

17 July 2020

Democratic Republic of Congo: Abduction of human rights defender Bandeko Namuhenda

On 16 July 2020, human rights defender **Bandeko Namuhenda** was abducted by six armed unknown assailants at his home in Uvira, in South-Kivu province.

[Bandeko Namuhenda](#) is a human rights defender and member of the organization Lutte pour le changement (Fight for Change – LUCHA) RDC Afrique. LUCHA RDC Afrique is a civil society movement advocating for social justice and encouraging citizens to fight for the promotion and respect of human rights through campaigns and petitions.

On 16 July 2020, at around 7:20 pm, six armed unknown individuals broke into Bandeko Namuhenda's home while he was inside with his wife and his son. After robbing the defender's laptop, three phones and some money, the assailants abducted the human right defender. His family reported to the police station and has not received any information on his whereabouts since his abduction.

Bandeko Namuhenda's family believes the defender has been targeted in reprisal for his legitimate and peaceful human rights activities.

On 8 July 2020, LUCHA RDC Afrique organised a march in Uvira to support the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo soldiers and their efforts to bring peace and security to the Minembwe highlands. After this march, on 10 and 12 July, Bankdeko Namuhenda and three other members of LUCHA RDC Afrique received death threats from an unknown number, threatening to kill them if they continue their human rights activites in Uvira.

Front Line Defenders is seriously concerned by the abduction of Bandeko Namuhenda and the targeting of members of LUCHA RDC Afrique as it strongly believes that it is directly linked to their peaceful and legitimate work in defence of human rights.

Front Line Defenders urges the authorities in Democratic Republic of Congo to:

1. Carry out an immediate, thorough and impartial investigation into the abduction of human rights defender Bandeko Namuhenda, with a view to ensuring his protection and release, publishing the results and bringing those responsible to justice in accordance with international standards;
2. Guarantee in all circumstances that all human rights defenders in DRC are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisals and free of all restrictions including harassment and threats.