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Weekly bulletin « ITEKA N'IJAMBO » n°71 of the Burundian League of Human Rights "ITEKA"

Week from 6-13 August 2017



In memory of Madame Marie Claudette Kwizera, Treasurer of Iteka, reported missing since December 10, 2015. From December 2015 to 13 August 2017, Iteka has documented at least 440 cases of enforced disappearances.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AMOTABU: *Burundi Motorcyclist Association*

CDS: *Health Center*

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

ECOFO: *Fundamental School/Ecole Fondamentale*

FAB: *Burundi Armed Forces*

FNL: *National Liberation Front*

MINUSCA: *United Nations multidimensional integrated stabilization mission in the Central African Republic*

OPJ : *Judicial Police Officer*

RANAC: *National Gathering for Change*

RDC: *Democratic Republic of Congo*

SNR: *National Intelligence Service*

UPRONA : *Union for National Progress*

VBG : *Gender Based Violence*

0. INTRODUCTION

Allegations and violations of human rights were recorded during this reporting period: at least 13 persons killed including 4 corpses, 1 reported missing, 14 tortured, 15 arbitrarily arrested as well as 1 victim of GBV.

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

This bulletin reports cases of killings, abduction, torture and arbitrary arrests of the alleged President Pierre Nkurunziza's 3rd term opponents.

Members of the opposition parties, namely those of the FNL wing of Agathon Rwasa, those of UPRONA wing of Charles Nditije and those of RANAC were a privileged target of the repression organized by President Pierre Nkurunziza's regime.

The bulletin 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.

The security situation is characterized by cases of killings, arbitrary arrests and torture and the continuation of acts of intimidation by CNDD-FDD members against alleged opponents of the regime.

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

I. ALLEGATIONS OF VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS

I.1. ALLEGATIONS OF VIOLATIONS OF RIGHT TO LIFE

I.1.1. PERSONS KILLED BY IMBONERAKURE, POLICEMEN AND/OR SOLDIERS

One person killed in Ntakangwa commune, Bujumbura city

Information received by Iteka League on 7 August 2017 indicates that on 6 August 2017 at about 8:00 pm, in Mubone quarter of Buterere urban zone, Ntakangwa commune, Bujumbura City, a retired police officer named Leonard Manirakiza was beaten to death by young Imbonerakure on patrol in this quarter of Mubone. According to our sources, Leonard Manirakiza shouted for rescue to police from Mutimbuzi commune post not far from the place where these young Imbonerakure were beating him but in vain. These young people carried him to his home where he succumbed to the blows and injuries.

A person killed in Bujumbura city

Information received by Iteka League on 7 August 2017 indicates that on 6 August 2017, a member of the presidential guard, Corporal Nishemezwe, Reg. 38772, native of Muramvya Province was shot dead by his colleague at his workplace at the presidential palace. But the Burundi police spokesman said the soldier committed suicide. He had just returned from a peacekeeping mission in the Central African Republic to MINUSCA.

1.1.2. PERSONS KILLED FOLLOWING ARMED ATTACKS

Two people killed and seven wounded in Buyenzi urban zone , Bujumbura City

On August 8, 2017, two people were killed in a grenade attack in a bar by an unidentified person in Buyenzi urban zone at the 7th Avenue, Mukaza Commune, Bujumbura City. According to sources on the spot, one died straightaway and another died from his injuries.

Three soldiers killed in armed attack in Mutimbuzi commune, Bujumbura rural province

As of 11 August 2017, around 9:00 pm, in Warubondo sector, Gatumba zone, Mutimbuzi commune, Bujumbura rural province, three soldiers were killed in an armed attack by rebels of General Aloys Nzabampema's FNL. According to the movement spokesman, Ambassador Isidore Nibizi, the attack occurred in Warubondo area between the 2nd and 3rd avenue when these men were on patrol.

On the morning of August 12, 2017, military, police and administrative officials held a security meeting. These authorities accuse the population of being accomplice and warn to take serious measures.

1.1.3. CORPSES FOUND IN BUSH AND/OR IN RIVERS

A corpse found in Giharo commune, Rutana province

On August 10, 2017, around 9:00 am, on Mutwana hill, Giharo commune, Rutana province, a corpse of an unidentified man was found floating in Ndurumu River. Giharo police has initiated investigations, according to sources on the spot.

A corpse found in Mutimbuzi commune, Bujumbura rural province

Information received by Iteka League on 6 August 2017 indicates that as of 3 August 2017, on Mushasha I hill, Gatumba zone, Mutimbuzi commune, Bujumbura rural province, a boy named Paul Bikorimana was killed by unidentified people. According to our sources, the corpse was found in his house on August 7, 2017.

A corpse found in commune and Muramvya province

As of 10 August 2017, around 6:00 pm, a young man's body was found on Musagara hill, Muramvya commune, Muramvya province. His body had torture signs. The body was taken to Muramvya hospital morgue in the presence of police, administration and the Red Cross.

