

SOS-TORTURE BURUNDI REPORT N° 309 PUBLISHED ON 13 NOVEMBER 2021

This report by SOS-Torture Burundi covers the period from 6 to 13 November 2021 regarding cases of human rights violations in Burundi.

At least six (6) people were murdered during this period in different localities of the country.

The report also deplores the case of one (1) woman who was violently beaten by her husband and three (3) people who were abducted by agents of the National Police and the National Intelligence Service (SNR).

1. Violations of the right to life

- On the night of Monday 9 November 2021, at around 10:30 p.m., a man known as Leonidas Ngendanzi (56 years old) burned to death in his house located on the hill of Gatanga, in the commune and province of Kayanza (northern Burundi).

According to local sources, a fire broke out in his house, which was also used as a shop, following an argument between the man and his 22-year-old son in which the two had exchanged enmity. One of the children of the deceased claimed that the quarrel originated from a flash disk containing films and music that the father had confiscated from the older brother of the alleged arsonist.

The same sources reveal that the boy, in a fit of anger, grabbed a plastic bag, burnt it and threw it into a room where there were goods. Immediately, the fire consumed everything in the house, including the victim, who did not have the chance to escape the fire. The alleged perpetrator fled immediately after the incident.

- On the morning of Wednesday 10 November 2021, three unidentified young men were killed by policemen and soldiers in the locality called "Kumateka" in Ruganza zone of Matongo commune, in Kayanza province, at the edge of the Kibira forest.

According to local sources, the police and the local administration presented these men as terrorists who were four in number, one of whom exploded a grenade that injured the Ruganza zone chief and a policeman, while another was captured alive.

- On the morning of Wednesday 10 November 2021, at around 9:00 a.m., a 12-year-old girl named Géraldine Niyonsenga was killed on Butihinda hill in Gitobe commune of Kirundo province (northern Burundi).

According to local sources, the victim died from injuries inflicted by her uncle Bonaventure Miburo after accusing her of damaging his bean field. The same sources said that the perpetrator was arrested by the police for investigation.

- On the night of Wednesday 10 November 2021, a woman known as Beatrice Nshimirimana was killed in Birongozi quarter in the commune and province of Rutana (south-east Burundi).

According to local sources, the decapitated body of the victim was found the next day. The same sources believe that the victim was killed by an unidentified man who had spent the night with the woman who was a prostitute.

2. Violations of the right to physical integrity (domestic violence)

- On 8 November 2021, a woman known as Claudine Nemerimana (28 years) was beaten with a club by her husband Elias Minani (34 years) on the Kayigi sub-hill of Nyarubera hill, in Rutana commune and province. According to local sources, the victim was admitted to Rutana hospital while her husband was arrested by the

police and detained at Rutana police station. The same sources said that Elias Minani beat his wife for refusing to sell the family property.

3. Cases of abduction or enforced disappearance

- On 23 October 2021, at around 6:30 p.m., Rémy Niyonsaba, a teacher at the Ruhanza primary school in Giheta commune of Gitega province (central Burundi), was abducted from the administrative centre of Mbuye commune in Muramvya province by men in military and police uniforms and taken away in a double-cabin vehicle with tinted windows to an unknown destination.

According to witnesses, the kidnappers of Rémy Niyonsaba, an activist of the CNL (National Congress for Liberty) party, were very close to the Mbuye commune office. The victim's relatives claim to have searched for him in all the dungeons in the provinces of Gitega and Muramvya and even in those of the economic capital Bujumbura, but in vain.

SOS-Torture Burundi notes that this is the second time that Rémy Niyonsaba has been kidnapped. He suffered the same fate on 29 September 2020 at around 2 p.m. not far from the Giheta communal high school, at a place called "Kukirato", when he was kidnapped by armed men in police uniforms who took him on board a black Toyota Carina type TI car. He was then detained in Bujumbura Central Prison before being released last June after spending ten months in arbitrary detention.

- On the night of Sunday 7 November 2021 at around 7:00 p.m., a girl known as Francine Bukuru (29 years old), from the Bwato hill in the Shombo zone, in the commune and province of Muramvya (central Burundi), was abducted by SNR (National Intelligence Service) agents from the bistro where she was working in Kajaga, in Mutimbuzi commune of province Bujumbura (western Burundi). Her family members searched for her in all the dungeons without finding her.

- In the afternoon of Monday 8 November 2021 at around 1:00 p.m., Innocent Girukwigomba, a former OPJ (Judicial Police Officer) at the Musaga police station in the Bujumbura town hall, was brutally abducted in the city centre of Bujumbura in the Rohero zone, on Avenue de l'ONU, near the hospital called "Chez Binagana", by men in police uniforms aboard a Toyota TI car with the registration number IA 3077, who took him away to an unknown destination.

According to witnesses, Brigadier Innocent Girukwigomba, a member of the ex-FAB (Burundian Armed Forces) and a native of the commune of Buraza in Gitega province (central Burundi), was on his way to an appointment with a person who had called him on the phone to meet at the same place where he was abducted.

The same sources reveal that police officer Innocent Girukwigomba was abducted on 14 September 2016 by unknown persons, while he was still on duty, before ending up in Ngozi central prison, from where he had just been released last April as part of the presidential pardon measure decreed in March 2021.

SOS-Torture Burundi denounces these acts of abduction, which have become recurrent, and fears that they could turn into cases of enforced disappearance, as the victims' relatives do not yet have access to the places where their loved ones are being held.



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.