

SOS-TORTURE BURUNDI REPORT NO. 411 PUBLISHED ON 29 OCTOBER 2023

This report by SOS-Torture Burundi covers the period from 21 to 28 October 2023 concerning cases of human rights violations in Burundi.

During this period, at least one (1) young boy was murdered in the province of Mwaro.

The report also deplores the cases of two (2) men who were tortured by policemen in the province of Ngozi, one (1) activist from the National Congress for Freedom (CNL) who was arbitrarily arrested and detained in the province of Rutana, and one (1) public transport driver who was abducted by police in the Bujumbura city.

1. Violation of the right to life

- SOS-Torture Burundi has learned that on the afternoon of Wednesday 18 October 2023, the lifeless body of a 13-year-old boy known as Alfred Ntirampeba was found in the Kaniga River between the Bugera and Gatsinga hills in the commune of Ndava of the Mwaro province (central Burundi).

According to witnesses to the gruesome discovery, the victim had been clubbed to death and his arms had been tied with rope. The young boy from Rango hill, in the same commune, had been missing since 14 October 2023.

SOS-Torture Burundi is calling for a thorough investigation to identify the perpetrators of the murder and bring them to justice.

2. Violations of the right to physical integrity

- On Wednesday 25 October 2023, Rodrigue Nkundimana and the man nicknamed Gisizwi were seriously injured after being severely beaten by policemen guarding the buildings of the Burundi Institute of Agronomic Sciences (ISABU) on the Gitasi hill in the commune of Mwumba, in Ngozi province (northern Burundi).

According to witnesses, the two men from the Tubindi sub-hill of the Kinyana hill in the commune and province of Ngozi were trying to gather dry grass for their stables in the fields of this institution when they were surprised by police agents who severely beat them and left them in a very critical condition.

The same witnesses revealed that the torturers demanded the sum of one hundred and fifty thousand Burundian francs (150,000 BuF) in order to free the victims.

SOS-Torture Burundi denounces the barbaric and violent behaviour of certain police agents and calls on the police and judicial authorities to initiate administrative and judicial proceedings against the perpetrators of these atrocious acts of torture so that they are punished in accordance with the law.

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

- Information reaching SOS-Torture Burundi reveals that on the night of Friday 20 October 2023, a CNL (National Congress for Freedom) party activist known as Jonathan Sinzumusi was arbitrarily arrested by the head of the Imbonerakure in his bar located on the hill, zone and commune of Giharo in Rutana province (south-east Burundi) and was taken directly to the Giharo commune prison.

According to witnesses, Jonathan Sinzumusi and his friend Elysée Niyongabo alias Cege, also a member of the CNL party, went out with their wives to quench their thirst in a bar belonging to Ernest Niyonizigiye, head of the Imbonerakure Youth League affiliated to the CNDD-FDD¹ party in the Giharo zone. While they were drinking their beer, an empty bottle accidentally fell over and broke. The bar owner took the opportunity to provoke an argument with the two CNL activists. Although the latter offered to pay for the broken bottle or replace it with another in good condition, Ernest Niyonizigiye, in complicity with his employee, attacked Jonathan Sinzumusi and took him to the local police station in Giharo, where he has been held ever since, while Elysée Niyongabo fortunately managed to escape.

SOS-Torture Burundi denounces the human rights violations committed with impunity by the Imbonerakure who benefit from administrative and police support. It calls on the police and judicial authorities to put an immediate end to this situation of arbitrary detention and to bring to justice the head of the Imbonerakure Youth League, who has arrogated to himself the power of arrest when he has no legal authority to do so.

4. Kidnapping or enforced disappearance

- At around 3 p.m. on the afternoon of Tuesday 24 October 2023, a public transport driver known as Hassan Sahinguvu was abducted from the Kinindo car park in the commune of Mukaza, in Bujumbura city (western Burundi).

According to eyewitnesses, Hassan Sahinguvu was abducted by Police Colonel Melchior Hakizimana (OPN 1240), former provincial police commissioner in Rumonge, and taken away in a grey Toyota vehicle with an unidentified number plate.

¹ National Council for the Defence of Democracy-Forces for the Defence of Democracy.



SOS – Torture/Burundi

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

SOS-Torture Burundi is calling on the police authorities to reveal the fate of Hassan Sahinguvu and to release him without delay.

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.