

SOS-TORTURE BURUNDI REPORT N° 385 PUBLISHED ON 29 APRIL 2023

This report by SOS-Torture Burundi covers the period from 22 to 29 April 2023 regarding cases of human rights violations in Burundi.

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

The report also deplores the case of three (3) people who were arbitrarily arrested in Bujumbura City and in Makamba province.

1. Violations of the right to life

- In the afternoon of Saturday 22 April 2023 at around 4 p.m., two decomposing lifeless bodies of unidentified men in Burundian army uniforms were discovered by fishermen on the shores of the Rusizi River, at the level of the 1st transversal of the Ruhagarika hill in the Buganda commune of the province of Cibitoke (north-west of Burundi).

According to witnesses to the gruesome discovery, the victims were killed elsewhere and their bodies dumped at this location near the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

The same sources revealed that the bodies were buried at the place of their discovery on the orders of the Buganda communal administrator, Pamphile Hakizimana, without waiting for their identification.

SOS-Torture Burundi denounces the bad practice, which has become a habit for several years, of burying many lifeless bodies that are discovered in the province of Cibitoke, particularly in the communes of Buganda and Rugombo without prior investigations. It calls on the country's authorities to conduct thorough,

independent and impartial investigations to identify the perpetrators of these targeted killings and bring them to justice.

- On the morning of Sunday 23 April 2023, the lifeless body of a young man known as Egide Ntaconzoba, aged 35, was found in the valley between the hills of Rukoba and Mahonda in the commune and province of Gitega (central Burundi).

According to witnesses to the gruesome discovery, the body was bound and showed no injuries. People of Mahonda hill estimated that Egide Ntaconzoba was murdered elsewhere and his body dumped there by his executioners.

SOS-Torture Burundi deplores the resurgence of targeted killings in Gitega province and calls on the judicial and police authorities to conduct credible investigations in order to identify the perpetrators and punish them in accordance with the law.

2. Violation of the right to freedom of movement

- On Wednesday 26 April 2023, two members of the EUSEBU church (Church for the Unity of the Holy Spirit in Burundi), Rubin Nkongoro (catechist) and Eliakim Ciza (deacon), were arrested by a judicial police officer and taken to the dungeon of the communal police station in Nyanza-Lac in the province of Makamba (southern Burundi).

According to local sources, the two worshippers are accused of refusing to hand over the musical instruments of the choir of a branch of this religious congregation located in Ngabwe locality on Kazirabageni hill in the same commune.

SOS-Torture Burundi recalls that the arbitrary arrest of Rubin Nkongoro and Eliakim Ciza is part of a leadership conflict between the members of EUSEBU who have split into two parties and have been staring at each other for some time.

- On the morning of Thursday 27 April 2023, Olivier Bugegene, a former journalist with RPA (African Public Radio), was arbitrarily arrested at his home in the Kibenga district of Bujumbura by agents of the National Intelligence Service (SNR).

According to information from family members, SNR agents broke into Olivier Bugegene's home and asked him to produce his mobile phone before proceeding with his arrest. He was first taken to the Kinindo zone cell before being transferred to the SNR dungeon the same day. He was arrested on a bizarre charge of using a stolen phone.

The same sources revealed that the agents searched his house without finding anything incriminating.

SOS-Torture Burundi denounces the arbitrary arrests and detentions committed with impunity by SNR agents and calls on the administration of this secret service to order the release of this former journalist who has been wrongfully imprisoned.



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.