



SOS – Torture/Burundi

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

REPORT No. 111 OF SOS-TORTURE / BURUNDI ISSUED 27 JANUARY 2018

This report of SOS-Torture/Burundi covers the period from 20 to 27 January 2018 concerning cases of human rights violations in Burundi.

At least four (4) persons were murdered during the period in different locations. In addition to these victims, two (2) others narrowly escaped assassination attempts including one of the victims and in a comatose state. A young child also succumbed to the explosion of a grenade with which he played in a field.

The report also mentions cases of arbitrary arrests among which two (2) opposition activists accused of sensitizing to vote "no" in the constitutional referendum scheduled for May 2018 by the Burundian government.

The administrative officials have also launched threat campaigns to warn anyone who is considering voting against the proposed revision of the Constitution. Sos-Torture Burundi notes a constant repression since the announcement of the date of the referendum.

SOS-TORTURE

1. Violations of the right to life and to physical integrity

- A young child named Johovat Tuyishime (3 years) succumbed to the explosion of a grenade on Samwe hill, Rugombo commune, Cibitoke province (north-west of the country) on January 22, 2018. Relatives report that the victim other two children, Thierry Shemezimana (15years) and Bosco Girukwishaka, were in a field in search of food. They discovered two (2) grenades left by unidentified individuals who exploded while handling them. The other two children were seriously injured.

Sos-Torture Burundi notes the irresponsibility of individuals who left grenades in a field, which ended in the death of one child and two other wounded. The police must find the owners of these grenades in order to bring them to justice, and raise awareness among the population to warn the police in such discovery.

Sos torture also suggests the disarmament of the civilian population to prevent such incidents.

- Unidentified individuals attempted to assassinate Eric Ndayishimiye in the center of Rugombo commune, Cibitoke province (north-west of the country) on 22 January 2018 in the evening. The victim reports that these individuals surprised him at his home, and also took away his money along with several mobile phone charging cards.

Sos-Torture Burundi notes that the police have not yet identified a suspect to date.

- Unidentified individuals murdered Marc Ndarufatiye and Capitoline Ndabarinze on Rusange Hill, Gisuru Commune, Ruyigi Province (East of the country) on January 23, 2018. The victims are a couple, murdered along the way as they returned to their homes.

Sos-Torture Burundi notes that the police have announced the arrest of six (6) suspects to date.

- Unidentified individuals attempted to murder Jean Marie Ndabagiye, found dying on Songa Hill, commune and Gitega province (center of the country) on January 24, 2018. Witnesses report that the victim was tied up, and was carrying traces violent torture on his body.

Sos-Torture Burundi notes that Mr. Ndabagiye is a soldier from the former Burundian Armed Forces (ex-FAB). He had been missing for two days before. Police have not identified any suspects to date.

- Unidentified individuals murdered a man whose body was found on Karira hill, Gasorwe commune, Muyinga province, north of the country, on 24 January 2018. Witnesses report that the victim had serious injuries on body.

Sos-Torture Burundi notes that the police did not determine the identity of the victim, his torturers even less the circumstances of his assassination.

- Unidentified individuals murdered a man whose body was found on Gatwaro Hill, Muramvya commune and province (center of the country) on January 25, 2018. The victim was not identified.

Sos-Torture Burundi notes, however, that the police indicate that the victim would be a thief, but did not determine the circumstances of this murder or the perpetrators.

2. Violations of the right to liberty and physical security

- Police agents arrested Charles Bacamurwanko and Emmanuel Manirambona in Gasorwe commune, Muyinga province (north of the country) on January 20, 2018. Relatives report that the two men are militants of the FNL opposition party of the deputy AgathonRwasa.

Sos-Torture Burundi notes that they are accused of raising awareness to vote "no" in the constitutional referendum scheduled for May 2018 by the Burundian government. These arrests confirm political intolerance especially at a time when the power and the CNDD FDD party are preparing to amend the current Constitution which will allow President Nkurunziza to remain on the throne for at least another 14 years (see point of this report).

