

SOS-TORTURE BURUNDI REPORT N° 380 PUBLISHED ON 25 MARCH 2023

This report by SOS-Torture Burundi covers the period from 18 to 25 March 2023 regarding cases of human rights violations in Burundi.

At least four (4) people were murdered during this period in different parts of the country.

The report also deplors the case of two (2) people who were arbitrarily arrested in the province of Makamba and that of one (1) young girl who was raped by a soldier in the province of Rumonge.

1. Violations of the right to life

- On the morning of Monday 20 March 2023, the lifeless body of Laurent Niyomakiriro, a 33-year-old motorcyclist, was found in the Nyabugogo stream between the districts of Karera 1 and Nyamugari in the town of Gitega (central Burundi).

According to witnesses to the gruesome discovery, Laurent Niyomakiriro was stabbed to death and nothing has been done to find the perpetrators.

- On the night of Wednesday 22 March 2023, at around 10.45pm, Emmanuella Niragira, a teacher in the 5th grade at ECOFO (Basic school) Sanzu in the commune and province of Ruyigi (eastern Burundi), was killed by an unidentified perpetrator armed with a Kalashnikov rifle.

According to local sources, Emmanuella Niragira was killed a few metres from her home in the Sanzu 3 quarter as she was returning home from her shop, not far from the provincial post office.

- In the late afternoon of Thursday 23 March 2023 at around 5pm, two lifeless bodies of unidentified young men were discovered by cotton farmers on the Mbaza sub-hill of Rukana 2 hill, in the Rugombo commune of the Cibitoke province (north-western Burundi), a few metres from the Rusizi River separating Burundi from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

According to witnesses to the macabre discovery, one of the bodies had been decapitated and the two bodies were immediately buried on the spot by several Imbonerakure, in the presence of police officers who had come to take note, without any investigation to identify the victims or the perpetrators of the double crime.

SOS-Torture Burundi deplores the persistence of the phenomenon of lifeless bodies abandoned in the Rusizi River or its surroundings in a context of impunity for the perpetrators of these targeted assassinations. It asks the country's authorities, in this case the President of the Republic, to demand credible and independent investigations to discover the perpetrators of these recurrent killings and thus put an end to this phenomenon that has become intractable.

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

- On Wednesday 22 March 2023, a manager and a worker of the Buheka health centre in the commune of Nyanza-Lac of the Makamba province (southern Burundi) were arbitrarily arrested by the hill leader in collaboration with Imbonerakure, members of the youth league of the ruling party, the CNDD-FDD (National Council for the Defence of Democracy-Forces for the Defence of Democracy).

According to witnesses, the health centre manager named Thacienne was arrested on charges of having incurred too many debts in several village savings and loan associations in Buheka Hill, although no complaint was filed against her with the police. The worker, on the other hand, was accused without evidence of selling drugs stolen from the health centre in local pharmacies.

Despite the fact that the two people were arrested without a warrant and by individuals unqualified to make the arrests, they were illegally detained at the police lock-up in Nyanza-Lac.

SOS-Torture Burundi denounces the arbitrary arrests and detentions of citizens by persons who are not legally vested with the power to deprive them of their liberty and deplores the fact that the police, instead of repressing such abuses, condone them and encourage the perpetrators to commit more. It urges the immediate release of these two arbitrarily and illegally detained persons and the bringing to justice of the perpetrators to be punished in accordance with the law.

3. Rape cases

- On the morning of Saturday 18 March 2023 at around 8 a.m., S. M., a 17-year-old girl, was raped by Philbert Ciza, a soldier assigned to the Rukinga military camp in the commune and province of Rumonge (south-west Burundi).

According to local sources, the victim was taken to Rumonge hospital for medical treatment while the alleged perpetrator was arrested on 21 March 2023 and taken to the police lock-up in Rumonge for investigation.



SOS – Torture/Burundi

Monitoring sur les cas de torture, les arrestations arbitraires, les disparitions forcées et les exécutions sommaires au Burundi

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.