

## **SOS-TORTURE BURUNDI REPORT N° 312 PUBLISHED ON 4 DECEMBER 2021**

This report by SOS-Torture Burundi covers the period from 27 November to 4 December 2021 regarding cases of human rights violations in Burundi.

At least four (4) people were assassinated during this period in different localities of the country and one (1) person was seriously injured in Rutana province.

The report also deplores the cases of one (1) person who was arbitrarily arrested in Bujumbura town hall and six (6) CNL (National Congress for Liberty) party activists who were abducted by police officers in Ngozi province.

### **1. Violations of the right to life**

- On the evening of Saturday 27 November 2021, at around 6 p.m., the lifeless body of a 27-year-old man known as Jean Marie Ndiokubwayo was found hanging on a rope from the roof of a house under construction on Mugitega hill in the Bugendana zone and commune of Gitega province (central Burundi).

According to witnesses of the macabre discovery, the body of Jean Marie Ndiokubwayo, son of François Baryungure and Consolate Ntakarutimana, residents of the same hill, was suspended on a rope, with his feet on the ground, suggesting that it was a fake suicide to conceal a murder. The local people believe that the young man was killed elsewhere and that his executioners brought his body to simulate a suicide.

The same sources mentioned that the motive and the circumstances of his assassination have not been clarified.

- On the night of Monday 29 November 2021, at around 7:30 p.m., Joseph Nkinahamira, aged 70, was ambushed by criminals who savagely murdered him with machetes as he was returning to his home on Murehe hill, in the commune and province of Cankuzo (eastern Burundi).

According to local sources, the victim was returning from the Gicumbi market when he was attacked by these unidentified criminals. The motives for the murder have not yet been clarified, but the local people believe that Joseph Nkinahamira was killed because of suspicions of witchcraft.

The same sources affirm that a suspect member of the victim's family known as Joachim Keshu was arrested by the police and taken to the police station in Cankuzo for investigation.

- On the night of Monday 29 November 2021 at around 8 p.m., a young activist of the UPRONA (Union for National Progress) party who was known as Jean Pierre Ndayishimiye alias Mukristu was murdered by four militants of the CNDD-FDD (National Council for the Defence of Democracy-Forces for the Defence of Democracy) party on Rubuga hill in the Kiyonza zone of Bugabira commune, in Kirundo province (northern Burundi). According to local sources, the young man was killed by four security guards from ECOFO (Basic School) in Rubuga who ambushed him and attacked him with machetes as he was returning home from a bar in the locality. The same sources affirm that the body of the victim had been moved afterwards by the perpetrators to lay it down in front of the door of the school canteen of ECOFO in Rubuga in order to simulate an attempted robbery and thus confuse the investigation of the motives and circumstances of the crime.

The same sources state that all four watchmen and CNDD-FDD activists were arrested and detained for investigation purposes at the communal police station in Bugabira and one of the alleged perpetrators of the crime confessed to having killed Jean Pierre Ndayishimiye with a machete.

- On the night of Friday 3 December 2021, at around 7: 30 p.m., Pélagie Rugoke (57 years old), a secretary at the Rutovu Secondary School, was shot dead by unidentified criminals in Mahoro quarter, located on Bibate hill, in the administrative centre of Rutovu commune, in Bururi province (southern Burundi). According to local sources, Pélagie Rugoke, a native of Kigamba commune in Cankuzo province ( eastern Burundi), was in her shop selling Brarudi ( Breweries and lemonades of Burundi) products when she was attacked by men armed with rifles who shot her at close range and she died immediately.

The same sources claim that the killers only took the victim's two mobile phones before fleeing.

### 2. Violations of the right to physical integrity

- On the night of Wednesday, 1 December 2021, at around 8 p.m., a sixty-year-old man named Vital, a native of Nyarubere hill in the zone, commune and province of Rutana (south-east of Burundi), was severely wounded with a machete by a man named Nkangara, a shoe seller in Rutana centre.

According to local sources, the old man was seriously wounded in the neck and arms while on his way to the Rutana centre where he was guarding a shop in the locality. The motive for the criminal attack is not yet clear.

The same sources said that the victim was admitted to Rutana hospital while the criminal was arrested by the police and detained at the provincial police station in Rutana for judicial investigation.

