

SOS-TORTURE BURUNDI REPORT NO. 397 PUBLISHED ON 22 JULY 2023

This report by SOS-Torture Burundi covers the period from 15 to 22 July 2023 concerning 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 deplores the case of one (1) young man who was seriously injured in the province of Gitega.

1. Violations of the right to life

- On the evening of Saturday 15 July 2023, at around 10 p.m., a woman named Rosine was shot dead by as yet unidentified criminals in the Mirango district of the Kamenge zone, in the Ntakangwa commune of Bujumbura city (western Burundi).

According to local sources, the victim was hit in the head by two bullets fired by individuals following her from a local church where she had just said prayers with other worshippers whom she was dropping off in her car.

- On 16 July 2023, the lifeless body of a lorry conveyor known as Melchiade Hakizimana, aged 35, was found at the Gitega airfield in the Magarama district of the capital of this province in central Burundi.

According to witnesses to the macabre discovery, the body of Melchiade Hakizimana, a married father of two, was covered in blood and had several wounds on the head, back and chest. He had been fatally beaten by unidentified criminals who had violently abducted him on the evening of Friday 14 July.

Local sources have confirmed that no suspects have been arrested as part of an investigation to identify the perpetrators, circumstances and motives behind the crime.

- On the morning of Tuesday 18 July 2023, the lifeless body of an unidentified young girl was found on the riverside of the Ruvyironza River near the Burundi Institute of Agricultural Sciences (ISABU) in Mahwa in the commune of Rutovu of the Bururi province (southern Burundi).

According to local sources, the victim's body was still bleeding, and residents near the scene of the gruesome discovery believe that the young girl was killed elsewhere before throwing her body into the river. The body has been transferred to the Rutovu hospital morgue pending identification of the victim.

- On the night of Tuesday 18 July 2023, Esperate Irakoze (33), a cashier at Hana's Halfway House in the Nyabiharage district of the political capital of Gitega, was murdered at her place of work by an as yet unidentified assailant.

According to witnesses to the gruesome discovery, the body of the deceased was discovered on Wednesday morning under a bed in one of the bedrooms of this guest house, after her colleagues noticed her absence from reception and her family's home. Her body was bound and covered in blood.

The same sources said that the victim's killer had stolen her phones and all the cash from the till, including the customer identification register.

SOS-Torture Burundi deplores the upsurge in crime linked to the targeted assassinations of people in various parts of the country. It is calling for a thorough, independent and impartial investigation to identify the perpetrators of these crimes and bring them to justice.

2. Infringement of the right to physical integrity

- On the night of Saturday 15 July 2023, at around 9 p.m., a young man known as Fabrice Havyarimana, a butcher and father of one, aged 24, was ambushed by criminals who severely beat him before amputating one of his testicles, on the hill of Rutegama, in the commune and province of Gitega (central Burundi).

Local sources said that the victim was evacuated, in a very critical condition, to Gitega regional hospital where he is receiving intensive care.

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.