



## SOS – Torture/Burundi

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

### **REPORT No. 109 OF SOS-TORTURE / BURUNDI PUBLISHED ON JANUARY 13, 2018**

This report of SOS-Torture / Burundi Organization covers the period from 6 to 13 January 2018 concerning cases of violations and human rights violations in Burundi.

At least eleven (11) persons were arrested in different localities during the period. Among the arrests are several activists of the opposition FNL party (National Front for Liberation) accused of conducting an awareness campaign aimed at rejecting the draft revision of the Constitution initiated by the Burundian government.

The report also discusses the forced contributions required of private sector executives, agents and actors such as traders for the 2020 elections. From so-called voluntary contributions, the Burundian government made them mandatory through a forced search across all sectors. .

Sos-Torture Burundi also reports at least two (2) cases of rape of girls in Bubanza province, as well as a victim of torture in Cibitoke.

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

- Cases of successive rapes of girls are reported by relatives in Bubanza province (west of the country). A 19-years victim was raped on Gahongore Hill, Mitakataka Zone, Commune and Bubanza Province on 5 January 2018 in the evening. A second 18-year-old victim was raped on Buhororo Hill II, Bubanza commune and province on January 4, 2018.

Sos-Torture Burundi notes that the police arrested two alleged perpetrators in both cases, Prosper Nduwayo and Evariste Ndorere, but the same police announced that one of these suspects escaped, it is (Prosper Nduwayo ) the same day.

- Members of the Imbonerakure militias tortured Jean Petit Ntakirutimana on Kigazi Hill, Buhayira Zone, Murwi Commune, Cibitoke Province (North West), on January 8, 2018 in the evening. Witnesses report that the young man was taken by a group of militiamen who were conducting night patrols, assaulted him for not helping them patrolling at night.

- Sos-Torture Burundi notes a critical health condition of the victim, who was evacuated by his family to a health center. Relatives also report that the

group of militiamen imbonerakure was led by Claude Hatangimana (Kigasura) who could be identified among the attackers. The police did not arrest any of the attackers. .

- Burundian soldiers shot dead a man in Ruhororo zone, Mabayi commune, Cibitoke province (north-west of the country on the border with Burundi and Rwanda) on 11 January 2018 in the evening. Witnesses report that the victim is a Rwandan national who was shot while crossing the border at night.

### **2. Violations of the right to liberty and physical security**

- Police agents arrested Christophe Nyabenda (Gasabune), Jean de Dieu Bigirimana, Irakoze, Habonimana and Egide Ndayiragije on Kirengane hill, Rugazi commune, Bubanza province (western part of the country) on January 6, 2018. Relatives reported that the five (5) men are all militants of the FNL (National Front for the Liberation) an opposition party faithful to Agathon Rwasa, arrested at their respective homes.

Sos-Torture Burundi notes that the police accuse them of having organized an unauthorized meeting. These arrests, however, highlight a new wave of repression targeting opposition activists, especially FNL, since the official launch of the draft revision of the Constitution and especially the announcement of the referendum in May 2018.

- Police agents arrested Benjamin Irakoze in the center of Cankuzo province (east of the country) on January 6, 2018. Eyewitnesses report that this man fought and quarreled in a bar with two members of the young, imbonerakure militiamen of the ruling party CNDD FDD.

Sos-Torture Burundi notes that the police accused him of insulting the Head of State, without specifying any possible evidence of these accusations.

- National police agents arrested Stany Ntakarutimana and Innocent Niyungeko in Nyabihanga commune, Mwaro province (center of the country) on January 7, 2018. Relatives report that they are both supporters of the opposition FNL party .

Sos-Torture Burundi notes that they are accused of having organized an unauthorized meeting. Cases of detention of FNL party activists have been steadily increasing since the official announcement of the draft revision of the Constitution by the Burundian government.

- Members of the Imbonerakure militiamen illegally arrested Mamerthe Haruna in Rutana (south-east of the country) on January 9, 2018. Witnesses report that Ms. Haruna was beaten before the pupils she teaches at a primary school in Rutana .

Sos-Torture Burundi notes an illegal arrest as well as violence in the presence of young students. The imbonerakure militiamen demanded that the teacher report to the police. No warrant to summon even less a summons had been issued by the police of Rutana.

