

URGENT ACTION

MISSING HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDER BELIEVED KILLED

In a report published on 13 September 2019, the UN Commission of Inquiry on Burundi indicated that Marie-Claudette Kwizera, a human rights defender and treasurer of Ligue Iteka, a leading human rights organization in Burundi, was killed a few days after she was abducted on 10 December 2015 by members of the National Intelligence Service. The Minister of Justice must instruct the Prosecutor General to open a prompt, thorough, impartial and effective investigation into her abduction and killing.

TAKE ACTION: WRITE AN APPEAL IN YOUR OWN WORDS OR USE THIS MODEL LETTER

Aimee-Laurentine Kanyana
Minister of Justice
BP 1305
Bujumbura, Burundi
Email: harerimana22@yahoo.com

Dear Minister,

*I am writing to bring to your attention the latest development in the enforced disappearance and killing of **Marie-Claudette Kwizera**, a human rights defender who served as treasurer for Ligue Iteka, a leading human rights organization in Burundi.*

Marie-Claudette was abducted by individuals believed to be members of the National Intelligence Service (SNR) on 10 December 2015 in Bujumbura. She was taken by force and bundled into a vehicle with tinted windows. According to new information obtained by the United Nations' Commission of Inquiry on Burundi and published on 13 September 2019, Marie-Claudette was taken to the offices of the SNR but was not duly registered there. And after a few days, she was moved to another location and extrajudicially executed.

I have reason to believe that Marie-Claudette was targeted because of her human rights work.

I would like to call on you to instruct the Prosecutor General to launch an investigation into the abduction and apparent killing of Marie-Claudette Kwizera and ensure that those suspected to be responsible are brought to justice in fair trials.

Yours sincerely,

AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Marie-Claudette Kwizera was abducted on 10 December 2015 as she walked out of an eye clinic in Bujumbura, Burundi. Two days later, an officer from the National Intelligence Service (SNR) told her family that she was being detained at the SNR office and could be released if the family paid about 2,000 US dollars as ransom. The ransom was paid but she was not released. Marie-Claudette's family then lodged in a complaint with the authorities. The SNR officer was arrested but later released according to Marie-Claudette's colleagues.

In January 2016, her relatives went to SNR's office but were told she was not in the premises.

Before her abduction, Marie-Claudette Kwizera, a mother of two girls, she was serving as the Treasurer for Ligue Iteka, one of the oldest and leading human rights organizations in Burundi. On 3 January 2017, an order by the Minister of Interior and Patriotic Training indefinitely banned Ligue Iteka from operating in Burundi after it published a major report jointly with the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH). Before that, Ligue Iteka along with nine other human rights organizations had been under suspension from October 2016 and accused of tarnishing the image of the country and sowing hatred and division in the Burundian population.

EU HRD Guidelines in Burundi

<https://www.amnesty.org/download/Documents/AFR1656782017ENGLISH.pdf>

Commission of Inquiry report

https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/HRCouncil/ColBurundi/ReportHRC42/A_HRC_42_CRP2_EN.pdf

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: French

You can also write in your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: 28 November 2019.

Please check with the Amnesty office in your country if you wish to send appeals after the deadline.

NAME AND PREFERRED PRONOUN: Marie-Claudette Kwizera (She/Her)