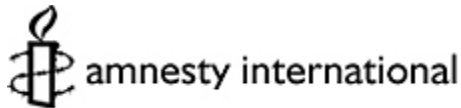


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UN peacekeepers and the Congolese authorities must act urgently to protect civilians from a spate of sporadic attacks by armed rebels which has left at least 100 dead in the last month said Amnesty International today.

In the most recent attack on the night of 30 October 2014 , it is reported that 18 civilians were killed and seven seriously wounded by the armed group, the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), in Kampi ya Chuyi approximately 75 kilometres from Beni town in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

"The ADF and other armed groups must renounce their unlawful campaign of violence against civilians. The Congolese authorities and UN peacekeepers must ensure civilians in peril are protected," said Sarah Jackson, Amnesty International's Deputy Regional Director for East Africa.

"These acts of unlawful killings and abductions of civilians must not go unpunished. The Congolese authorities should ensure that prompt impartial and independent investigation is conducted to bring the perpetrators to justice."

The attacks on innocent civilians by ADF and other armed groups in Beni territory are believed to be in retaliation to military operations launched in January 2014 by the Congolese army with the support from the United Nations peacekeeping force MONUSCO.

While "Operation Sokola 1" meaning "Operation Clean-up" in Lingala, forced the rebels from their forest base, they now appear to have re-grouped launching a series of attacks carrying out arbitrary killings and kidnappings against civilians.

Since early October 2014, civil society organizations monitoring the situation report that at least 100 civilians have been killed, 27 seriously wounded and ten abducted by the ADF in Beni territory. Victims were killed with firearms, machetes, axes and hoes.

On 17 October 2014 in Eringeti, a village in Beni territory, at least 21 civilians were killed, a further two died as a result of injuries sustained in a similar attack and six more were abducted. The ADF reportedly committed similar attacks on civilians in other areas, including Mayimoya, Kisiki, Linzo, Maibo villages and Beni town.

There have also been reports of abductions and the destruction and looting of civilian property by the ADF.

"The escalation of violence since the beginning of the month, should act as a wake-up call for the Congolese Government and MONUSCO. Every effort must be made to prevent the continuing wave of attacks," said Sarah Jackson.

"A clear message must also be sent to the ADF leadership that attacks against civilians are a serious breach of international humanitarian law and that they will be held to account for any human rights abuses committed by their members."

Amnesty International urges both the ADF and the Congolese army to adhere to international humanitarian law and calls upon them and MONUSCO to ensure full protection of civilians.

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