

SOS-TORTURE BURUNDI REPORT N° 377 PUBLISHED ON 4 MARCH 2023

This report by SOS-Torture Burundi covers the period from 25 February to 4 March 2023 regarding cases of human rights violations in Burundi.

At least three (3) people were murdered during the period in different localities of the country.

1. Violations of the right to life

- On the morning of Tuesday 28 February 2023 at around 11 a.m., an unidentified man was killed with sticks and clubs by an angry population on the hill of Rukoba, in the commune and province of Gitega (central Burundi).

According to witnesses, the man was beaten to death while tied to a tree after he was caught in possession of a solar panel and a battery that he had stolen from the home of an individual named Dismas Bizindavyi.

SOS-Torture Burundi deplors the use of mob justice in the repression of offenders, a sentiment born of numerous dysfunctions in the Burundian judiciary that have led to a loss of confidence in it by the population.

- On the morning of Tuesday 28 February 2023, the lifeless body of a young girl known as Sophie Irakoze, aged 20, was discovered on the hill of Rurambira in the commune of Vugizo, of the Makamba province (southern Burundi).

According to local sources, the body of the victim, a student of Gishiha High School located on the same locality, was found in a tripsacum field of the school. The same sources said the pregnant girl had a head injury and had been missing since 23 February 2023.

SOS-Torture Burundi calls for an independent and credible judicial enquiry to identify the circumstances and the perpetrators of the assassination in order to be prosecuted and punished according to the law.

- On the morning of Wednesday 1st March 2023, the lifeless body of Balthazar Mbarushimana, aged 62, was discovered on the sub-hill of Rwamagashwa, Nyampundu hill, Makarabo zone, in the commune of Mugina of the province Cibitoke (north-west Burundi).

According to local sources, farmers on their way to their fields discovered the body of Balthazar Mbarushimana who was last seen the day before in a local bistro with friends.

SOS-Torture Burundi calls for an investigation to determine the motives and perpetrators of his murder in order to punish them in accordance with the law.

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.