**REPORT No. 171 SOS-Torture / BURUNDI PUBLISHED ON March 23, 2019**

The report of SOS-Torture/Burundi covers the period from 16 to 23 March 2019 regarding cases of violations and abuses of human rights in Burundi.

Almost six (6) people were murdered during the period and in different localities. Among the victims, two (2) police officers shot at Mutimbuzi. Two (2) other unidentified victims were executed and their bodies without lives thrown into the river Kaburantwa in Cibitoke. A man was tortured before being executed and part of his limbs amputated; her decomposing body was found in Bubanza.

The report also mentions arbitrary arrests: almost seven (7) cases are listed. All the victims were activists of opposition parties CNL (5 cases) and FRODEBU (2 cases).

1. **Violations of the right to life and physical integrity**
* Unidentified gunmen assassinated two (2) police agents: Jean Simbagoye APC and APC Leopold Nshimirimana the Mutara hill, Maramvya zone, Mutimbuzi commune, Bujumbura province on March 18, 2019 in the evening. Witnesses report that both agents are ambushed as they intervened to free a kidnapped victim.

SOS-Torture/Burundi noted that Mutimbuzi police announced the arrest of five (5) persons suspected of being accomplices of the armed group who murdered the two (2) police agents.

* A group of individuals murdered Privat Nshimirimana in Runanira quarter, Kirundo commune and province (north) on March 18, 2019 in the evening. Relatives reported that the victim, a teacher, responded to a call from a colleague named Bonito Bayubahe (35 years). He was with two other persons. Nshimirimana was beaten and severely injured before being knocked out a bottle of blow to the head by Bonito Bayubahe.

SOS-Torture/Burundi noted that Kirundo police announced the arrest of the accused and his two accomplices. Nshimirimana succumbed to his injuries at the hospital the same night of the attack.

* Unidentified individuals murdered Janvier Nahimana and Germain Ntahimpera and their bodies were found floating in Kaburantwa River on crossroad 6, Buganda commune, Cibitoke province (northwest of the country) on 20 March 2019. Witnesses report that the victims were tied up, evidence of an execution and an attempt to erase all traces by dropping the bodies into the river.

Sos-Torture/Burundi notes that Buganda communal administrator ordered the immediate burial of the bodies, without prior investigation to determine the circumstances of the murder of these people and to identify their executioners. Relatives report that the victims had been missing for five (5) days.

* Unidentified individuals attacked a household on Gasenyi Hill, Buganda commune, Cibitoke province (north-western part of the country) with a grenade on the evening of 20 March 2019. Witnesses report that a person has been seriously injured.

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



**The grenade victim in Buganda commune**

* Unidentified individuals murdered Bucumi whose body was discovered on Kagirigiri hill, Bubanza commune and province (western part of the country) on 19 March 2019. Witnesses report that the victim was tortured and parts of his body mutilated and amputated. His wrists and feet were not found.

SOS-Torture/Burundi noted that the victim had been missing for a week. The administrative authorities ordered as usual burial of the body, without prior investigation. Police did not identify any suspects

1. **Violations of the right to liberty and physical security**
* Members of the militiamen Imbonerakure arrested Eric Niyorugira at his home on Kagazi hill, Rugombo commune, Cibitoke province (north-west) on March 17, 2019 in the evening. Another militiamen group arrested Pacific Niyorugira, Erastus Bizimana and Japheth Irankunda on Gisaba hill Murwi commune, Cibitoke province. All four (4) young men victims of arbitrary arrests are activists of the opposition party CNL (National Congress for Liberty) led by MP Agathon Rwasa. Relatives report that they have no news of Eric Niyorugira since his abduction by militias: it is found in all official detention cells in Rugombo.

SOS-Torture/Burundi note of the illegal and arbitrary arrests and the risk of forced disappearance of one of the victims. The three (3) other CNL activists were put in jail without a warrant and in violation of the law and procedure. Since the approval of the new party CNL, which replaces the FNL of MP Rwasa, known members of this party are constantly arrested, manhandled and threatened by militiamen of the ruling CNDD-FDD.

* Police officers arrested two (2) activists of the opposition party FRODEBU: Julias Nkurikiye was arrested on the hill and Cunamwe Buregeya Omar was arrested on Mahembe hill area Gitaba, Makamba province and municipality (south) March 19, 2019 in the evening. Relatives reported no warrant has justified the arrests.