A corpse found in Kayokwe commune, Mwaro province

On August 10, 2017, around 9:00 pm, a body of Joseph Bankuwiha, aged 70, was found 100 m away from his home on Benja hill, Kayokwe zone and commune, Mwaro province. According to the police, Joseph came from bar, and he would have fallen to the ground due to the excess of alcohol, and then died straightaway.

1.1.4. PERSONS KILLED DUE TO MOB JUSTICE AND/OR SETTLEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

One person killed in Bukeye commune, Muramvya province

Information received by Iteka League on 7 August 2017 indicates that on August 1, 2017, on Kibogoye hill, Bukeye commune, Muramvya province, 60-year-old Astère Ngendakumana was killed with a machete by his son Tuyisenge Jean. Astere had surprised her son stealing his fruits. Tuyisenge Jean was jailed at Muramvya police station on the same day.

1.2. PERSONS ABDUCTED AND REPORTED MISSING

A person reported missing in Buhiga commune, Karusi province

Information received by Iteka League on 7 August 2017 indicates that Charles Nsabuwanka from Rwingoma hill, zone and commune of Buhiga, Karusi province was reported missing since the morning of 6 August 2017. Sources on the spot indicate that Charles Nsabuwanka was No. 4 of the hill elected official, and a new knife, a new rope, and a bag of mice poison were found in his room, but no trace shows he was killed.

1.3. PERSONS TORTURED BY IMBONERAKURE, SNR AGENTS AND POLICEMEN

A person tortured in Nyabitsinda commune, Ruyigi province

On 8 August 2017, around 6:00 pm, a man named Fabien was beaten up by a police officer in Nyabitsinda commune, Ruyigi province. According to sources on the spot, he accused him of trafficking sugar while the latter carried rice bran. Richard came to rescue the victim by beating this policeman. He took his rifle and handed it to his colleagues. Richard was pursued by the police and is at large.

One person tortured in Mabayi commune, Cibitoke province

On August 11, 2017, Eliazard Bizimana was beaten by Imbonerakure on Gahoma hill, Mabayi commune, Cibitoke province, headed by Habarugira, also a young Imbonerakure while leaving a gold panning site. According to our sources, he was robbed the gold he owned valued at more than 300,000 Bif. The victim is accused of going back and forth to Rwanda in Bweyeye area to traffic gold.

A person tortured in Mugongo-Manga commune, Bujumbura rural province

On August 7, 2017, around 8:00 pm, on Nyarushanga hill, Jenda zone, Mugongo-Manga commune, Bujumbura rural province, Bigirimana was beaten and wounded at the face in a bar, located in Jenda urban center by an Imbonerakure named Niyonzima alias Tempo. According to our sources, this Imbonerakure intimidated him forcing him to buy him beer that he is supposedly from CNDD-FDD party and that he is influential (uwindani). The victim complained to Mugongo-Manga commune administrator named Diomede Ndabahinyuye and to the police station head named Jean Louis Sugwavuba but this Imbonerakure was not worried.

A person tortured in Butihinda commune, Muyinga province

On August 10, 2017, Hamisi Niyonkuru, known as Nzungu, was beaten by SNR agents and Imbonerakure of Butihinda commune, Muyinga province. According to sources on the spot, Gérard Ndayisenga, SNR head in Muyinga province and police officers guarding him, came to arrest Hamisi, accusing him of extracting gold without paying taxes. The same sources add that Philippe Rwaswa, SNR head Butihinda commune went himself to arrest Hamisi alias Nzungu where was hiding to his cousin's. After beating him, he was embarked in a SNR vehicle in Muyinga registered IA 4028. He was released the same day.

A person tortured in Busoni commune, Kirundo province

Information dated 13 August 2017 indicates that as of 5 August 2017, at Vyanzo hill police station, Gatare zone, Busoni commune, Kirundo province, a 34-year-old Evelyne Mukandekezi, pregnant, was beaten by policemen and Imbonerakure. According to sources on the spot, she was accused of refusing to pay a forced contribution required by Imbonerakure from local associations. Evelyne was taken to CDS Vyanzo for treatment and risks of abortion, according to the same sources. The victim was refused by the OPJ of Busoni commune to file a complaint for fear of giving summons to the alleged authors composed of Imbonerakure and police officers.

One person tortured in Gihogazi commune, Karusi province

On August 10, 2017, Mbitsemunda was beaten up by two Imbonerakure Revocat Ndayishimiye and Leon Gahungu on Ruyaga hill, Munanira zone, Gihogazi commune, Karusi province. According to sources on the spot, these Imbonerakure accused him of drunkenness.

