

SOS-TORTURE/BURUNDI REPORT NO. 280 PUBLISHED ON 24 APRIL 2021

This report of SOS-Torture/Burundi covers the period from 17 to 24 April 2021 regarding cases of human rights violations in Burundi.

At least four (4) persons were murdered and two (2) others were seriously injured during the period in different localities of the country.

1. Violations of the right to life

- On the night of Friday to Saturday 24 April 2021 at around 1 a.m., criminals not yet identified murdered with machetes a married couple, Melchiade Bihomvore (70) and Véronique Munanage (64), at their home on the Nyagutoha hill in the Rusengo area of the commune and province of Ruyigi (eastern Burundi).

According to sources on the spot, the killers first threw a grenade that exploded to dissuade any intervention by neighbours and then broke down the doors before killing the two people inside the house with machetes.

The same sources specify that the husband died immediately while his wife died in Rema hospital in the provincial town at around 3 a.m. on Saturday morning and that the identity of the killers and the motives for this double murder are not yet known.

SOS-Torture/Burundi deplors the cases of murder that are intensifying throughout the country in the complete silence of the country's authorities at a time when these same authorities are constantly repeating that "peace and security reign throughout the national territory".

- On the afternoon of Sunday, April 18th, 2021, on Bitezi hill, Matana commune, Bururi province (southern Burundi), individuals who have not yet been identified killed a young 14-year-old boy named Thierry, from the commune of Nyabihanga, in the province of Mwaro (central Burundi).

According to witnesses who discovered his body, the victim, a goat herder, was stabbed in the neck and his body was then thrown into the valley at the foot of Bitezi hill. The same sources specify that perpetrators also stole 4 of the goats that this young child was guarding.

SOS-Torture/Burundi denounces the incessant violations of the right to life that are committed under the complacent eye of the administrative and police authorities.

- On the morning of Thursday, April 22th, 2021, around 3:00 p.m., Eliezer Nahimana, alias Chombo (76 years), died in the cells of Buganda communal police station in Cibitoke province (northwestern Burundi)

Sources on the spot reveal that this septuagenarian died as a result of bodily injuries inflicted on him at around 10 a.m. on transversal road 3 in Gasenyi by a group of Imbonerakure at the instigation of Buganda communal administrator, Pamphile Hakizimana, on the occasion of a dispute by the victim about a rainwater drainage canal that this administrator wanted to have laid out in his plot.

2. Violations of the right to physical integrity

- On Saturday, April 17, 2021, two members of the National Council for Freedom (CNL), Hilaire Niyongere and Lionel Habonimana, were severely beaten by a group of Imbonerakure on Nkurye hill, Giharo zone and commune, in the southeastern province of Rutana.

According to local sources, Athanase Bigirimana, a member of Imbonerakure youth league and Director of the Giharo communal high school, arrested two CNL activists and took them to a bush in the locality where three other Imbonerakure named John, Napoléon and Anaclet were waiting to administer several blows with sticks, particularly to their feet.

The same sources specify that the two victims are admitted to the health center of Giharo for health care.

SOS-Torture/Burundi deplores the violence and political intolerance of members of CNDD-FDD party against activists of other opposition political parties, which are committed regularly under the complicit and encouraging eye of the administrative and police authorities

SOS-Torture/Burundi was initiated with the objective of informing national and international opinion on the serious human rights violations taking place in Burundi through monitoring reports, particularly 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 December 11 and December 12, 2015 by police and military under the pretext of pursuing rebels who had just attacked military camps located on the outskirts of the capital.

The affected areas 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 Hall.