

## U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

## Press Center



## Treasury Sanctions Three Individuals for Contributing to the Ongoing Violence in Burundi

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### *Action Targets Two Security Officials Aligned with the Government and One Opposition Leader*

**WASHINGTON** – Today, the U.S. Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) sanctioned two pro-government officials, Marius Ngendabanka and Ignace Sibomana, and one member of an armed opposition group, Edouard Nshimirimana, pursuant to Executive Order (E.O.) 13712 for engaging in actions or policies that threaten the peace, security, or stability of Burundi. This action follows several months of escalating violence in Burundi, and is intended to hold accountable those involved in such activities. As a result of today's actions, all assets of those designated that are in the United States or in the control of U.S. persons are frozen, and U.S. persons are generally prohibited from engaging in transactions with them.

"Since the political crisis began in Burundi last year, we have seen those on both sides of the conflict actively fueling the cycle of violence," said Acting OFAC Director John E. Smith. "Treasury is committed to disrupting this destructive behavior that has such harrowing consequences on the Burundi people. We will continue to take steps like our actions today to target those who engage in this activity, including through violent attacks and human rights abuses."

The United Nations Refugee Agency recently cited that between April 2015 and April 2016, over 400 individuals have died as a result of the situation in Burundi. Also in April 2016, the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights cited an increase in the use of torture and ill treatment in Burundi, estimating that approximately 595 people have suffered ill treatment at the hands of Burundi's national intelligence and police since the crisis began in April 2015.

#### **Marius Ngendabanka**

Ngendabanka belongs to a group of regime elites charged under Burundi's President Pierre Nkurunziza with command and control of elements of the Burundian National Defense Force (BFDN), the National Intelligence Service (SNR), and the Imbonerakure militia. As Commander of Burundi's 1<sup>st</sup> Military Region covering the areas of Bujumbura and Cibitoke, Ngendabanka oversaw Burundian military combat operations that took place against an unidentified rebel group in Cibitoke province between December 29, 2014 and January 3, 2015. Ngendabanka reportedly ordered the rebels to be executed. Ngendabanka is also one of several Nkurunziza regime officers alleged to be involved in "purification" operations in Bujumbura against those opposed to the president's third-term bid. Specifically, Ngendabanka reportedly assigned several BFDN officers to work with former Burundian National Police officer and "Anti-Emeutes" Brigade commander Desire Uwamahoro to arrest, torture, and assassinate opposition figures in Burundi.

#### **Ignace Sibomana**

Sibomana is a Burundian security force member linked to President Nkurunziza's inner circle and part of a group charged with the command and control of the Imbonerakure militia. He has been involved in operations to target those opposed to the regime of President Nkurunziza. Sibomana is also one of several Nkurunziza regime officers charged with involvement in "purification" operations in Bujumbura against those opposed to the president's third-term bid. In early March 2016, Sibomana reportedly pressured the Burundi Chief of Defense to support the efforts of security forces accused of committing extrajudicial killings. Additionally, he has promoted and instigated the fracture within the BFDN.

#### **Edouard Nshimirimana**

Nshimirimana is a former senior Burundian army officer who leads the Force Republicaine du Burundi (FOREBU) rebel group, which launched in December 2015. Nshimirimana was working with the Burundian armed opposition following his defection from the BFDN, and was communicating and coordinating operations on a regular basis. FOREBU was reportedly behind attacks on three military camps, where the group captured enough weapons to fight Burundi's army. At least 87 people were reportedly killed in the capital city of Bujumbura when the rebels attacked two military barracks there.

As of Fall 2015, Nshimirimana allegedly had a force of approximately 1,000 men with weaponry including rifles, machine guns, and rocket propelled grenade launchers throughout rural Bujumbura province.

For identifying information on the three individuals designated today, click [here](#).

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