

SOS-TORTURE BURUNDI REPORT N° 333 PUBLISHED ON 30 APRIL 2022

This report by SOS-Torture Burundi covers the period from 23 to 30 April 2022 regarding cases of human rights violations in Burundi.

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

The report also deplores the case of one (1) young man who was abducted in Bujumbura town hall.

1. Violations of the right to life

- On the morning of Sunday 24 April 2022, the decomposing body of a young gold miner known as James Niyonzima, aged 25, was found in a pit at a mineral extraction site on the Rusororo hill in the commune of Rugombo of Cibitoke province (north-west Burundi).

According to local sources, James Niyonzima was last seen last Friday, 22 April 2022, in a bistro in the locality with other people after selling gold. One of the gold miners claims that the young Niyonzima was killed with a machete on the way home and his body was later dumped in a mineral extraction ditch.

The same sources said that the body of the victim showed many wounds which prove that she was killed with a machete.

SOS-Torture Burundi calls on the police and judicial authorities to conduct an impartial investigation to find the perpetrators of the murder and bring them to justice.

- In the Buganda commune of Cibitoke province, four lifeless bodies of young men were discovered by cotton farmers in the space of two days on the 7th transversal hill of Kaburantwa, less than two kilometres from the Rusizi River separating Burundi from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

According to witnesses of the macabre discovery, the first two bodies of unidentified young men were found tied together with a rope in the afternoon of Wednesday 27 April 2022 at around 5 p.m. in the Gasenyi zone, less than two kilometres from the Rusizi River. Two other bodies, also tied together, were found in the morning of Thursday 28 April at around 7 a.m. in the same area of Kaburantwa hill, less than 50 metres from the Rusizi River. Local sources indicate that all these young men, who have not been identified, were killed with machetes and knives and had wounds on the chest and head. The bodies of the victims were hastily buried on the spot on the same day on the orders of the Buganda communal administrator, Pamphile Hakizimana, despite the protests of a local police official who demanded that the bodies be transferred to the morgue of the Cibitoke hospital first.

SOS-Torture Burundi deplors the fact that lifeless bodies continue to be discovered abandoned on the banks of the Rusizi River in the province of Cibitoke, despite the cries and denunciations of this recurrent criminal phenomenon by the local population. It calls on the country's authorities to put an end to this phenomenon of abandoned bodies by carrying out reliable and impartial investigations to identify and punish the perpetrators of these crimes.

- On the night of Thursday 27 April 2022, a teacher at Maramvya Basic School known as Thomas Nimbona was killed by unidentified individuals on the hill and zone of Maramvya in Burambi commune of Rumonge province (south-west of Burundi).

According to local sources, Thomas Nimbona had gone to the Kiganza market in the same commune and his body was found with strangulation marks on his neck. The perpetrators of the murder have not been identified.

2. Cases of abduction or enforced disappearance

- On the night of Saturday 23 April 2022, a 19-year-old man known as Aimé Aubin Niyongabo was abducted by unidentified individuals who found him in a bistro called Ramba in Kinanira III quarter of Musaga zone, Muha commune, in Bujumbura city (western Burundi) and took him to an unknown destination.

SOS-Torture/Burundi was initiated with the aim of informing national and international opinion about the serious human rights violations taking place in Burundi through monitoring reports, particularly 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 people killed during the day of 11 and 12 December 2015 by police and military under the pretext of pursuing rebels who had just attacked military camps on the outskirts of the capital.

The affected areas are said to be contesting the third term of President Nkurunziza, namely Musaga, Mutakura, Cibitoke, Nyakabiga and Jabe, the last two being located in the centre of Bujumbura city.