

SOS-TORTURE / BURUNDI REPORT NO. 73 PUBLISHED ON 6 MAY 2017

This SOS-Torture report covers the period from 29 April to 6 May 2017 concerning human rights violations in Burundi.

The report highlights an increase of targeted armed attacks and killings in several locations across the country.

At least six (6) people were killed during the above-mentioned period, most were victims of armed attacks not yet claimed by the perpetrators. During the same period, nine (9) persons were injured. Among the attacks listed, three were conducted by grenade.

The report also cites arbitrary arrests of two Rwandan nationals in Cibitoke province (north-western Rwanda). They have been abducted by the intelligence agents in Cibitoke which have not yet communicated their place of detention, SOS-Torture Burundi is apprehensive that they are the victims of the strained political relations between Burundi and Rwanda since the beginning of the Crisis in Burundi, following the announcement of the desire to run for a third term by Burundian President Pierre Nkurunziza.

1. Arbitrary arrests, kidnappings and forced disappearances continue

- The head of the National Intelligence Service (SNR) in Cibitoke province (north-west of the country) arrested Felix Nzarama and Damascene Nkundawayezu on Camakombe Hill in Mugina commune on 4 May 2017 in the evening. Witnesses reported that the SNR agents tied them up before embarking them for an unknown destination.

SOS-Torture Burundi notes that the two men are of Rwandan nationality, a bordering country in northern Burundi with the Cibitoke province, whose political relations have been strained since the beginning of the crisis in Burundi. Relatives say that MM. Nzarama and Nkundawayezu had come to Cibitoke to visit friends. The SNR, which has not communicated their place of detention, would try to accuse the two men of espionage on behalf of the Rwandan army.

SOS-Torture Burundi wishes to emphasize that the two Rwandan nationals are ordinary civilians and should not be victims of the strained relations between

Burundi and Rwanda. The SNR must make public the place of detention of these two men, as well as the charges against them and not mere suspicions.

2. Assassinations, summary executions and armed attacks

- Armed individuals attacked a bar in the Kamenge zone, Ntahangwa commune (north of Bujumbura) on 28 April 2017 in the evening. Two persons were injured during the attack, but the perpetrators have not been identified to date by the police.

- Armed individuals also attacked the home of a Burundian senator, Pascal Ntahonzigamiye, in the Rushubi zone, Isale commune, Bujumbura province on 28 April 2017 in the evening. During the attack, a police agent assigned to the senator's security was killed, and three others were injured. The police did not identify the perpetrators of the attack or the reasons behind. The senator, elected by the ruling party CNDD-FDD, was not touched.

- Unidentified individuals murdered James Habonimana nicknamed 'Mpongo' on Bwayi Hill, near Mugina Hill in Mugina commune, Cibitoke province (north-western) on April 30, 2017 in the evening. The victim was slaughtered by his killers. SOS-Torture Burundi also learned that the victim is a trader of 'ndagalas' (small fish from Lake Tanganyika).

James was also a militant of the FNL (National Front for the Liberation) opposition party of Agathon Rwaso, current deputy speaker of the National Assembly. The police arrested five youths suspected of murdering the man. The arrested are Imbonerakure militiamen, the youth league of the ruling party CNDD-FDD. Relatives fear that James was a victim of his political affiliation, although the police invoke the theft as mobile behind this assassination.



James Habonimana 'Mpongo' found murdered in Mugina

- Armed individuals attacked three households on Mugoma and Muyebe hills, Musigati and Rugazi communes in Bubanza province (western Burundi) on 1 May 2017 in the evening. In the course of these successive attacks, three persons were injured. One of the victims is Irénée Nibitanga living on Mugoma Hill. The police have not yet identified the perpetrators of the attacks.

- Individuals armed with rifles shot down Gilbert Ndayisaba in the Rushubi zone, Isale commune, and Bujumbura province on 2 May 2017 in the evening. Witnesses report that the killers, dressed in police uniforms, entered a bar where the victim was and shot him on the spot. Mr. Ndayisaba is a former employee of Isale commune. The police also did not identify the perpetrators of the attack, nor the motive behind the assassination. This is the second armed attack in the Rushubi zone during the week (the first case mentioned above in this report).



Mr. Gilbert Ndayisaba, shot dead by armed individuals in Rushubi

- The body of a murdered man was discovered on the second cross-section on the Mparambo II hill, Rugombo commune, Cibitoke province (northwest of the country) on May 4, 2017. The victim is Nyabenda but the police did not identify the perpetrators of the assassination. Nyabenda had wounds all over her body.

SOS-Torture Burundi notes that cases of murder in the western and north-western parts of the country (Bubanza and Cibitoke provinces) are increasing, without the police being able to identify and arrest the perpetrators.

- The body of another murdered man was found on the Nyarurambi sub-hill, Kigamba hill, and commune and Ruyigi province (East of the country) on May 4, 2017. The police did not identify the victim, or the circumstances of his assassination. The communal administration ordered the burial of the victim the same day, without the identification taking place.

- Armed individuals shot and killed Claude Bararufise in Mirango I quarter, Kamenge zone, Ntahangwa commune (north of Bujumbura) on 4 May 2017 in the evening. The victim worked as a beater at the bus station in Kamenge. The police have not yet identified the perpetrators of the attack, nor the mobiles. The same individuals also wounded a girl named Nadine Tumberayezu during the attack.



Claude Bararufise, defeated in Mirango in the Kamenge zone

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, particularly on based torture, Arbitrary arrest, forced disappearances, sexual violence and summary executions. This initiative to inform about the realities of the country followed the carnage of a hundred persons killed during the day of 11 December and that of 12 December 2015 by the police and military under the pretext of tracking rebels groups which came to attack military camps on the outskirts of the capital City. The affected quarters are said to be challenging the third term of President Nkurunziza which are Musaga, Mutakura, Cibitoke, Nyakabiga and Jabe, the last two being located in the center of Bujumbura.