

SOS-TORTURE BURUNDI REPORT N° 307 PUBLISHED ON 30 OCTOBER 2021

This report by SOS-Torture Burundi covers the period from October 23 to 30, 2021 regarding cases of human rights violations in Burundi.

At least seven (7) people were murdered during this period in different localities of the country.

The report also deplores the cases of seven (7) people who were seriously injured and two (2) others who were abducted.

1. Violations of the right to life

- On the morning of Sunday, October 24, 2021, the lifeless body of a young man selling clothes at the central market of Gitega who was known as Gérard Bukuru, aged 28, was found in a small bush on Jimbi hill in the commune and province of Gitega (central Burundi).

According to eyewitnesses, Gérard Bukuru was first slightly injured on his feet, along with 6 other people, in a grenade explosion thrown the day before by an unidentified person at around 8:30 p.m. in a restaurant located at 2nd Avenue No. 32 in the Nyamugari quarter (commonly known as the Swahili Quarter) of Gitega city, and he himself had gone to the Notre Dame d'Afrique health center for treatment required by his condition. A few minutes later, his employer and brother-in-law, Prosper Niyonizigiye, came to see him at the health center. At that very moment, the provincial head of the National Intelligence Service (SNR) in Gitega, OPC1 Zabulon Mfuranzima (OPN 0864), in the presence of the provincial police responsible in Gitega, OPC1 Évariste Habogorimana (OPN 1251), abducted the two men and took them away in his service van, registration number E0524A, to an unknown destination.

According to the same sources, the body of Gérard Bukuru, his head smashed by bullets with a cartridge next to it, was found the next morning in a small bush on Jimbi hill, 8 kilometers from the center of Gitega, and his brother-in-law Prosper Niyonizigiye, who was taken away in the same vehicle, has been missing since their abduction.

SOS-Torture Burundi calls on the judicial authorities to prosecute OPC1 Zabulon Mfuranzima and OPC1 Évariste Habogorimana for their alleged involvement in the assassination of Gérard Bukuru and the enforced disappearance of Prosper Niyonizigiye, since both men were abducted from the health center publicly, as reported by eyewitnesses.

- On Sunday, October 24, 2021, the lifeless body of a cowherd known as Oscar Hagerimana (56 years old) was discovered at the entrance of his house located on Mutambara-Kayange hill in the Gatete zone of Rumonge commune and province (southwest of Burundi).

According to local sources, the body of the victim, a native of the Rubumba hill in Kiganda commune of Muramvya province (central Burundi), showed no injuries. The same sources specified that the circumstances of the death of Oscar Hagerimana have not been clarified.

- On the night of Sunday, October 24, 2021, a woman in her seventies known as Marie Ntamwishimiro was stabbed to death by unidentified individuals who found her at her home on Mugendo hill in Ntega commune of Kirundo province (northern Burundi).

According to sources in the locality, the body of the victim, who lived alone in her house, showed several wounds, particularly on the head and chest. The same

sources reveal that the perpetrators of the crime allegedly began by raping the old woman before murdering her.

SOS-Torture Burundi calls on the police and judicial authorities to initiate an independent investigation in order to discover the perpetrators and determine the circumstances of these murders.

- In the morning of Tuesday, October 26, 2021, the body of a young girl known as Jeannette Nijimbere, 19 years old, was discovered hanging on a rope in a house under construction located at the 15th transversal in Maramvya zone of Mutimbuzi commune, in Bujumbura province (western Burundi).

According to local sources, the young girl from the Nkubara hill in Buhiga commune of Karusi province (east-central Burundi), was killed in another place and her executioners brought her body to simulate a suicide.

- On the night of Thursday, October 28, 2021, around 8:00 p.m., Issa Nizigiyimana, one of the local administrative staff at the Bukeye hill and a CNDD-FDD (National Council for the Defense of Democracy-Forces for the Defense of Democracy) activist, was stabbed to death by a soldier named Leopold on Bukeye hill in Nyanza-lac commune of Makamba province (southern Burundi).

According to eyewitnesses, Issa Nizigiyimana was near his residence with a friend when a Toyota Dyna vehicle with two people in it, including the soldier who ensures security at the Prime Minister's private residence in Rutana province, suddenly stopped near them. The two people argued with each other for a while before the soldier jumped on his victim and stabbed him to death. The victim was evacuated for emergency treatment to a health facility near the scene of the incident before succumbing to his injuries some time later.

- On the evening of Wednesday, October 27, 2021, Gloriose Zayina (40 years old) was killed on the Ntabo sub-hill of the Gitumba hill, in the Nyamakarabo zone, in Mugina commune of the Cibitoke province (northwestern Burundi).

According to local sources, Gloriose Zayina was killed by her husband Cyprien Nyandwi (46 years old) on the way from a bar near their home. After an argument between the couple, Cyprien Nyandwi kicked his wife several times in the abdomen and she died immediately. According to the same sources, the murderer was arrested by the police for investigation.

2. Violations of the right to physical integrity

- On the afternoon of Wednesday, October 27, 2021, at around 4:00 p.m., a 31-year-old member of the CNL (National Congress for Liberty) party known as Alexis Rutayisire was seriously wounded by a group of Imbonerakure led by a certain Jean-Bosco Kanyeshamba on the Yaranda hill in the commune and province of Kirundo (northern Burundi).

According to local sources, while returning home, Alexis Rutayisire was violently attacked with clubs by these Imbonerakure of the ruling CNDD-FDD party, who accused him of having refused to join their party. The same sources state that the victim was evacuated in critical condition to the Kigozi health center before being referred to the Kirundo hospital where he remains in bed.

3. Cases of abduction or enforced disappearance

- On the evening of October 5, 2021, at around 7:30 p.m., Augustin Niyoyankana (53 years old), a farmer and plot commission agent, was abducted by men in civilian clothes and a policeman in uniform in the Buterere 2A quarter, in the Ntakangwa commune, in the north of the city of Bujumbura (western Burundi) and has been missing since that day.

According to eyewitnesses, while Augustin Niyoyankana was drinking his beer of banana wine in a bar in the Buterere quarter, a certain Ezéchiel asked him what kind of beer he was taking and ordered another beer of banana wine before leaving at once. A few minutes later, Marius Ntakirutimana, a local administrative came to ask Augustin where Ezéchiel was before leaving in his turn. The same sources said that a few minutes later, three men (a policeman and two others in civilian clothes, one of whom had a Motorola and a pistol) came in a pick-up van without license plates and took Augustin Niyoyankana away to an unknown destination.

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.