

# Attempted assassination of General Secretary of the Communist Party of Kenya, as abductions, repression mount

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In the early hours of January 11, unidentified assailants attempted to assassinate Booker Omole, the General Secretary of the Communist Party Marxist (CPM) Kenya, at his home in Nairobi.

According to a statement issued by the CPM, “armed assailants carried out a brazen assassination attempt on our General Secretary, Comrade Booker Omole. These attackers, bearing advanced equipment and lethal weapons, stormed his residence with the clear intent of silencing a fearless revolutionary voice.” It continued, “This cowardly act bears the hallmarks of rogue state operatives and counter-revolutionary forces tied to the Kenya Kwanza regime [of President William Ruto].”

A few days later, Omole was interviewed by African Stream on Instagram to discuss the attack. He recounted how eight assailants entered his home through the garden, made their way upstairs, and seized his sister, demanding to know the whereabouts of the homeowner. They then forced their way into Omole’s bedroom, where he defended himself with his firearm, killing one of the attackers and forcing the rest to flee.

An hour later, the police arrived but dismissed the incident as an attempted robbery, despite Omole and his sister stating that the assailants never demanded valuables or money at any point.

That Omole was targeted politically is clear when one analyses the broader government repression against the CPM. The assassination attempt came days after the attempted abduction of CPM’s National Chairperson, Mwaivu Kaluka, in Mombasa—Kenya’s second-largest city—along with two other party members, by plain-clothes police officers. While Kaluka was eventually released, the operation came just weeks after a crackdown on the CPM after its national congress in November, when Kaluka and former National Chairperson Kinuthia Ndungu—who has been repeatedly beaten and arrested 10 times—were detained at Central Police Station in Nairobi. No reason was given for

their arrest.

The pattern of targeted repression against the CPM leadership and its members has intensified over the years. In 2020, during the initial surge of COVID-19, the party’s headquarters was raided, and several members were arrested. In 2023, amid the anti-austerity protests, one of its youth members was shot dead. Last year, during the Gen-Z protests, three more members were killed.

The International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI) and the WSWs condemn the assassination attempt on Omole and the broader repression of the CPM. The ICFI has well-documented and profound political differences with the CPM’s anti-Trotskyism and the role it played in demobilising workers and youth during the Gen-Z protests against tax hikes and austerity last year. However, the ICFI defends Omole and the CPM against state threats and assassination.

The assassination attempt is an early expression of the global ramifications of the second US presidency of Donald Trump, a fascist and January 6, 2021, coup plotter, who has threatened to kill Marxists and socialists. Trump is openly advocating for a policy of economic extortion, military aggression, and violent repression. He has called for the annexation of Greenland, Panama, and Canada while threatening China and other economic rivals, including Washington’s NATO allies, with punitive tariffs and military force.

Domestically, his administration plans to slash tens of billions from what remains of social security and has vowed to arrest and deport millions of migrants. These actions are laying the groundwork to suppress all social and political opposition within the US and establish a dictatorship.

Trump’s rule is a green light to regimes like Ruto’s national unity government—formed through an alliance between his Kenya Kwanza party and the Orange Democratic Movement (ODM) led by billionaire Raila Odinga, and backed by the Central Organization of Trade

Unions (COTU)—to escalate their repression, driven by fears of rising working-class resistance against both imperialist wars abroad and escalating class struggles at home.

The Ruto-Odinga regime is currently ramming through International Monetary Fund (IMF) austerity, tax hikes and privatisations. It has a long track record of violently suppressing of workers and youth, including last year's killing of over 60 protesters, the maiming of hundreds, and the mass arrests of thousands during the June-July Gen-Z protests.

The Kenyan state is now systematically attacking anything identified as "left" to try to intimidate workers and youth opposed to International Monetary Fund austerity and Ruto's support for genocide against the Palestinians in Gaza, airstrikes against the Houthi in Yemen and a police deployment to suppress Haitians in the Caribbean nation.

This includes the state policy of abductions. At least 82 people have disappeared or been abducted, some of whom were later found dead, since last year's Gen-Z protests, according to Kenya's National Human Rights Commission. The wave of abductions started after protests against tax hikes last June and have continued since then.

Despite the government's denial of involvement in these abductions, mounting evidence—including CCTV footage and eyewitness accounts—makes the state's role undeniable. Among the abducted was Leslie Muturi, who was taken on June 22. His father, Justin Bedan Muturi, Kenya's Minister for Public Service and, at the time, Attorney General, was a sitting member of the National Security Council alongside the Director of the National Intelligence Service, Noordin Haji.

In a recent interview with KTN, Justin Muturi recounted how his search for his son led him deep into the machinery of Kenya's police state, all the way to President Ruto himself. Ruto then ordered Noordin Haji to secure Leslie's release, and less than an hour later, Leslie returned to his family.

Ruto himself has chillingly hinted at the role of the state in abductions. Three weeks ago, speaking in Homa Bay County, he said in an implied threat, "I want to urge all parents that our children are a blessing from God and you should take care of them and the government will do our part. And what has been said about abductions matters; we will stop it."

All of the abducted expressed in various ways public dissatisfaction with the Ruto government. They include satirists such as Kibet Bull, Billy Mwangi, Peter Muteti, Bernard Kavuli, and Naomi—all reported missing from various neighborhoods in Embu, Nairobi, and Kajiado.

On Saturday, Richard Otieno, a critic of Ruto and the corrupt area MP Kimani Kuria, was killed by unknown

people with axes and machetes while heading home. Yesterday, dozens of angry locals staged a protest while carrying Otieno's body after storming the local police station to demand answers.

Kenya is also now playing a key role in the extraordinary rendition of opposition figures targeted by US-backed regimes in the region. On November 16, leading Ugandan opposition politician, Kiiza Besigye, who was in Nairobi, disappeared. Five days later, he surfaced before a military tribunal in the custody of the Uganda People's Defence Force on charges of illegal possession of firearms. Reports later emerged that Besigye was put into a car by Ugandan intelligence forces and driven to the border, allowed through by Kenyan police and taken into military custody in Uganda.

This unfolds as Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni's son and head of the armed forces, US-trained General Muhoozi Kainerugaba, positions himself as his father's successor while preparing to suppress opposition ahead of the 2026 general elections.

Weeks after Besigye's rendition, Maria Sarungi, a prominent critic of Tanzanian government of President Samia Saluhu, who has been living in exile in Kenya for the past four years, was abducted in Nairobi. She was released hours later. Tanzania is expected to hold elections later this year.

Sarungi later recounted, "I am sure part of the abduction was to get access to my devices and to get access to the activities I do online, which sometimes include whistleblowing and also doing a lot about abductions in Tanzania. That's the first thing I felt they really wanted."

The attacks on the CPM, abductions and transnational renditions of the Kenyan government are preparations for even more extensive attacks on the democratic rights of the population as a whole. They have clearly revealed the extremely dangerous situation facing the masses in this struggle.

Workers and youth must defend themselves. Protests and meetings must be policed by workers to fend off police violence and state-sanctioned goons. Individuals targeted by repression need to be protected. For this, the working class must build an independent political movement against imperialist war and social reaction, based on a socialist perspective, against the parties and trade unions of the capitalist ruling class.



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