

9 August 2017

DRC: Attempted killing of Butoto Kiza

On 5 August 2017, human rights defender Butoto Kiza was shot and wounded by a group of armed men following a series of threats against him and his colleagues as a result of their human rights work in Kiliba, South Kivu province.

[Butoto Kiza](#) is an active member of the **Nouvelle Société Civile de Kiliba (New Civil Society of Kiliba)**, an organisation dedicated to the monitoring of human rights violations in Kiliba, a settlement near the Ruzizi plain, in South Kivu Province.

On the evening of 5 August 2017, at approximately 9pm, a group of armed men stormed the house of human rights defender Butoto Kiza in Kiliba and opened fire. Following the shooting neighbours came to the rescue of the human rights defender. They found him bleeding from gun wounds on one of his legs and arranged for his transfer to a nearby hospital. According to witnesses, the attackers were dressed in uniforms of the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (FARDC).

A few months prior to the attack, Butoto Kiza had left Kiliba citing a series of death threats in connection with his participation as a witness in a trial surrounding the killing of another human rights defender from the area. The trial led to the conviction of at least one FARDC officer.

Front Line Defenders is deeply concerned by the attempted killing of human rights defender Butoto Kiza as it believes it was as a result of his peaceful and legitimate work in defence of human rights. This attack is a part of a larger pattern of targeting human rights defenders in the DRC. Front Line Defenders urges the authorities in DRC to ensure the physical and psychological integrity of Butoto Kiza and other members of Nouvelle Société Civile de Kiliba.

Front Line Defenders urges the authorities in DRC to:

1. Carry out an immediate, thorough and impartial investigation into the assault of Butoto Kiza, with a view to publishing the results and bringing those responsible to justice in accordance with international standards;
2. Take all necessary measures, in consultation with the defenders, to guarantee the physical and psychological integrity and security of Butoto Kiza and other members of Nouvelle Société Civile de Kiliba.
3. Cease all targeting of human rights defenders in DRC and guarantee in all circumstances that they are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisals and free of all restrictions including judicial harassment.

