



SOS – Torture/Burundi

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

REPORT No. 106 OF SOS-TORTURE / BURUNDI PUBLISHED ON 23 DECEMBER 2017

This report of SOS-Torture covers the period ranging between 16 and 23 December 2017 concerning cases of violations and human rights violations in Burundi.

At least seven (7) persons have been victims of human rights violations in different localities. These acts were mostly committed by members of the imbonerakure militiamen of the ruling CNDD-FDD party, but also by police agents. The victims include members of the opposition.

There is an increased repression led by imbonerakure militiamen since the announcement of a revision of the Constitution of Burundi by the government. Members of the "Imbonerakure" militia were already committing abuses, and the impunity they enjoyed only exacerbated the number of such abuses.

The report also mentions five (5) persons injured in grenade attacks, including a couple in Cibitoke.

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

- Unidentified individuals attacked a household on Mugina hill, Buseruko zone, Mugina commune, Cibitoke province, northwest of the country, on 17 December 2017. Eye witnesses reported that the grenade seriously injured Jerome Sinumvayaha (70 years old) and his wife Emilienne Ntacoripfa (55 years old).

SOS-Torture Burundi notes that the couple had received death threats before, but the police did not protect the victims to prevent the attack.

- Unidentified individuals abducted Jeremiah Irapaye in Nyamazi, Nyarusange commune, Gitega province (center of the country) on December 21, 2017. The victim is the director of a school, and at the same time a member of the opposition party FNL pro Agathon Rwasa .

SOS-Torture Burundi notes an enforced disappearance, with fears for the safety of Mr. Irapaye whose relatives have no news.

- Individuals attacked the area of Bugarama, commune and province Muramvya (center su country) with grenade on December 17, 2017. Witnesses report that 3 persons were wounded after the explosion of two grenades.

SOS-Torture Burundi notes that the police have announced the arrest of twelve (12) persons including the driver of the vehicle from which grenades were thrown.

2. Violations of the right to liberty and physical security

- Members of the Imbonerakure militiamen assaulted and abused Frédéric Ntakirutimana in the center of Makamba commune and province (south of the country) on December 15, 2017. Witnesses report that the victim is a shop owner, accused of phone battery theft at the time of the arrest.

SOS-Torture Burundi, however, learned from relatives that the Imbonerakure militiamen beat Mr. Ntakirutimana for expressing his opinion on his intention to reject the new revision of the Constitution in the event of a referendum. The attackers were identified as Hamissi Kabura, Makamba II quarter's chief, and Claude, who is the hill representative of the ruling party CNDD FDD. None of the perpetrators were prosecuted while the victim was injured.

- Police agents arrested Dieudonné Nimubona and Gahengeri on Mutobo Hill, Rukina zone, Mukike commune and Bujumbura province on 17 December 2017. Relatives report that the two young men are accused of participating in armed thieves' groups.

SOS-Torture Burundi notes, however, that no weapons or other evidence was seized during searches prior to the arrests; nor to this day. During the arrest, soldiers participated in the operation.

- Police agents arrested Leonidas Niyonizigiye, Luc Kazuba, Gregory Nigaba and Leonidas Sibomana in the locality of Kigororero, Itahe hill, Gisuru commune, Ruyigi province (East of the country) on December 17, 2017. Witnesses report that the four men were in a bistro, when Imbonerakure militiamen arrested them and accused them of holding an illegal meeting.

SOS-Torture Burundi notes that the police commissioner of Gisuru executed the arrest on the order of the administrator of the same municipality. The four men

arrested are also activists of the FNL (National Front for the Liberation) opposition party faithful to Agathon Rwaswa. Among other things, they are accused of preparing an awareness campaign aimed at inciting residents to reject the new Constitution.

- Imbonerakure militiamen also beat residents of a household on Nyabigina Hill, Kabuye area, commune and Makamba province (south of the country) on December 18, 2017 in the evening. Relatives report that militiamen, three in number, broke into the household following a dispute between brothers and began beating up the occupants.

SOS-Torture Burundi also notes that Imbonerakure militiamen demanded 10,000 francs to leave the family alone. In this case of new aggression, the imbonerakure militiamen were also identified by their victims: it is Nyabigina hill chief, and two others nicknamed 'Muhutu' and 'Podowa'. They are free from their movements, and no pursuit has been brought against them.

- Imbonerakure militiamen illegally arrested Nestor Rwaswa on Yaranda hill, Kirundo commune and province (north of the country) on December 17, 2017. Relatives report that the arrest was ordered by the governor of Kirundo province, after receiving a Mr Rwaswa's complaint letter the same day. The man expressed concern over spoliations of land that affected several persons near Lake Cohoha (one of the great lakes of Kirundo province).

SOS-Torture Burundi notes that the imbonerakure militiamen first beat the victim before taking him to the Kirundo police cell. The police agents allowed the arrest and imprisonment, without any record or charges that could justify this detention. The police must release Nestor Rwaswa who is the victim of arbitrary detention.

- National Intelligence Service agents arrested Marc Nzeyimana on Murama hill, Muyinga commune, Muyinga province, north of the country, on December 18, 2017. Relatives report that Mr. Nzeyimana is a victim of his political convictions because he is a member of FNL opposition party faithful to deputy Agathon Rwaswa.

SOS-Torture Burundi notes that the police did not communicate the reasons for the arrest and detention of this opponent.

- The police chief of Buganda commune, Cibitoke province (north-west of the country) arrested Evariste Kayoya on Ndava hill on December 19, 2017. Witnesses report that Mr. Kayoya was embarked in APC2 Jérôme vehicle registered C5019A.

SOS-Torture Burundi notes that the police agents in Buganda denied that the relatives had led the arrest. Relatives report learning that he would be accused of wanting to form a rebellion, but that the police did not provide any evidence.

- Members of the Imbonerakure militiamen tortured Jean Bosco Hatungimana on Nyamarobe Hill, Kiremba commune, Ngozi province, in the north of the country, on December 19, 2017. Witnesses report that the victim is an activist of the opposition party FNL faithful to Deputy Agathon Rwasa. The Imbonerakure militiamen also attacked two other men who were trying to intervene to stop the beatings.

SOS-Torture Burundi also learned that the representative of the ruling party CNDD FDD arrived on the scene to direct the abuses, demanding the three men to join their party by force. No prosecution has been initiated against the alleged perpetrators.

-On 17 December 2017 on KAMARAMAGAMBO Hill, District and Commune of Musongati, Rutana Province, a certain Gabriel, Nsengiyumva, and Marc were beaten by Imbonerakure (Bosco and Blaise) who forced them to return while they were taking a beer around 19:00. The situation turned out otherwise because a fight broke out afterwards and these imbonerakure ended up being stopped.

-On December 18, 2017, at about 7 pm on Musagara Hill, Ngoma Zone, Musongati Commune, Rutana Province, a certain Audace Rwasa, a former member of the CNDD FDD party who refused to pay his contribution for the construction of the provincial headquarter of this party, was forced by the head of Ngoma Zone to pay an amount of 50,000 Burundian francs. The zone chief was with the head of the police station and the leader of the ruling party Cnnd Fdd at this zone.



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SOS-Torture / Burundi was initiated with the objective of informing national and international opinion about the 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 persons killed during the day of December 11 and 12, 2015 by the 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..

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