commune, Mwaro province**

On May 22, 2017, a 10-year-old girl named A. from Bugorora hill in Rusaka commune was raped by Fiston Mugisha from the same hill, sources said. Both were collecting firewood, police sources said.

## ***III. INTIMIDATION BY CNDD-FDD PARTY MEMBERS***

### **Forced contributions by Imbonerakure in Makamba province**

The inhabitants of Makamba province are exhausted of forced unpredicted contributions from the administration. Barriers have been erected on all hills in the province mainly on main roads to public places such as markets and CDS.

"No one can pretend going to public places without having receipts proving the payment of these contributions," said a citizen met arrested on a roadblock on Kayogoro-Makamba road.

In Vugizo commune, adults no longer have access to the markets, "young Imbonerakure stop us at the roadblocks and force us to pay all the installments. We abandoned the markets, we only send children," adds an inhabitant of Vugizo commune.

In Kibago commune, young Imbonerakure abuse and beat people unable to pay these contributions. "They should know that means are limited for some people. There are even those who do not have what to eat, the construction of a provincial office is not a priority for them," say a resident of Kibago.

Communal and provincial authorities say that this project concerns every inhabitant of the province. These contributions are in the 5<sup>th</sup> tranche at a rate of 1,000 Bif per household and an amount varying between 5,000 and 20,000 Bif per official and per tranche.

In Makamba commune, it is also the forced recovery of the cash allocated to the construction of a provincial building. Barriers kept by CNDD-FDD young Imbonerakure are erected everywhere on the roads to the province city.

These roadblocks are observed on all the hills of the commune. People are arrested there, their release is done by means of payment of these expenses or bribes to these young people guarding the barrier.

### **People assaulted by Imbonerakure in Kayogoro commune, Makamba province**

On May 23, 2017, around 1:00 am, Longin Nsengiyumva, chair of Imbonerakure Youth League in that commune, with other young people, Osias Bigirimana and a nicknamed American assaulted the people who were in a bar.

### **Armed Imbonerakure in Rugombo commune, Cibitoke province**

Information received by Iteka League on 22 May 2017 indicates that, at about 8:00 on 20 May 2017, in Rugombo commune, Cibitoke province, at Burundiano hotel belonging to Vedaste Niyokwizera alias Warumonge, a score of armed men were there. According to our sources, all were young Imbonerakure who had just been armed. Until now, no one is indicating where these young Imbonerakure went.

### **Intimidation by Imbonerakure in Ruyigi province**

In a visit to Ruyigi province of the CNDD-FDD general secretary Evariste Ndayishimiye on May 25, 2017, the inhabitants of the province spent an eventful night because of intimidation by Imbonerakure of the area. The patrol was made by the latter and ordered the inhabitants to go home very early. As an example for Sanzu III quarter, the patrol was made by Imbonerakure including one of the 5 elected on the hill named Sibomana and Damas, according to our sources.

### **Night patrols of Imbonerakure in Gatara commune, Kayanza province**

In Gatara commune, Kayanza province, the Imbonerakure armed with long sticks make night patrols in Ruyigi province which frighten the population. As of 20 May 2017, around 9:00 pm, a teacher from Gatara High School named Audifax met them, interrogated him for a long time and then let him continue his way.

### **Paramilitary training in Rumonge province**

Information received by our office on May 28, 2017 indicates that a mobilization of young Imbonerakure is intensifying on several hills where these young people are running chanting slogans glorifying the ruling party and demonizing the opponents. Information reports night secret meetings and paramilitary training in Rumonge, Kigwena and Vyanda nature reserves in Bururi province.

### **Threats to be arrested and tortured in commune and province Bururi**

Olivier Muhimpundu, a native of Kiremba hill, commune and Bururi province is threatened by young Imbonerakure including Bikebesi, the head of these Imbonerakure and the

commune administrator Nestor Nijimbere, according to sources on the spot. Olivier Muhimpundu fled and is living underground. His family is afraid and thinks he could be executed. It then solicits urgent assistance to save him. A summons signed by the administrator came out on May 23, 2017 to arrest him. The reason of this pursuit is that Olivier Muhimpundu refused to adhere to the Imbonerakure youth movement, clarifies our source.

#### ***IV. OTHER FACTS REPORTED***

##### **Four grenades found in a field in commune and province Makamba**

As of May 22, 2017, four grenades were found in a field on Nyabigina hill, commune and Makamba province. According to administrative sources, this field was rented by an association of farmers.

##### **Grenade attack in Rohero urban zone , Mukaza commune, Bujumbura mayorship**

On 26 May 2017, around 8:00 pm, close the French school in Rohero quarter, Mukaza commune, Bujumbura mayorship, unidentified persons aboard a vehicle launched two grenades. One person was injured and gunshots were heard.

##### **Grenade attack in Kamenge urban zone , Ntahangwa commune, Bujumbura mayorship**

Information received on 22 May 2017 indicates that a grenade was launched on the night of 21 May 2017 near the home of Kamenge zone head on the 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Gikizi quarter, Kamenge urban zone, Ntahangwa commune, Bujumbura mayorship. According to sources, six people were wounded during the attack.

#### ***V. CONCLUSION ET RECOMMENDATIONS***

Allegations and violations of human rights following the deterioration of political context since the beginning of President Pierre Nkurunziza's protested 3<sup>rd</sup> term continue to be recorded in various parts of the country.

Armed attacks and ambushes by unidentified armed men continue in different parts of the country.

Torture, targeted arbitrary and illegal arrests to opponents in general and in particular members of AMIZERO Y'ABARUNDI coalition (Agathon Rwasa's FNL wing and UPRONA wing of Charles Nditije) are still recorded.

Intimidation by young Imbonerakure, forced contributions as well as night patrols are a source of threats to anyone non-member of the ruling party.

The phenomenon of mob justice is also a consequence of the hate speech pronounced by some authorities of the country and the impunity observed from the young Imbonerakure.

Considering the continuously serious situation of human rights situation in Burundi, Iteka League recommends the government of Burundi the following:

- To dismantle and disarm the Imbonerakure militia which spread terror in the country and which has replaced the administration and security corps;
- To ensure compliance with the CCP for cases of arrests currently being committed dealt with by persons who are not competent to do so;
- To punish policemen, soldiers, Imbonerakure League youth and administrative agents involved in human rights violations;