



## 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. 456 PUBLISHED ON 8 SEPTEMBER 2024**

This report by SOS-Torture Burundi covers the period from 31 August to 7 September 2024 concerning cases of human rights violations in Burundi.

During this period, at least five (5) people were seriously injured by Imbonerakure<sup>1</sup> in the provinces of Gitega and Rutana.

The report also deplores the case of one (1) person who was abducted in the province of Muyinga.

#### **1. Violations of the right to physical integrity**

- On Saturday 31 August 2024, four CNL<sup>2</sup> party activists, Claver Bampamirubusa, Gasindi, Minani and Daniel, were severely beaten by the CNDD-FDD party's secretary on Butezi hill, known as Jean Bosco Ciza, in collusion with the head of the Imbonerakure on this hill in the commune of Giharo in Rutana province (south-east Burundi).

According to witnesses, the four CNL activists were beaten because of their political affiliation, as their attackers accused them of being the cause of the disrespect shown to them by the residents of the hill following the messages given by CNL leaders in the locality.

The same sources said that the two Imbonerakure also extorted a sum of forty thousand Burundian francs (40,000 BuF) and a notebook used to record the contributions of members of a community association. They even lodged a complaint with the chief of the Butezi hill, but the case was dismissed.

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<sup>1</sup> 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).

<sup>2</sup>National Congress for Freedom.

SOS-Torture Burundi deplores the political intolerance that militants of the ruling CNDD-FDD party display with impunity towards militants of opposition political parties, and fears that this situation will be exacerbated during next year's electoral process.

- According to information received by SOS-Torture Burundi, on the afternoon of Friday 30 August 2024, a motorbike taxi driver called Jules Irankunda was severely speared by a young Imbonerakure man known as Kassim Ndihereye in the commune of Mutaho in the province of Gitega (central Burundi).

According to witnesses, the motorbike drivers, including the victim, were discussing their experiences of driving motorbikes in the presence of Kassim Ndihereye. At a certain point, however, he withdrew from the group and, some time later, returned with a spear in his hand. Kassim Ndihereye immediately went towards Jules Iradukunda and, for no apparent reason, threw a spear at his ribs.

The same sources said that the victim was quickly evacuated to the Mutaho health centre before being transferred to Mutoyi hospital for appropriate treatment.

SOS-Torture Burundi has learned that Kassim Ndihereye was directly arrested by the police and taken to the dungeon of the Mutaho police station, where he spent just two hours before being released.

It deplores the impunity that surrounds acts of violence committed by the Imbonerakure, which comforts the imbonerakure in their dirty work. It calls for the re-arrest of the perpetrator of the grievous bodily harm so that he can be tried and punished in accordance with the law.

### 2. Kidnapping or enforced disappearance

- On the night of Saturday 1 September 2024, at around 2 a.m., a retired policeman known as Gratien Macumi, aged 50, was abducted by three uniformed men from the Burundi National Police (PNB) from the capital of the commune and province of Muyinga (north-east Burundi), who drove him in a white Toyota Hilux double-cabin van with tinted windows to an unknown destination.

According to local sources, the kidnappers found Gratien Macumi and his colleague working as night watchmen at the Burundi Road Agency (ARB) in Muyinga province. Two policemen came up to them and asked them, in a threatening tone, how they dared to sleep while thieves were taking the agency's equipment. Gratien Macumi and his colleague went to check the equipment they were guarding but found nothing wrong. The policemen then invited them to come closer to the vehicle to show them some of the stolen equipment that had already been seized, but to their great surprise there was nothing there. When the policemen forced them into the vehicle, Gratien Macumi and his colleague tried to escape. Unfortunately, Gratien Macumi, a father of seven from the hill of Kagugo in the commune of Giteranyi, in the same province of Muyinga, was caught and taken away in the vehicle to an unknown destination.

The same sources said that members of his family had searched unsuccessfully for him in the dungeons of the police and the National Intelligence Service (SNR), and had even confided in the local administration without any reassuring response. SOS-Torture Burundi deplores the upsurge in kidnappings followed by enforced disappearances being committed throughout the country by people in PNB uniforms in Toyota Hilux double-cabin vans with tinted windows. It calls on the Head of State, Evariste Ndayishimiye, to order an end to this recurring phenomenon, which has brought grief to so many Burundian families, and to demand a credible investigation to identify all the perpetrators and punish them in accordance with the law.



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SOS-Torture/Burundi was set up 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 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.