- Police agents arrested Donatien Nibitanga on Nkondo hill, Nyarusange commune, Gitega province (center of the country) on January 10, 2018. He is an FNL opposition party activist, arrested in front of his students in high school at Nkondo High School where he teaches.

SOS-Torture Burundi notes that Mr. Nibitanga was arrested in connection with the investigation into the murder of the father of an influential businessman in the ruling party in March 2017. The police have not the links between this case and Mr Nibitanga.

- On 10 January 2018 Young members of the imbonerakure militiamen arrested Astere Tumukunde on Sigu hill, Nyagisozi zone, Busoni commune, Kirundo province (north of the country). Witnesses report that he was arrested in front of students while teaching at Sigu primary school.

Sos-Torture Burundi notes an unlawful arrest by militiamen who do not have the prerogatives to act in an official capacity even less to make any arrest in a country that has the police. Relatives report that Mr Tumukunde is accused of having carried out an awareness campaign to incite inhabitants to reject the draft revision of the Constitution launched by the Burundian government. He is also an activist of the FNL opposition party faithful to Deputy Agathon Rwasa who's several other activists are the subject of untimely arrests with the same accusations. Sos-Torture Burundi also notes that the Nyagisozi

police incarcerated Mr. Tumukunde, who had just been handed over to the police agents by imbonerakure militiamen. Police must release this man, who has been illegally arrested and arbitrarily detained.

- In addition to the arrests made against opponents, several employees are summoned for a few weeks to contribute this year to the elections of 2020. The administrative and political leaders of the ruling party CNDD FDD set in each municipality amounts of contribution according to the 'social class' of employees and managers.

Sos-Torture Burundi has learned that the ruling party's representative in Kirundo province (north of the country) has set the mandatory contribution amounts for Executives and agents of health centers in that province. These mandatory contributions range from 50,000 to 100,000 BIF. For their survival, many agents and executives will be forced to pay for an election process acquired in advance at the party in power.

This same forced contribution operation is carried out in Rutana province (south-east of the country). The communal secretary of the ruling party CNDD FDD has threatened local traders to chase them from kiosks rented at the market. Witnesses report that the directors of the agriculture and health directorates in Rutana demand the same contributions from the employees of these departments.

- Members of the imbonerakure militiamen have forced Paul Ntahimpera to live in hiding for almost a week. He is a driver of the Burundian Company of management of Stocks and assistance to airplane in Transit (SOBUGEA) who resides in Rugombo commune, Cibitoke province (north-west of the country). Mr. Ntahimpera was beaten on 3 January 2018 by a group of imbonerakure militiamen, and more feared for his safety by staying at his home. The victim is also a demobilized from an old armed movement, who returned to civilian life after the maquis.

### **3. Police keep a man in detention without dossier**

Sos-Torture Burundi learned that Mr. Sadoscar Ndikumwami has been held in detention without a record since his arrest on 2 January 2018 following a car accident involving an ambulance he was driving and a vehicle belonging to the Burundi

Minister of Public Security ( see **Sos-Torture Burundi report N ° 108**: <http://sostortureburundi.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/SOS-Torture-Burundi-num%C3%A9ro-108-en-En.pdf>).

No file of his incarceration or alleged offenses has been opened to the police. Relatives report, however, that Mr.Ndikumwami's family has paid a fine as demanded by the police in Rutana province (south-east of the country) where he is incarcerated, in addition to paying the hospitalization costs of the wounded victims at the time of accident. Relatives also report that Mr. Ndikumwami would be detained by the decision of the Minister of Public Security whose guards were injured in the accident.

#### **4. Police stations are overflowing with detainees without records**

Sos-Torture Burundi reports prison overcrowding in the police cells of Rumonge province (south-west of the country). At the beginning of January 2018, nearly 40 inmates shared a cell, men and women alike. Detainees have been detained without a record for over a month, often for minor offenses. Men, women and girls live in very difficult conditions of confinement in small size. Prosecutors must speed up procedures to relieve cells and release detainees without charges.



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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 12, 2015 by policemen and soldiers on the pretext of pursuing rebels groups which 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.

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