

REPORT N°244 OF SOS-TORTURE/BURUNDI PUBLISHED ON 15 AUGUST 2020

This SOS-Torture report covers the period from 08 to 15 August 2020 concerning cases of human rights violations in Burundi.

At least eight (08) people were murdered during the period in different localities. Among the victims were three (03) children who died from a grenade thrown in a hairdressing salon in Gahahe and two (02) people burned in arson in Kiremba in the province of Ngozi.

The report also mentions 10 persons seriously injured in different parts of the country, two (02) persons arbitrarily arrested and two (02) persons abducted and missing

1. Violations of the right to life and physical integrity

- On Saturday, August 8, 2020, around 1:00 am, on Canamo Hill, Kiremba commune, Ngozi province, unidentified criminals set fire to the house of Macumi Come (68 years old) in which himself, his son named Zabulon and a goat all burned to death. It should be noted that Macumi Come, who had left his native hill Nkanka in Tangara commune, Ngozi province, 7 years ago, was accused of witchcraft by his neighbor.

SOS-Torture Burundi notes that four people from the neighbourhood were arrested by the police for failing to help the victims.

- During the night of Tuesday 11 August 2020 at about 19 h 30 min, in Kiyovu location, Kayokwe commune, Mwaro province, individuals ambushed Jean Berchmans Nshimirimana (28 years) and his wife Godelieve Baraghorana (28 years) with their baby. An amount of three million Burundian francs (3,000,000 BIF) was stolen from Jean Berchmans Nshimirimana who is the manager of a Brarudi store in this locality.

At the same time, Jean Claude Havyarimana known as a motorcyclist was hit by bullets at the scene of the incident and died on the spot.

Sos-Torture Burundi notes that Kayokwe police arrested three people the next day who were taken to the police dungeon in Kayokwe for investigation.

- On Wednesday 12 August 2020, a lifeless body of a boy aged about fifteen years and whose identity was not recognised, was found in Ndurumu river separating the communes of Buhiga and Bugenyuzi in Karusi province.

The victim's body was taken to the mortuary of Karusi Hospital to await burial.

- On the morning of this Thursday 13 August 2020 at about 8:30 am, in Gahahe quarter, Kinama zone, Ntakangwa commune in the Bujumbura town hall, a grenade exploded in a hairdressing salon full of children watching television, immediately taking the life of one child while two others died while they were being evacuated to the hospital, also causing 8 seriously injured children. According to the testimonies of local residents, the grenade targeted the owner of the hairdressing salon who had been arguing with a certain Désiré, head of Imbonerakure in Gahahe, who was suspected of being the perpetrator of this abominable crime.

Sos-Torture Burundi notes that the police have already arrested three suspects, including this chief of Imbonerakure, as part of an investigation it has opened.

- On the morning of Thursday 13 August 2020, the body of a man known as Melchior Butoyi, a native of Musigati commune, Bubanza province, was discovered in a bistro called 'Kugisupusupu' located in the capital of Cibitoke province in Rugombo commune. Witnesses say the victim was a night watchman at the same cabaret and that people who have not yet been identified reportedly strangled him to death.

SOS-Torture Burundi notes that the police in Rugombo arrested four suspects for investigative reasons

2. Violations of the right to liberty and physical security

- On the night of 10 August 2020, a trader named Joseph Ndikumana from Rurengera hill, Mutaho commune, Gitega province was seriously injured in the head.

In the middle of the night, the victim received hammer blows to the head. He shouted for help, which alerted the staff and other guests of the hotel, who rushed to his aid.

SOS-Torture Burundi notes that Rutana police arrested a certain Joël Nyabenda, from Giharo commune, Rutana province, who shared the hotel with the victim and who had registered under a false identity and took him to the dungeon for investigation.

- In the afternoon of Tuesday, August 11, 2020, on Muhungu hill, Butahana zone, Mabayi commune, Cibitoke province, the head of the National Intelligence Service (SNR) in Mabayi and young Imbonerakure arbitrarily arrested two members of the National Council for Liberty (CNL) Jean Paul Safari, CNL communal leader in Bukinyanya commune, and Alfred Nyandwi accused of destroying the monument of the National Council for the Defence of Democracy - Forces for the Defence of Democracy (CNDD-FDD) when, according to witnesses on the spot, the monument had been destroyed more than a year earlier. CNL activists in that locality claim that the arbitrary arrest was aimed solely at the CNDD-FDD's withdrawal of CNL party members from the race for the hillside elections, given that Alfred Nyandwi is a hillside candidate on Muhungu Hill.

SOS-Torture Burundi notes that the victims are being held in Mabayi Brigade dungeon.

- During the night of Tuesday to Wednesday 11 August 2020 on Bujondi hill , Kayogoro commune, Makamba province, a group of Imbonerakure composed of Jean Gahungu, Thomas Niyongabo, Nathan and Evariste Nibasumba all from Bujondi hill, violently hit Fulgence Bukuru after an altercation he had just had with his wife. Witnesses at the scene said that the victim, who is currently in critical condition, tried to file a complaint against the perpetrators of the assault and battery with the hill leader but in vain

3. Kidnappings followed by enforced disappearances

- On August 13, 2020 in Buterere Commune Bujumbura town hall, Issa Ngendakumana, a member of CNL who is the communal treasurer of the party's youth league was abducted with another person who was not identified at the place called "Mobile". Unidentified persons took them away in a black car without a licence plate.

SOS-Torture Burundi notes one case of enforced disappearance for political motives.



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 of informing national and international opinion on serious human rights violations under way in Burundi through monitoring reports, particularly on torture, arbitrary arrests, forced disappearances, sexual violence and summary executions.

This initiative to provide information on the realities of the country followed the carnage of some 100 people killed on 11 December and 12 December 2015 by police and military officers under the pretext of pursuing rebels who had just attacked military camps on the outskirts of the capital.

The affected areas are said to be contesting President Nkurunziza's third term of office, namely Musaga, Mutakura, Cibitoke, Nyakabiga and Jabe, the last two being located in the centre of Bujumbura City Hall.

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