

REPORT No. 116 OF SOS-TORTURE / BURUNDI ISSUED MARCH 3, 2018

This SOS-Torture report covers the period from 24 February to 3 March 2018 concerning cases of violations and human rights violations in Burundi. At least four (4) persons were murdered during the period in different locations. Among the victims are two (2) young men killed in Busoni in Kirundo province by members of the imbonerakure militiamen according to relatives of one of the victims who had just returned from exile. A local leader of the ruling party was also shot dead by soldiers in Gitega.

The document also lists about eight (8) arbitrary arrests. These include victims of arrests by imbonerakure militiamen, including beatings and tortures. Three (3) young men arrested by police in Buganda cannot be found in official jails.

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

- Unidentified individuals attacked by grenade at a petrol station located at 15th Avenue, Cibitoke Zone, Ntahangwa Commune (north of Bujumbura City) on 25 February 2018 in the evening. Witnesses report that the craft injured four (4) persons.

Sos-Torture Burundi notes that the police announced the arrest of a suspect, without revealing his identity.

- Soldiers shot and killed Evariste Ngenzi on Mutoyi hill, Bugendana commune, Gitega province (center of the country) on February 26, 2018 at night. Witnesses report that the victim is the representative of the ruling party CNDD FDD on Mutoyi Hill.

Sos-Torture Burundi notes the arrest of the alleged perpetrators: Warrant Officer Ndabahagamyé and Master Corporal Jonas Uwimbabazi,

Following the flagrancy procedure, the Gitega Intermediate Court convicted and sentenced these two defendants to life imprisonment. .

Sos torture Burundi welcomes this unusual speed of Burundian justice but denounces a procedural flaw because it is the War Council (Military Court) which had the competence to prosecute these military defendants.



Evariste Ngenzi, active member of the ruling party shot by military



Soldiers accused of shooting down local representative of ruling party in Mutoyi



SOS – Torture/Burundi

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

- Unidentified individuals murdered Dieudonné Ngendakumana on Buringa Hill, Gihanga Commune, Bubanza Province (western part of the country) on February 24, 2018 in the evening. Witnesses report that the victim was slaughtered.

Sos-Torture Burundi notes that the police announced the arrest of five (5) suspects.

- Unidentified individuals murdered two (2) young men whose bodies were found on Gatete Hill, Busoni Commune, Kirundo Province (North of the country) on February 24, 2018. One of the victims was identified as René Pacifique Ntwari (22 years old). The second victim was beheaded, not allowing identification to date. Relatives of René Pacifique Ntwari report that the young man was returning from exile from Rwanda, and would have fallen into the net stretched by a group of imbonerakure militiamen on patrols on the day of his arrival in Busoni commune (border with Rwanda). The same militiamen would have tried to bargain over the young man's life for a certain amount of money.

Sos-Torture Burundi notes that the police have not arrested suspects to date, nor identified the second victim of execution. The patrols of the imbonerakure militiamen are known to the local authorities, including the police, since they are regularly denounced by the locals..



René Pacifique Ntwari, young man executed in Busoni on his return from exile

2. Violations of the right to liberty and physical security

- Members of the Imbonerakure militiamen arrested Jean Bosco Nimpagaritse on Butare Hill, Richard Ndayihimbaze and Eric Nduwayo on Kimanga hill, Bukemba commune, Rutana province (south-east of the country) on 19 February 2018 in the evening. Witnesses report that militiamen of the ruling party CNDD FDD patrolled at night.

Sos-Torture Burundi notes illegal and arbitrary arrests. Relatives report that the three (3) victims are activists of the FNL opposition party of the faithful of the deputy Agathon Rwasa. There is a fear that their continued detention may be politically motivated, since no charges are laid against the three men who remain

detained by the police in Bukemba. Police and national intelligence agents are complicit in the crimes committed by members of the imbonerakure militiamen.

