



STATEMENT ON THE ARREST AND DETENTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDER NIBITANGA NESTOR

The Burundian Coalition of Human Rights Defenders (CBDDH) condemns the arrest and detention of Nestor NIBITANGA, regional observer with the Association Burundaise pour la Protection des Droits Humains et des Personnes Détenues (APRODH) for Centre-East Burundi in Gitega, on 22 November 2017. After two raids on his home on the same day by police and the Service National des Renseignements (SNR) in Gitega, his documents and cell phone were confiscated. He was then forcibly taken to the SNR headquarters in Bujumbura and was transferred to Rumonge Prison on Monday, December 4, 2017.

The CBDDH strongly opposes this prominent human rights defender being deprived of his liberty for the simple act of having engaged in human rights defense.

The arrest of Nestor NIBITANGA comes on top of the arbitrary detention, confiscation of working tools and private property, and intimidation of other human rights defenders in Burundi under the pretext of internal security by the Burundian State.

The CBDDH demands the immediate release of Nestor NIBITANGA, arbitrarily detained for his work and defense of human rights, or at the very least, guarantee him basic legal detention rights, especially the right to consultations with a lawyer and visits from his family.

The CBDDH further demands the unconditional release of all human rights defenders currently being held illegally, and the freeing of civic space so that all human rights defenders can aid the people of Burundi as necessary.

Signed on 06/12/2017

For the CBDDH

Vital NSHIMIRIMANA

President