

Flygtningenævnets baggrundsmateriale

Bilagsnr.:	167
Land:	Burundi
Kilde:	United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
Titel:	Burundi: Navi Pillay Denounces Restrictions on Civil and Political Rights Ahead of 2015 Elections
Udgivet:	7. marts 2014
Optaget på baggrundsmaterialet:	29. juli 2014

[EN](#) | [DE](#)

- **Source:**
OHCHR - UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
- **Title:**
Burundi: Navi Pillay Denounces Restrictions On Civil And Political Rights Ahead Of 2015 Elections
- **Publication date:**
07 March 2014
- **ecoi.net summary:** High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay concerned following recent violent attacks and restrictions on civil and political rights (attacks by ruling party's youth wing Imbonerakure; disruption of opposition meetings; opposition youth leader killed on 19 February 2014) [ID 271681]
- **Countries:**
Burundi
- **Original link** http://www.unog.ch/unog/website/news_media.nsf/%28httpNewsByYear_en%29/6B9AF2FA82DEF6F5C1257C9400564043?OpenDocument

Recommended citation:

OHCHR - UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights: Burundi: Navi Pillay Denounces Restrictions On Civil And Political Rights Ahead Of 2015 Elections, 07 March 2014 (available at [ecoi.net](http://www.ecoi.net/local_link/271681/386998_en.html)) http://www.ecoi.net/local_link/271681/386998_en.html (accessed 02 May 2014)



Burundi: Navi Pillay Denounces Restrictions On Civil And Political Rights Ahead Of 2015 Elections

7 March 2014

United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay on Friday expressed concern at the increasing restrictions on civil and political rights in Burundi, following a series of violent acts by the ruling party's youth wing and the disruption of public meetings organised by opposition parties.

"I am concerned that restrictions have increasingly been imposed on freedom of assembly and on the press over the past few months in Burundi," Ms. Pillay said.

Recent attacks by the ruling party's youth wing, including the reported killing of an opposition youth leader on 19 February, were also hugely worrying, especially in the lead up to the 2015 elections, she added.

At least 19 violent incidents involving members of the youth wing, known as Imbonerakure, have been documented since the beginning of the year. These included beatings, acts of extortion and intimidation of political opponents, and the prohibition and disruption of political meetings.

The latest incident occurred on 28 February, when Imbonerakure members reportedly beat up members of an opposition party's youth wing in the village of Busoni, in the Kirundo province.

"These violent acts threaten to have a negative impact on the exercise of political rights and freedoms in Burundi, and there is real risk that opposition youth groups may start to retaliate, creating a dangerous downward spiral of violence," Ms. Pillay said.

"I call on the Government to publicly condemn these violent acts to ensure that those responsible for acts of violence are held accountable. This is essential if the rising political tensions in the country are to be defused," she said.

The High Commissioner also expressed concern that the police, acting on instructions from administrative authorities, disrupted meetings organised by an opposition party on February 18 and 19. A workshop organized by the Bujumbura Bar Association in conformity with the new Law on Public Gatherings was also prohibited by the authorities on 18 February.

"The increasing restriction of public gatherings could severely narrow the democratic space ahead of the elections," Ms. Pillay said.

The High Commissioner also expressed concern at legislation introduced over the past year, including the Law

on Public Gatherings adopted on December 5.

"The prohibition of spontaneous gatherings by this new law may amount to a disproportionate restriction on peaceful assembly and freedom of expression," said Ms. Pillay.

"I am also concerned that attributing civil and criminal responsibility to organisers of public gatherings, for any unlawful act committed by anyone attending such gatherings, could deter the holding of demonstrations and protests that are legitimate under international law," she said.

The High Commissioner also drew attention to the potentially negative impact of the new Media Law, promulgated last June, on press freedom. The law requires journalists to reveal their sources of information when they report on a number of issues ranging from state security to public order.

"This legislation could all too easily lead to infringements of freedom of expression, thereby violating the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights," Ms. Pillay said. "The protection of a journalist's sources is essential to ensure that media can play an active and vibrant role in a properly functioning democracy," Ms. Pillay said.

"Next year's elections will be a key test for Burundi. Continued political violence is a threat to the democratic process in a country which is still slowly recovering from a devastating protracted civil war," the High Commissioner said.

For use of the information media; not an official record

HC14/024E

published on  **ecoi.net**
European Council of Organisations of Information Networks