

SOS-TORTURE/BURUNDI REPORT No. 141 ISSUED AUGUST 25, 2018

This SOS-Torture/Burundi report covers the period between 18 and 25 August 2018 on cases of human rights violations and abuses in Burundi.

At least five (5) persons were murdered in different locations during the period. Among the victims are four (4) men and a young woman. This last victim was first raped and then strangled in Bubanza. Two (2) persons were also injured during a grenade attack in Makamba.

The report also notes twenty-six (26) cases of arbitrary arrests. Among those arrested are ten (10) members of UPD-Zigamibanga opposition party, arrested by agents of National Intelligence Service.

1. Violations of the right to life and to physical integrity

- Individuals murdered Leonidas Ndayizeye at his home on Rubindi Hill, Nyanza Lac commune, Makamba province, southern Burundi on August 11, 2018. Relatives report that the victim was slaughtered and later moved to be burned.

Sos-Torture/Burundi notes that Nyanza Lac police arrested the next day the victim's brother, Alex Bahati and his wife Chantal as the main suspects ; having been surprised with the bloody sheet that would have been used to transport the victim. Relatives report, however, their fear of the slowness of the file. The main suspects are still in custody, and have not been brought before the judge so far.

- Unidentified individuals attacked Léonce Ngabo and Ernest Kenguza by grenade on Nyakazi hill, Kibago commune, Makamba province (south of the country) on 17 August 2018 in the evening. Relatives report that the two targeted victims were injured, and the attack occurred a hundred meters from their homes.

Sos-Torture/Burundi notes that Kibago police have not identified any suspects to date.

- One (or more) individual (s) murdered Wilfried Nibigira (66 years) at his home in Musigati commune, Bubanza province (western part of the country) on 19 August 2018 in the evening. Witnesses report that the victim was strangled, her body kneeling in front of her bed.

Sos-Torture/Burundi notes that the police have announced the arrest of the victim's wife, Cécile Uwimbabazi ; but did not specify his possible involvement in the assassination of Mr. Nibigira.

- Unidentified individuals murdered Gilbert Bigirimana, 18, whose body was found at his home on Mwimbiro Hill, Nyanza Lac Commune, Makamba Province, southern Burundi, on August 20, 2018. Witnesses report that the victim was tied up and received several fatal blows to the head, and his body was subsequently suspended.

Sos-Torture/Burundi notes that police in Nyanza Lac have announced the arrest of four suspects among the local cow-keepers. Mr. Bigirimana was also a cow keeper.

- On August 20, 2018 in the evening unidentified, individuals murdered Christophe Niyonkuru on Munyika Hill II, Rugombo commune, Cibitoke province (north-west of the country). Witnesses report that the victim was beaten several times with machetes.

Sos-Torture/Burundi notes that Rugombo police have arrested three (3) suspects.

- One (or more) individual (s) murdered Adelphine Izere 16 years whose body was found in Masaka neighborhood, in the center of Bubanza commune and province (west of the country) on 21 August 2018. Relatives report that the victim was sexually assaulted and strangled.

Sos-Torture/Burundi notes that Bubanza police have announced the arrest of five suspects (1 man, 2 boys and 2 girls). The girl is from Muramba hill, Bubanza commune.

2. Violations of the right to liberty and physical security

- Sos-Torture/Burundi learned of the appearance of Mr. Bernard Mpubusa (70 years) at Mukaza Intermediate Court (Bujumbura City) on August 22, 2018, in a very critical state of health. Mr. Mpubusa is a retiree from the Central Bank.

Police agents arrested Mr. Mpubusa and six (6) persons whom he employed on 6 August 2018 in Buringa, Gihanga Commune, Bubanza Province, in the western part of the country, where he went to supervise the rearing of his farm. He is accused of undermining state security and participating in armed gangs. The prosecution accuses him of sending rebel groups to his property where he raises his farm. SOS-Torture/Burundi notes the family's concern over the torture of Mr. Mpubusa's employees in the National Intelligence Service in an attempt to extort confessions.

Sos-Torture / Burundi also notes Bernard Mpubusa's very critical state of health before and during the court hearing. Mr. Mpubusa suffers from several chronic diseases. Witnesses report that he was taken to the hospital on August 23, 2018, but the director of Mpimba Prison, Arthemon Nzitabakunze, made two attempts to remove him from the hospital against the advice of his doctor.

