

## **RAPPORT N° 281 DE SOS-TORTURE/BURUNDI PUBLIE LE 1<sup>st</sup> MAI 2021**

This report of SOS-Torture/Burundi covers the period from April 24<sup>th</sup> to May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021 regarding cases of human rights violations in Burundi.

At least four (4) persons were murdered and one (1) was reported missing after leaving prison on the first day of the implementation of the decree granting presidential pardon to certain prisoners.

### **1. Violations of the right to life**

- In the afternoon of Tuesday, April 27<sup>th</sup>, 2021, a lifeless body in a state of decomposition of a pastor of Beninese origin known as Franck Nyandaka, on an evangelistic mission in Burundi since 2019, was discovered by fishermen floating on the waters at the edge of Rusizi River at the level of crossroad 4 of Nyamitanga hill, Ndava zone, Buganda commune, in Cibitoke province (northwestern Burundi).

Witnesses reveal that this evangelist pastor had gone to South Africa and the Central African Republic with his wife and two children for an evangelization mission and that on Saturday, April 24<sup>th</sup>, 2021, upon returning to Burundi, he wanted to infiltrate Burundi with his family from the Democratic Republic of Congo across Rusizi River. According to the same sources, he resorted to the Imbonerakure smugglers of Nyamitanga hill who first brought his wife, a Burundian, and his children across the river and accompanied them to take a bus to Bujumbura. Afterwards, the same Imbonerakure returned to take the pastor, but instead of taking him across, they allegedly slit his throat and threw his body into the river, after having stripped him of his money and luggage.

SOS-Torture/Burundi denounces once again the crimes committed by the Imbonerakure with impunity because of their support and complicity with the administrative and police authorities.

- On the night of Wednesday, April 28<sup>th</sup>, 2021, the lifeless body of a small-scale livestock trader known as Phénias Busimbo was found hanging on a rope inside his home in Tonganya sub-hill in the centre of Bubanza province (northwestern Burundi).

Sources on the spot indicate that marital and neighborhood conflicts were at the origin of this murder.

SOS-Torture/Burundi has learned that no investigation has been conducted to determine the circumstances and responsibilities of this murder.

- A lifeless body of a man known as Jean Marie Nkuzimana (35 years), a farmer and community leader, was found on Thursday, April 29<sup>th</sup>, 2021, on Nyagisozi hill, Gatabo zone, Kiganda commune, Muramvya province (central Burundi).

According to witnesses, the victim was stabbed in the temples on his way back to his home located on the same hill.

- On the morning of Friday, April 29<sup>th</sup>, 2021, the bound lifeless body of Pascal Bucumi, a teacher at Mivo Fondamental School, was discovered about one kilometer from his home in Gisagara district, Ngozi commune and province.

Sources on the spot indicate that the victim was called on the phone around 10:00 p.m., and when she went out to contact the person who had called her, she did not return. The same source said that the victim was strangled as a shoelace was near her body when she was found.

## **2. Cases of enforced disappearance**

- Since Monday, April 26<sup>th</sup>, 2021, at 1:00 p.m., one of the beneficiaries of the presidential pardon of last March, which came into effect that very day, Alexis Nsabimana, a member of the National Congress for Freedom (CNL), has been missing since his release from the central prison of Mpimba.

According to sources from his biological family, Alexis Nsabimana, an engineer by training and a native of Kinama sub-hill, Nyamaboko hill, Kiyenzi zone, Kanyosha commune, Bujumbura province (west of Burundi) had received a phone call around noon from one of his friends who planned to go and welcome him as soon as he was released from prison, but shortly after 1:00 p.m., both phone lines were switched off and the victim has not been found to this day.

SOS-Torture/Burundi deplores a disturbing contradiction of the country's authorities, in this case the President of the Republic, Evariste Ndayishimiye, between the desire to improve prison conditions for prisoners, especially in terms of



decongesting the prison population, and a willingness to maintain the status quo characterized by a series of human rights violations, especially against people wrongly or rightly accused of not supporting the CNDD-FDD regime in power.

SOS-Torture/Burundi was initiated with the objective of informing national and international opinion on 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<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>, 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 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 Hall.