

REPORT NO. 81 OF SOS-TORTURE / BURUNDI PUBLISHED ON 1 JULY 2017

This report of SOS-Torture covers the period from ranging 24 June to 1 July 2017 about human rights violations in Burundi. At least seven (7) persons have been assassinated during the period; including one held in custody in Karusi had been taken out of his cell and tortured to death. None of the alleged perpetrators of this crime has been apprehended to date. SOS-Torture Burundi neither is also records an increase in cases of murder in Cibitoke province, which crime the police are not able to neither prevent nor explain convincingly. The report also refers to six (6) cases of arbitrary arrests in different localities. These arrests include two (2) members of the opposition Movement for Solidarity and Democracy (MSD), who were subsequently taken to the national intelligence service.

1. Violations of the right to life and physical integrity

- SOS-Torture Burundi notes an increase in crime in the province of Cibitoke (northwest of the country) over the last three weeks. At least six (6) persons have been murdered in various municipalities and these persons are presented by the local administration as victims of reprisals related to the practice of witchcraft or acts of theft.

These arguments are not convincing, and rather lead to fears of targeted assassinations for reasons that the police have not yet given, especially as they do not conduct serious investigations.

The persons already identified as victims of these assassinations are: Frédéric Sibomana, murdered during the night of June 9 to 10, 2017 on Rubirizi hill; Jean Ntakobiri, assassinated between 10 and 11 June 2017 on Gitebe hill; Emelyne Nduwarugira, murdered on 13 June 2017 on Muyange hill; Japhet Nkurikiye, killed on 16 June 2017 on Gitumba Hill; Juma Ntakobakingira, assassinated on 21 June 2017 on Muyange hill; Damascene Hakizimana, killed between 24 and 25 June 2017 on Rugendo hill.

- The Imbonerakure militiamen of the ruling party CNDD FDD assassinated with Onesphore Nshimirimana on Mirempera sub-hill, Senga hill, Butezi commune, Ruyigi province (East of the country) on June 18, 2017. Witnesses report that Mr. Nshimirimana was arrested by Diomede Buhonga (leader of the militia Imbonerakure of Senga Hill), Omer Hakizimana and Ndiokubwayo (also a member of the Imbonerakure militia) who slit him and beat him with clubs at his home. These imbonerakure militiamen entered the house, pretexting a dispute between Nshimirimana couple.

SOS-Torture Burundi notes that since that crime, the Imbonerakure militiamen have never been incriminated and are still free. As usual, in the case of crimes committed by the Imbonerakure militia, the judicial police and the public prosecutor's office remained silent in front of this crime.

- Unknown persons murdered Damascene Hakizimana nicknamed Saddam on Rugendo hill, Mugina commune, Cibitoke province (northwestern part of the country) on 24 June 2017 at night. This is a man presented by the police as an alleged thief, who have been stabbed to death by the inhabitants of the hill.

- Unidentified individuals murdered Cyprien Ngendakuriyo by machetes in the center of Musigati commune, Bubanza province (west of the country) on 26 June 2017 at night. He is a police officer who was guarding the post office of Musigati commune. Witnesses from the vicinity report that the perpetrators murdered the policeman, took his gun and did not enter the post office.

SOS-Torture Burundi learned of the arrest of six suspects by Musigati police for investigative reasons.

- SOS-Torture Burundi learned that the police apprehended the alleged perpetrator of the crime, named Gervais Ndimurwanko, in the northern town of Ndava, Mwaro province (center) on 27 June 2017. A still unidentified individual murdered Marie Ntimpirangeza on the Butazi hill, , Who would be the son of the victim.

SOS-Torture Burundi notes, however, that the prosecutor's office and the intermediate Court of Mwaro dispatched the trial by condemning the alleged perpetrator to twenty-five years of criminal servitude the next day.

- Policeagents assassinated Oscar Ndizeye in front of the Karusi police cell on 27 June 2017. Witnesses (quoted by RPA radio in his Humura program) report that the victim was taken out of the cell by these agents, in complicity with individuals in civilian clothes identified as Imbonerakure militiamen, who tortured him until death.

SOS-Torture Burundi has learned that two other detainees in the cell have also been tortured and treated for their injuries. Karusi police office has not yet conducted any credible investigation to date to identify and arrest the perpetrators of the murder, while witnesses, and victims of these acts, are requesting justice.

- Unidentified individuals murdered a man whose body was discovered between Rukina and Nyagituku hills, Songa commune, Bururi province, on 29 June 2017. The police identified the victim as Gisanabagabo but the administrative authorities ordered his burial before the investigations are completed.

