



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. 455 PUBLISHED ON 1 SEPTEMBER 2024

This report by SOS-Torture Burundi covers the period from 24 to 31 August 2024 concerning cases of human rights violations in Burundi.

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

The report also deplores the cases of two (2) people who were seriously injured with sticks by Imbonerakure in the province of Bubanza and the case of one (1) person who was arbitrarily arrested and detained by Imbonerakure¹ in the province of Rumonge.

1. Violations of the right to life

- On the night of Monday 26 August 2024, at around 11 p.m., Mpawenimana Charles, aged 67, and his wife Ndayisavyimana Frédiane, aged 52, were murdered with machetes by unidentified individuals who surprised them in the middle of their sleep at their home on the Rwamagashwa sub-hill on the Nyempundu hill, in the Nyamakarabo zone, in the commune of Mugina of the Cibitoke province (north-west Burundi).

According to local sources, the victims had been accused of witchcraft and, as a result, had been receiving death threats for some time. Residents of Nyempundu point the finger at young Imbonerakure men because they have often been seen in recent days, in the late hours of the night, close to the home of the deceased.

SOS-Torture Burundi is calling for a thorough and impartial investigation to clarify the circumstances of the couple's murder and to identify the perpetrators of the double crime so that they can be brought to justice and punished under the law.

¹ Members of the youth league affiliated to the ruling party, the National Council for the Defence of Democracy-Forces for the Defence of Democracy (CNDD-FDD).

- On the afternoon of Friday 30 August 2024, the lifeless body of an unidentified girl was found in a gutter (see photo below) beside the RN3 (national road no. 3) Bujumbura-Rumonge, close to the shore of Lake Tanganyika, on the hill of Rutunga, in the commune of Muhuta in the Rumonge province (south-west Burundi).



According to witnesses to the gruesome discovery, the girl had been raped by her perpetrators before being murdered, as her underwear was lying next to the victim's body. In addition, the deceased was wearing a catheter on her left arm, suggesting that the victim had been dragged from her hospital bed before being murdered and dumped there.

SOS-torture Burundi is calling for a thorough investigation to identify the circumstances and the perpetrators of this girl's murder, so that they can be brought to justice and punished in accordance with the law.

2. Violation of the right to physical integrity

- On the night of Sunday 25 August 2024, a man named Joseph Ndabakandiye and a blind man known as Nyampunyi were severely beaten by Imbonerakure on night patrol led by men named Eddy and Mwarabu in the village of Ragaza in the Gihanga hill and zone of the Mpanda commune, in the province of Bubanza (north-west Burundi) and were evacuated in a critical condition to a local health facility, where they have since been hospitalised.

According to local sources, these Imbonerakure burst into Nyampunyi's home, after breaking down the door, and asked him where his son was, who, according to their allegations, had thrown stones at them. As his son was not at home, the Imbonerakure began to beat Nyampunyi violently and seriously injured his face.

The same sources said that Nyampunyi's cries of distress alerted his neighbour Joseph Ndabakandiye, who had to intervene. The same Imbonerakure also beat him, particularly in the kidneys.

SOS-Torture Burundi deplores the impunity surrounding the acts of institutionalised violence committed by the Imbonerakure, who believe they can do whatever they like since the CNDD-FDD party came to power.

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

- SOS-Torture Burundi has received information that on the morning of 20 August 2024, at around 10 a.m., Désiré Nzisabira, a representative of the Sahwanya FRODEBU² party in the Kigwena zone of the commune and province of Rumonge (south-west Burundi), was arbitrarily arrested by Imbonerakure on the hill of Mayengo in the same zone, on the orders of the chief of the hill.

According to witnesses, Désiré Nzisabira was first held hostage in a shop for the whole day before being transferred to a cell in the Kigwena zone.

The same sources stated that Désiré Nzisabira was arrested because of his political affiliation, in particular because he refused to pay a forced contribution to finance the CNDD-FDD party's election campaign.

SOS-Torture Burundi has learned that Désiré Nzisabira was released the next day on the orders of Augustin Minani, the local administrator of Rumonge, after spending the night in detention in the Kigwena zone.

It condemns the forced contributions being made throughout the country to finance the next election campaign of the ruling party, and calls on the President of the Republic, Evariste Ndayishimiye, to order the immediate cessation of these illegal operations, which are exacerbating the impoverishment of a population grappling with an unprecedented economic crisis.

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

² Front of Democracy in Burundi



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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.