

REPORT N ° 199 OF SOS -TORTURE/BURUNDI PUBLISHED ON 5 OCTOBER 2019

This report of SOS-Torture/Burundi covers the period between 28 September and 5 October 2019 concerning cases of human rights violations and abuses in Burundi.

At least Six (6) persons were murdered, including two (2) in the town of Bujumbura. One of the victims, a senior official at the Ministry of culture, had been missing for five days. His body was found buried in the garden of his estate. The bodies of the remaining four (4) victims were recovered from Rusizi River.

The report also refers to five (5) cases of arbitrary arrest, including four young men from Mugamba commune. Members of imbonerakure militiamen also beat up people during a show of force by those members of the ruling CNDD-FDD party.

1. Violations of the right to life and physical integrity

- On 28 September 2019 unidentified individuals murdered four (4) people and their lifeless bodies were found in Rusizi River on cross section 6, Nyamitanga Hill, Buganda commune, Cibitoke province (northwest of the country). Testimony at the scene indicates that the victims were in military clothing.
- Unidentified individuals assassinated Déo Arakaza, whose body was discovered in Quarter VII of Ngagara zone, Ntahangwa commune (north of the city of Bujumbura) on 2 October 2019.

Sos-Torture/Burundi notes that the circumstances of the young man's death are unknown to date. Relatives report that the victim was also serving as a second division football referee.



Déo, a young man found dead in Ngagara zone

- Unidentified individuals murdered Mr. Jean Marie Vianney Rugerinyange, whose body was found buried in the garden of his compound in Kinanira IV District, Musaga Zone, Muha commune (south of the city of Bujumbura) on 4 October 2019. Relatives report that the victim, an official of the Ministry of Culture, had been missing since September 29, 2019. The National television footage shows Red Cross agents digging up the body, which was wrapped in a blue plastic tarp.

Sos-Torture/Burundi noted that the discovery of the body had been announced by the police, who said nothing about the circumstances of Mr. Rugerinyange's disappearance and assassination. Police have announced the arrest of the victim's domestic as the main suspect.



Mr. Rugerinyange, found murdered and buried on his property after he disappeared



The body of the victim dug up by Red Cross and police officers

2. Violations of the right to liberty and physical security

- On 29 September 2019 Members of imbonerakure militiamen arrested Gabriel Miburo on Sigu Hill, Nyagisozi zone, Busoni commune, Kirundo province (north of the country). Relatives report that he was about to take his injured child away following the explosion of a telephone battery when the militiamen arrived at his home. They accused Mr. Miburo of possession of a firearm.

Sos-Torture/Burundi notes an illegal arrest by the militias of the ruling party CNDD-FDD, as well as a search, also illegal, allegedly to search for firearms. Relatives also report that Mr. Miburo is a member of the opposition party CNL.

Sos-Torture/Burundi also notes the complicity of Busoni police agents who put the victim in jail without a legal reason.

- On September 29, 2019 members of imbonerakure militiamen beat five (5) persons in the centre of Rugombo commune, Cibitoke province (northwest of the country). Witnesses report that the militiamen were demonstrating these paramilitary capabilities. The victims were part of the public.

Sos-Torture/Burundi notes violences inflicted on these people who had to be hospitalized. The police have not yet arrested any of the alleged perpetrators. It is also worth noting the threatening character of the members of the imbonerakure militiamen through their demonstration of force.



One of the victims beaten in Rugombo

- On 3 October 2019 members of the police arrested Nestor Nkengurutse, Fabrice Ninahaza, Claude and Olivier in Muramba zone, Mugamba commune, Bururi province (south of the country) . Relatives report that the first two are students from the Basic School in Ruko and the other two were arrested while they were having a drink. The four young men were appointed by a member of the imbonerakure militiamen who allegedly told the police agents that they possessed weapons.

Sos-Torture/Burundi notes arbitrary arrests based on false accusations by a member of the ruling party CNDD-FDD. Since the beginning of the crisis in 2015, hundreds of young people from Mugamba commune have been victims of arbitrary arrests, torture, enforced disappearances and summary executions following their real or supposed participation in the demonstrations against the third term of President Pierre Nkurunziza.



SOS-Torture/Burundi was initiated with the aim of informing national and international opinion on serious human rights violations in Burundi through monitoring reports on torture, arbitrary arrests, enforced disappearances, sexual violence and summary executions.

This initiative to inform on 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 areas are said to be the protestors 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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