

## **SOS-TORTURE BURUNDI REPORT NO. 448 PUBLISHED 14 JULY 2024**

This report by SOS-Torture Burundi covers the period from 6 to 13 July 2024 concerning cases of human rights violations in Burundi.

During this period, at least three (3) people were murdered in the provinces of Cibitoke, Kirundo and Ruyigi.

The report also deplores the cases of two (2) people who were arbitrarily arrested in Bujumbura city and in Ngozi province.

### **1. Violations of the right to life**

- On the morning of Monday 8 July 2024, farmers discovered the lifeless body of an unidentified young man in his thirties on transversal 2 of the Munyika I hill, in the commune of Rugombo of the Cibitoke province (north-west Burundi).

According to witnesses to the gruesome discovery, the decomposing body of the victim was lying on the side of an irrigation canal. Local residents believe that the young man may have been killed elsewhere, and that his body was dumped there to distort or make impossible any subsequent investigation.

SOS-Torture Burundi deplores the persistence of the phenomenon of lifeless bodies abandoned in the wild, particularly in the province of Cibitoke. It is calling for a credible and independent investigation to uncover the perpetrators of this targeted killing and thus put an end to this criminal phenomenon, which has become intractable.

- On the night of Thursday 11 July 2024, a young man known as Ntatinya died after being beaten by policemen from a position on the Kiyonza hill in the commune of Bugabira, in Kirundo province (northern Burundi).

According to local sources, this young man from the same Kiyonza hill was first arrested by the police on trumped-up charges of having released tobacco smoke in their direction. They then violently beat him on the spot before handcuffing him and taking him to the dungeon in their police station.

The same sources stated that they heard the young man's cries of distress under atrocious torture, which led to his death. The police torturers then tried to disguise the crime scene by hanging the victim's body with a rope from the roof of a house under construction, which they use as both a shelter and a dungeon. They wanted to make it look as if the young man had committed suicide, which is inconceivable given the position of the victim's body and the height from which he was suspended, with no ladder or chair nearby.

SOS-Torture Burundi is calling for an immediate and thorough investigation to identify all those responsible for the young man's murder, so that they can be brought to justice and punished in accordance with the law.

- On Saturday 13 July 2024, the lifeless body of a man known as Jean Berchmans Nzikoruriho was found in the Ruvubu National Park, which he was also guarding.

According to sources in his family, Jean Berchmans Nzikoruriho, originally from the Gishurushuru hill in the commune of Butezi of the Ruyigi province (eastern Burundi), had left his home the day before the dismal discovery to meet a man from the neighbouring province of Karusi, to whom he was supposed to deliver onion plans, but he has not returned since.

SOS-Torture Burundi is calling for an investigation to be opened to identify those responsible for the murder of Jean Bosco Nzikoruriho so that they can be brought to justice and punished in accordance with the law.

### **2. Violations of the right to freedom of movement: arbitrary arrests and detentions**

- On the afternoon of Thursday 11 July 2024, at around 1 p.m., David Nzeye, a computer specialist at the Data Processing Centre of the Ministry of the Civil Service, Labour and Employment (MFPTE), was arrested by agents of the National Service Intelligence (SNR) and taken to a cell at the SNR headquarters in the Rohero zone of Bujumbura city (western Burundi).

According to witnesses, when David Nzeye was arrested without a warrant, he was found in his department despite having sent a letter of resignation to the Minister for the Civil Service on 5 July because of the threats he was receiving in the performance of his duties. In fact, his former superior had asked him to report to the department that day to provide a full explanation of the reason for his recent resignation.

SOS-Torture Burundi condemns the SNR's failure to comply with the rules of the Code of Criminal Procedure when depriving people of their liberty. The SNR has a reputation for unscrupulous human rights violations.

- On the night of Wednesday 10 July 2024, at around 7 p.m., a trader known as Prosper Nzosabimana was abducted in the town of Ngozi (northern Burundi) at a place called "Kuri Ferme" by Imbonerakure in a white Toyota Hilux double cab pick-up truck with tinted windows and no number plates, who then drove him to the SNR cell in Ngozi.

According to witnesses, Prosper Nzosabimana (see photo below), from the hill of Gitongo in the commune of Bugendana, in Gitega province, was abducted by Imbonerakure led by their chief in the new province of Butanyerera, Jean Bosco Ndayishimiye, including a much-feared Imbonerakure in Ngozi, nicknamed Cokumpa.



SOS-Torture Burundi has learned that Prosper Nzosabimana was transferred the day after his arrest to SNR headquarters.

It denounces the anarchy and amalgam in the execution of judicial police missions in Burundi where, according to the law of criminal procedure or other specific texts, no role is assigned to members of the youth league affiliated to the ruling party, the CNDD-FDD<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> 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 was set up to inform 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 provide information on the realities of the country followed the carnage of around a hundred people killed on 11 December and 12 December 2015 by police and soldiers on the pretext of pursuing rebels who had just attacked military camps on the outskirts of the capital.

The areas affected are said to be those contesting President Nkurunziza's third term in office, namely Musaga, Mutakura, Cibitoke, Nyakabiga and Jabe, the last two being located in the centre of Bujumbura city.

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