

## **REPORT No. 96 OF SOS-TORTURE / BURUNDI PUBLISHED ON 14 OCTOBER 2017**

This report of SOS-Torture covers the period from 7 to 14 October 2017 about human rights violations in Burundi.

At least nine (9) persons were murdered during the above-mentioned period. Among the victims were six (6) persons murdered in Buhiga commune Karusi Province by the same person who suicides after the massacre.

During the same period, a new detainee died in Muyinga prison following the refusal of the Prison's management to go to hospital for appropriate care. Another prisoner had been the victim of the same practices one year ago in this prison, as well as another prisoner detained in Mpimba during that year.

The same report refers to torture suffered by seven (7) inhabitants of Nyabitsinda commune Ruyigi province. Imbonerakure militiamen tied and beat them before handing them over to police agents. At least six (6) other persons were victims of arbitrary and unlawful arrests during the period.

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

- Unidentified individuals assassinated Consolate Ntiyankundiye on Nyanza Hill, Marangara Commune, Ngozi Province, on October 8, 2017. Relatives reported that she was killed with a machete.

SOS-Torture Burundi notes that the police have not identified any suspects to date.

- Individuals murdered a young boy whose body was found in Kigoma, Karusi province (center-east of the country) on 9 October 2017. The victim was not identified and the local administration buried him.

- Claude Ntirandekura assassinated six (6) persons on Rweya hill, zone and Buhiga commune, Karusi province (center-east of the country) on 9 October 2017 in the evening. Witnesses reported that the perpetrator burned three (3) of the victims in their homes and killed three (3) other victims.

SOS-Torture Burundi notes that the perpetrator of these killings was found hanged. The police have not yet determined the reasons for the massacre but jailed seven (7) persons on charges of not providing assistance to persons in danger.

- Unidentified individuals assassinated Bulex Bahungu, whose body was found on Renga Hill, Marangara commune, Ngozi province, on 12 October 2017. Witnesses reported that the victim had some items stolen from a household.

SOS-Torture Burundi notes that the police have not identified any suspects, or the circumstances of this murder to date.

- A detainee known as Anastase Sibomana died in Muyinga prison (northern part of the country) on 8 October 2017. Relatives reported that the man had asked permission to leave prison for appropriate treatment. However, the director of the prison Alfred Ngomirakiza refused to grant this right.

SOS-Torture Burundi notes that this is not the first case of the non-assistance of a person at risk on the assets of the Muyinga prison administration. Inmate Elias Nishemezwe died in similar conditions on 25 July 2016 while requesting permission to visit a hospital for treatment. He was a minor at the time of his death and was arrested on his return from Tanzania (see **Sos-Torture Burundi report No. 33**: <http://sostortureburundi.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/SOS-TORTURE-BURUNDI-REPORT-N%C2%B033.pdf>).

SOS-Torture Burundi also notes another similar case at the Mpimba prison in the city of Bujumbura. Inmate Armel Ndacituma ('Mentu') died on 18 April 2017 in prison, while demanding an exit permit to visit an appropriate health facility. Prison officials denied him this basic right, claiming to wait until the next day to go out. The detainee Ndacituma did not survive (cf **Sos-Torture Burundi Report No. 71**: <http://sostortureburundi.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/SOS-Torture-Burundi-Num%C3%A9ro-71-in-En.pdf>).

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

- Policeagents arrested Faustin Ndikuriyo and Georges Ntaganzwa on Rusenda Hill, Bukinyana commune, Cibitoke province, on 7 October 2017. Relatives reported that the two men were victims of their political convictions. They reportedly declared their refusal to participate in the opening of a local office of the party in power CNDD FDD and tried to convince other people not to go there.

SOS-Torture Burundi notes that this ground does not constitute an offense or an offense justifying imprisonment. The families of the two men are also not allowed to



## SOS – Torture/Burundi

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

visit them, which is another violation of their rights. The police must release these two persons who have only expressed their point of view.

- Police agents arrested three men on Kamurenda sub-hill, Kirungu hill, Nyabitsinda commune, Ruyigi province, on 7 October 2017. Witnesses reported that people were drinking at a friend's home they came to visit at the time of their arrest. The three men were arbitrarily detained and forced to pay 20,000 francs each to be released late in the evening around 11 pm. Witnesses also report the arrest of another man who came to inquire about the situation. They were young imbonerakure militiamen of the ruling party who arrested him, accusing him of collaborating with journalists in exile.

SOS-Torture Burundi notes that extortion of money has become a practice of police agents to escape from arbitrary arrest. People who fail to satisfy the demands of police agents, and sometimes imbonerakure militiamen, are detained for no reason.

