

SOS-TORTURE Burundi REPORT NO. 493 PUBLISHED ON 26 MAY 2025

This report by SOS-Torture Burundi covers the period from 17 to 25 May 2025 and documents cases of human rights violations committed in Burundi.

During this period, two (2) people were seriously injured in the provinces of Bubanza and Gitega.

The report also notes the case of one (1) official of the Council of Patriots (CDP) in Rutana province arbitrarily detained, as well as one (1) person kidnapped by soldiers in Gitega province.

1. Violation of the right to physical integrity

- According to information gathered by SOS-Torture Burundi, on Friday, May 16, 2025, at around 11 p.m., individuals not yet identified violently beat and seriously injured Emile Ntirampeba, leader of the CNDD-FDD in the Nyabututsi district, in the commune and province of Gitega, before leaving him for dead, dying near the military camp called the 22nd Commando Battalion.

According to the same information, Emile Ntirampeba was attacked as he was returning to his home in the Nyabututsi district, after an evening spent in one of the cabarets in the city of Gitega. He was evacuated, dying, by passers-by during the same night at the SOS Burundi health center and admitted to the emergency department for intensive care.

The same sources indicate that this CNDD-FDD official was allegedly attacked by other members of the CNDD-FDD party's youth league, the Imbonerakure, in retaliation for his alleged appropriation of funds allocated to propaganda activities.

SOS-Torture Burundi calls for an independent and impartial investigation to identify the perpetrators of this attack and bring them to justice. It strongly urges the Minister of Justice, Mrs. Domine Banyankimbona, to take all necessary measures to put an end to the persistent impunity that plagues the Burundian judicial system.

- On Monday, May 19, 2025, in broad daylight, an unidentified soldier violently assaulted and seriously injured Sylvestre Banteyintuntu in the locality known as "Mu Kideheri", located in the commune of Gihanga, Bubanza province, on the bank of the Rusizi, the natural border between Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

According to eyewitnesses, Sylvestre Banteyintuntu, from Kagwema hill in the same commune, was attacked while harvesting rice in a perimeter recently fenced off by the National Institute for Nature Conservation (INCN) with the aim of making it a protected reserve.

The same sources specify that this perimeter was previously exploited by more than five thousand (5,000) farmers, whose families had been established there for a long time.

SOS-Torture Burundi calls for a rigorous investigation to identify the perpetrator of this attack and bring him to justice in accordance with the law.

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

- On Monday, May 19, 2025, Egide Hakizimana, head of the Council of Patriots (CPD) in Rutana province, was arbitrarily arrested and is currently being held in the police station in that province.

According to eyewitnesses, Egide Hakizimana was accused of having withdrawn voter cards in the name of certain members of his party, despite the official dispensation granted by the Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI), authorizing the withdrawal of the cards of other people upon presentation of the required documents.

This arrest of Egide Hakizimana is part of a broader context of political intolerance shown by the CNDD-FDD party towards opposition parties. This situation is reflected in particular in acts aimed at hindering their participation in the electoral process, such as arbitrary arrests, abductions and other forms of intimidation.

SOS-Torture Burundi calls for the immediate release of this representative of the CDP, who is arbitrarily detained.

3. Cases of abduction or enforced disappearance

- On Tuesday, May 20, 2025, in the morning, at around 6 a.m., soldiers in two pick-up trucks kidnapped Éric Niyongere, 44, from his home in the Rango district, in the commune and province of Gitega, before driving him to an unknown destination.

According to his family's statements, these soldiers burst into his home and rushed him, seizing his mobile phone as well as that of his wife. Both devices have remained switched off since that day, fueling concerns about his fate.

According to the same sources, Eric Niyongere had just repatriated in April 2025 from Uganda, where he had taken refuge since 2015.

SOS-Torture Burundi urges the military authorities to immediately reveal the whereabouts of Eric Niyongere and to immediately release him.

The facts documented during the period from 17 to 25 May 2025 testify to a persistent deterioration of the human rights situation in Burundi. Acts of violence, arbitrary arrests, abductions and attacks perpetrated by State agents or with their direct complicity remain commonplace, in a climate of almost total impunity.

SOS-Torture Burundi once again calls on the Burundian authorities to respect their human rights commitments, ensure the protection of citizens, including returnees, and put an end to intimidation, persecution and abduction practices. It also calls on the international community to maintain its vigilance and strengthen its support for efforts for documentation, truth and justice in 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.