



## Mouvement des Femmes et Filles pour la Paix et la Sécurité

### **BURUNDIAN WOMEN DEMAND JUSTICE**

Since 26 April 2015, following the peaceful demonstrations to challenge Pierre NKURUNZIZA's candidacy for the 3rd mandate in violation of the Arusha Agreement signed on 28 August 2000, the Burundian people have since lived in violence and terror.

Burundi is sinking more and more into a fascist authoritarian regime that has forced more than 400,000 people to flee. Most are women and children. Other hundreds are victims of assassinations, extrajudicial killings, forced disappearances, inhuman treatment of the innocent people such as: torture, sexual abuse of all kinds, and so on.

Among the victims, there are always women and children, from all ethnic groups, religions, and political tendencies. They are our martyrs, and their memory will remain, forever, engraved in our hearts.

The report of the United Nations Commission of Inquiry on Burundi presented its report in Geneva on 19 September 2017 at the 36th session of the Human Rights Council. It describes the extent and severity of the violations, which resulted in serious physical and psychological consequences for the victims, and that most of these violations were committed by members of the national intelligence service, the police, army and the youth league of the ruling party, known as the "Imbonerakure". Today more than ever, our only message is: "BURUNDIAN WOMEN CLAIM JUSTICE".

#### **Some illustrative cases:**

##### **ASSASSINATIONS AND EXTRAJUDICIARY EXECUTIONS: THE HORROR**

***Mrs Charlotte Umugwaneza*<sup>1</sup>, Vice-President of MSD political party in CIBITOKÉ urban area. She disappeared on October 15<sup>th</sup> 2015, her body horribly tortured found two days later**



Charlotte is the first political woman figure to be horribly executed. Family members were informed that she was abducted by elements of National Intelligence service to unknown destination they will not manage to locate until the images of her dead body began to circulate on social media.

<sup>1</sup> <http://mffpsburundi.org/hommage-temoignages-sur-les-femmes-victimes-de-la-repression-nkurunziza-cas-de-umugwaneza-charlotte/>



## Mouvement des Femmes et Filles pour la Paix et la Sécurité

***Mrs Hafsa MOSSI<sup>2</sup>, Member of the East African Legislative Assembly, EALA, murdered on 13 July 2016.***



Mrs. MOSSI, was the communication advisor and spokesman for President Nkurunziza before taking up other posts. A moderate figure of the ruling CNDD-FDD, she was murdered on July 13, 2016. A moving tribute was paid to her by her colleagues from EALA and the National Democratic Institute (NDI) during its campaign "NOT THE COST" aimed at combating violence against women in politics

***Aline MASAMVYA<sup>3</sup>, the bereaved mother lost her twin sons and their father children on the same day***



Pantheon HAKIZIMANA and the twins Fleury and Frank HAKIZIMANA 23 years old were brutally murdered on the morning of 1 July 2015 by the elements of the national army. When this tragedy occurred, Mrs. MASAMVYA was abroad. This national holiday in Burundi is now and forever a day of mourning and distress for this mother.



The report of the United Nations Commission of Inquiry on Burundi<sup>4</sup> reveals many cases of Burundian citizens who have been executed since April 2015. The situation has not changed, up to today and every day, dead bodies are found regularly, some thrown into the rivers.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.jeuneafrique.com/341391/politique/burundi-assassinat-de-deputee-hafsa-mossi-figure-moderee-cndd-fdd/>

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ih\\_Wp5mL5iM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ih_Wp5mL5iM)

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/ColBurundi/Pages/ColBurundiReportHRC36.aspx>



## Mouvement des Femmes et Filles pour la Paix et la Sécurité

### KIDNAPPING AND FORCED DISAPPEARANCES

***Christa Bénigne IRAKOZE, head of the women's branch of the SAHWANYA-FRODEBU Party in the Province of Bujumbura.***



She disappeared at the same time as Eddy Claude NDABANEZE former officer of the Burundian Army (ex-FAB and FDN), on December 29, 2015.

Mrs. IRAKOZE was one of the mobilizers of the march of women against the third mandate of NKURUNZIZA on 10 and 13 May 2015. The investigations carried out by a Burundian civil society organization FOCODE<sup>5</sup> reveal that before her death, Bénigne underwent through heavy interrogations and all kinds of torture, including humiliating sexual abuse.

***Marie Claudette Kwizera, Treasurer of the Human Rights League ITEKA, arrested on 10 December 2015, disappeared<sup>6</sup>***



On 10 December 2015, around 6 pm, Mrs. KWIZERA was arrested near the Central Polyclinic in Bujumbura. According to witnesses, she was allegedly forced to get into a National Intelligence Service (SNR) car and since that date she cannot be found

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.focode.org/declaration-du-focode-du-10-fevrier-2016/>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.fidh.org/fr/themes/defenseurs-des-droits-humains/burundi-sans-nouvelle-de-marie-claudette-kwizera>



## Mouvement des Femmes et Filles pour la Paix et la Sécurité

### ***Emelyne NDAYISHIMIYE : double family tragedy<sup>7</sup>***



Alexis Nkunzimana was abducted on December 7, 2015. The next day, his wife suffered the same fate. The husband was a member of the MSD political party and was employed in a forex exchange bureau in Bujumbura. Mrs. NDAYISHIMIYE was a merchant and did not militate in any political party. The couple had just returned from exile, and left a one-year old infant orphan

### **SEXUAL VIOLENCE: DEHUMANIZATION**

*Mrs Yvonne<sup>8</sup>*, was a teacher in the Muramvya province. Her husband had just fled the country some days before. She testifies:

After my husband fled Burundi, policemen and Imbonerakures came often to ask me where he is. They told me: "We know that your husband went in Rwanda, he went to learn how to handle weapons and come back to kill us". But I refused to tell them where he is because if I stay silent or if I speak, they will not spare me either way. After learning of the threats against me, my husband asked me to organize myself to join him.

