

SOS-TORTURE BURUNDI REPORT NO. 530 PUBLISHED ON 8 FEBRUARY 2026

This report by SOS-Torture Burundi covers the period from 31 January to 7 February 2026. It documents cases of human rights violations committed on Burundian territory.

During this period, three people (3) were murdered by a policeman, a soldier and Imbonerakure¹ in the provinces of Bujumbura and Butanyerera.

1. Violation of the right to life

- On Thursday, January 29, 2026, in the morning, the lifeless body of Jean-Pierre Ntahiraja, 40 years old and father of 4 children, was found in his cell in the dungeon of the Buhindo zone of the commune of Cibitoke, in the province of Bujumbura, after being violently beaten by two Imbonerakure nicknamed Ndakurasa and Kazoviyo at the victim's home, following strong tensions with his wife.

According to these eyewitnesses, the two Imbonerakure burst into the home of the marital couple and began to violently beat Jean-Pierre Ntahiraja, after tying him up. In the aftermath, these same Imbonerakure took him to the dungeon in the Buhindo zone, in a very critical condition, without even thinking of taking him to a nearest health center for urgent care.

The same sources said that relatives of the victim tried to take revenge against the two Imbonerakure alleged perpetrators of this crime who fled immediately after the commission of the criminal act. Nevertheless, the policeman in charge of guarding Buhindo's dungeon was immediately arrested and detained for failure to assist a person in danger, as part of a judicial investigation opened for this purpose. Similarly, the victim's wife was also arrested in the same proceedings.

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

SOS-Torture Burundi calls for the active search and arrest of the two Imbonerakure on the run so that they can be brought to justice and punished in accordance with the law.

- On Thursday, February 5, 2026, at dawn, a soldier assigned to guard the Burundian Ombudsman, Mrs. Aimée Laurentine Kanyana, shot and killed a young man named Jedidiah Nishimwe, 25 years old, whom he found at his home located in the Sororezo district, Nyakabiga zone, Mukaza commune, in the province of Bujumbura (economic capital), not far from Mutanga South.

According to eyewitnesses, it all began on the night of Tuesday, February 3, 2026, at around 10 p.m., when Jedidiah Nishimwe's father, known as Ndorera, met the perpetrator near their home in the center called Kamabuye-Sororezo and simply greeted him in the popular form in this locality: "*Amahoro neza Mzee*" (Peace be with you, old man²). So, this young soldier, who recently returned from operations in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), before being assigned to the security of the Ombudsman, felt hurt in his self-esteem and engaged in a heated altercation that degenerated into a fight, even involving the victim who tried to separate them.

In the aftermath, the young soldier returned to his position, accusing them of having hit him and vowing revenge. When he arrived at his home post, he tried to go and take revenge the same day, after putting on his uniform, taking grenades and his service rifle, but his comrades in arms dissuaded him. It was at this point that he confessed to them that he was going to commit a crime against people with whom he had just quarrelled.

The next morning, this soldier intercepted Ndorera in his vehicle and tried to assassinate him, had it not been for the intervention of other soldiers who intervened and tried to reconcile them through a fine settlement. After that, Ndorera was able to continue his journey, thinking that the case was over.

² Free translation.

However, according to the same sources, the soldier burst into Ndorera's home at dawn on February 5, 2026 with his rifle and immediately shot the young Jedidiah Nishimwe in the head and died instantly. Although other soldiers who rushed to the scene of the tragedy tried to protect the perpetrator of the crime by concealing him, the military hierarchy finally intervened to arrest the perpetrator and put him at the disposal of the military prosecutor's office.

SOS-Torture Burundi calls for the immediate opening of the criminal case against this soldier in order to bring him to justice and punish him in accordance with the law.

- On Thursday, February 5, 2026, at 11 a.m., a policeman known as Abbas Bimenyimana shot and killed a 22-year-old miner named Domitien Ndayizeye in a mine located on his home hill of Munege, Kabarore zone, Kayanza commune (former Kabarore BUR commune), Butanyerera province.

According to the testimony of his colleagues, policeman Abbas Bimenyimana acted at the direct instigation of Abel Ahishakiye³, an Imbonerakure who is responsible for security at the mine site and whose own security he and other policemen provide, who ordered him to shoot the victim. Indeed, on the day of the tragedy, Domitien Ndayizeye was excavating minerals with his colleagues in the locality of Munakavuvu (located between the hills of Munege and Kivuvu in the same commune of Kayanza) when a large quantity of water flowed into the place where they were working. They then asked him to rush to turn off the tap. As soon as Domitien Ndayizeye was running to turn off the tap, Abel Ahishakiye ordered policeman Abbas Bimenyimana to shoot the young man, thinking without any evidence that he was rushing to hide a quantity of stolen gold. Thus, the policeman Abbas Bimenyima, having immediately carried out the order received, fatally fired bullets that hit the young man in the heart and he died on the spot. Outraged by this unspeakable tragedy, the other miners tried to

³ Abel Ahishakiye was the leader of the Imbonerakure in the former province of Kirundo, in northern Burundi. He has a sinister memory in this province, his name has been regularly mentioned in reports by human rights organizations implicating him in serious violations such as enforced disappearances and summary and extrajudicial executions against real or perceived opponents of the CNDD-FDD.

arrest this policeman, but Abel Ahishakiye intervened, threatening to suffer the same fate if they persisted.

The same sources said that the body of Domitien Ndayizeye rests in the morgue of the health center in the Kabarore zone, while members of his family and colleagues have refused to proceed with the burial of the body until those responsible for this crime have been arrested and brought to justice.

SOS-Torture Burundi calls for the opening of a judicial investigation with a view to arresting the material and main (instigator) perpetrators of the crime, bringing them to justice and punishing them in accordance with the law.

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.