



Burundi Watch Update December 2018



Summary

November was dominated by international focus on the situation of Burundi but with very few results as Burundi government boycotted the EAC Summit. However the arrest of former officers in the Army of Burundi and the release of an arrest warrant against a dozen of dignitaries including President Pierre Buyoya raised much concern as to the ethnicization of the conflict and as a strategy to escape the real political crisis prevailing in the country. Meanwhile, killings and arbitrary arrests continue with more dead bodies recovered.

Burundi boycotts EAC Summit

After the absence of the government of Burundi to the 5th and last inter-burundian dialogue in late October¹, the facilitator, President Mkapa presented his report to the Mediator President Museveni on 19 November 2018. While many expected that the report would be analyzed by the Summit of 30 November 2018, the government of Burundi argued that it was notified at short notice and would not be able to prepare responses, despite the chair of the Summit insisting². The Summit was finally postponed to 27 December 2018 due to the failure to have the required quorum³. Meanwhile, the AU peace and security council reiterated the deployment of human rights and military

¹ See <http://atrocitieswatch.org/burundi-watch-monthly-update-november-2018/>

² Letters exchanged by President Museveni of Uganda, President Nkurunziza of Burundi and the Mfumukeko, Secretary General of the EAC circulated on social media sometimes before the meeting day

³ See <https://www.eac.int/press-releases/1301-20th-ordinary-meeting-of-the-eac-heads-of-state-postponed-to-a-later-date>

observers⁴ whereas the UN Special envoy Kafando stressed the fragile situation as he presented his report in the United Nations security council⁵.



President Mkapa handing the report of President Museveni. Credit Tembele Macocha on twitter

Senior Army officers arrested, Former President Buyoya Wanted

Since gaining independence Burundi experienced several crises. The assassination of a Hutu President Melchior Ndadaye on 21st October 1993 triggered the massacre of thousands of Tutsi and Hutu members of UPRONA days after. The atrocities were documented by a commission set up by the United Nations Security Council that concluded to the commission of the crimes of genocide committed by the FRODEBU against the minority Tutsi⁶. The international community helped Burundi to peacefully settle the political crisis and put an end to violence. The peace process concluded with the Arusha peace agreement in 2000. The latter granted provisional immunities to both

⁴ See **Communique of the 808th Meeting of the Peace and Security Council on the situation in Burundi** <http://www.peaceau.org/en/article/communique-of-the-808th-meeting-of-the-peace-and-security-council-on-the-situation-in-burundi>

⁵ See <https://news.un.org/en/story/2018/11/1026381>

⁶ See <https://www.usip.org/publications/1995/09/commission-inquiry-burundi>

army members and former rebels until the creation of a special tribunal for Burundi and the creation of transitional justice mechanisms.

Although this step was not reached, and amid the unsolved crisis related to the third term of President Pierre Nkurunziza, the Ndadaye assassination case was recently revived. On 25 November 2018, 4 high ranking officers who retired from the army namely General Ndayisaba Celestin aka kibadashi, Colonel Gunungu, Colonel Niyonkuru were arrested and detained in several prisons of Burundi.

Less than a week later, 18 people, majority of whom were in the leadership of UPRONA in the 90' were placed under international arrest warrants. In a press conference of 30 November 2018, the prosecutor general of the Republic, Sylvestre Nyandwi stated that all countries hosting the concerned people should hand over those wanted to Burundi justice. President Pierre Buyoya currently Special envoy of the African Union in Mali is listed first whereas former president of Uprona including Charles Mukasi and Libere Bararunyeretse and Luc Rukingama are amongst the 18 persons wanted.

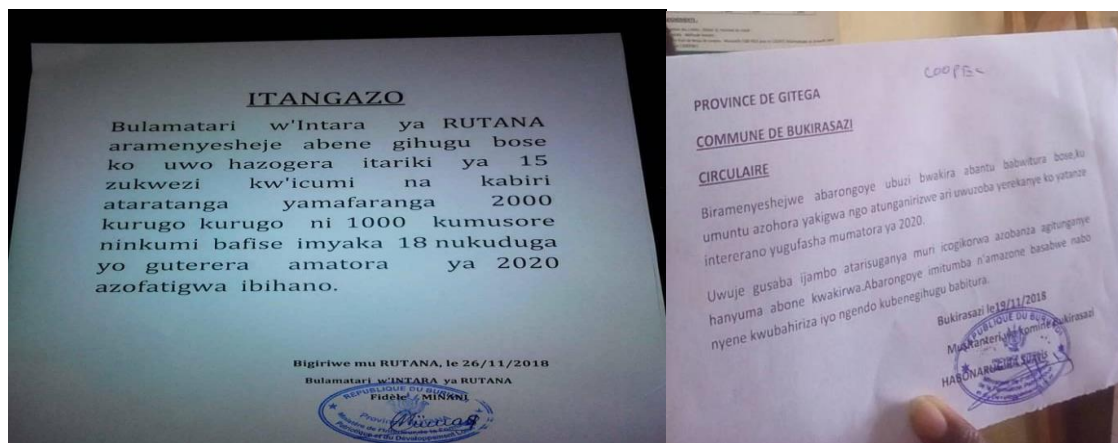
Forced contributions for 2020 elections

During the month of November 2018, several administrative units released notes recalling the obligation to contribute for the general elections of 2020. In the beginning, the contributions were presented as voluntary because the Minister of Home affairs and that of Finances signed a joint ministerial ordinance n° 530/540 /1772 of 11 December 2017 relating to modalities of contributions⁷.