As I was preparing to flee with my children, the policemen came back and took me to the police station. They put me in a cell where I was isolated. The policemen were taking turns threatening me to kill me if I did not to tell them where my husband was.

One night, these policemen dragged me to a small house. They undressed me and tied my feet with ropes. There were three of them.

They took turns to rape me. I suffered tremendously. A fourth policeman also came to abuse me but recognized me, and he decided to help me run away to Bukeye (nearest small country city) because he knew that they were going to kill me. He gave me back my clothes, detached me.

In Bukeye, my children joined me and we were finally able to flee Burundi and join my husband in Rwanda. I am relieved that my husband did not reject me because he knows that I am only a victim. It took me a while before I could agree to testify because I was worried for my family who remained in Burundi after we fled.

Since then, I am very unwell and often sick, but doctors comfort me. Another issue /consequence of my horrible experience are affecting my intimate relationship with my husband. I remember everything I went through and I feel ashamed. But, thank God, he understands, and it alleviates my suffering<sup>9</sup>

The case of Yvonne, on sexual violence is not an isolated case. The report of the Commission of Inquiry has documented hundreds of them. Those who are most targeted are particularly the women of the "opponents" of the regime, members of the civil society, but also ordinary citizens, by Imbonerakures. In addition, speeches of hatred and incitement to rape are pronounced by some state authorities and members of the ruling party, which was illustrated by a video that circulated in

<sup>7</sup> <http://imboneza.blogspot.be/2017/08/burundi-disparition-forcee-du-couple.html>

<sup>8</sup> Anonymous name for security reasons

<sup>9</sup> Testimony from a woman leaving in Mahama refugee camp on the 8<sup>th</sup> March 2016, international women's day.



## Mouvement des Femmes et Filles pour la Paix et la Sécurité

April 2017. It shows a hundred Imbonerakures singing a song inciting them to forcedly impregnate opponents so that they can give birth to more Imbonerakures<sup>10</sup>.

### THE CALVARY OF A WIFE OF AN IMBONERAKURE

**Vanessa Elaine KANEZA<sup>11</sup>: wife of an active imbonerakure who was abducted on 25/05/2017**



She testifies: "My husband was a well-known imbonerakure named Aimé Aloys MANIRAKIZA nicknamed MUSAGA. He was often involved in the crimes committed on opponents of the NKURUNZIZA regime, especially in the urban area of MUSAGA. He had received weapons and other military effects such as military uniforms and boots. This did not prevent it from disappearing on 25/5/2017. I am afraid that some Imbonerakures will attack me because I have already received threats from them. I am also worried about the families and friends of my husband's victims who may take revenge on me or worse, on my children. This is one of many consequences falling on us women due to our husbands' actions. Now I am wandering with my two children and another to come. I wonder if my husband is alive or not.

### OUR CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Women and Girls Movement for Peace and Security in Burundi, MFFPS:

- 1) Sends an alarming call on the extreme gravity of the crisis in Burundi and neighbouring countries. One of the last tragedies is the ignoble massacre perpetrated against Burundian refugees in a refugee camp in Kamanyola, Democratic Republic of Congo, on 15 September 2017.
- 2) Denounces the draft revision of the Code of Criminal Procedure, adopted by the Government of Burundi at the Council of Ministers on 16 May 2017. This project authorizes the night search, a form of legalization of serious violations of human rights in this case sexual abuse of women, theft and arbitrary arrest.

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=21505&LangID=E>

<sup>11</sup> The picture with her two hidden kids was taken at her arrival at Rwandan- Burundian border



## Mouvement des Femmes et Filles pour la Paix et la Sécurité

- 3) Denounces the draft revision of the Constitution before the conclusion of the inter-Burundi dialogue.
- 4) Also denounces the proposed establishment of a body of national volunteers who may legalize the Imbonerakure militia
- 5) Thanks to the United Nations Commission of Inquiry for Human Rights in Burundi for revealing to the world what thousands of Burundians endure in Burundi and in exile. We would also like to thank all those who participated in the preparation of this report. For this reason, the MFFPS supports the renewal of the mandate of this commission to enable it to deepen its work.
- 6) Calls for justice for the victims of the crisis in Burundi, the majority of whom are women and children, as the result is bitter: Burundian justice is not in a position to conduct impartial investigations and to try those responsible for crimes in progress. The MFFPS therefore supports the recommendation of the International Criminal Court to investigate crimes committed since 2015.
- 7) Supports the peaceful and inclusive inter-Burundi dialogue bringing all the stakeholders of the crisis (in exile and in Burundi) around the same table, for a peaceful resolution of the conflict. We therefore support the work of the mediation conducted by President Yoweri Museveni and the facilitator former President Benjamin Mkapa.
- 8) We pay tribute to all the victims of the Burundi conflict and pledge to work for justice, as impunity is the root cause of the cycles of violence in Burundi.

### Contact :

Email : [antenneeurope@mffpsburundi.org](mailto:antenneeurope@mffpsburundi.org)

Tweet @mffpsbdi (Barundikazi)

Facebook : ' Barundikazi – MFFPS'