- Police agents arrested Audace Nibayubahe on Mbizi hill, Kibago commune, Makamba province (south of the country) on January 22, 2018. Relatives report that during the arrest, young Imbonerakure militiamen were accompanying the police agents.

SOS-Torture Burundi fears an arrest based on an unprovoked denunciation of the youth of the ruling party. Mr. Nibayubahe is accused of facilitating the departure of young people from his locality outside of the country. These charges are not supported by any evidence to date.

- Sos-Torture Burundi has learned about the death threats against Serge Mberamiheto by members of the imbonerakure militiamen in Kirundo commune and province of (north of the country) since December 2017. This is a retired soldier from the former Burundian Armed Forces (ex-FAB). Mr. Mberamiheto is the cousin of Serge Barutwanayo, a former communal administrator of Kirundo murdered on November 28, 2017 (cf report **Sos-Torture Burundi N ° 103**: [http://sostortureburundi.over-blog.com/2017/12/report-n-103-de-torturesos / Burundi-publish-le-2-December-2017.html](http://sostortureburundi.over-blog.com/2017/12/report-n-103-de-torturesos/Burundi-publish-le-2-December-2017.html)).

Sos-Torture Burundi notes that Mr Mberamiheto was forced to flee the country, fearing for his safety. Relatives report that his murdered cousin would have had time to confide in him before his death to reveal the identity of the perpetrators of the crime. In this case, the victims can not confide in the agents of the order for fear that the information provided will be fatal. Among the perpetrators of the threats, Mr. Mberamiheto's relatives identified Nyange-Bushaza hill chief where Serge Barutwanayo, the president of the imbonerakure league in



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Kirundo Abel Ahishakiye commune, and his provincial hierarchical leader Minani were murdered.

3. The inhabitants of Makamba province have been under constant threat since the beginning of the year

Since the beginning of January 2018, the administrative authorities have started an awareness campaign to encourage the population to vote "YES" the draft revision of the Constitution initiated by the Burundian government and CNDD FDD Party on Power.

Sos-Torture Burundi, however, notes clear threats by the same authorities to anyone who would consider rejecting this project in the referendum provided this year by the government. In Makamba province (south of the country), Governor Gad Niyukuri made threats during sensitization meetings in Nyanza-Lac, Mabanda, Makamba and Kayogoro communes between 8 and 10 January 2018.

The governor of this province has particularly threatened twelve (12) persons whose identities he knows, without appointing them at these meetings, that they will be mended if they are aware to sensitize the population to reject the project of constitutional revision. Sos-Torture Burundi notes that these threats target opponents, and the arrests carried out in recent weeks against militants of the FNL party confirm the threats and repression in progress.

Sos-Torture Burundi learned that in addition to administrative officials at all levels, school representatives are conducting similar campaigns with high school students, asking them to vote in favor of the amendment of the Constitution. Witnesses report that the director of Bukeye Communal High School (Nyanza-lac commune) urged his students to vote for the change of the Constitution at a meeting on January 12, 2018. This is a violation of the law political campaigns are not allowed in schools. The director of this high school has also exceeded his responsibilities, threatening students who do not adhere to the ruling party CNDD FDD to get no service from his institution.

Several witnesses report that they fear for their safety, following the constant threats to vote for the draft amendment of the Constitution. This campaign is likely to lead to more arbitrary arrests and abuses, especially by the youth of the ruling party, which has become uncontrollable.



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SOS-Torture / Burundi was initiated with the objective of informing national and international opinion about serious human rights violations under way in Burundi through monitoring reports, particularly on torture, arbitrary arrests, forced 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 December 11 and that of December 12, 2015 by police and soldiers on the pretext of pursuing rebels who came to attack military camps on the outskirts of the capital city.

The affected zones are said to be contesting President Nkurunziza's third mandate namely Musaga, Mutakura, Cibitoke, Nyakabiga, Jabe, the last two being located in the center of Bujumbura City Hall.