- Police agents arrested Violette Nibogora in the center of Kibago commune, Makamba province (south of the country) on 19 February 2018. Relatives report that Ms. Nibogora voluntarily responded to a police summons to Kibago. A few days before her, her husband Leonidas Barantandukiye had spent two weeks in the same cell. The couple is accused of having one of their cows grazing in the fields of a school.

SOS-Torture Burundi notes an arbitrary and prolonged detention of Mrs. Nibogora, because custody cannot in any way exceed seven (7) days in a police cell is also necessarily a harassment of the family after the husband he was also deprived of liberty for two weeks.

- Members of the imbonerakure militiamen kidnapped Salvator Ntahomvukiye and his wife on Rubimba hill, Kibago commune, Makamba province (south of the country) for 24 hours on 24 February 2018. Relatives report that the militiamen demanded that the couple (aged sixty years) to show the receipts attesting that they are registered as electors for the constitutional referendum of May 2018.

Sos-Torture Burundi notes ongoing threats and intimidation against the population by militiamen who enjoy impunity. Witnesses report that the couple was sequestered for not being able to show these documents to members of the militiamen.

- Members of the imbonerakure militiamen assaulted and beat Desire Sindihebura in the center of Giheta commune, Gitega province (center of the country) on February 24, 2018 in the evening. Relatives report that the victim is a journalist from the Iwacu press group accused of spreading bad news by his attackers.

SOS-Torture Burundi notes that police have not arrested any suspects to date, despite a complaint filed by the victim.



Désiré Sindihebura, assaulted and beaten by militiamen members in Giheta

- Members of the Imbonerakure militiamen arrested Clement Ruhaza on Muriza hill, Butaganzwa commune, Ruyigi province (East of the country) on 25 February 2018. Witnesses report that he was accused by this group of militiamen of insulting institutions .

Sos-Torture Burundi notes an illegal arrest by members of the ruling party's militiamen. Police agents in Muriza zones agreed to put Mr Ruhaza in jail without a warrant or a criminal record incriminating him. The victim was released the next day after being forced to pay 50,000 francs to Butaganzwa commune agents.

- Members of the Imbonerakure militiamen tortured 38-year-old Gaudence Ntahimpera on Muyange Hill, Butezi Commune, Ruyigi Province (East of the country) on 25 February 2018. Witnesses report that the victim was beaten several times and was beaten dying at the hospital.

Sos-Torture Burundi notes that the perpetrators of the blows are free from their movements, the police having opened no investigation.

- Police agents arrested Clovis Icishatse, Leon Nincuti and Ndikumana on Kagwema Hill, Gihanga Commune, Bubanza Province (western Rwanda) on 27 February 2018. Witnesses report that the three (3) young men were taken to Buganda police station, where no official cells are listed. They are accused of collaborating with a group of rebels based in the DRC.

Sos-Torture Burundi fears an enforced disappearance, the Buganda police has not formally recognized the arrest of these three young men. Witnesses report that the head of Buganda Commune police station embarked the same evening the three detainees to an unknown destination, aboard a police vehicle registered PNB A311A.

3. The judiciary accompanies the executive in its policy of repression

Sos-Torture Burundi has learned that a young teenage has been sentenced to a term of life imprisonment for acts related to the preparation of the constitutional referendum of the Burundian government. Armand Duhamahoro was sentenced by the judges of Makamba High Court to one year in prison on 23 February 2018. Relatives report that he was arrested on 11 February 2018 in the evening on Mbizi hill, Kibago commune. Makamba province (south of the country), following a denunciation of an registrar of the locality.

Sos-Torture Burundi notes a conviction for 'usurpation of the activity of registration' and 'violation of domicile'. The judgement comes as several reports have already reported numerous arrests since the launch of the draft revision of the Constitution, and particularly during the voter registration campaign in February 2018. The judges have not sought to hear no prosecution or defense witnesses, as none have been presented by the prosecution; which raises fears of complacency of the courts in the ongoing crackdown.



SOS-Torture / Burundi was initiated with the objective of informing the national and international opinion on serious human rights violations under way in Burundi through monitoring reports notably 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 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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