Seven people arrested and tortured in Vugizo commune, Makamba province

As of August 12, 2017, seven natives of Buhiga commune, Karusi province were arrested by CNDD-FDD Imbonerakure youths on Kagege hill, Mpinga zone, Vugizo commune, Makamba province. The latter tortured them, including two seriously wounded. The administration accused them of being surprised causing bush fires. One is being treated at CDS while others are being held at Vugizo police station.

One person tortured in Vugizo commune, Makamba province

As of August 10, 2017, Longin was seriously injured by young Imbonerakure of CNDD-FDD. He was suspected of arson in Rukamba Nature Reserve on Kagege hill, Mpinga zone, Vugizo commune, Makamba province.

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

One person arrested in Vyanda commune, Bururi province

On August 13, 2017, a pastor of the Pentecost Church named Manassé Kazungu, alias Tiroso, was arrested in Vyanda commune, Bururi province by SNR agents accompanied by an Imbonerakure named Ferdinand alias Budida. According to sources on the spot, this pastor Manassé Kazungu, a Tutsi ex-FAB was taken to Bururi central prison. The same sources indicate that this pastor was arrested while preaching the word of God.

One person arrested in Nyanza-Lac commune, Makamba province

On August 7, 2017, Stève Bishaza, a representative of AMOTABU in Nyanza-Lac commune was arrested and taken by policemen to Nyanza-Lac police station cell, Makamba province. According to sources on the spot, he was transferred to Makamba prosecutor's office cell on 9 August 2017. The reason for his arrest remains unknown. The same source indicates that he was wanted by the SNR head in Makamba province.

One person arrested in Rango commune, Kayanza province

On August 2, 2017, on the hill and Rango commune, Kayanza province, Mechak Bukuru from Ngoro zone, Gataru commune was arrested by Imbonerakure, including Joachim nicknamed Rugata. They accused him of being among the people who threw grenades on Shinya hill in Ngoro zone. They jailed him in Rango commune police cell, Kayanza province.

Three people arrested in Matongo commune, Kayanza province

As of August 10, 2017, Matongo commune, Kayanza province, Claude Nzeyimana of party FNL of Agathon Rwasa's wing, teacher at ECOFO Kiziba, Emile Bankuwunguka of RANAC, teacher at Burarana Commune High School and Emmanuel Nzambimana of UPRONA Nditije wing's, teacher at ECOFO Gasenyi, were arrested by the police with Imbonerakure. They were arrested in a church on Bandaga hill while praying. They were jailed at the commune police cell, accused of having denounced a distribution of weapons to Imbonerakure youth.

Two people arrested in Buganda commune, Cibitoke province

On August 7, 2017, Claude Nzeyimana and Jerome were arrested by Anaclet Bikorimana of SNR deputy head in Cibitoke province. He accused them of having stayed in the DRC. Sources on site claim they are victims of their membership to FNL of Agathon Rwasa's wing.

II. CASES OF GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

A person raped in Bukeye commune, Muramvya province

Information received by Iteka League on 7 August 2017 indicates that as of 31 July 2017, on Kivogero commune, Bukeye, Muramvya province, a 7-year-old C. was raped by Liévin, aged 17, shepherd to the victim's family.

III. INTIMIDATION BY CNDD-FDD PARTY MEMBERS

The population mistreated in Ntega commune, Kirundo province

Information received by Iteka League on 13 August 2017 indicates that on Mariza hill, Ntega commune, Kirundo province, any person nonmember of CNDD-FDD party is mistreated by administrative authorities and has no right to administrative documents such as wedding certificates. Non-members of CNDD-FDD party are also banned of the right to purchase goods in shops. As illustration, on 10 August 2017, Jacqueline Miburo, FNL member Agathon Rwasa's wing, was denied by CNDD-FDD party chair in Ntega commune and the Imbonerakure to buy one kg of palm oil.

IV. OTHER FACTS REPORTED

Sixteen people killed in Buyenzi urban zone , Bujumbura City

As of 11 August 2017, around 10:00 am, 16 people were embarked by police in a pickup truck registered A277A PN in Buyenzi urban zone, Muha commune, Bujumbura city. According to sources on the spot, they were taken to an unknown destination.

A person injured in Cibitoke urban zone , Bujumbura City

As of 8 August 2017, at around 2:00 am, an old lady named Alimasi Mwajuma was shot and wounded by a gun fired by an unidentified person through her sleeping bedroom window in Cibitoke urban zone, 11th Avenue No. 120, Ntahangwa Commune, Bujumbura City. According to sources on the spot, land conflicts with her nephews would be behind this assassination attempt.

V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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.

Grenade attacks by unidentified men are still observed in different parts of the country.

Torture, arbitrary and illegal arrests, targeted to opponents in general and in particular opposition parties' members namely FNL Agathon Rwasa's wing, UPRONA of Charles Nditije's wing and RANAC are also reported.

Intimidation by Imbonerakure youth are a source of threats to any person nonmember of the ruling party.

The phenomenon of mob justice is also a consequence of the impunity to 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 enforce 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;