

SOS-TORTURE BURUNDI REPORT NO. 396 PUBLISHED ON 15 JULY 2023

This report by SOS-Torture Burundi covers the period from 10 to 15 July 2023 concerning cases of human rights violations in Burundi.

At least one (1) person was seriously injured during this period in Rumonge province.

The report also deplores one (1) case of arbitrary detention of a young girl studying at the Mugendo Communal High School in the commune of Ntega of the Kirundo province.

1. Violation of the right to physical integrity

- On the night of Sunday 9 July 2023, a man in his sixties known as Rémy Manirakiza (aged 63) was seriously stabbed by his wife Jeanine Inamuco (aged 35) at their home on the hill of Mugomere, in the urban centre of the commune and province of Rumonge (south-west Burundi).

According to local sources, Rémy Manirakiza was trying to punish one of their children when he was stabbed by his wife, with whom he had a long-standing marital dispute.

The same sources said that the victim was evacuated the same night to Rumonge hospital, while his aggressor was arrested the next day and taken into custody in a local police cell.

2. Violation of the right to freedom of movement: arbitrary arrest and detention

- Since 12 July 2023, Christella Ndayishimiye, a third-year language student at the Mugendo Communal High School in the commune of Ntega in the province of Kirundo (northern Burundi), has been arbitrarily and illegally detained in Ngozi

prison following a preventive detention order issued by judges of the Kirundo high court accusing her of "violating professional secrecy" when she denounced sexual harassment and an attempted rape by the former headmaster of her school, Oscar Nemeyimana.

According to eyewitness accounts from the locality, this pupil wrote a letter on 6 March 2023 explaining why she had dropped out of school because she had refused to have sexual relations with the headmaster of the school, Oscar Nemeyimana. She then asked for her safety to be guaranteed, as she had received death threats following an unsuccessful court case against her former headmaster, who had tried to rape her. Subsequently, in a letter dated 27 June 2023 that she sent to the Governor of Kirundo, the young girl stated that various authorities had not listened to her when deciding her case.

SOS-Torture Burundi deplores the instrumentalisation of Burundian justice for political or individual ends in favour of certain militants of the CNDD-FDD party (National Council for the Defence of Democracy-Forces for the Defence of Democracy). On reading the pre-trial detention order issued by three judges, Ntisumbwa Benoît, Sikubwabo Jean-Pierre and Nibizi Joël, it is indeed absurd to accuse the young girl of "revealing professional secrecy", when she is not the holder of any secret by virtue of her status or profession, as provided for by article 263 of the Criminal Code in force in Burundi.

SOS-Torture Burundi is calling for the immediate release of pupil Christella Ndayishimiye and the prosecution of the former headmaster of the Mugendo Communal High School Oscar Nemeyimana on charges of sexual harassment and attempted rape.

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.