

SOS-TORTURE BURUNDI REPORT N° 337 PUBLISHED ON 28 MAY 2022

This report by SOS-Torture Burundi covers the period from 21 to 28 May 2022 regarding cases of human rights violations in Burundi.

At least one (1) person was murdered during this period in different localities in the country.

The report also deplores the cases of three (3) people seriously injured by a grenade in Cibitoke province and one (1) old woman tortured by Imbonerakure in Ruyigi province as well as four (4) young girls who were raped in Bubanza province.

1. Violations of the right to life

- On the night of Tuesday 24 May 2022 at around 7 p.m., a motorbike taxi driver known as Théogène Itangishaka was killed on Kibati hill of Masango zone, in Bukinyana commune of Cibitoke province (north-western Burundi) by two men he was driving on his motorbike.

According to local sources, Théogène Itangishaka's throat was slit by the two men who also stole his motorbike after the crime was committed. A police investigation led to the seizure of the stolen motorbike the day after the crime in Buyenzi, in the economic capital Bujumbura.

According to the same sources, three men accused of having murdered the motorcyclist Théogène Itangishaka and stolen his motorbike were tried and sentenced on Friday 27 May 2022 in a flagrante delicto trial by the High Court of Cibitoke. Charles Minani and Diomède Ntakirutimana were sentenced to life imprisonment while a soldier named Jean Marie Ndiokubwayo was sentenced to 20 years imprisonment for complicity in the murder of Théogène Itangishaka. The

three convicts, who all pleaded guilty, were also ordered to pay thirty million Burundian francs (30,000,000 Fbu) in damages to the victim's family.

2. Violations of the right to physical integrity

- On the night of Sunday 22 May 2022, at around 7 p.m., unidentified individuals attacked the household of Japhet Mbonihankuye with a grenade on Rugeregere hill of Rugombo commune, in Cibitoke province (north-western Burundi) and during this explosion three people were seriously injured.

According to local sources, the grenade explosion injured Evelyne Mukeshimana (56 years old), the wife of the head of the household, her 22-year-old niece Nadia, and their tenant, a 35-year-old man known as Ndiwokubwayo.

According to the same sources, the attack was mainly aimed at Evelyne Mukeshimana, who was accused by her neighbours of witchcraft on the basis of death threat leaflets based on suspicions of witchcraft that had been spread in the locality before the attack. The three injured people were evacuated to Rugombo hospital for medical treatment.

SOS-Torture Burundi once again denounces targeted killings linked to suspicions of witchcraft, particularly in the communes of the Cibitoke province, which have become recurrent as a result of the impunity that surrounds the commission of these heinous crimes despite the fact that the criminals are not difficult to identify, given their proximity to the crime scene.

- On the afternoon of Friday 27 May 2022, at around 4 p.m., an elderly woman known as Joselyne Nsabimana, aged 60, was atrociously tortured by two Imbonerakure from the youth league of the CNDD-FDD (Council for the Defence of Democracy-Forces for the Defence of Democracy) on Kinama hill in Gisuru commune of Ruyigi province (eastern Burundi). The victim was tortured to punish

her for the refusal of her husband, Philbert Bukuru, an activist of the CNL (National Congress for Freedom) party, to join the CNDD-FDD party.

According to witnesses, Joselyne Nsabimana was returning from the fields when she was attacked by two Imbonerakure, Clément Ikorukwigomba and Gaspard Nyawenda nicknamed Gitenge (former driver of Gisuru commune), who had ambushed her at a public fountain in the locality commonly known as "At Anaclet's". They violently beat her with kicks, fists and slaps until her face was disfigured and her teeth were broken before the residents of the locality rushed to rescue the victim. The same source said that Joselyne Nsabimana was evacuated in a critical condition to Gisuru hospital for intensive care, while the two torturers were never charged.

SOS-Torture Burundi denounces the recurrence of acts of political intolerance against opposition party activists, which are attributed to CNDD-FDD militants and committed with impunity. It demands an impartial and independent investigation to punish the culprits in accordance with the law.

3. Cases of gender-based violence

- On Friday 27 May 2022, a nurse known as Cyprien Nyabenda from the emergency department at Bubanza hospital was arrested by the police and taken to the provincial police station in Bubanza (north-western Burundi) for the repeated rape of four underage girls aged between 5 and 12 in the Matonge quarter of the same town.

According to local sources, the four underage girls belonging to three different families, J. aged 5, I.N.L. aged 7 and a schoolgirl in the 2nd year of primary school, and A. and J. aged 8 and 12 respectively, were raped several times by the same alleged rapist who was arrested. The same source states that the victims were



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taken by their parents on Saturday 28 May 2022 to the Seruka Centre for psychological and medical care.

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.