



SOS – Torture/Burundi

Monitoring sur les cas de torture, les arrestations arbitraires, les disparitions forcées et les exécutions sommaires au Burundi

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This SOS-Torture/Burundi report covers the period from 2 to 9 May 2020 concerning cases of human rights violations and abuses in Burundi.

At least two (2) people were murdered during the period. Both victims are members of political parties, in this case the ruling CNDD-FDD party and the opposition CNL party. The second victim was abducted from his home in Mwaro province by members of the ruling party.

The report also mentions nearly eight (8) cases of arbitrary arrests in different localities. The persons concerned are members of the opposition party CNL according to their relatives.

1. Violations of the right to life and physical integrity

- Sos-Torture/Burundi learned of the death of a member of the ruling CNDD-FDD party following clashes between them and members of the opposition CNL (National Congress for freedom) on rukore Hill, Ntega province Kirundo commune (north of the country) on May 3, 2020. Witnesses report that members of the ruling party provoked the group of opposition members who were sharing a drink in a local bar. The provocations resulted in clashes and serious injuries.

Sos-Torture/Burundi notes the political intolerance and tensions on both sides of members of political parties during this election campaign. A member of the CNDD-FDD party lost his life as a result of these clashes after being pierced by a spear in the chest and six other activists of this party were injured. Relatives also report that twenty - five (25) members of the CNL party were arrested in the aftermath of these clashes.



The victim succumbed to his severe chest injury during the clashes.

- Members of the imbonerakure militia kidnapped Richard Havyarimana after an attack at his home on Mbogora Hill, Nyabihanga municipality, Mwaro province (Central) on the night of 3 May 2020. Relatives report that the victim, an active member of the opposition CNL party, was forcibly taken into a Toyota-branded vehicle, Probox model with civil registration.

Witnesses report that the body of Mr. Richard Havyarimana was discovered floating in the Ruvyironza River at Muyebe Hill, Nyabihanga municipality on May 7, 2020.

Sos-Torture Burundi notes that Mr. Havyarimana's relatives had searched for him in all police dungeons in Mwaro province, without finding him. The discovery of his body confirms an execution carried out by members of the ruling CNDD-FDD party. Police have not arrested any suspects to date.

2. Violations of the right to liberty and physical security

- Members of imbonerakure militiamen beaten Alain Nzisabira and Apollinaire Niyonkuru on kibungere Hill, Nyabihanga commune, Mwaro province (centre of the country) on 2 May 2020. Relatives report that they are two members of the opposition party CNL (National Congress for Freedom) who were campaigning door-to-door for the elections scheduled for May 20, 2020.

Sos-Torture/Burundi also learned that another group of imbonerakure militiamen arrested Balthazar Bitorwa in Nyabihanga commune. The victim is also an activist of the CNL party. He was handed over to police officers who led him to the dungeon.

Sos-Torture/Burundi notes the violence against political opponents that continues with impunity and complicity on the part of police officers. None of the perpetrators were arrested.

- Police officers arrested Jérôme Mpfayokurera, Emmanuel Sinzinkayo, Gilbert Ndizeyimana, Ismaïl Niyokwizera, Arphat Uwimanikunda and Aegide Bizimana in Yoba district, Gitega municipality and Province (Central) on 4 May 2020. Relatives report that the six men are all members of the opposition CNL party arrested during their election campaign activities.

Sos-Torture/Burundi notes arbitrary arrests of members of the opposition. Witnesses also report that members of the ruling CNDD-FDD party were leading the operations by designating the persons to be arrested.

- Police officers arrested Claude Bayizigire in the town of Rugombo, Cibitoke province (northwest of the country) on May 7, 2020. Relatives report that the operation was led by the provincial police Commissioner, Bonfort Ndoreraho. Mr. Bayizigire, a member of the opposition CNL party according to his relatives, was taken to the cells of the National Intelligence Service in Cibitoke where he was tortured for accusing the ruling party of being responsible for several murders.

Sos-Torture/Burundi notes an arbitrary arrest of a member of the opposition following his remarks



Claude Bayizigire, arrested by Cibitoke Police Commissioner for his remarks.

SOS-Torture/Burundi was initiated with the aim of informing national and international opinion on serious human rights violations in Burundi through monitoring reports including torture, arbitrary arrests, enforced disappearances, sexual violence and summary executions.

This initiative to inform about the realities of the country followed the carnage of a hundred people killed during the day of 11 and 12 December 2015 by police and military under the pretext of pursuing rebels who had just attacked military camps located on the outskirts of the capital.

The affected zones are said to be protesters of the third term of President Nkurunziza namely Musaga, Mutakura, Cibitoke, Nyakabiga, Jabe, les deux dernières étant situées au centre de la Mairie de Bujumbura.