

## **REPORT N° 254 OF SOS-TORTURE/BURUNDI PUBLISHED ON 24 OCTOBER 2020**

This SOS-Torture report covers the period from 17 to 24 October 2020 regarding cases of human rights violations in Burundi.

At least seven (7) persons including six (6) bodies found floating on Rusizi river were murdered during the period in different localities of the country and one (1) person seriously injured because of his ethnicity.

This report also deplores two (2) cases of arbitrary and politically motivated arrests of opposition party activists.

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

- Six (06) lifeless decomposing bodies of unidentified men were recovered on Saturday, October 17, 2020 floating on Rusizi river at the level of cross-road 6 of the Ndava hill and zone of Buganda commune in Cibitoke province.

According to sources on the spot, residents living along Rusizi river reveal that they saw at least sixteen (16) lifeless bodies from the beginning of October on cross-road 6, 9 and 10 at the foot of Rusiga and Kaburantwa hills, Cibitoke zone, Rugombo commune and at the foot of Ndava hill on cross-roads 4, 5 and 6 in Buganda commune.

The same sources report that people are taken alive during the night by vehicles of the Burundian National Intelligence Service (SNR) from Bujumbura before being killed and thrown into the Rusizi river.

SOS Torture Burundi regrets that the governor of Cibitoke province, OPC1 Carême Bizozza, gave the order to bury the bodies each time they were discovered, on the pretext that these decomposing bodies could contaminate the inhabitants near the river. This suggests that these people are being killed by state services and that they rush to bury them to cover up the perpetrators of these despicable crimes.

- On Muse sub-hill of Nyarubano hill in Vugizo commune of Makamba province, a lifeless body of a young man named Nijimbere Emmanuel (27 years), son of Kamucape Amos and Niyonkuru Eugénie, was found hanging on a rope in his residence by a friend who had come to visit him.

According to witnesses at the scene, the victim committed suicide and his body was evacuated to the morgue of the Gikaragata health centre.

### 2. Violation of the right to physical security

- On the night of Tuesday, October 20, 2020, around 8:00 p.m., in the Gishubi Commune, Gitega province, two Imbonerakure co-owners of a bar in the square called "Ryimare na Ndiyo" severely beat Fabrice Manariyo alias Rumanda and left him for dead.

According to a source on the spot, Fabrice Manariyo had come to share a drink with his friends in this bar and, as he was looking for the money in his pocket to pay the bill, he was attacked by these Imbonerakure who accused him of wanting to go home without paying the bill. The same source stated that the victim was not violently beaten because of the late payment, but because she was of Tutsi ethnic group, given the divisionist words they uttered while beating her: "We will correct you to set an example for other Tutsis".

SOS Torture Burundi has learned that Fabrice Manariyo is currently in critical condition and undergoing intensive care at Gishubi dispensary and that the perpetrators of intentional bodily harm have not been apprehended in order to answer for their criminal act.

### 3. Arbitrary arrests

- On the afternoon of Sunday, October 18, 2020 at approximately 1:00 p.m., an inhabitant of Gisagazuba sub-hill, Maramvya zone, Burambi commune in Rumonge province, who is known as Dieudonné Mukamarakiza nicknamed Mapengu, was arbitrarily arrested by Imbonerakure and police officers on a plan of an Imbonerakure named Ndikumwenayo alias Marius.

According to a local source, this Imbonerakure militiaman issued a false alarm to the police officers of Kiganza and soldiers at the Donzi position, telling them that he had just seen rebels in a local cemetery so that they would begin searching the

locality to find and arrest Dieudonné Mukamarakiza, who had begun to be searched the day before since his release from Rumonge prison last Friday.

The same source adds that Dieudonné Mukamarakiza was eventually arrested and taken to the cell located on a police station in Kiganza and that, although he had been cleared by the justice system, which was prosecuting him for complicity with rebel groups, he was transferred the next day to the cell of Rumonge provincial police station.

SOS Torture Burundi calls on the Burundian authorities to put an end to these practices of abusive arrests of young people and to the abusive and illegal power of Imbonerakure militiamen who orchestrate arrangements to request arrestations or even arrest themselves any person they have put in their sights.

- On the afternoon of Sunday, October 18, 2020, on Rukoba hill, Gitega commune and province, Imbonerakure militiamen from this hill, in complicity with some police officers from Gitega provincial police station, arbitrarily arrested a member of CNL (National Council for Liberty) party named Dieudonné Havyarimana and took him to the cells of this police station for incarceration.

According to local sources, the victim had just spent four months in hiding in Bujumbura after he was persecuted during May election campaign.

SOS Torture Burundi deplors the fact that Burundian citizens continue to be arbitrarily arrested simply because of their political affiliation, particularly to the CNL party.



The SOS-Torture/Burundi campaign was initiated with the aim of informing national and international opinion on serious human rights violations taking place in Burundi through monitoring reports 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 12, 2015 by the 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 President Nkurunziza's third term of office, namely Musaga, Mutakura, Cibitoke, Nyakabiga, Jabe, the last two being located in the center of the Bujumbura City Hal.