- Unidentified individuals assassinated Florence Nduwimana in village IV, Gihanga commune, Bubanza province (western part of the country) on 29 June 2017. The police have not yet identified the perpetrators of the crime.

2. Violations of the right to liberty and physical security

- Police agents arrested Jean Claude Ndikuriyo at his home in Ngagarall zone, Ntahangwa commune (northern Bujumbura City) on 23 June 2017. Witnesses reported that agents of the national intelligence service also participated in the the arrest, and it was the latter who took him in their vehicle to the cell of the National Intelligence Service. SOS-Torture Burundi has learned that Mr. Ndikuriyo is a member of the MSD (Movement for Solidarity and Democracy) party, whose activists have been subjected to arbitrary arrests, torture and targeted assassinations since the beginning of this crisis. The official reason for Mr. Ndikuriyo's arrest was not communicated by the SNR. Some relatives, however, report that he would be accused of wanting to take young person to Rwanda.



Jean Claude Ndikuriyo, an MSD activist detained at SNR

- Agents of National Intelligence Service also arrested Elie Ntirampeba at his home on 6th Avenue, Mutakura quarter, Buterere zone, Ntahangwa commune (north of Bujumbura city) on 23 June 2017. Mr. Ntirampeba is also a member of MSD Party, taken to the SNR cell without informing the reasons to his family. The SNR agents carried out a search which did not allow any incriminating seizure. These two arrests of MSD party members the same day leave fear of political motives.



Elie Ntirampeba, member of the MSD party arrested by SNR agents

- Police agents arrested Sylvère Bariboneka on Bikinga hill, Bukoro z, None, Nyarusange commune, Gitega province (center of the country) on 24 June 2017. He is a member of the opposition party FNL (Front for National Liberation) faithful to Agathon Rwasa (current vice-president of the National Assembly).

SOS-Torture Burundi noted that the police had no warrant at the time of the arrest, and is afraid of another arbitrary arrest linked to Mr. Bariboneka's political convictions.

- Soldiers arrested and beaten Fiacre Mweranda on Rukina Hill in Mukike commune, Bujumbura province on June 24, 2017. The young man was seriously injured and hospitalized following the beatings.

SOS-Torture Burundi learned that after being admitted to hospital, the same soldiers apprehended him and kept him in custody, clearly illegal in their barracks, without any intervention of the police and local administration.

- The head of Moravia zone, Burambi commune, Rumonge province (southwestern part of the country) publicly threatened Burundian retired soldiers (ex-FAB) on 27 June 2017 in a meeting. Witnesses reported that the administrative official accused them of illegally detaining weapons and training young people in the rebel groups as well as having carried out attacks on the commune. These are serious accusations

that should be submitted to the police for investigation, but which instead increased tensions since that day.

SOS-Torture Burundi has learned from some retired soldiers that the Imbonerakure militiamen are intimidating them in their turn, uttering threats. These individuals have filed a complaint, but police in the Maramvya zone didn't do anything up to date to deter the imbonerakure militia from resorting to violence.

SOS-Torture Burundi draws attention to the incitement to violence organized or tolerated by administrative officials, which allows Imbonerakure militiamen to commit crimes with impunity. The police must act to protect those who have lodged a complaint for fear of their safety.

- Police agents arrested two men in the Bukirasazi Zone, Murwi commune, Cibitoke province (north-western part of the country) on 27 June 2017. During the operation, police agents were accompanied by Imbonerakure militiamen from the CNDD FDD who designated the persons in question, accusing them of possession of weapons. However, the search conducted at their homes did not show any seizure of military effects.

SOS-Torture Burundi notes that the Murwi police did not communicate the identities of the two arrested persons.

- Policeagents took two prisoners from their cells in Mpimba prison, Musaga zone (south of Bujumbura) on 27 June 2017 to an unknown destination as it was not meant for families and relatives. The two detainees are Christophe Ndayitangira and Léonidas Nimpagaritse, who are activists of the MSD (Movement for Solidarity and Democracy)



Christophe Ndayitangira, a member of the MSD party forced to leave his cell in Mpimba Prison

SOS-Torture / Burundi campaign was initiated with the aim of informing national and international opinion on serious human rights violations under way in Burundi through monitoring reports, particularly based on torture, Arbitrary arrests, forced disappearances, sexual violence and summary executions. This initiative to inform about the realities of the country followed the slaughter of a hundred people killed during the day of 11 and 12 December 2015 the by police agents and soldiers under the pretext of pursuing rebel groups that came to attack military camps on the outskirts of the capital. The affected quarters are said to be challenging the third term of President Nkurunziza which are the following Musaga, Mutakura, Cibitoke, Nyakabiga, Jabe, the last two being located in the center of Bujumbura City Hall.