



## **REPORT NO 202 OF SOS-TORTURE/BURUNDI PUBLISHED ON 26 OCTOBER 2019**

This report of SOS-Torture/Burundi covers the period from 19 to 26 October 2019 concerning cases of human rights violations and abuses in Burundi.

At least five (5) people were murdered during the period. Victims are a police officer and two others who are alleged to be rebels killed in fighting in Bubanza province between an armed group and the security forces. The fourth victim was a local leader of imbonerakure militiamen, who was shot dead by his comrades in the ruling party party CNDD-FDD.

The body of a little girl under the age of 3 was also found in a ditch.

The report also refers to six (6) cases of arbitrary arrest. Five employees of Iwacu press group were arrested, including four journalists and a driver detained in Bubanza. They were arrested while gathering information related to the fighting between the rebel group and the army.

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

- On the night of 22 October 2019 a group of armed men attacked several hills of Musigati Commune, Bubanza province (west of the country). Witnesses report that the armed group also crossed part of Mpanda commune before returning to the Kibira forest. Clashes have occurred between this armed group and local military and police. Witnesses report that a police officer was killed, and two persons described as rebels during the fighting which continued until 24 October in Rugazi Commune.

Sos-Torture/Burundi notes forced displacement of the inhabitants of the affected hills escaping the fighting. A rebel movement called Red-Tabara has also claimed responsibility for these attacks through social media.

- On 23 October 2019 unidentified gunmen shot Désiré Hakizimana, whose body was discovered in a cassava field on Buramata Hill, Gihanga commune, Bubanza province (west of the country). Relatives report that he had been illegally arrested the previous day by four members of imbonerakure militiamen armed with guns and dressed in military fatigues.



## SOS – Torture/Burundi

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

Sos-Torture/Burundi notes a summary execution carried out by members of the ruling CNDD-FDD party. None of the alleged perpetrators have been arrested to date. Sos-Torture/Burundi further noted that the victim was the local leader of the same imbonerakure militiamen on Buramata Hill.

- The body of the little Riziki Irakoze (2 years and 8 months) was discovered in a ditch in the center of Makamba commune and province (south of the country) on October 24, 2019. Relatives report that the little girl had been missing since 18 October 2019.

Sos-Torture/Burundi notes that the police of Makamba has not yet determined the circumstances of the death of this child

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

- On 22 October 2019 Police agents arrested Agnès Ndirubusa, Christine Kamikazi, Aegis Harerimana, Thérance Mpozenzi and their driver Adolphe Masabarakiza in the commune Musigati, Bubanza province. These are journalists from the Iwacu press group who were on their way to collect information on the earlier clashes between a rebel group and the army. Journalists ' equipment and phones were also confiscated. Witnesses report that journalist Christine Kamikazi was slapped by one of the police agents.

Sos-Torture/Burundi notes the arbitrary arrests aimed at further muzzling the independent press and preventing anyone from reporting the results of these clashes. Sos-Torture/Burundi also notes that the Bubanza prosecutor's office ordered, after three nights spent at the provincial police station, the transfer of these journalists to Bubanza prison after they were charged with complicity in undermining the internal security of the state by the same floor.



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The four journalists and the driver of Iwacu press group arbitrarily detained in Bubanza (Iwacu photo)

- Members of the imbonerakure militiamen arrested Désiré Bakundukize in Musigati Commune, Bubanza province on 22 October 2019 in the evening. Relatives report that he is a member of the opposition CNL party. He was taken to the police cell in Musigati.

Sos-Torture/Burundi notes illegal and arbitrary arrest of Mr. Bakundukize, as well as the complicity of the police with the militiamen of the ruling party.



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SOS-Torture/Burundi was initiated with the aim of informing 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 the 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 Bujumbura.

The affected zones 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.