

SOS-TORTURE BURUNDI REPORT N° 365 PUBLISHED ON 10 DECEMBER 2022

This report by SOS-Torture Burundi covers the period from 3 to 10 December 2022 regarding cases of human rights violations in Burundi.

At least eight (8) people were murdered during this period in different localities of the country.

The report also deplores the cases of one (1) person who was seriously injured, one (1) woman who was tortured by the police and then arbitrarily arrested and detained, as well as five (5) militants of the CNDD-FDD (National Council for the Defence of Democracy-Forces for the Defence of Democracy) party who were arbitrarily arrested and detained in the province of Makamba because of a leadership dispute.

1. Violations of the right to life

- In the afternoon of Sunday 4 December 2022, the lifeless body of an unidentified old man was found on the hill of Karurama at the level of the 7th transversal of the commune of Rugombo, in Cibitoke province (north-western Burundi), very close to the Rusizi river separating Burundi from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

According to local sources, goat herders discovered the body of the victim, who was naked, and alerted the military from a position close to the place of the dismal discovery. The body was directly buried on the spot by Imbonerakure of the ruling party's youth league on the orders of the local administration.

- On the morning of Monday 5 December 2022, the lifeless body of a woman identified as Alice Ntahokagiye, aged 35, was found in Ward 9 of the Ngagara zone of the urban commune of Ntangwa, in the city of Bujumbura (western

Burundi), in front of the entrance of the former SODECO (Coffee clearing and packaging company).

According to witnesses of the macabre discovery, the body of Alice Ntahokagiye, a former employee of the Salama pharmacy and originally from the Mutakura district of the Cibitoke zone in the same city of Bujumbura, was undressed. Local sources reveal that, during the night at around 1 a.m., security agents of the Brigadier General of Police Isidore Ndiwokubwayo took to the Ngagara zone jail an unidentified man and Alice Ntahokagiye tied together and in a very bad state of health following the beating they had received at the home of the Brigadier General of Police, but the Judiciary Police Officer on duty refused to take them into custody. The fate of this man remains unknown for the moment.

SOS-Torture Burundi calls for an independent investigation to determine the circumstances and perpetrators of Alice Ntahokagiye's murder, as well as the fate of the man who was with her, in order to punish them in accordance with the law.

- On the morning of Monday 5 December 2022, the decomposing body of an unidentified woman was discovered on the hill of Rusosoro in Rugombo commune of Cibitoke province.

According to witnesses to the gruesome discovery, the victim's body was naked and was immediately buried on the orders of the local administration

- On 5 December 2022, the lifeless body of an unidentified man was discovered on the shores of the Murembwe River at the foot of the hill and commune of Songa in Bururi province (southern Burundi).

According to witnesses to the macabre discovery, the body was tied up and tied to a large stone, which clearly proves that the perpetrators had wanted to remove all traces of their heinous crime. The same sources regret that the local

administration ordered the burial of the victim's body before opening a judicial investigation to identify the victim and the perpetrators of the crime.

- On the morning of Tuesday 6 December 2022, a child aged two and a half was killed on the Kagazi hill in the commune of Rugombo of the Cibitoke province.

According to sources in this locality, the parents of this child had entrusted him to a neighbour before leaving for the countryside; but unfortunately, on their return, they found that their child had died.

The same sources state that the alleged perpetrator was immediately arrested and taken to the Cibitoke provincial police station for a judicial investigation.

- On Tuesday 6 December 2022, the lifeless body of an unidentified young man was discovered on the hill of Mparambo I on the shores of the Nyakagunda River in the commune of Rugombo of the Cibitoke province.

According to local sources, the body of the victim, which was lying in a pool of blood, was buried immediately on the orders of the local administration without any prior investigation to identify the victim and the perpetrators.

- On the evening of Tuesday 6 December 2022, the lifeless body of a 12-year-old boy was found at the fishing port in the city of Rumonge (southwestern Burundi).

According to local sources, the body of the boy, which has not been identified, has been evacuated to the morgue of Rumonge hospital pending burial.

SOS-Torture Burundi is concerned about the resurgence of crime in Burundi, particularly in the province of Cibitoke, and deplores the fact that human lives continue to be taken almost daily in a country where the authorities sing all day long that peace and security reign throughout the country. It calls for thorough and

independent investigations to track down the perpetrators of these crimes and bring them to justice.

- On the afternoon of Friday 9 December 2022, the lifeless body of an unidentified man in his forties was found in the Murehe nature reserve in the commune of Busoni, in Kirundo province (northern Burundi).

