

SOS-TORTURE Burundi REPORT NO. 492 PUBLISHED ON 18 MAY 2025

This report by SOS-Torture Burundi covers the period from 10 to 17 May 2025 and documents cases of human rights violations committed in Burundi.

During this period, three (3) people were murdered in Bujumbura City Hall.

The report also denounces cases of torture and serious injuries inflicted on at least three (3) people by agents of the National Intelligence Service (SNR) and members of the youth league of the CNDD-FDD party, the Imbonerakure, in the province of Ngozi and in the Bujumbura town hall.

1. Violation of the right to life

- On Monday, May 12, 2025, a lifeless body of an unidentified man was discovered lying in the waters of Lake Tanganyika in the Nyabugete IV district, Kanyosha area, Muha commune, in Bujumbura City Hall.

According to eyewitnesses, the victim's body had his feet and arms tied together.

SOS-Torture Burundi demands the opening of a thorough investigation in order to establish the circumstances of the murder, identify the perpetrators and bring them to justice in accordance with the law.

- On Friday, May 15, 2025, in the late afternoon, children who were herding goats discovered two lifeless bodies of men dressed in military uniforms of the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of Congo (FARDC) floating on the Rusizi River, at the foot of the hill of Rusiga (11th transversal), commune of Rugombo, province of Cibitoke.

According to eyewitnesses, security officers on patrol, alerted by the population, quickly went to the scene. Shortly after, agents of the National Intelligence Service

arrived urgently in a vehicle with registration number D0517A and evacuated the bodies to an unknown destination.

This attitude of the SNR agents reinforced the suspicions of local residents that the two victims could be members of the Imbonerakure youth league¹ sent to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) to fight alongside the FARDC, the FDNB² and the Wazalendo against the M23 rebels. They were then reportedly executed while trying to cross the Rusizi River while fleeing the fighting, in order to avoid the disclosure of sensitive information.

SOS-Torture Burundi urges the police authorities to shed light on the identity of the victims, to conduct an impartial investigation and to prosecute those responsible for this double murder in accordance with the law.

2. Violation of the right to physical integrity

- On Saturday, May 10, 2025, at around 7:30 p.m., MP Jean Baptiste Sindayigaya (representative of the co-opted people of the Batwa community) was the victim of a violent kidnapping attempt on 1st Avenue, near the Gare du Nord, in the Kamenge area, commune of Ntahangwa, in Bujumbura City Hall.

According to his statements, while returning from Mwaro in his white double-cab vehicle, accompanied by his driver, he was intercepted by unidentified individuals driving in a van with tinted windows and whose license plate was concealed with a piece of cloth. Five armed men, four in civilian clothes and one in police uniform, rushed out of the vehicle. They tried to force him into the vehicle, which already contained a bleeding man, visibly tortured.

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

² Burundi National Defense Force.



Refusing to comply, the MP was violently attacked: he was kicked, punched and hit with a rifle butt in the face, seriously injuring him. Threatened with death, he was nevertheless able, with his driver, to alert the population and the police officers present nearby. The latter quickly intervened, provoking a tense confrontation with the kidnappers, who finally fled.

Before fleeing, the attackers stole a sum of five hundred thousand Burundian francs (500,000 FBu) as well as a new mobile phone, bought the same day by the victim. The bloodied individual, already in their vehicle, was dropped off in the Kamenge area, the kidnappers claiming that he would be responsible for the violence suffered by the deputy, which seems obviously incoherent.

In addition, the police officers present at the scene informed the MP that the vehicle used by the kidnappers belonged to the National Intelligence Service (SNR).

SOS-Torture Burundi strongly condemns this attempted kidnapping and calls for the immediate opening of an impartial, rigorous and independent investigation in order to identify the perpetrators of this targeted attack and bring them to justice. It is all the more urgent to act since MP Jean Baptiste Sindayigaya claims to have referred the matter to several high authorities, including the Prime Minister, the Minister of the Interior, Community Development and Public Security, as well as the Ombudsman, without any follow-up to date seeming to have been given.

- On Friday, May 15, 2025, in the late afternoon, at around 6 p.m., Dismas Minani, provincial representative of the "Burundi Bwa Bose» coalition in Ngozi province, as

well as other members of this coalition, were violently attacked by activists of the ruling party, the CNDD-FDD (National Council for the Defense of Democracy - Forces for the Defense of Democracy), on the hill of Caga, Mihigo area, commune and province of Ngozi.

According to eyewitnesses, the coalition members were ambushed by a group of CNDD-FDD activists, led by Pascal Nyabenda, a local leader of the Imbonerakure militia in the Mihigo area. The latter rushed at them, beat them violently, seriously injuring them, before extorting a motorcycle and a sum of money estimated at one million eighty-seven thousand Burundian francs (1,087,000 FBu).

According to the same sources, the perpetrators of this violent attack remain at large, as no investigation has been opened so that they can be prosecuted and punished in accordance with the law.

This case illustrates the persistence of a climate of impunity in Burundi, particularly in the context of a tense political campaign marked by growing intolerance and election-based violence against members of the opposition.

SOS-Torture Burundi calls on the competent authorities to conduct an impartial investigation and bring to justice all the perpetrators of these acts, in order to put an end to this culture of impunity.

The cases documented during the period from 10 to 17 May 2025 illustrate an alarming persistence of serious human rights violations in Burundi, characterized by killings, torture, targeted kidnapping attempts, and politically motivated violence.

These facts are mostly attributed to state agents, including the National Intelligence Service (SNR), members of the security forces, as well as activists of the ruling party and the Imbonerakure militia, acting in a climate of almost total impunity.

The lack of an appropriate response by judicial and police authorities to these abuses reinforces the erosion of the rule of law and citizens' trust in the public institutions that are supposed to guarantee their security and fundamental rights.

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.