

REPORT NO. 80 OF SOS-TORTURE / BURUNDI PUBLISHED ON 24 JUNE 2017

This report of SOS-Torture which concerns the violation of human rights in Burundi covers the period from 17 to 24 June 2017.

At least three (3) persons were assassinated during the period, including a man shot dead by soldiers in Mwumba. Two (2) others have been wounded, including one man severely beaten by Imbonerakure militiamen in Ruyigi. The report also refers to other acts of violence committed by Imbonerakure militiamen who enjoy impunity and complicity with the police and prosecution services. The most recent example concerns militia who entered the home of a resident of Ruyigi tied and beaten him without any reason. At least twelve (12) persons were arrested during the period. Among them nine (9) persons have been arrested in Matana.

1. Violations of the right to life and physical integrity

- Military agents shot dead Frédéric Jumapili on Cah Hill, Mwumba commune (the native commune of Burundian President Pierre Nkurunziza), Ngozi province, on June 16, 2017. Witnesses reported that the victim was trying to rescue a friend beaten by the same soldiers, accusing him of selling clothing items in Rwanda.

SOS-Torture Burundi notes that three (3) soldiers have been arrested but their identities have not been disclosed.

- Individuals armed with clubs seriously wounded Donatien Kazoya (60 years) on Karambi Hill, Ruyigi commune and province (East of the country) on June 18, 2017 in the evening. This man was apprehended by two men who stunned him with clubs, and dragged to the ground while he was agonizing.

SOS-Torture Burundi notes that the police apprehended four (4) suspects, including a CNDD FDD party leader on Karambi Hill. The relatives are afraid that these suspects will be released, given the pressure exerted on police agents by the Imbonerakure militiamen of the Ruyigi commune to free this local leader from their political party.

- Unidentified individuals attacked a Bar on Rwiri Hill, Murwi Commune, Cibitoke province (north-western part of the country) on June 18, 2017. A client of the Bar was injured.

- Individuals assassinated Juma Ntakobakibigira on Muyange Hill, Mugina commune, Cibitoke province (north-western) on 21 June 2017 in the evening.

- Armed individuals murdered with machetes Théoneste Buyoya on the Bugwana hill, Gitobe commune, Kirundo province (north of the country) on 22 June 2017 in the evening. The perpetrators of the assassination were not identified. SOS-Torture Burundi notes that the police arrested a suspect.

2. Violations of the right to liberty and physical security

- Imbonerakure militiamen of CNDD FDD party beaten Manasseh Ntaconkurikira on Nyabitare Hill, Gisuru commune, Ruyigi Province, on 11 June 2017. Witnesses reported that Mr. Ntaconkurikira was in a bistro when a demobilized CNDD FDD named Mathias caught him by force and began to hit him together with his accomplices. The victim was left on the spot in a very critical state.

SOS-Torture Burundi learned from relatives that Mr. Ntaconkurikira is a victim of his political affiliation to the FNL (National Front for the Liberation) faithful to Agathon Rwasa; and that the Imbonerakure militiamen described him as an enemy (igipinga in kirundi) by wanting to force him to join the party CNDD FDD on power.

- Imbonerakure militiamen forcibly introduced themselves in Floris Irakaninahazwa's home in Gasanda quarter, Ruyigi commune and province (East of the country) on 17 June 2017. They immediately violently tied him up and beaten him without explanations. Witnesses from the vicinity report that they were alerted by the victim's cries of rescue, whose marks of abuse were noticeable on his chest because of the tight ropes.

SOS-Torture Burundi has learned from relatives that the source of the torture is an incident of the day before when the head of the CNDD FDD party in the Sanzu quarter Elioud Ntakarutimana toppled Mr. Irakaninahazwa's glass into a bar, . SOS-Torture Burundi notes that the administrative authorities who arrived at the house of Floris Irakaninahazwa ordered further arrests in the vicinity, instead of coming to the rescue of the victim, finally released several hours after the multiple protests of the neighbors.

- Police agents arrested nine (9) persons on Gisiry Hill, Matana commune, Bururi province, on June 19, 2017. The police accused them of illegal possession of weapons. SOS-Torture Burundi notes that the police did not communicate which weapons were seized by the arrested persons, nor the names of the nine persons arrested.

