

SOS -TORTURE/BURUNDI REPORT N ° 198 PUBLISHED ON 28 SEPTEMBER 2019

This report of SOS-Torture/Burundi covers the period from 21 to 28 September 2019 concerning cases of human rights violations and abuses in Burundi.

At least one person was murdered in Karusi province following the torture of imbonerakure militiamen. Several faithful of a church were also beaten by police officers including a woman with video-witness in support.

The report also mentions five (5) cases of arbitrary arrests, three of which concern activists from the CNL opposition party.

1. Violations of the right to life and physical integrity

- Policemen tortured worshippers of the Adventist Church in Rubuye district, Ngozi town and province (north of the country) on 21 September 2019. Witnesses, confirmed by video footage of the scene, report that the agents entered the church at the time of the service and began beating the faithful who failed to escape. One of these videos shows a woman beaten defenceless by three policemen who then dragged her through the church towards the exit, despite the victim's screams of distress.

Sos-Torture/Burundi notes violence inflicted on the faithful of a church and the arbitrary arrest of at least fifteen (15) people who were in the church. Relatives report that the women arrested were released on 24 September 2019.



A woman from Ngozi Adventist Church was beaten and dragged to the ground by policemen

- Members of the imbonerakure militiamen beaten to death Jérémie Ntaconimariye on Gashikanwa Hill, Gihogazi commune, Karusi province (central-east of the country) during the night of 23 September 2019. Relatives report that the victim, member of the opposition party CNL, was woken up in the middle of the night and asked to leave his home. Mr. Ntaconimariye was brutally beaten and left in agony.

Sos-Torture/Burundi notes the violence inflicted on the victim, who died the next morning. The police have not yet arrested any of the alleged perpetrators. Relatives also report that Ntaconimariye was a victim of his refusal to join the ruling CNDD-FDD party.

2. Violations of the right to liberty and physical security

- Policemen arrested Boniface Nzoyihera and Georges Sabushimike on Mvugo Hill, Nyanza-lac commune, Makamba province (south of the country) on 22 September 2019. Witnesses report that young members of imbonerakure militiamen accompanied the police. Relatives also report that the two men arrested are activists accused of mobilizing and teaching the ideology of the opposition CNL (National Congress for Freedom) Party.

Sos-Torture/Burundi notes arbitrary arrests of these members of the opposition. Relatives report that they are in fact victims of having protested against the illegal search of a resident the day before by the head of mvugo Hill accompanied with members of the imbonerakure militiamen.

- On 23 September 2019 Police agents arrested Boniface Ndikuriyo in Minago zone, Rumonge municipality and province (southwest of the country). Relatives report that he is the representative of the opposition party CNL in Minago zone. The Minago zone chief who was waiting for him with police agents summoned Mr. Ndikuriyo. He is accused of holding an illegal meeting.

Sos-Torture/Burundi note an arbitrary arrest linked to the political affiliation of this activist and which confirms the persecution of members of CNL party. Relatives also report that members of CNL party had gathered the day before to raise funds for the rehabilitation of their permanent residence, which had been destroyed a few weeks ago by members of the imbonerakure militiamen of the ruling CNDD-FDD party.

- On 25 September 2019 Police agents arrested Emery Mutabazi and Majambere on Rwankona Hill, Kiremba Zone, Bururi Commune and province (south of the country). Witnesses report that the police conducted a search of their home, nothing suspicious was found. During this operation, members of the imbonerakure militiamen accompanied the police.

Sos-Torture/Burundi notes an arbitrary arrest based on false accusations. Both young men are suspected of illegal possession of fire arms, although police have found nothing in their homes. Relatives also report that they are victims of the appointment of their brother as vice-president of Bururi provincial electoral commission (CEPI) as a representative of the opposition party CNL.



SOS – Torture/Burundi

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

SOS-Torture/Burundi was initiated with the aim to inform national and international opinion on serious human rights violations in Burundi through monitoring reports on torture, arbitrary arrests, enforced disappearances, sexual violence and summary executions.

This initiative to inform on realities of the country followed the carnage of a hundred people killed during the day of 11 and 12 December, 2015 by the police and military under the pretext of pursuing rebels who had just attacked military camps located on the outskirts of the capital city.

The affected areas are said to be the protestors of the third term of President Nkurunziza, namely Musaga, Mutakura, Cibitoke, Nyakabiga, Jabe, the last two being located in the center of the Town Hall of Bujumbura.

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