

SOS-TORTURE/BURUNDI REPORT No. 132 PUBLISHED ON 23 JUNE 2018

This SOS-Torture/Burundi report covers the period between 16 and 23 June 2018 concerning cases of human rights violations in Burundi.

At least two (2) persons were murdered during the period in different locations, and an attempt assassination with machetes is reported. All the victims murdered and seriously injured during the attempt assassination are women.

This report also highlight several cases of torture involving members of the imbonerakure militiamen in Rutana, Ruyigi and Makamba provinces. Among the victims there is a man beaten naked in front of his children, and tortured under a water tap; which caused his hospitalization.

The report talks about the release on appeal of a CNDD-FDD party executive after two (2) months in prison, he was sentenced to three (3) years in prison for threatening internal security, death threats and hateful speeches. This is a justice miscarriage on Bujumbura Court of Appeal side that decided to release him.

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

- Unidentified individuals murdered Caritas Girumumpaye on Taba hill, Nyabikere commune, Karusi province (center of the country) in the evening on June 16, 2018. Relatives report that the victim was shot with axes.

Sos-Torture/Burundi notes that Nyabikere police announced the arrest of suspects, but did not disclose their identities and the number of apprehended persons.

- An individual named Appolinaire Niyorugira attempted to murder Beoline Niyizomburana (20 years old) on Nyamiyaga Hill, Muriza zone, Butaganzwa commune, Ruyigi province (East of the country) on June 18, 2018. Relatives report that the victim was attacked by machetes.

SOS-Torture/Burundi notes that the police have announced the arrest of the alleged aggressor.



The victim received several machete shots alongside the body

- Individuals murdered Ms. Kankuyo (60) on Higiro Hill, Busoni Commune, Kirundo Province (North) on June 19, 2018 in the evening. Relatives report that the victim was killed at home with a grenade thrown through the window of his house.

SOS-Torture/Burundi notes that the Busoni police have announced the arrest of two suspects: the son-in-law of the victim named Alexis and his neighbor named Athanase.

2. Violations of the right to liberty and physical security

- A group of young members of imbonerakure militiamen tortured Elysé Niyokwizera in Bugiga, Bukemba commune, Rutana province (south-east of the country) on June 8, 2018. He is a finalist student at Bugiga communal high school. Witnesses report that the victim received 50 lashes, imbonerakure militia accused him of having impregnated a classmate.

Sos-Torture/Burundi notes violent shots inflicted by members of imbonerakure militiamen on a young student. Bukemba police have failed to respond to this assault, and the alleged attackers remain free from their

movement. Elysee Niyokwizera was forced to flee to Tanzania (neighboring country) and give up his studies.

- A group of young members of Imbonerakure militiamen tortured Macumi (50 years) on Kibinzi hill, Rutana commune and province (south-east of the country) on June 10, 2018. Witnesses report that the militia have left the victim dying.

Sos-Torture/Burundi notes brutal beatings on Mr. Macumi, who had to be hospitalized. The police didn't open any investigation to identify the perpetrators of the attack and bring them to justice. Many people are regularly targeted by attacks and abuses of imbonerakure militiamen, who enjoy impunity.

- Members of imbonerakure militiamen arrested Zacharie Shweburi on Kigamba hill, Gisuru commune, Ruyigi province (East of the country) on June 15, 2018. Witnesses report that this man was in his rice field at the time of his arrest by militiamen, who accused him of not living in the locality. Mr. Shweburi was taken to a police station in Kigamba where he was beaten, despite the intervention on his favor by local government officials who confirm that he resides in Gisuru commune.

Sos-Torture/Burundi notes an illegal arrest by imbonerakure militiamen, as well as the complicity of police agents who witnessed the caning. Relatives report that the same police agents transferred Mr. Shweburi to Gisuru commune police cell. The victim was released after six (6) days, and after filing a complaint with Ruyigi Prosecution service for violations of his rights and physical integrity. None of the aggressors of the victim have, however, been prosecuted to date.

- A group of imbonerakure militiamen tortured Peressi Ndayishimiye (60 years) on Murambi hill, Makamba commune and province (south of the country) on June 16, 2018 in the evening. Relatives report that these militiamen entered into her house during night, pulled the victim from her bed and beat her naked with sticks in front of her children. Mr. Ndayishimiye was also dragged to a water tap at the Murambi Basic School where he suffered further torture underwater.

Sos-Torture/Burundi notes again violent abuses committed by members imbonerakure militiamen. The police did not investigate on the case, as the victim and relatives identified one of the militiamen leading the group: a certain Jean Nibimpa who is the leader of imbonerakure militiamen on Murambi Hill. Mr. Ndayishimiye had to be hospitalized due to his very critical state of health related to torture.

3. The Human rights defender Germain Rukuki forced to leave the hospital

SOS-Torture/Burundi learned that police agents forcibly removed Germain Rukuki the human rights activist from Ngozi hospital in the north of the country on June 18, 2018. He was then taken back to Ngozi Prison. Mr. Rukuki had just undergone surgery intervention on his leg.

SOS-Torture/Burundi notes a continued persecution of the human rights activist arrested on July 13, 2017, and who has already been sentenced to a heavy punishment of 32 years in prison (see **Sos-Torture Burundi report No. 124**). : <http://sostortureburundi.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/SOS-Torture-Burundi-num%C3%A9ro-124-in-Fr.pdf>). The treatment inflicted on Mr. Rukuki does not allow him to receive appropriate medical care following this surgery.



Germain Rukuki the Human Rights Defender unlawfully incarcerated

4. Burundian justice grants freedom to a politician convicted for hate speech

Sos-Torture/Burundi learned about the release of Mr. Melchiade Nzopfabushe on June 20, 2018. This is the ruling party CNDD-FDD Official who was arrested on April 29, 2018, then tried the next morning and sentenced the same day to three (3) years imprisonment for attempt to internal security, death threats and hateful speeches (cf report Sos-Torture Burundi N ° 125: <http://sostortureburundi.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/SOS-Torture-Burundi-num%C3%A9ro-125-en-Fr.pdf>).

Mr. Nzopfabushe threatened to death opponents of the Constitution revision, while addressing the population on Migera Hill, Kabezi commune, Bujumbura province on April 15, 2018. Mr. Nzopfabushe explicitly stated that the opponents would be thrown into Lake Tanganyika to feed fishes. Sos-Torture/Burundi had already noted at this time the softness of the sentence (3 years in prison) in view of serious charges against this ruling party official.

This cadre of the ruling party was released by a judgment of the Bujumbura Court of Appeal. This favorable treatment by Burundian justice to members of the CNDD-FDD ruling party confirms the lack of independence and impartiality of the Burundian judicial system, moreover, the unusual speed with which this judicial procedure has led to fears influential cadres of the ruling party to free Mr Nzopfabushe. Sos-Torture/Burundi notes that after the condemnation of the latter, messages of support for Mr. Nzopfabushe had been broadcast by predicting his release after the holding of the referendum of May 17, 2018.



Mr. Nzopfabarushe at his trial on April 30, 2018 who sentenced him to 3 years in prison

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

This initiative to inform about the realities of the country followed a slaughter of a hundred people killed during the day of December 11 and 12, 2015 by the police and military on the pretext of pursuing rebel groups that came to attack military camps on the outskirts of the Capital City.

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