

# Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/drc-sud-kivu-journalists-victims-of-12-06-2015,48005.html>

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Africa - DRC

Unpunished after eight years

## Sud-Kivu journalists – victims of violence and impunity

12 June 2015

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**On the eve of the eighth anniversary of *Radio Okapi* journalist Serge Maheshe's murder in Bukavu, the capital of the eastern province of Sud-Kivu, Reporters Without Borders (RSF) urges the Sud-Kivu authorities to do more to protect journalists and to not let the constants threats against them go unpunished.**

Sud-Kivu journalists staged a march through Bukavu on 9 June, four days before the anniversary, to press the authorities to take the threats more seriously and give them better protection.

They handed in a memo to the provincial governor's office condemning the high level of violence to which journalists are exposed and the continuing impunity, referencing the murders of [Maheshe](#), on 13 June 2007, and another *Radio Okapi* journalist, [Didace Namujimbo](#), on 29 November 2009. "The Sud-Kivu authorities must take threats against journalists seriously and, when appropriate, conduct thorough judicial investigations," said Cléa Kahn-Sriber, the head of the Reporters Without Borders Africa desk. "In 2009, we condemned the trial fiasco with Maheshe's accused murderers and the tragic consequence of inaction by the authorities, namely Namujimbo's murder. Since then, there has been no progress with protecting journalists or punishing their murderers. As a result, all journalists in the eastern DRC are in great danger."

All those convicted as perpetrators in the Maheshe and Namujimbo murders managed to escape from prison and have never been re-arrested. Those who masterminded these murders have never been identified or sought by the police.

### Harassed by officials

Not only do the authorities fail to protect journalists but, worse still, they are often the source of the threats against them.

Current targets include *Donat Musema* of community radio *Iriba FM*. He has been getting serious threats from an employee of the governor's office ever since he broadcast a speech delivered in Bukavu by Vital Kamerhe, a former supporter of President Kabila who is now an opponent.

Since filing a complaint about the threats, Musema and his supporters have been harassed by persons close to the provincial authorities, who are pressing them to withdraw the complaint and settle out of court.

Other journalists have also recently been the targets of intimidation in Bukavu, which Reporters Without Borders dubbed the "[city of murders](#)" in its 2009 report.

**Ernest Muhero** and **Ricky Ombeni**, two respected journalists with *Radio Mandeleo*, have been receiving anonymous threats for covering stories linked to land disputes. **Jean Chrysostome Kijana**, a journalist who heads a group called Inter Médias Grands Lacs, received an SMS death threat a few months ago.

In Minembwe, in Sud-Kivu's Fizi upland region, a militia commander with the rank of colonel regularly makes threatening phone messages to **Vedast Ngabo** and **Runyambo Kasi**, two journalists with community radio *Tuungane* who criticized his militia's harassment of the local population.

To read the report of RSF's detailed investigation into the Maheshe and Namujimbo cases, click [here](#).

Democratic Republic of Congo is ranked 150th out of 180 countries in the [2015 Reporters Without Borders press freedom index](#).

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