

## **SOS-TORTURE BURUNDI REPORT N° 387 PUBLISHED ON 13 MAY 2023**

This report by SOS-Torture Burundi covers the period from 6 to 13 May 2023 regarding cases of human rights violations in Burundi.

At least two (2) people were murdered during this period in the provinces of Bururi and Cankuzo.

The report also deplores the arbitrary arrests of six (6) activists of the National Congress for Freedom (CNL) perpetrated by the head of the SNR in Bubanza province as well as by police agents and administrative officials in Gitega province.

In addition, the report denounces the case of one (1) former Imbonerakure abducted in a hotel in Gitega by the SNR leader in this province and that of one (1) 5-year-old girl who was allegedly raped in the commune of Rutovu in the province of Bururi.

### **1. Violations of the right to life**

- On the night of Saturday 6 May 2023 at around 8pm, Felix Ndikumana alias Vingt, a 55-year-old teacher at Bururi high school, was murdered by unidentified men with machete blows to the head, a few metres from his home in the capital of the commune and province of Bururi (central Burundi).

According to local sources, Félix Ndikumana was ambushed by unidentified individuals armed with machetes who had hidden in a wooded area near the school as he was returning home after accompanying guests who had visited his family. His body, lying in a pool of blood, was evacuated to the Bururi hospital morgue. This is a 5<sup>th</sup> victim (second teacher) murdered in the same circumstances in the capital of Bururi province in less than a month.

The residents of the town of Bururi and its surroundings denounce the inertia of the administrative and police authorities in the face of this upsurge in crime, which has caused general panic among the population, given that no criminal has so far been identified and arrested.

SOS-Torture Burundi deplores a resurgence of crime in the urban centre of Bururi province since last April in particular and calls on administrative and police officials to take appropriate measures to curb this growing crime phenomenon in this locality.

- On the night of Monday 8 May 2023, at around 9.40 pm, the 57-year-old police colonel Henri-Frère Manisha was murdered by an unidentified person not far from his home in the Kigwati 2 district of the capital of the Cankuzo province (eastern Burundi).

According to local sources, Henri-Frère Manisha (from the 2<sup>nd</sup> promotion of ENAPO<sup>1</sup> and former Judicial Police Officer in Cankuzo) was attacked by an unidentified individual as he was returning from a bar in the locality. His body was lying in a pool of blood at the time of the macabre discovery and his natural son, Jean-Paul Ntakarutimana, the first to alert, was arrested and taken to the provincial police station in Cankuzo for investigation.

Local sources revealed that the retired police colonel was on bad terms with his wife.

SOS-Torture Burundi denounces the resurgence of criminality linked particularly to the assassination of well-targeted people throughout the country and asks the police and administrative authorities to take appropriate measures to curb this alarming criminal phenomenon. It also demands an independent and impartial

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<sup>1</sup> Ecole Nationale de Police (Police National School).

investigation to arrest the perpetrator of the assassination of police colonel Henri-Frère Manisha.

## 2. Violation of the right to freedom of movement: arbitrary arrests and detentions

- A report received by SOS-Torture Burundi reveals that on 5 May 2023, three activists of the National Congress for Freedom (CNL), Claver Ntakarutimana, Adeline Wizeyimana and Radégonde Ndaruzaniye, were arbitrarily arrested by policemen and administrative officials on the Rubamvyi hill in the commune and province of Gitega (central Burundi) and were taken *manu militari* to the dungeon of the provincial police station.

According to witnesses, the three activists were accused of singing a song at a party meeting on 16 April attended by CNL party president Agathon Rwasa, which called on Burundian refugees in Tanzania, Rwanda, DRC and Uganda not to return to Burundi because of the famine there.

The same sources said that the three activists spent three days in the provincial police station custody in Gitega before being released on Monday 8 May 2023.

SOS-Torture Burundi denounces the political intolerance that has always characterised CNDD-FDD (National Council for the Defence of Democracy-Forces for the Defence of Democracy) party activists from the top to the bottom and calls for the unlocking of the political space and freedom of expression or opinion, which are fundamental rights guaranteed by the Constitution and the law on political parties

- Since 4 May 2023, three CNL party activists have been arbitrarily arrested by the head of the National Intelligence Service (SNR) in the province of Bubanza (northwestern Burundi).

According to local sources, the CNL youth representative on the Gicuba hill in Mpanda commune, Jean Marie Ndayishimiye, was arrested by police colonel Germain Tangishaka (OPN 0856), in charge of the SNR in this province, and taken to the provincial police station. In the same vein, Samson Ntuyahaga from the hill of Gifurwe in the commune of Mpanda and Vianney Hakizimana from village 6 in the commune of Gihanga were respectively arrested on 8 and 9 May by the same SNR official. The former is being held in the SNR's prison in Bubanza province, while the latter was taken to the prison of the provincial police station.

Sources close to the police in Bubanza revealed that the three CNL activists are being held in particularly bad conditions and that they have been severely tortured. Indeed, they are tied up with their legs and arms together, undergo atrocious torture sessions and are not allowed visits by family members.

According to the same sources, three other CNL activists, Elias from village 6 in the commune of Gihanga, Tiger and Fabrice from the hill of Gicuba in the commune of Mpanda, are still being sought and are no longer staying at their homes for fear of being caught and imprisoned.

All these CNL activists are persecuted following the visit of the Secretary General of the CNDD-FDD, Révérien Ndikuriyo, who is said to have ordered the party's activists to hunt down "troublesome elements", as he did for the physical elimination of the former soldier David Ninganza alias Kaburimbo, who was assassinated on 15 April 2020, along with his two servants, following the bounty placed on his head by Révérien Ndikuriyo, the then President of the Burundian Senate.

### 3. Cases of abduction or enforced disappearance

- On the morning of 10 May 2023 at around 8 a.m., Haruna Mustafa, an influential member of the CNDD-FDD's Imbonerakure youth league who fell from grace in 2022, was abducted from the Villa Dubaï hotel in the province of Gitega (central Burundi) by SNR agents and taken away in a white van with tinted windows, numbered EA0507.

According to witnesses, two men in civilian clothes armed with pistols, accompanied by two others in police uniforms, got out of the van while three other people remained in the vehicle. They then asked to be shown the room where Haruna Mustafa was staying and pulled him out of bed while he was still sleeping. They then took him into the van and sat on him while going back.

Later, his family members searched for him at the police and SNR dungeons in Gitega and Bujumbura, but had no news of him. They are now in a state of anxiety and fear that Haruna Mustafa may be killed or subjected to enforced disappearance.

SOS-Torture Burundi denounces the serious human rights violations committed with impunity by SNR agents. It demands the communication of the place of detention of Haruna Mustafa and his release.

### 4. Rape cases

- On 10 May 2023, a 5-year-old girl was allegedly raped by a man known as Cyriaque Hakizimana, aged 46, on the Gatwaro hill in the commune of Rutovu, in the province of Bururi (southern Burundi).

According to local sources, the victim's relatives alerted the local administrative and police authorities who quickly intervened and arrested the alleged perpetrator.



## SOS – Torture/Burundi

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

Cyriaque Hakizimana was immediately taken to the provincial police station in Bururi.

SOS-Torture Burundi calls for a thorough, impartial and independent investigation to determine the constituent elements of the crime and punish the perpetrator 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.