

REPORT N° 250 OF SOS-TORTURE/BURUNDI PUBLISHED ON 26 SEPTEMBER 2020

This SOS-Torture report covers the period from 19 to 26 September 2020 concerning cases of human rights violations in Burundi.

At least five (05) persons were murdered and three (03) persons were injured during the period in different localities of the country.

This report also deplores one (01) person kidnapped by a group of unidentified armed men and seventeen (17) cases of arbitrary arrests directed mainly against political opponents.

SOS Torture Burundi denounces the inertia of justice and the administration in the face of this rise in crime and serious violations of the inalienable rights of Burundian citizens, making them accomplices and/or protectors of the perpetrators of these violations.

1. Violations of the right to life and physical integrity

- In the afternoon of Sunday, September 20, 2020, a group of police officers under the command of the "Brigadier de corps" of the 2nd Mobile Rapid Intervention Group (GMIR) in Kanyosha shot and killed Master Corporal Cishahayo of the 11th Armored Battalion, assigned as a driver to the Special Brigade for the Protection of Institutions (PSPI). According to sources on the spot, this Brigadier de corps (whose name is not yet known) ordered a policeman to shoot Master Corporal Cishahayo while he was having a glass of beer with friends in a bistro near his residence in Busoro quarter of the Kanyosha zone, in the south of the economic capital Bujumbura, and died immediately. According to the same sources, at the origin of this murder, the deceased soldier had argued with a moto-taxi driver about the price of the transport ticket and refused to go to the

GMIR to be interrogated by intervening police elements, asking instead to be interrogated by his military hierarchy.

The same sources stated that Master Corporal Cishahayo was a native of Cibitoke province, married and father of four children who were still minors.

SOS Torture Burundi learned that two other unidentified persons were injured by the same bullets fired by this police officer and that no police investigation had been opened to punish the perpetrators of this murder and willful bodily harm. It also noted the misuse of firearms by defense and security elements, a consequence of a generalized climate of impunity that has taken hold in the defense and security corps.

- In the early morning of Wednesday, September 23, 2020, a lifeless body of a 60 years man named Gregoire Muryanguraryana was discovered at the entrance of his home on Kirehe hill, Buhinyuza commune, Muyinga province. The same source states that the deceased had spent a few hours in a local bar the day before his assassination, but that he did not manage to return home.
- On the night of Wednesday, 23 September 2020, at about 20:30 hrs, Pavela NIYOMWUNGERE, a pupil of 8th class at the basic school of Rutyazo, Kayokwe commune, Mwaro province, was killed by a group of as yet unidentified criminals armed with a rifle.
- In the morning of Thursday, September 24, 2020, a lifeless body of a certain Deo Havyarimana, from the Mugamba commune, Bururi province, was discovered near the walls of Regina Mundi cathedral and not far from the Headquarters of the National Intelligence Service (SNR) located in Rohero zone, Mukaza commune, Bujumbura town hall. According to witnesses on the spot who discovered the body around 6 a.m., his tongue had been severed and his body showed injuries to the head.

- On the night of Friday, September 25, 2020, around 11:00 p.m., on the hill of Rwimbogo-Tondero, Rugazi zone, commune of Kabarore, Kayanza province, a group of unidentified armed men carried out an attack during which Bucumi Grégoire was killed, while Nkurikiye Samuel was abducted.

SOS Torture Burundi regrets the increase in targeted killings and denounces the impunity enjoyed by the perpetrators of these crimes

2. Violation of the right to physical security

- On Monday, September 21, 2020, around 7:00 p.m., on Nyagisozi hill, Busoni commune, Kirundo province, unidentified people threw a grenade in a bistro belonging to a certain Rubomboza. According to sources on the spot, among the people who were in this bistro, three unidentified people were injured in the explosion and evacuated to Kinyinya Hospital. The motive for this crime is not yet known.

SOS Torture Burundi denounces acts and threats of violence whose main purpose is to spread terror among the civilian population.

3. Arbitrary arrests

- In the afternoon of Sunday, September 20, 2020, at about 5:30 p.m., a group of soldiers from Rukoma military position, Matongo commune, Kayanza province, arrested Bacamurwako Salvator, the leader of CNL (National Council for Liberty) party on Rukoma hill. According to witnesses on the spot, several soldiers entered his home after breaking down the door, took him by force and led him manu militari to their position in Rukoma, near Kibira forest.

SOS Torture Burundi notes an arbitrary arrest without a title or judicial warrant, which could turn into an enforced disappearance as the whereabouts of the arrested person remains unknown.

- On Monday, September 21, 2020, the communal police of Gishubi arrested two activists of the National Council for Liberty (CNL), Dismas Harerimana and Frederic Ngendakumana, respectively seller and cell phone repairer at Nyabiraba trading center in Gishubi Commune, Gitega province (central Burundi). After their arrest on a motive that remains unknown, they were taken to the cell of the provincial police station in Gitega for incarceration.
- In the afternoon of Tuesday, 22 September 2020, on Zingi-Nyaruyaga hill, Ruteme zone, Bugarama commune, Rumonge province, the Burundian police and elements of National Intelligence Service arrested six (06) persons, namely Makebuko Salvator, a demobilized ex-FAB (Burundi Armed Forces), Yamuremye Juvénal, Niyonizigiye Jean Marie, Ntezukobagira, and two other young men whose names have not yet been identified.

SOS Torture Burundi notes that these six individuals were arrested at their respective homes and taken to a hitherto unknown destination after a search operation. Although no suspicious objects were found in their homes during the search, they were gratuitously accused of collaborating with rebel groups.

- On Thursday, September 24, 2020, the Rumonge police arrested a CNL party official named Jumaine Kayumbu and three other unidentified fishermen in a bistro located in the Birimbi neighborhood of the city of Rumonge. According to witnesses at the scene, they were accused of holding an illegal meeting.

SOS Torture Burundi has learned that the four arrested persons are being held in the police dungeon in Rumonge.

- In the morning of this Thursday, September 24, 2020 around 10 am, at the ninth crossroads on Rusiga hill, Rugombo commune, Cibitoke province (northwestern Burundi) around 10:00 am, young Imbonerakure arrested three unidentified young men, tied them up and beat them before handing them over to the communal police of Buganda in a very critical condition. According to witnesses on the spot, these three young men are known in the locality as sellers of loincloths that they import from the DRC (Democratic Republic of Congo). The same sources state that later at about 3:00 pm, the head of SNR in Cibitoke, OPC2 Venant Miburo, retrieved these young men from Buganda communal police cell and loaded them into his vehicle to a previously unknown destination.
- During a search by police officers of the Makamba Provincial Police Station on the morning of Saturday, September 26, 2020 in the Kigwati neighborhood of the city of the commune and province of Makamba, police officers arrested a retired ex-FAB (Burundian Armed Forces) named Charles Ndikumana known as Munyuwisi, although no suspicious objects were found at his home. Witnesses on the spot indicated that this retired soldier was regularly subjected to unannounced searches and revealed that these police officers intended to search for rebels he had allegedly hidden in his home.

SOS Torture Burundi denounces a resurgence of cases of arbitrary arrests of members of opposition political parties, particularly since the clashes in several localities of the country between armed groups and the security forces accompanied by Imbonerakure.



SOS-Torture/Burundi was initiated with an aim of informing national and international opinion on the 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 persons 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 Hall.