



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. 458 PUBLISHED ON 22 SEPTEMBER 2024

This report by SOS-Torture Burundi covers the period from 15 to 21 September 2024 concerning cases of human rights violations in Burundi.

During this period, at least one (1) person was violently beaten and seriously injured in Bujumbura city.

The report also deplores the case of five (5) people who were abducted by agents of the National Intelligence Service (SNR) in the provinces of Cibitoke and Cankuzo and the case of two (2) people who were arbitrarily arrested and detained in the province of Makamba.

1. Violation of the right to physical integrity

- On the night of 14 September 2024, a young imbonerakure¹ of the CNDD-FDD nicknamed Karagabuye, bodyguard of the chief of the Jabe I district of the Mukaza commune in Bujumbura town hall known as Aline Niyonzima, was severely beaten by Léon Fidèle Mujakazi.

According to information received by SOS-Torture Burundi, the chief of the Jabe I district was with her concubine Léon Fidèle Mujakazi and Karagabuye in a bistro located on the Jabe basketball court. As usual, Léon Fidèle Mujakazi gave Karagabuye his phone to keep. After a while, Karagabuye moved to his house near the Interbank Jabe branch. It was then that Mujakazi suspected the young Imbonerakure of being a thief and set off in pursuit.

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

When he got close to the Interbank, he found him on the road and asked him why he had stolen his phone. Suddenly, before he had an answer, he stabbed him in the neck with a large knife he was carrying with the intention of killing him.

People near the scene came to his aid and called the police, who came and arrested him. The victim was taken to the Jabe health center.

According to information received by SOS-Torture Burundi, the head of the zone is doing everything in her power to free her concubine, who is imprisoned in the Bwiza zone dungeon. The people of the Jabe district are calling on the courts to punish the alleged perpetrator by the law, given that this is not the first time he has committed acts of barbarism under the protection of this district chief.

SOS-Torture Burundi deplores the impunity surrounding the repeated human rights violations committed by the Imbonerakure, who are supported or encouraged by the deafening silence of the administrative, police and judicial authorities about their abuses.

It calls on the relevant State authorities to take concrete measures to put an end to the human rights violations regularly committed by the youth of the ruling party, in order to restore and establish a climate of peaceful cohabitation between all citizens, without favouritism or discrimination on political grounds.

2. Cases of abduction or enforced disappearance

- On the afternoon of Sunday 15 September 2024, at around 5 p.m., four militants of the Conseil Des Patriotes² (CDP) party, Mao Ndikukazi, Elysée, Hamza and another whose name has not been revealed, were arrested at the “Hôtel Jaune” in the capital of the province of Cibitoke (north-west of the country) where they were quenching their thirst.

² Patriots' Council.

According to eyewitnesses, the four CDP activists were arrested by the Rugombo market commissioner, Elias, head of the CNDD-FDD-affiliated Imbonerakure youth movement in the commune of Rugombo, in collaboration with agents of the National Intelligence Service (SNR) in Cibitoke.

According to the same sources, the four CDP activists were accused of holding an illegal meeting and were taken manu militari by the provincial police commissioner to an unknown location. Their families have searched for them in the province's dungeons, but to no avail, and are calling for their immediate and unconditional release.

SOS-Torture Burundi deplores the resurgence of political intolerance less than a year away from the 2025 legislative, communal and hill elections.

It also deplores the upsurge in cases of abduction followed by enforced disappearance, particularly in the province of Cibitoke since the beginning of this year, most often committed by SNR agents or officials of the ruling CNDD-FDD party.

- On the night of Monday 16 September 2024, at around 11 p.m., a man known as Philippe Ntamakiriro, aged 36, leader of the CNL³ party pro Rwaswa in the commune of Mishiha, living on the Mwiruzi hill and zone in the commune of Mishiha of the Cankuzo province (eastern Burundi), was attacked and abducted from his home by a group of CNDD-FDD militants.

According to local sources, the abduction was carried out by Philippe Munyaneza, former secretary of the CNDD-FDD party on Mwiruzi hill, Antoine Mugerinkoko, head of the sub-hill and three imbonerakure known as Ntore, Ndayisaba and Ngabo.

³ National Congress for Freedom.

According to the same sources, the kidnappers tried to imitate his younger brother's voice to trick him into leaving, but he refused. They then broke down the door and took him by force, although members of his family tried in vain to alert everyone around them, including the administrator of Mushiha commune, Frédéric Nzoyisaba, and the governor of Cankuzo province, Boniface Banyiyezako. In the end, the victim was driven away in a black Jeep PRADO that was parked not far from his house. His family searched all the dungeons in Cankuzo province for him the following day, without success.

SOS-Torture Burundi deplores the upsurge in cases of abduction followed by enforced disappearance committed throughout the country by PNB uniformed personnel and young imbonerakure. It calls on the Head of State, Evariste Ndayishimiye, to order a halt to this recurring phenomenon, which has brought so many Burundian families into mourning, and to demand a credible investigation to identify all the perpetrators and punish them in accordance with the law.

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

- According to information received by SOS-Torture Burundi, two of the four women arrested on 11 September 2024 in the main town of Mabanda commune have been transferred to the Makamba prosecutor's cell in the south of the country. They had been accused of itinerant fuel trading.

At the time of their transfer to the provincial prosecutor's cell, there were four of them: Claudine Niyongere, Joselyne Nizigama, Julienne Niyukuri and Divine Nimbabazi. Only Julienne Niyukuri and Divine Nimbabazi remain in detention.

According to local sources, this was an arbitrary arrest targeting these women for other reasons, as only 5 liters had been seized by the police at this location, not from these four women.



SOS - Torture/Burundi

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

The public is calling for the immediate release of these women, who have been arbitrarily imprisoned, and for a thorough and meticulous investigation to identify the real fuel traffickers and punish them in accordance with the law.

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.