

REPORT NO. 224 OF SOS-TORTURE/BURUNDI PUBLISHED ON MARCH 28, 2020

This SOS-Torture/Burundi report covers the period from 21 to 28 March 2020 concerning cases of human rights violations and abuses in Burundi.

At least three (3) people were murdered during the period. Two murders occurred in Bubanza province and one in Rumonge.

The report also mentions six (6) persons arrested during the period, including three (3) members of the CNL party. In addition to these arrests, two (2) others were beaten by members of the imbonerakure militia.

1. Violations of the right to life and physical integrity

- Unidentified individuals murdered a soldier whose body was found floating in Rusizi River at cross border IV on gahongore Hill, Bubanza commune and province (west of the country) on 21 March 2020. Witnesses report that the soldier's body bore several traces of injuries.

Sos-Torture/Burundi notes that the military and police authorities proceeded to the recovery of the body by preventing anyone from approaching. The body was then transported to the city of Bujumbura without its identity being known. Witnesses also report that the soldier did not identify because he is not based in the area.

- Unidentified individuals murdered Joseph Nyabenda (55 years) on Mitakataka Hill, gihanga commune, Bubanza province (west of the country) on the night of 21-22 March 2020. Relatives report that the victim received several blows of machetes in the throat. Mr. Nyabenda was guarding his tomato field at the time of his murder.

Sos-Torture/Burundi notes that the police in Gihanga announced the arrest of seven people, including four members of the imbonerakure militia, as part of their investigation.

- Police officers shot dead Onesphore Mukamarakiza on Gisenyi Hill, Muramvya zone, Burambi commune, Rumonge province (south-west of the country) on the night of 26

March 2020. Witnesses report that the police surrounded Mr. Mukamarakiza's house before entering and shooting the victim. They also report that the police accused him of illegal possession of firearms.

Sos-Torture/Burundi notes that the police also arrested three persons, including the wife of the victim, Mrs Thérèse Ndayikengurukiye and the other two, Marie Goreth Tuyisenge and Albert Nduwimana.

2. Violations of the right to liberty and physical security

- Members of the imbonerakure militia beat Emmanuel Hakizimana (42) on Murungurira Hill, ntega commune, Kirundo province (north of the country) on 21 March 2020. Witnesses report that the victim was assaulted on the orders of the communal leader of the ruling CNDD-FDD party named Jean-Marie Mugumyankiko who accused him of assault. The victim is a member of the opposition party CNL (National Congress for freedom).

Sos-Torture/Burundi notes the violence of the aggression and the impunity enjoyed by the members of the ruling party because none of the aggressors is under investigation.

- Sos-Torture/Burundi has also learned of the beatings of another CNL opposition party activist. This is Dieudonné Majambere (38 years) beaten by imbonerakure militiamen on Buringanire hill, Ntega Commune on March 22, 2020. Mr. Majambere is a victim of his refusal to join the ruling party according to his relatives.
- Police officers arrested Jérémie Nduwimana on Ciya Hill, Bubanza commune and province (west of the country) on 23 March 2020. Witnesses report that the arrest operation was conducted by the secretary of the ruling CNDD-FDD Party of the bubanza commune named Alexis Ntahomvukiye.

Sos-Torture/Burundi notes an arbitrary and illegal arrest, since the police acted on the orders of a member of the CNDD-FDD party. Mr. Nduwimana is an activist of the CNL party, which is said to have led to his arrest.

- Police officers also arrested Désiré Hatungimana on Murama Hill, Nyabihanga commune, Mwaro province (centre of the country) on 23 March 2020. Witnesses



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report that he was carrying out maintenance work at the CNL party in Nyabihanga (of which he is a member) at the time of his arrest.

Sos-Torture/Burundi notes an arbitrary arrest of Mr. Hatungimana.

- Police officers arrested Aaron Ndayishimiye on gisitye Hill, Nyabihanga commune, Mwaro province (centre of the country) on 24 March 2020. Relatives report that he was taken without reason after a search of his home that did not allow any seizure.

Sos-Torture Burundi notes an arbitrary arrest. The victim would also be a victim of his membership of the opposition party CNL.

SOS-Torture/Burundi was initiated with the aim of informing national and international opinion on serious human rights violations taking place in Burundi through monitoring reports on 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 Bujumbura.

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.