

SOS-TORTURE/BURUNDI REPORT N°291 PUBLISHED ON 10 JULY 2021

This report by SOS-Torture/Burundi covers the period from 3 to 10 July 2021 regarding cases of human rights violations in Burundi.

At least three (3) people were murdered during the period in different localities of the country.

The report also deplores two (2) people seriously injured by Imbonerakure, one (1) person who was arbitrarily arrested, one (1) young girl who was raped and one (1) person who was abducted by unidentified individuals.

1. Violations of the right to life

- In the early morning of Sunday 4 July 2021, fishermen on their way to the Rusizi River separating Burundi from the DRC (Democratic Republic of Congo) discovered two lifeless bodies of unidentified men on Kaburantwa hill, Buganda commune, in the province of Cibitoke (north-west of Burundi).

According to fishermen's testimonies, the two men were tied up and hung from a tree in a cassava field less than a hundred meters from National Road No. 5 and alerted soldiers from a position not far from the Rusizi River.

The same sources say that the two victims had many wounds on their bodies and believe that they were killed the day before by unidentified individuals who tied them to this tree to simulate a suicide, as there was a lot of blood still fresh under the tree from which they were hanging.

- On the morning of Sunday 4 July 2021, the lifeless body of Charles Nizigiyimana (59 years old), a resident of the peace village of Rugombo, was found on the hill of Samwe, less than one kilometre from the Rugombo commune office in Cibitoke province.

According to sources on the spot, the body of the victim, whose perpetrators' identity remains unknown, was lying in an irrigation canal, with a lot of blood and wounds on his head.

SOS-Torture Burundi deplores the unspeakable criminal phenomenon that has become endemic, where lifeless bodies are constantly being discovered in rivers or public places, far from witnesses able to identify them, in the aberrant silence of the country's authorities, who had the noble mission of protecting, on an equal footing, all citizens as well as anyone living on Burundian territory.

It calls on the Burundian authorities to come out of their complacent silence in order to undertake concrete measures and actions to curb this criminal phenomenon which only tarnishes the image of the nation.

2. Violations of the right to physical integrity

- On the evening of Saturday 3 July 2021, a group of Imbonerakure on patrol on Ruvumpu hill, Kiremba commune, in Ngozi province (north of Burundi) injured with clubs an activist of the National Congress for Liberty (CNL) known as Prosper Nahimana as he was returning home.

According to witnesses, as he was returning home from a local bar, Prosper Nahimana was beaten with clubs by a group of Imbonerakure who injured his back and head.

SOS-torture Burundi denounces the political intolerance of CNDD-FDD members towards activists of other opposition political parties and the impunity enjoyed by the Imbonerakure.

- On the night of Monday 5 July 2021, on Nyeshanga hill in village 3, Gihanga commune, in Bubanza province (north-western Burundi), a group of Imbonerakure violently beat a young girl named Cécile Iradukunda (26 years old) with clubs when she was returning from work.

According to sources on the spot, Cécile Iradukunda, a servant in a local bistro and originally from the commune of Buganda in Cibitoke province, was ambushed by a group of Imbonerakure on patrol led by the head of the CNDD-FDD (National Council for the Defence of Democracy - Forces for the Defence of Democracy) youth league in the commune of Gihanga, Déo Maboneza, who violently beat her with clubs and left her in a very critical condition.

The same sources state that the victim was evacuated to a local health facility and that Déo Maboneza was arrested the next day by the police and is being held at the Gihanga commune police station.

3. Violations of the right to liberty: arbitrary arrests and detentions

- On the evening of Tuesday 6 July 2021, a cow owner known as Emmanuel was arrested and arbitrarily detained on the orders of Pamphile Hakizimana, the communal administrator of Buganda, in Cibitoke province, for having claimed his two stolen cows that were found in the cowshed of this administrative officer.

According to witnesses, the owner of these cows was arrested by the head of the National Intelligence Service (SNR) in Cibitoke who had just been called by the communal administrator on the phone and took him away in his vehicle with plate number D3984A to a destination not yet known.

4. Cases of gender-based violence (rape)

- On the morning of Wednesday 7 July 2021, the doctor in charge of the Cabara health centre in the Kirwena zone, in the commune and province of Rumonge (south-western Burundi) raped a young underage girl aged 16.

According to sources on the spot, the girl had gone to the health centre for treatment, but instead of treating her, the doctor Gilbert Niyoyankundiye took her to one of the rooms in the centre to rape her. As soon as she returned home, the girl revealed to her parents the suffering she had endured at the health centre.

The same sources reveal that the doctor tried to convince the girl's parents to settle out of court for the sum of 200,000 Burundi francs, but the parents rejected this offer and decided to file a complaint with the police.

SOS-Torture Burundi has learned that the doctor was arrested in the afternoon of the same day for investigation.

5. Case of kidnapping

- On the night of Thursday to Friday, 9 July 2021, a group of six people dressed in civilian and military uniforms abducted Melthus Mahoromeza, a manager of the City of Peace Motel located in the Shatanya district of Gitega town.

Sources on the spot revealed that the kidnappers disguised themselves as customers and took Melthus Mahoromeza, originally from the commune of Vyanda in Bururi province, on board their white Jeep vehicle bearing the Burundian government's plate number and drove him to an unknown destination.



SOS – Torture/Burundi

Monitoring sur les cas de torture, les arrestations arbitraires, les disparitions forcées et les exécutions sommaires au Burundi

SOS-Torture/Burundi was initiated with the aim of informing national and international opinion about serious human rights violations taking place in Burundi through monitoring reports, particularly on torture, arbitrary arrests, forced 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 11 and 12 December 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 areas affected are said to be those contesting the third term of President Nkurunziza, namely Musaga, Mutakura, Cibitoke, Nyakabiga and Jabe, the last two being located in the centre of the Bujumbura town hall.