



SOS – Torture/Burundi

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

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This SOS-Torture/Burundi report covers the period from 18 to 25 April 2020 concerning cases of human rights violations and abuses in Burundi.

At least eight (8) people narrowly escaped an armed ambush (machetes and beatings) carried out by a group of members of the imbonerakure militiamen in Vumbi commune. The persons concerned were activists of the opposition party CNL.

The report also mentions eight (8) cases of arbitrary and illegal arrests, some of which were carried out by members of the imbonerakure militiamen.

1. Violations of the right to life and physical integrity

- Members of the imbonerakure militiamen attacked with machete a group of CNL opposition party activists on matyazo Hill, Vumbi commune, Kirundo province (north of the country) on April 22, 2020. Witnesses report that the militiamen seriously wounded Eugene Nsabimana and Ishmael Macumi and left their bodies in the bush, thinking they were dead. Six other activists were injured in the same attack.

Sos-Torture/Burundi notes the violence of the attack that could have led to the premeditated murder of members of the opposition. The police did not arrest any of the alleged perpetrators despite the fact that they were identified by the victims of the attack. Among the militiamen identified are Emmanuel Mpabonye, Venant Ndayishimiye, Jean Paul Havyarimana and Lengo Miburo.



One of the victims of the imbonerakure militia attack on members of the opposition in Vumbi



Another victim of the same attack



2. Violations of the right to liberty and physical security

- Police officers arrested Ferdinand Nibigira and another man in Gitaza zones, Muhuta commune, Kayanza province (northwest of the country) on April 16, 2020. Relatives report that they are both local representatives of the opposition Sahwanya-Frodebu party.

Sos-Torture/Burundi learned from relatives that they are accused of propaganda on behalf of their party through the distribution of Cards. This is an arbitrary arrest of members of the opposition. Members of the ruling CNDD-FDD party are not worried as they are threatening to recruit activists.

- Agents of the National Intelligence Service arrested Eric Niyomwungere and Medard Kazungu in Gitega municipality and province (Central) on April 15, 2020. Relatives report that Mr. Niyomwungere is the half-brother of Pascal Nginganza (nicknamed Kaburimbo) executed on the same day by police officers at his home in Matana commune, Bururi province.

Sos-Torture/Burundi notes the arbitrary arrests of which one of the victims had just brutally lost his brother. This is a double torture for the family. Relatives also report that Mr. Kazungu was arrested for having sent a message to Mr. Niyomwungere; this message in no way justifies his arrest.

- Members of the imbonerakure militiamen attacked members of the opposition party CNL (National Congress for freedom) on Gatwe Hill, Ntega commune, Kirundo province (north of the country) on April 19, 2020. Witnesses report that CNL activists were returning from a meeting of their party and collided with members of the CNDD-FDD Party, causing an avalanche of blows on both sides.

Sos-Torture/Burundi notes that at least six people were injured during these clashes. Relatives also report that police officers were stalking CNL activists in the aftermath of the fighting. None of the instigators of these violent fights were apprehended by the police.

- Police officers arrested Anne Sinzumusi and Augustin Matata at their respective homes in Buringa zone, Gihanga commune, Bubanza province (west of the country) on 19 April 2020. Relatives report that Ms. Sinzumusi is the former representative of the

opposition party MSD (movement for solidarity and democracy); Mr. Matata is one of the local leaders of the opposition party CNL.

Sos-Torture/Burundi notes arbitrary arrests, as the police did not provide any warrant or explanation during these arrests.



Ms. Anne Sinzumusi and Mr. Augustin Matata arrested at their homes in Buringa.

- Members of the imbonerakure militiamen arrested Oscar Baryamwabo and Emmanuel Habonimana in the center of Giheta Commune, Gitega province (central of the country) on April 23, 2020. Relatives report that the operation was led by Leonidas Ntakarutimana, communal leader of the ruling CNDD-FDD party.

Sos-Torture/Burundi notes the illegal arrests of two members of the opposition, in this case the CNL party; as well as the complicity of the Giheta police who put the two men behind bars.



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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 including torture, arbitrary arrests, enforced 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 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.

The affected zones are said to be protesters 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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