According to local sources, the victim's body was only wearing underwear and showed no signs of physical violence. Residents of the locality bordering the Murehe forest claim that they noticed several vehicles travelling back and forth during the night (the vehicle of Abel Ahishakiye, President of the CNDD-FDD in Kirundo province, the vehicle of the provincial head of the SNR in Kirundo and that of the provincial Secretary of the CNDD-FDD), which they suspect to be among the executioners of people found in this nature reserve.

The same sources indicate that the body of the victim is at the Vyanzo health centre awaiting burial.

- On the morning of Thursday 8 December 2022 at around 9 p.m., a young man known as Ezéchiel Nzoyikorera succumbed to his injuries in the general hospital of Mpanda in the province of Bubanza (north-west of Burundi).

According to witnesses, Ezéchiel Nzoyikorera was fatally stabbed with a kitchen knife in the abdomen on the Muzinda hill and zone in Rugazi commune of Bubanza province when he claimed the sum of one thousand Burundian francs left over from the sale of his mobile phone to an imbonerakure known as Jean Paul Muhire, from Cogo in Ngozi province. The latter was subsequently injured in the head in his attempt to flee by a neighbour who tried to arrest him.

SOS-Torture Burundi deplores the criminality attributable to Imbonerakure members of the youth league affiliated to the CNDD-FDD following the impunity they have enjoyed since the advent of this party to power.

2. Violations of the right to physical integrity

- On 8 December 2022, Ernest Kwizera, a member of the CNDD-FDD Imbonerakure youth league, was seriously injured with a machete by another Imbonerakure, Innocent Ndayisenga, on the Kajondi hill and zone of the Rutovu commune, in Bururi province (southern Burundi).

According to local sources, Ernest Ndayisenga was trying to prevent Innocent Ndayisenga from destroying his brother's potato field when he was struck in the head and face with a machete.

The same sources state that the injured man was evacuated to a local health facility while Innocent Ndayisenga was arrested and taken to the Rutovu police station for investigation.

3. Case of torture followed by arbitrary arrest and detention

- On the afternoon of Friday 9 December 2022, at around 4.30 p.m., in the centre of Bujumbura city near ONATEL (National Telecommunications Office), three policemen, two of whom were wearing civilian clothes, tortured a woman known as Médiatrice Irakoze, a resident of Kamesa in the same municipality, accusing her of practising the ambulatory trade in roasted groundnuts.

According to eyewitnesses and through a video that has been circulating on social networks since the incident, the three policemen violently beat Médiatrice Irakoze, stripped her and trampled her, while dragging her on the ground.

The same sources reveal that Médiatrice Irakoze was then taken, in a critical state of health, with other women itinerant traders, including one with a baby of only six months, to the former SOGEMAC (Society for the Management of the Central Market of Bujumbura) cell to be detained before being transferred the same day to the cell of the Special Research Bureau (BSR). Although Mediatrice's state of health required urgent care because of the blows and injuries inflicted on her by these policemen at the time of her arbitrary arrest, she was kept in solitary confinement without any health care (she had bruises on her face and intense pain).

SOS-Torture Burundi denounces the police violence that has become commonplace and the violence suffered by itinerant traders, who are forced to brave police violence because of the general impoverishment caused by bad governance in all sectors of national life.

4. Violations of the right to liberty: arbitrary arrests and detentions

- In the afternoon of Wednesday 7 December 2022, the former administrator of the commune of Nyanza-Lac in the province of Makamba (southern Burundi), Jean Claude Nduwimana, was arrested by the police after having spent the whole day under interrogation by a Judicial Police Officer (OPJ) and was taken to the cell of the communal police station of Nyanza-Lac before being transferred to the cell of the provincial police station in Makamba (southern Burundi).

According to local sources, this former communal administrator is being persecuted following the decision to dismiss the bureau of the communal council of Nyanza-Lac last Friday, a decision that did not please some tenors of the CNDD-FDD in this province of Makamba. These authorities want to intimidate and harass the members of the communal council who were influential in the decision to dismiss them in order to make them change their minds.



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The same sources specify that another communal councillor, Evelyne Havyarimana, was also questioned by the police officer in charge of the case, who seized her mobile phone before allowing her to return to her home. The arbitrary arrest of the former communal administrator of Nyanza-Lac is the fifth CNDD-FDD activist to be detained since last weekend as a result of leadership conflicts.

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.

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