

## **SOS-TORTURE Burundi REPORT NO. 470 PUBLISHED ON 15 DECEMBER 2024**

This report by SOS-Torture Burundi covers the period from 7 to 14 December 2024 and documents cases of human rights violations in Burundi.

During this period, five (5) people were murdered in the provinces of Cibitoke, Gitega and Kirundo.

The report also mentions the case of one (1) person seriously injured by a hill leader and members of the Imbonerakure in the province of Bubanza, as well as the kidnappings of three (3) people in the town hall and the province of Bujumbura.

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

- On Saturday, December 7, 2024, at nightfall, individuals who had gone to pick wild vegetables and fruits in the Kibira forest discovered two lifeless bodies, those of a man and his wife, whose names have not been identified. The discovery was made on the hill of Myave, in the area of Ndora, commune of Bukinanyana, province of Cibitoke.  
According to eyewitnesses, the two decomposing bodies were tied up and hung from a tree with ropes. They were reportedly killed by Rwandan rebels based in the Kibira nature reserve.

The same sources specify that the communal administrator of Bukinanyana sent the chief of the Ndora zone, accompanied by members of the Imbonerakure, to ascertain the facts and supervise the burial ceremonies, which took place on the same day.

SOS-Torture Burundi calls for a thorough investigation to identify the circumstances of these killings and their perpetrators, so that they can be prosecuted and punished in accordance with the law.

- On Saturday, December 7, 2024, in the afternoon, the lifeless body of an unidentified woman was found in the Mubarazi River, below Gatongo Hill, Mutaho commune, Gitega province.

According to eyewitnesses, the victim's body had facial injuries. He was rescued by civil protection police officers and buried on the orders of the local administration.

- On Saturday, December 7, 2024, during the day, the lifeless body of Joseph Ndohoye, 66 years old and father of five, was discovered in the Waga River, Ryansoro commune, Gitega province.

According to neighbors, Joseph Ndohoye had been missing since November 30, 2024. He was reportedly killed by unidentified individuals, who then threw his body into the Waga River in order to cover his tracks and hinder a possible investigation.

SOS-Torture Burundi calls for the opening of a thorough investigation to identify the perpetrators of this crime and bring them to justice so that they can be punished in accordance with the law.

- On Friday, December 13, 2024, at around 1:30 p.m., the lifeless body of a 45-year-old man known as Sibomana, alias Gapoco, was found in a bean field located in a eucalyptus forest, near the parish of Kanyinya, in Kirundo commune and province.

According to eyewitnesses, the body of Sibomana, who was originally from Nyange-Bushaza hill but lived on Rambo hill in the same Kirundo commune, showed signs of severe violence, including bruises caused by blows from sticks all over his body:

The same sources indicate that Sibomana was killed by two men: Marc Nduwamahoro, 40 years old (CNDD-FDD communal treasurer in Kirundo and

manager at the Vumbi District Health Office), and Jean Baptiste Ntezukwigira, 50 years old.

Both men were arrested by the Kirundo Judicial Police and are currently being held in the Kirundo Prosecutor's Office's dungeon. They confessed to beating Sibomana after catching him stealing a bunch of bananas, potatoes and ears of maize from Marc Nduwamahoro's property.

SOS-Torture Burundi calls for an impartial investigation into Sibomana's murder, so that those responsible can be prosecuted and punished in accordance with the law.

## 2. Violation of the right to physical integrity

- On Tuesday, December 10, 2024, in the morning, the chief of the hill of Gahwazi I, located in the Butanuka area, Mpanda commune, Bubanza province, in collaboration with a dozen Imbonerakure, seriously tortured and seriously injured a bicycle taxi driver named Athanase Kwizera, 27 years old and from Kayanza province.
- According to eyewitnesses, the Imbonerakure arrested Athanase Kwizera, claiming that they did not know him in the locality. They then called on the head of the hill of Gahwazi I, Espérance Minani (see her photo below).



Upon arriving at the scene, she ordered the Imbonerakure to violently beat Athanase Kwizera. They then brutally beat him, including the hill leader, using reinforcing bars all over his body, especially on his buttocks and arms (see photos of his injuries below).





According to the same sources, Athanase Kwizera was saved in extremis by passers-by, who also alerted the police of the commune of Mpanda. He was then evacuated to Mpanda Hospital, where he was admitted in critical condition to the Surgery Department, Room 3.

SOS-Torture Burundi calls for the arrest of all perpetrators of the acts of torture inflicted on Athanase Kwizera, so that they can be brought to justice and punished in accordance with the law.

### **2. Cases of abduction or enforced disappearance**

- On Monday, December 9, 2024, at 10:15 p.m., unidentified individuals, armed with pistols, abducted a young man named Schadrack Nzitunga, nicknamed Chado, and a young girl named Nelly Lynca Dushime in the Nyabugete neighborhood (Phase 3), Kanyosha area, near a pharmacy called "Yacu Pharmacy", in Muha commune, Bujumbura town hall.

According to witnesses, the kidnappers intercepted the two young people while they were in the Premium brand vehicle, registered KA 1515, belonging to Schadrack Nzitunga, a resident of the Gasekebuye district in the same commune.

The kidnappers, dressed in civilian clothes, threatened them with their pistols before forcing them into a Probox vehicle, registered LA 7943, which they used to take them to an unknown destination. In addition, one of the kidnappers seized Schadrack Nzitunga's vehicle.

- On Tuesday, December 10, 2024, at dawn, individuals in uniform of the Burundi National Police (PNB) abducted a man named Sheikh Seif Ramadhani, 42 years old and father of 12 children, in the Maramvya neighborhood, on transversal 14 (Buhomba locality), Mutimbuzi commune, Bujumbura province. They took him in a white Toyota Hilux double-cab van with tinted windows, similar to those used by provincial officials of the National Intelligence Service (SNR), to an unknown destination.

According to family members, Sheikh Seif Ramadhani had gotten up, as usual, to go pray with his son. However, as they left the house, police officers who were waiting for Ramadhani forced him into their vehicle, claiming that they were taking him to the Maramvya area.

Since that day, his family has searched in vain for him in the dungeons of the police and the SNR.

SOS-Torture Burundi urges the General Administration of the SNR to reveal the fate of Nelly Lynca Dushime, Schadrack Nzitunga and Sheikh Seif Ramadhani, as well as the whereabouts where they may be detained.



## 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 initiated with the aim of informing national and international opinion about the serious human rights violations underway in Burundi through monitoring reports, particularly on torture, arbitrary arrests, enforced disappearances, sexual violence and summary executions.

This initiative to inform about the realities of the country followed the carnage of a hundred people killed during the day of December 11 and December 12, 2015 by police and soldiers under the pretext of pursuing rebels who had just attacked military camps located on the outskirts of the capital.

The affected areas are said to be protest areas of President Nkurunziza's third term, namely Musaga, Mutakura, Cibitoke, Nyakabiga, Jabe, the last two being located in the center of the Bujumbura City Hall.