However, during the following months, the contributions now seem to have become mandatory. It is common now for individuals to be required to present the receipts for their contribution prior to accessing public services. Some of the examples:

⁷ See <http://burundi.gov.bi/spip.php?article3082>

- On 19 November 2018, the chief of the District of Bukirasazi demanded all the communal services to require the receipt of the contribution before individuals access any service
- On 26 November 2018, the Governor of Rutana warned that beyond 15 December 2018, those who would not have contributed will be sanctioned
- On 1 December 2018, individual adults were required to present receipt of contributions before entering the Kabezi market



8 bodies recovered on Lake Rweru

During the period between 11 and 14 November 2018, eight (8) dead bodies were recovered in Lake Rweru situated in the province of Kirundo. On 11 November 2018, fishermen were surprised as they discovered two male bodies floating on the waters of the lake Rweru. They quickly called the local authorities. The chief of the District of Busoni Marie Claudine Hashazinka ordered the burial of the dead bodies without identifying them. The corpses were buried in the cemetery of the Rukurajoro sub hill and Gatare area three hundred meters from Lake Rweru.

Two days later, on 14 November 2018, two dead bodies of male adults were recovered floating on the lake peninsula at Nyagisozi hill in Busoni District. The same day, four other corpses of two children, a man and a woman who, probably could be a family, were found all naked, tied on a tree and beheaded. Again, the chief of District ordered the burial of the corpses without prior identification.

Human rights violations

- On 25 October 2018, a 30 years old male Richard Nkurunziza was arbitrary arrested by Imbonerakure Gaposho and three policemen assigned to the police station of Bubanza and taken to an unknown destination.
- On 28 October 2018, a former executive member of FRODEDU political party David Niyoncungu was arrested in Bugarama zone in the District of Muramvya. He was withdrawn from a bus coming from Uganda as he returned from exile in Uganda. He was arrested and detained in Muramvya
- On 30 October 2018, Sijewambere was killed at Mitakataka in the District of Bubanza by unknown gunmen

- On 30 October 2018, a dead body of an unidentified man was recovered hung in a palm plantation at Kirama hill of the District of Buyengeru. The victim bore traces of blows on the body, and was undressed by his executioners.
- On 2 November 2018, three members of the Coalition Amizero y'Abarundi Mashurubu, Marc and another person were arrested at Mutwenzi in the District of Burambi and detained at Burambi police station
- On 5 November 2018, two members of the Association chrétienne Campus pour Christ, Désiré Irankunda et Isaac Mugisha were arrested in Gitega during the evangelization mission in universities and were taken to the NIS in Gitega
- On 5 November 2018, two FNL Rwasa militants Salvatore Nsabiyumva and Zébédé Ntakirutimana were arrested and detained in Vugizo
- On 5 November 2018, Eric Niyubahwe was arrested under the order of the Governor of Makamba, Gad Niyonkuru. Niyubahwe is a teacher at the communal school of Vugizo
- On 5 November 2018, A pro- Rwasa militant, Elvis Ndayirukiye was gravely assaulted by Imbonerakure militiamen at Rusagara hill in the District of Mugina because he was accused of holding an unauthorized meeting.
- On 5 November, teachers at secondary school of Gisovu, Bukuru Emmanuel aka Bekere and Abraham Hashiminfura were gravely assaulted and wounded by a team of Imbonerakure of Bubanza led by a certain Eric. Hashiminfura lives with a disability.
- On 7 November 2018, a 12-year-old girl I.N. was raped at Mugerama Hill, in the District of Nyanza Lac Commune, Makamba Province (South of the country), on 7 November, 2018. Relatives report that she attempted to call for help, but her abuser had already committed the irreparable.

- On 8 November 2018, a former chief of District and member of the CNDD of Nyangoma, André Irambona was arrested in Bugarama and detained at Bugarama police station before he was transferred to Rumonge prison
- On 9 November 2018, a soldier shot dead one of his colleagues and seriously injured another before killing himself on Kinyovu hill, Ntega commune. Witnesses report that the perpetrator of the shooting, nicknamed Mafume, was disputing with a military colleague assigned to the same barracks on Kinyovu threatening his colleague with his weapon. A third soldier, Gervais Rugemintwaza (nicknamed Biregeya) tried to intervene to reconcile his colleagues. He was immediately shot by Mafume. The witnesses report that the latter also fired on the colleague with whom he had a disagreement, before killing himself.
- On 11 November 2018, Boniface Nizigiyimana was abducted from Gatabo in the District of Kayogoro and his dead body was recovered at the Burundi-Tanzania border in Malagarazi two days later. When he was seen the last time, he was with his colleague Eric
- On 12 November 2018, a 61-year-old Yolande Ntukamazina was gravely wounded by unknown individuals who attempted to kill her at Gisagara in the District of Muhanga
- On 13 November 2018, a magistrate of the Tribunal of Bururi, Nicaise Niyungeko was abducted from his office without explanations or a warrant. A day later, he was put under arrest and detained in Mpimba.
- On 15 November 2018, three pro-Rwasa FNL militants, Ferdinand Muterateka, Théogène Nsengiyumva and Berchimans were abducted by unidentified persons from Busoro in the District of Kanyosha and taken to unknown destination
- On 16 November 2018, a 62-year-old Symphorien Ngendakumana was killed by unidentified individuals at his home

situated at Buhoro hill in the District of Mabayi. Witnesses reported that the body of the victim had traces of wounds. Witnesses also report that the practice of witchcraft is at the origin of this assassination.

- On 23 November 2018, Aimable Nduwayezu was arrested as he returned from exile in Rwanda and was taken to the NIS in Ngozi before he was transferred to Mpimba prison
- On 30 November 2018, Nahayo was killed by unidentified persons at Gitanga hill in the District of Bubanza
- On 1 December 2018, Gitabu Sarehe was arrested from Gisovu and detained in the prison of Bubanza