- Imbonerakure militiamen beat Remouard Irakoze in Ruyigi commune and province (East of the country) on June 20, 2017. This man was returning from a hearing at the Ruyigi Intermediate Court where he responded to a summons from the judge. Witnesses report that he was arrested near the hospital of Ruyigi by the militia, who accused him of having cheated them before beating him to the point of bleeding at the head.

SOS-Torture Burundi notes that the chief of the quarter intervened, but ordered him to be taken to Ruyigi prosecution office instead of being treated for his injuries. Mr. Irakoze was put in the custody without explanation.

- The head of police in Rugombo commune, Cibitoke province (northwestern of the country), arrested a man with rwandan nationality residing on Mparambo I Hill on 21 June 2017. Witnesses reported that the man was boarded by the the police officer In his private vehicle. SOS-Torture Burundi notes that the Rugombo chief police refused to confirm the arrest, which raises fears of forced disappearance.

- Police agents arrested a man in the centre of Mugina commune, Cibitoke province, on 23 June 2017. Witnesses from the scene reported that they could not identify the " Man, who was violently tied up before being shipped to an unknown destination.

- Young Imbonerakure militiamen affiliated with the ruling CNDD FDD party organized a forced ransom against residents of Butaganzwa commune, Ruyigi province on June 17, 2017. Several witnesses reported that only households of not activists of Party CNDD FDD were targeted to pay each 110,000 Burundi francs. The Imbonerakure militiamen have imposed the payment of this money, at the risk of suffering their retaliation in case of refusal.

SOS-Torture Burundi notes that neither the administration nor the police have prevented this organized and imposed terror. It is a complicity that reinforces the Imbonerakure militiamen in their daily exactions.

3. Military judged for alleged involvement in attack

SOS-Torture Burundi is closely following the case of the soldiers accused of participating in the attack on Mukoni military camp in Muyinga province (north of the country) on January 24, 2017. After the attack, a first wave of arrests of at least thirteen (13) military personnel had been conducted by national intelligence services. (See Sos-Torture Burundi Report N ° 59: <http://sostortureburundi.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/SOS-Torture-Burundi-nums%CC%81ro-59-en-En.pdf>). Several of the apprehended soldiers, however, suffered severe torture by SNR agents, without the intervention of justice (see report N ° 60: <http://sostortureburundi.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/SOS-torture-Burundi-nums%CC%81ro-60-en-En.pdf>).

On June 19, 2017 seven (7) military personnel prosecuted in this case appeared at Muyinga Intermediate Court. SOS-Torture Burundi notes that the judges allowed the accused to call on defense witnesses, including an officer who publicly stated that one of the accused was at work at the time of the attack. SOS-Torture welcomes the progress of the judges of the Muyinga Intermediate Court in the search for the truth and hopes that the testimonies collected will be analyzed objectively in order to give priority to equality of arms in criminal matters between two parties and thus the prosecution will have the challenge of producing tangible and irrefutable evidence of the involvement of these soldiers in this attack.

Since the beginning of the crisis, many military and police officers, largely of the former Burundian Armed Forces (formerly FAB), have been subjected to arbitrary arrests, torture, forced disappearances and targeted assassinations. It is to be feared that the numerous arrests that occurred after this attack on Mukoni camp are linked to this crackdown.



SOS – Torture/Burundi

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

The SOS-Torture / Burundi campaign was initiated with the aim of informing national and international opinion on serious human rights violations under way in Burundi through monitoring reports, in particular on torture, arbitrary arrests , forced disappearances, sexual violence and summary executions. This initiative to inform on realities of the country followed the slaughter of a hundred people killed during the day of 11 and 12 December 2015 conducted by police agents and soldiers under the pretext of pursuing rebel groups which came to attacking military camps on the outskirts of the capital Bujumbura. The affected quarters are said to be challenging the third term of President Nkurunziza among others Musaga, Mutakura, Cibitoke, Nyakabiga, Jabe, the last two being located in the center of Bujumbura City Hall.

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