

SOS-TORTURE BURUNDI REPORT NO. 426 PUBLISHED ON 11 FEBRUARY 2024

This report by SOS-Torture Burundi covers the period from 3 to 10 February 2024 concerning cases of human rights violations in Burundi.

During this period, at least two (2) people were seriously injured in the province of Gitega.

1. Violations of the right to physical integrity

On the night of Thursday 8 February 2024, at around 10 p.m., Berchmans Niyonkuru, a motorbike taxi driver and father of three, and his mother, Speciose, were severely beaten and seriously injured by a group of Imbonerakure, a youth league affiliated to the ruling CNDD-FDD party, at their home in the Nyabututsi district, in the commune and province of Gitega (central Burundi).

According to local sources, a group of young Imbonerakure led by the head of the Nyabututsi district, Pascal Mpawenayo, burst into Berchmans Niyonkuru's home and ordered him to open the door of his house and leave immediately. As soon as he came out, Berchmans Niyonkuru was greeted by three Imbonerakure named Thierry, Emile and Sylvain, including Pascal Mpawenayo, who forced him to lie on the ground, belly down, and violently beat him on the back and buttocks with sticks. They said they were punishing him because he had had a fight with his wife two days earlier.

The same sources said that his mother, who goes by the name of Speciose, tried in vain to intervene on her son's behalf to get the torturers to stop abusing him. Instead, they began to beat her and her son.



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

In the end, Berchmans Niyonkuru was evacuated the same night, in a critical condition, to the "Amis des malades" health centre in the same Nyabututsi district. SOS-Torture Burundi deplores the persistence of impunity for crimes committed by the Imbonerakure and calls on the President of the Republic, Evariste Ndayishimiye, to put an end to the situation at the root of the cases of serious human rights violations that have gone almost systematically unpunished since the advent of the CNDD-FDD party to power. Finally, it is calling on the local police to open an investigation in order to bring all those responsible for this double crime to justice and punish them 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.