- Members of the Imbonerakure militiamen arrested and tortured Edouard Mabwire and his nephew Damascus Sibomana, January Bankuwunguka, Prosper Harerimana, Firmin Nyandwi, Elias and Diomede Ntakarutimana on Ruharo hill, Muhwazi zone, Nyabitsinda commune, Ruyigi province 7 October 2017 in the evening. Relatives report that all these men were in the home of the father of Edouard Mabwire who distributed tasks to them to do the following day. The imbonerakure militiamen arrived at the scene and began to beat up all the people present after they were tied up, on the pretext that they were fighting. Witnesses were able to identify some of the militiamen torturing that day: David Tuyikorere, Method Ntawukirishiga, their local leader Ferdinand Kananidi who was quoted in several acts of torture in Nyabitsinda commune as well as other unidentified militiamen.

SOS-Torture Burundi notes that Mr. Edouard Mabwire was seriously injured as a result of these tortures, but the imbonerakure militiamen took him with all the others to Nyaruganda police station. Police agents present kept these men in arbitrary detention while still being tied up for two days. They released them after having disbursed 20,000 francs. This impunity enjoyed by the imbonerakure militia has already caused some inhabitants of the locality to flee for fear of suffering the same fate.

- Members of the imbonerakure militiamen arrested Gaston Nshimirimana in Maramvya zone, Mutimbuzi commune, Bujumbura province, on 10 October 2017. Relatives reported that Mr. Nshimirimana was then handed over to the National

Intelligence Service have no news of him since that day and also do not know his place of detention.

SOS-Torture Burundi notes that this is an illegal arrest carried out by unauthorized persons, especially militiamen who enjoy impunity and complicity. There is also a concern for the safety of the victim, given that his place of detention was not disclosed. The National Intelligence Service shall communicate the place of detention of Mr. Nshimirimana as well as the reasons.

- Unidentified individuals entered the premises of Frieden bar-restaurant in the center of Ruyigi town (East of the country) on 11 October 2017. These premises belong to Mrs Marguerite " Maggy " Barankitse, leaders of Burundian civil society forced into exile since 2015 following its participation in the movement Stop the third mandate of civil society organizations and threats to its security. Witnesses report that these persons seized several assets.

SOS-Torture Burundi notes that this act was committed within 50 meters of several public buildings guarded by police officers including Ruyigi Intermediate Court, the Ruyigi Procurator's Office and the Provincial Governor's Office.

- Militiamen imbonerakure in complicity with administrative officials imposed compulsory contributions to the inhabitants of Gatumba zone , Mutimbuzi commune, Bujumbura province . These sums of money would be destined to pay those militants imbonerakure of the ruling party who carry out patrols at night.

These patrols are also uncontrolled because the imbonerakure militiamen commit crimes, imposing also a curfew that restricts the freedoms of movement of the population. People who do not advocate for the ruling party are particularly targeted and brutalized. The communal and provincial authorities must put an end to this ransom and to these illegal patrols that sow fear and insecurity.

### **3. Burundian refugees in DRC are not safe**

Several Burundian refugees from the Lusenda camp in South Kivu province, Fizi zone, in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) have reported fears for their safety since the attack that killed several refugees in Kamanyola a few weeks ago. These refugees told SOS-Torture Burundi that they are no longer secure. Thus, the Congolese police

agents deserted the neighborhood of the camp after demolishing their sentry boxes; leaving the refugees to themselves.

Refugees also report that several of their compatriots have already deserted the camp following fear of a new attack by Congolese rebel groups. In village 40 of the camp of Lusenda, which numbered 49 families of refugees, there are only 29 families left. Fear for their safety is accentuated by incursions into the camp by Congolese soldiers dressing in civilian clothes to infiltrate the camp by posing as homeless.

SOS-Torture Burundi also notes that Congolese citizens have engaged petitions to demand the dismantling of the Burundian refugee camp in Lusenda to be relocated elsewhere. UNHCR and the Congolese government must ensure the safety of refugees who have fled Burundi. Any decision regarding the Lusenda camp must guarantee their safety to avoid further massacres.

*The SOS-Torture / Burundi was initiated with the aim of informing national and international opinion on 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 slaughter of a hundred people killed during the day of December 11 and 12, 2015 by the police and military under the pretext of pursuing rebels who came attacking military camps on the outskirts of the capital Bujumbura. The affected zone are said to be challenging the third term of President Nkurunziza wich are Musaga, Mutakura, Cibitoke, Nyakabiga, Jabe, the last two being located in the center of the city of Bujumbura.*