



SOS – Torture/Burundi

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

SOS-TORTURE BURUNDI REPORT NO. 423 PUBLISHED ON 21 JANUARY 2024

This report by SOS-Torture Burundi covers the period from 13 to 20 January 2024 concerning cases of human rights violations in Burundi.

During this period, at least three (3) people were murdered in various parts of the country.

The report also deplores the case of one (1) man who was severely tortured by Imbonerakure in the province of Bubanza.

1. Violations of the right to life

- On the night of Wednesday 18 January 2024, at around 1 a.m., a man known as Joseph Habumugisha, aged 65, was brutally murdered with a machete and an axe by Imbonerakure who found him at his home on the Nyarurinzi hill of the Buzirasazi zone, in the Murwi commune of the Cibitoke province (north-west Burundi).

According to witnesses to the macabre discovery, in addition to Joseph Habumugisha's body being covered with serious injuries, his arms had been amputated and his skull had been smashed with an axe. Although no suspects have been apprehended, the victim's neighbours have pointed the finger at the local Imbonerakure, who had sworn to murder him on accusations of witchcraft. They claimed that since these spurious accusations were made, these Imbonerakure had been spying on the victim's every move and that they passed by his home every time during their nightly rounds.

SOS-Torture Burundi denounces the crimes committed by the Imbonerakure, members of the youth league affiliated to the ruling CNDD-FDD (National Council for the Defence of Democracy-Forces for the Defence of Democracy), who have enjoyed total impunity for crimes committed over several years. It calls for a credible and thorough investigation to identify the perpetrators of Joseph Habumugisha's assassination and punish them in accordance with the law.

- On the morning of Friday 19 January 2024, the lifeless body of Moïse Nibasumba, chief of Nyarugera hill in the Munini zone of the commune and province of Bururi (southern Burundi), was discovered under the rubble of his house, which had been destroyed.

According to local sources, Moïse Nibasumba was murdered by unidentified individuals who then hid his body in the rubble in order to falsify any investigation.

- On the morning of Friday 19 January 2024, the lifeless body of a man called Bonite, aged 46, was found in a maize field at 2nd avenue in the Magarama district, in the commune and province of Gitega (central Burundi).

According to witnesses to the grisly discovery, the victim's body showed no signs of violence.

The same sources said that the cause and circumstances of Bonite's death had not been determined, and that the victim's body had been taken by the civil protection police to the morgue at Gitega regional hospital pending burial.

2. Violation of the right to physical integrity

- On the night of Friday to Saturday 13 January 2024, a man known as François Ngendakumana, aged around forty, was severely beaten and seriously injured by a group of Imbonerakure on night patrol on the Dorsal Avenue of the hill and commune of Gihanga, in Bubanza province (north-west Burundi).

According to local sources, during their night patrol, four Imbonerakure, Mwarabu, Védaste, Eddy and Muswati, armed with machetes and clubs and known in the locality for their viciousness, heard screams coming from the victim's household, as François Ngendakumana and his wife were arguing. When they arrived, he closed

the door in vain and refused to open it for them. They then broke down the door and found him in his bedroom, where they beat him violently as punishment.

The same sources said that the Imbonerakure also stole twenty-four thousand Burundian francs (24,000 BuF) from him.

SOS-Torture Burundi is asking the Burundian state authorities, in this case the President of the Republic, Évariste Ndayishimiye, to put the members of the Imbonerakure youth league in their place, as they should normally be treated like other citizens. It is asking them to treat all Burundian citizens equally, without favouritism linked to their political affiliation, contrary to what the CNDD-FDD has been doing since it came to power in 2005.

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.