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

- In the afternoon of Wednesday, 1 December 2021, at around 4 p.m., Salvator Gasogo, an employee of a passenger transport agency, 'Air ponctuel', was the victim of an arbitrary arrest in the Carama quarter of the Kinama zone, in the northern part of Bujumbura city ( western Burundi), by men on board a black Toyota Hilux Vigo double-cabin pick-up with registration number D7934A, belonging to Emile Cimpaye, head of the National Intelligence Service (SNR) in Bujumbura province.

According to local sources, Salvator Gasogo was released from Muramvya prison on 24 November after being granted provisional release in a case pending at the Ntahangwa Court of Appeal against the family of his colleague Vandrakis Nshimirimana, who died as a result of the beating he received.

The same sources claim that Salvator Gasogo is being held in the SNR headquarters' dungeon, near the Regina Mundi cathedral, and that he was severely tortured when he arrived at the dungeon.

SOS-Torture Burundi finds it difficult to imagine a country other than Burundi where a judicial decision is contradicted by a police force, even one attached to the presidency of the Republic. The Burundian authorities should strengthen the real independence of the judiciary and put an end to the multi-faceted intrusions of the executive that hinder the proper functioning of justice.

### **4. Cases of abduction or enforced disappearance**

- Since 15 November 2021 at around 9 p.m., a teacher at Don Bosco High School and activist of the CNL (National Congress for Liberty) party, known as Stéphanie Hatungimana, has been reported missing after being abducted in Kinyami quarter,

in the urban centre of Ngozi province (northern Burundi) by police officers who took her away in a police vehicle with tinted windows to an unknown destination.

According to witnesses, the family members of the victim, aged about forty, searched all the dungeons without finding her and have had no news of her since that day.

- On the night of Sunday 28 November 2021, a CNL party activist known as Stany Miburo, aged around 40, was abducted by police officers and Imbonerakure (a youth league affiliated to the CNDD-FDD party) in Rusuguti quarter of the urban centre of Ngozi province and was taken away in a police vehicle to an unknown location. His biological family members tried to search for him in the different dungeons of Ngozi province without success.
- In the afternoon of Monday 29 November 2021, a CNL party activist called Felix Nzoyisaba was abducted by the police in collaboration with Imbonerakure in the administrative centre of Gashikanwa commune in Ngozi province and was taken to an unknown destination.
- On the night of Monday 29 November 2021, two CNL activists, Aloys Ndayizeye and Jean Marie Ntirandekura, were abducted by police officers after a search of their respective homes on the hills of Maruri and Cihonda of the Gashikanwa zone and commune, in Ngozi province. The victim's family members searched for them in all the dungeons in Ngozi province without success.
- On the night of Thursday, 2 December 2021, at around 10 p.m., Olivier Nkurunziza, a CNL activist and teacher at ECOFO Gisha located in the zone and commune of Tangara, in Ngozi province, was abducted from his home at Gisha hill, in the same commune, by men in National Police uniforms.

According to witnesses, the police officers found Olivier Nkurunziza in his house and ordered him to get out. They took him to an unknown destination without

informing his family members of the reason for his arrest and took him away in a vehicle they had left in the Tangara zone.

The same sources point out that Olivier Nkurunziza, a native of Gasekanya hill, in the same commune, had almost been abducted in 2020 when he was a candidate for the CNL party in the communal council elections.

Sources from CNL party officials reveal that all six CNL party activists are suspected by CNDD-FDD party members of collaborating with armed gangs and providing information to exiled media that are considered by the ruling power as hate media.

SOS-Torture Burundi is concerned about the resurgence of cases of abductions or arbitrary arrests resembling kidnappings on a background of political intolerance, where the families of the victims receive no communication about the fate or whereabouts of their loved ones, all in violation of the rules of the code of criminal procedure in force in Burundi and the international human rights protection instruments to which it is a party. This increases the legitimate concern that such arbitrary arrests and abductions are followed by other human rights violations such as torture and enforced disappearance.

It urges the country's authorities, in this case the Head of State, Major General Evariste Ndayishimiye, to do everything possible to put an end to the recurrent violations of human rights that are attributed to certain state agents in charge of law and order and security, operating in collusion with members of the Imbonerakure youth league. There is no point in singing that peace and security reign throughout the national territory when this peace and security remain the prerogative only of the members of the party in power.



## 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.