

REPORT NO. 218 OF SOS-TORTURE/BURUNDI PUBLISHED ON FEBRUARY 15, 2020

This report of SOS-Torture/Burundi covers the period from 8 to 15 February 2020 concerning cases of human rights violations and abuses in Burundi.

At least two (2) people were murdered during the period. The victims are men, one of whom was discovered in Lake Tanganyika.

The cases of arbitrary arrests concern members of the opposition party CNL but also of the party UPRONA pro-government.

1. Violations of the right to life and physical integrity

- The body of a man was discovered floating in Lake Tanganyika in the Port of Rumonge (southwest of the country) on February 9, 2020. Witnesses report that the victim was a fisherman guarding a fishing vessel.

Sos-Torture/Burundi notes that the police had not yet determined the circumstances of the man's death.

- Unidentified individuals assassinated Célestin Ndashinze in front of his home in the Magara zone, Bugarama commune, Rumonge province (southwest of the country) on February 9, 2020. Witnesses report that the perpetrators of the attack were armed with guns and shot the victim at close range and seriously injured another person, Mr. Labani Nimbona.

Sos-Torture/Burundi notes that the police in Rumonge have not identified any suspects to date.

2. Violations of the right to liberty and physical security

- Members of imbonerakure militias beat and arrested Boas Nihorimbere, Jean Ndayambaje and a third person on Gatwe Hill, Kayogoro commune, Makamba province (south of the country) on 8 February 2020. Witnesses report that the first two victims, traders, were accused of "practising witchcraft." The third victim was beaten for trying to rescue the shopkeepers.

Sos-Torture/Burundi notes the violence of imbonerakure militia and the illegal arrest they made. There is also the complicity of the police in Kayogoro, who put the three people in solitary confinement, despite the fact that they are victims of violence by members of the ruling CNDD-FDD party.

- Police officers arrested Ézéchiel Karugendo, Jean Berchmans Nsabayongoma, Sinzinkayo, Ndacayisaba, Rwaswa Ruribikiyimvanda and Méthode Rugemintwaza on Nyakibingo Hill, ntega commune, Kirundo province (north of the country) on 9 February 2020. Relatives report that all six are members of the opposition CNL (National Congress for Freedom) Party who were arrested after defending themselves against members of the imbonerakure militia who had just attacked them.

Sos-Torture/Burundi notes arbitrary arrests of members of the opposition. Police officers are constantly complicit in the actions of the militias of the ruling CNDD-FDD party.

- Police officers arrested Stany in Muzinda, West Bubanza province on 10 February 2020. Relatives report that he is accused of undermining the internal security of the state but is in fact a victim of his membership in the opposition political party CNL.

Sos-Torture/Burundi notes an arbitrary arrest, especially since other activists of this party languish in prison despite their acquittal by the High Court of Bubanza.

- Police officers arrested Amédé Habimana and Évode Bihizi in the centre of Gitega commune and province (central part of the country) on 12 February 2020. Relatives report that the two men are respectively adviser to the First Vice-Presidency of the Republic and executive of the mutual Civil Service in Gitega. They are victims of having opposed the leaders of their political party UPRONA (Union for national progress)



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regarding the nomination of candidates of their party in the next legislative elections of this year.

- Sos-Torture/Burundi notes arbitrary arrests with no legal basis.

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 December 11 and 12, 2015 by 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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