Sos-Torture/Burundi notes that doctors refused to sign the hospital discharge ticket for a patient in critical condition.

- Young members of the imbonerakure militiamen assaulted and tortured Joseph Nzomvita on Rugeregere hill, Rugombo commune, Cibitoke province (north-west of the country) on 22 August 2018 in the evening. Relatives report that the victim was intercepted by a group of militiamen on patrol as he returned from his rice field. These militiamen beat Mr. Nzomvita with clubs until the victim lost consciousness.

Sos-Torture/Burundi notes that the police have not apprehended any suspects to date. The local imbonerakure militiamen are known to local authorities and the police. This violent aggression once again demonstrates the impunity enjoyed by the militia of the ruling party despite numerous cases of human rights violations committed and reported to the police and judicial authorities.



SOS – Torture/Burundi

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

- Members of the Imbonerakure militia arrested Gabriel Ndikumana, Jean Paul Mpanzwenayo, Phaniel Ndayongeje and Nsanzurwimo on Rusenda hill, Bukinanyana commune, Cibitoke province (north-west of the country) on 22 August 2018. Relatives report that militiamen are accusing the four people for collecting food for rebels.

Sos-Torture / Burundi notes that Bukinanyana police officers detained the four men in jail without a warrant or proof of allegations fabricated by members of the ruling party's militia. Relatives also report that these detainees are militant members of the opposition FNL party of the faithful of Agathon Rwasa. They would be victims of their refusal to join the ruling party CNDD-FDD.

- Police agents arrested eleven (11) people in the center of Bubanza province (west of the country) on August 24, 2018. Witnesses report that these people were arrested after a search in Kidahwe neighborhood of Bubanza town.

Sos-Torture/Burundi notes that the police had to release six (6) persons and maintain five (5) others without explanation of their detention.

- National Intelligence Service agents arrested ten (10) people in the center of Makamba commune and province (south of the country) on August 23, 2018. Those arrested are all members of UPD-Zigamibanga opposition party (Union for Peace and Development). SNR agents accuse them of rebellion.

SOS-Torture/Burundi notes the transfer of six (6) among these detainees to the SNR cells in Bujumbura on 24 August 2018. Relatives report that these opposition members are victims of a trap and their political affiliation.

Several leaders of UPD party live in exile since the beginning of the crisis in 2015, including the president of this party. His predecessor, Zedi Feruzi, was shot dead by agents of API (Police Unit in charge of the protection of the highest authorities) on May 23, 2015. Another cadre of the UPD-Zigamibanga party was abducted by agents of the national intelligence service on 12 September 2017 in Bujumbura. Mr Léopold Habarugira has been missing since his abduction (see Sos-Torture Burundi report N ° 92 : <http://sostortureburundi.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/SOS-Torture-Burundi-nums%CC%81ro-92-in-En.pdf>).

3. A magistrate victim of abusive and arbitrary detention

Sos-Torture/Burundi learned of the decision of the Bururi Court of Appeal to sentence Claver Ndikumasabo to one month's imprisonment and a fine of 100 thousand Burundian francs in a judgment delivered on 23 August 2018. Mr. Ndikumasabo was arrested on 13 August 2018 following a brawl with the representative of the imbonerakure militiamen of Bururi province (South of the country). Mr. Ndikumasabo is a magistrate at the Bururi Intermediate Court.



Mr Claver Ndikumasabo (in green) and his lawyers during his appearance at the Bururi Court of Appeal

SOS-Torture/Burundi was initiated with the aim of informing national and international opinion about serious human rights violations under way in Burundi through monitoring



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reports, particularly on torture, arbitrary arrests, enforced disappearances, sexual violence and summary executions.

This initiative to inform about the realities of the country followed the slaughter of a hundred people killed during the day of 11 and 12 December, 2015 by the police and military on the pretext of pursuing rebels who came to attack military camps on the outskirts of the capital city.

The affected zones are said to be contesting President Nkurunziza's third term namely Musaga, Mutakura, Cibitoke, Nyakabiga, Jabe, the last two being located in the center of the Bujumbura City Council.

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