



Burundi Watch Update ***30 April-7 May 2017***

Summary

Despite numerous international efforts to help stem the violence in Burundi and the need to find a solution to the ongoing crisis, grave human rights abuses are reported continue unabated. These include killings, torture, arbitrary arrests and abductions. Hate speech is permanently displayed by the ruling CNDD-FDD youth wing- The Imbonerakure.

Briefing on the Inter-Burundian Dialogue in Bujumbura

In late April, the Facilitator of the Inter-Burundian Dialogue, former president Benjamin Mkapa announced a series of briefings with Burundian stakeholders that did not attend the previous meeting in Arusha¹. In this regard, the facilitation team led by Ambassador Francis Mndolwa met faith based groups, registered civil society and some political parties in Bujumbura on 3 May 2017. Participants were informed about the main points discussed in Arusha. The Facilitation team suggested the amendment of the constitution initiated by the government should be discussed and agreed upon by all parties in Burundi.

¹ See Burundi update watch n°53



Picture 1. Participants to the Briefing on the inter-Burundian dialogue in Bujumbura. Credit Ikiriho on twitter

Guterres appoints a new Burundi Envoy

On 5 May 2017, the UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres appointed former President of Burkina Faso, President Michel Kafando, as his special envoy in replacement of Jamal Benomar who was rejected by the government of Burundi in late November 2016. “Mr. Kafando’s role will include leading and coordinating the United Nations political efforts to promote peace and sustainable development in Burundi. Furthermore, he will provide assistance to the efforts of the East African Community for political dialogue among Burundi role players”². Whereas the government of Burundi welcomed President Kafando, opposition raised concerns that Kafando will have his office in Burkina Faso, making it difficult for him to follow and understand on the ground realities, far away in Burundi



Picture 2. Président Michel Kafondo, UN Secretary General Special Envoy

² See Secretary-General Appoints Michel Kafando of Burkina Faso as Special Envoy, <https://www.un.org/press/en/2017/sga1729.doc.htm>

Hate speech

Despite the ruling CNDD-FDDF arguing that the Imborekaure song calling for rape of rivals in Ntega was an isolated³ incident, the “Terinda abakeba bavyare imbonekakure” (impregnate rivals so that they give birth to Imbonerakure) song is widely used and repeated at many gathering as it was proven on 6 May 2017 as thousands of new members joined the CNDD-FDD in Bujumbura. Once again, a video footage showing Imbonerakure singing the infamous song was uploaded on social media.



Picture 3. CNDD-FDD members having fun as they gathered at Place de l'indépendance in Bujumbura on 6 May 2017. Credit: Ikiriho on twitter

Killings

- On 30 April 2017, Habonimana aka Mpongo was killed by unidentified persons in Bwayi in the District of Mugina
- On 1 May 2017, an attack by unidentified gunmen on three households at Mugoma and Muyebe hills in the Districts of Musigati and Rugazi resulted in three persons being wounded
- On 2 May 2017, armed attack by unknown people in the pub known as “Kwa Rukasha” in Rushubi in the District of Isare resulted in a retired civil servant Gilbert Ndayisaba being killed
- On 3 May 2017, Nyabenda was killed following a series of beating under the supervision of the Imbonerakure chief in Mparambo known as Ezechiel

³ See Burundi update watch n°60

- On 4 May 2017, Claude Bararufise was shot dead by unknown gunmen in Kamenge whereas Nadine Tumberayesu was wounded
- On 4 May 2017, a lifeless body of an unknown person was recovered in Mparambo in the District of Rugombo
- On 4 May 2017, a lifeless body of an unidentified person was recovered at Kigamba hill in the District of Ruyigi

Arbitrary arrests and abductions

Continued arrests and abductions were reported during the period report:

- On 1 May 2017, Etienne Ntamavukiro was arrested in Bujumbura and detained in Mpimba prison
- On 3 May 2017, Frederic Nzeyimana was arrested at the International Airport of Bujumbura as he returned to Canada
- On 3 May 2017, six (6) persons arrested in Mugina and detained at Nyeshenza in the District of Mugina
- On 3 May 2017, two (2) MSD militants Rémy Ndagijimana and Léon Bangiricenge were abducted from Kamenge and taken to unknown destination
- On 4 May 2017, a university student Inamahoro Ben Eric was abducted from Muramvya and taken to unknown destination
- On 4 May 2017, two Rwandan nationals Félix Nzarama and Damascène Nkundawayezu were abducted from Camakombe in the District of Mugina and taken to unknown destination
- On 4 May 2017, Four (4) youths, namely Aloys Sam Batungwanayo, Thomas Ruzocimana, Egide Asmani Bangurambona and Claver Salim Nkeshimana were arrested and detained in Ngozi.
- On 5 May 2017, three inmates, namely Fulgence Bizosa, Aimable Manirakiza and Vilipien Bigirimana were transferred to an isolated room within the prison of Mpimba where they are being tortured under the supervision of the Director of the

prison, OPC 2 Déo Bigirimana. They are believed of preparing unrest within the prison

- On 6 May 2017, a pro- Rwsa militant Réverien Hakizimana was arrested in Biyorwa in the District of Butaganzwa and detained at Butaganzwa police station
- On 7 May 2017 , the chief of District of Busiga, Mr Romain Ndagabwa was arrested and detained at Ngozi prison

Atrocities Watch Africa

Atrocities Watch Africa (AWA) is a non-partisan, civil society organization and institution that intends to provide continental leadership in matters pertaining to the prevention of mass atrocities within Africa and beyond, through multi-pronged approaches that infuse ownership, legitimacy, and sustainable interface. AWA's strategic and approaches are grounded in the realization that atrocities can be prevented through various interventions, including, but not limited to, early warning mechanisms, diplomatic efforts, use of social media and new technologies, litigation, and advocacy campaigns.

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