SOS-Torture / Burundi note of arbitrary arrests in connection with the political affiliation of the victims. The municipal administration Makamba ordered to FRODEBU members to cease all activity on behalf of that party. These detentions constitute violations of rights and freedoms of everyone to choose their political affiliation without threats and reprisals.

* Prosecutors in Kirundo province (north) decided to transfer to Ngozi prison three (3) students charged with "doodle" of the picture of President Pierre Nkurunziza found in textbooks. The affected students are all girls: Belyse Irankunda (15 years), Micheline Ciza (17 years) and Consolate Bashirahishize. They had been arrested in the course at the elementary school Akamuri, Kirundo commune and province (north) March 12, 2019 with four other students (see report Sos-Torture Burundi No. 170:<http://sostortureburundi.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/SOS-_Torture_Burundi_numero_170.docx>).

SOS-Torture/Burundi again noted a violation of the law, "the scrawl of the president picture" is not a scheduled offense and punishable under Burundian criminal law is strictly interpreted. Girls now are languishing in the prison for minors Ngozi, while their place is on the school bench. In their case, if there fault the application of school rules is justified and legal.

* A police agent tried to kill Damien Nzambimana on Kinoso hill Kabuye zone Makamba commune, Makamba province (south of the country) March 21, 2019 in the evening. Witnesses report that the agent nicknamed Nyabenda Mukoca disputed with a man named Willy that the police agent accused of practicing witchcraft. Witnesses also report that the agent was later fired and a bullet seriously wounded Mr. Nzambimana in the stomach.

SOS-Torture/Burundi notes that the police have not yet announced the arrest of the agent, who used his weapon against an unarmed civilian. SOS-Torture/Burundi also notes a new episode of violence of police agents on those accused of practicing witchcraft.

* Police agents and imbonerakure militiamen attempted to arrest Dominique Nijimbere, a CNL militant, at his home on Murambi Hill, Nyarusange commune, Gitega province (central part of the country) on 21 March 2019. Witnesses report that the victim narrowly escaped but rather highlight a manhunt by CNL party activists in this commune. Witnesses also report that two (2) of these activists have already fled the town and a list of people to be arrested has already been drawn up.

Sos-Torture/Burundi notes arrests on grounds of political affiliation and also notes the climate of intolerance promoted by the ruling CNDD-FDD party.

* Police agent arrested Bosco Nyandwi on Murenge Hill, Rusabagi area, Burambi commune, Rumonge province (southwest of the country) on 22 March 2019. He is the provincial youth representative of the new CNL party of Deputy Agathon Rwasa.

Sos-Torture/Burundi notes an arbitrary arrest in connection with the victim's political beliefs. Relatives report that the order to arrest him comes from the provincial secretary of the ruling CNDD-FDD party, Diomède Niyongabo.

1. **Forced contributions continue despite the impoverishment of the population**

Sos-Torture/Burundi notes a steady increase in the number of cases of forced contributions required from the population. Witnesses report that shop owners are forced to pay five thousand (5000) francs for the construction of the Rumonge zone office (southwest of the country). Members of the imbonerakure militia who threaten to retaliate against anyone who does not comply with this requirement collect these contributions.

Sos-Torture/Burundi also learned that the governor of Rumonge province plans to collect construction materials from the population. Witnesses report that teachers are the first to be targeted by this collection: they will have to give one bag of cement for every two teachers, or 12500 francs (cost of the bag). Bicycle carriers will have to put four (4) to buy a bag of cement and motorcycle carriers will have to put two (2) to pay for the bag.

Sos-Torture/Burundi notes incessant pressure from local authorities on the population to extort money, which is not monitored to determine its end use. In addition to these constructions, residents must also continue to pay money for the 2020 elections.

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

This initiative to inform about the country's realities followed the carnage of around 100 people killed on 11 December and 12 December 2015 by police and military officers under the pretext of pursuing rebels who had just attacked military camps on the outskirts of the capital.

The affected zones are said protesters third term of President Nkurunziza namely Musaga Mutakura, Cibitoke Nyakabiga, Jabe, the last two being located in the center of Bujumbura.