

SOS-TORTURE BURUNDI REPORT N° 359 PUBLISHED ON 29 OCTOBER 2022

This report by SOS-Torture Burundi covers the period from 22 to 29 October 2022 regarding cases of human rights violations in Burundi.

At least two (2) people were murdered during this period in different parts of the country.

The report also deplores the cases of two (2) people seriously injured and two (2) militants of the CNL (National Congress for Freedom) party who have been arbitrarily detained for a total of ten days in the cell of the Kayogoro police station after being illegally arrested by the administrator of this commune.

1. Violations of the right to life

- On the morning of Tuesday 25 October 2022, the lifeless body of Donatien Nkurunziza, aged 25, was found lying in a small bush near a road on Mahwa hill, in Ryansoro commune of Gitega province (central Burundi).

According to a witness to the gruesome discovery, Donatien Nkurunziza was murdered with a dagger and his body showed injuries to the head. The victim, a native of Kayokwe commune in Mwaro province, was working as a labourer on the construction site of the Bururi-Gitega road executed by a Chinese company.

SOS-Torture Burundi calls for a thorough and independent investigation to determine the motive and circumstances of the assassination of Donatien Nkurunziza, who, according to a local source, was first abducted before being murdered.

- On the morning of Thursday 27 October 2022, the lifeless body of an unidentified man was discovered floating on the waters of Lake Tanganyika, at the foot of the Nkayamba hill located north of the city of Rumonge (southwestern Burundi).

According to local sources, the police who evacuated the body did not say where it would be taken and what would happen to it.

2. Violations of the right to physical integrity

- On the night of Monday 24 October 2022, a young student known as Iteriteka from the Bubanza Technical School was violently beaten by three young students from the same school, members of the Imbonerakure youth league affiliated to the ruling party, the National Council for the Defence of Democracy-Forces for the Defence of Democracy (CNDD-FDD).

According to the account of this student victim of torture, Yves Misigaro (2nd year in Electromechanics), Salomon Sonerimana (2nd year in Computer maintenance) and Innocent Mpawenayo (3rd year in Computer maintenance) violently beat him on his back and buttocks, for more than five hours, while pouring water on the parts where they hit him. And to prevent him from screaming, they put a gag made of cloth over his mouth. According to the testimony at this school, the victim, who can no longer sit up, complains of pain all over his body and shows traces of violence on his buttocks and back in his hospital bed in Bubanza where he was admitted.

According to sources from this boarding school, the father of the pupil Iteriteka lodged a complaint against the three Imbonerakure at the police station in Bubanza, but they refused on Thursday 27 October to appear before the judicial police officer (OPJ) who is investigating this case of torture.

SOS-Torture Burundi has learned that these three Imbonerakure students occupy different positions within the school and even have military effects in their dormitory, such as the T-shirts and boots they brandish when they want to bully other students: Yves Misigaro is in charge of the security of the dormitories, Salomon Sonerimana is in charge of the security of the school, while Innocent Mpawenayo is in charge of the maintenance of the school

It deplores the complacency of the headmaster and other school officials who did not take appropriate measures under the school regulations in force in Burundi, which prohibit acts of violence within schools, and calls on the police and judicial authorities to conduct a thorough investigation to punish the perpetrators in accordance with criminal law.

- On the night of Wednesday 26 October 2022 at around 10 p.m., a man known as David Nisubire was stabbed with knives by three unidentified men who ambushed him as he was returning to his home in Social District in the city of Rutana (south-east Burundi).

According to local sources, the three men wounded him in the arm while he was trying to defend himself and stole his Android phone before driving off.

3. Violation of the right to liberty: arbitrary arrest and detention

- Two CNL party activists, Abednego Sindayihebura and Ezéchiél Nibitanga, have been arbitrarily detained for 10 days in the cells of the Kayogoro police station on the orders of the administrator of this commune in the province of Makamba (southern Burundi).

According to local sources, Abednego Sindayihebura (CNL leader in Dunga zone) and Ezéchiél Nibitanga (CNL leader in Shaka hill) were arrested last Wednesday 19 October by Antoine Ndayiragije, administrator of Kayogoro commune, on

charges of interfering in the functioning of the Council of Notables of Shaka hill, after they had succeeded in reconciling two female CNL activists in a dispute related to witchcraft. Indeed, these two women from the CNL had turned to their party leaders for a conciliation procedure after having failed to seize the council of notables who demanded that they pay a sum of one hundred and thirty thousand Burundian francs (130,000 FBU) in recognition of their complaint.

SOS-Torture Burundi denounces the repeated abuses attributed to the Kayogoro communal administrator, Antoine Ndayiragije, who is often involved in human rights violations against opposition parties, particularly members of the CNL party, and calls for the unconditional release of these two activists who are being detained in an arbitrary and illegal manner.

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 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 December 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.