

SOS-TORTURE Burundi REPORT NO. 490 PUBLISHED ON 4 MAY 2025

This report by SOS-Torture Burundi covers the period from 26 April to 3 May 2025 and documents cases of human rights violations committed in Burundi.

During this period, three (3) people were murdered in Bubanza province.

The report also notes the case of one (1) journalist who was severely tortured and kidnapped at the Mutanga campus, in Bujumbura City Hall by student representatives of the University of Burundi and that of one (1) woman who is arbitrarily detained with her child in the province of Gitega.

1. Violation of the right to life

- On Tuesday, April 29, 2025, at around 10 p.m., a uniformed police officer, Jean Claude Bizimana, nicknamed "Kirenge", shot dead his colleague Egide Bashirahishize as well as a young woman, Léa Nijimbere, an employee of the New Star bistro, whom the two men coveted. He then committed suicide by shooting himself in the head.

This triple homicide, motivated by an obsession with love, occurred in the New Star bistro, located a few hundred meters from the provincial office, not far from the presidential palace of Bubanza.

According to eyewitnesses, Lea Nijimbere was preparing to marry Egide Bashirahishize, after rejecting the advances of the perpetrator of the crime. She was fatally shot while sharing a drink with her fiancé, and died hours later after being rushed to Bubanza Hospital.

SOS-Torture Burundi urges the authorities of the Burundi National Police to put an end to the impunity that plagues this corps, which already has a tainted past, and to take the necessary measures to restore discipline within it, in order to restore trust, which is now in sharp decline, between Burundian citizens and the security forces.

2. Violation of the right to physical integrity

- On Monday, April 28, 2025, at around 10 a.m., six student representatives of the University of Burundi, on the Mutanga campus, violently assaulted Bonesha FM radio journalist Willy Kwizera while he was reporting on the living conditions of students in their residences.

According to his testimony, Willy Kwizera (see photo below) was severely tortured with rifle butts and truncheons, then sequestered for more than two hours in Pavilion IX, the headquarters of the student representation. He sustained serious injuries to his neck, back, ribs, legs and face, and is currently in critical condition and in hospital bedridden.

His attackers also threatened him with death if he dared to reveal what he had suffered.



SOS-Torture Burundi demands the immediate opening of an independent and impartial investigation to identify the perpetrators of these acts of torture and bring them to justice without delay.

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

- Since Friday, April 26, 2025, a young woman named Goreth Niyibizi, in her thirties, and her three-month-old infant, have been arbitrarily detained by the police in a container used as a makeshift dungeon, at the Mutoyi police station on Cishwa hill, Bugendana commune, in the province of Gitega.

According to family members, Goreth Niyibizi was arbitrarily arrested at her home by three unidentified men, in place of her husband, who fled after being involved in a motorcycle accident where he allegedly hit a local child.

This arbitrary detention also constitutes a serious violation of the principle of criminal responsibility, according to which *"criminal responsibility is personal; no one is punishable except by reason of his own act."*¹

¹ Article 18 of Law No. 1/27 of 29 December 2017 revising the Criminal Code.



SOS - Torture/Burundi

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

SOS-Torture Burundi demands the immediate release of Goreth Niyibizi and his child, who are being held arbitrarily and in inhumane conditions, as well as the opening of an impartial investigation with a view to identifying and punishing the perpetrators of this violation, in accordance with the law.

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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.