

SOS-TORTURE BURUNDI REPORT NO. 535 PUBLISHED ON 15 MARCH 2026

This report by SOS-Torture Burundi covers the period from 7 to 14 March 2026. It documents cases of human rights violations committed on Burundian territory.

During this period, six (6) people were murdered in the provinces of Bujumbura, Burunga and Gitega.

1. Violation of the right to life

- On Sunday, March 8, 2026, in the morning, two lifeless bodies of a woman and a man were found hanging from a rope in two different localities in the province of Bujumbura.

The first body, that of an 80-year-old woman known as Marie Nahayo, was found hanging from a tree in the courtyard of her home located on transversal 6 of the Kagazi district, in the Cibitoke zone and commune. According to neighbors of the victim, the death of this octogenarian raises suspicions of murder by individuals who have not yet been identified. They believe that it would have been difficult for a woman of her age to climb a tree to commit suicide, because of the weakness of her physical strength linked to her advanced age. They call for a thorough investigation to clarify the exact circumstances of Marie Nahayo's death and to uncover those responsible so that they can be brought to justice and punished in accordance with the law.

For the second body, that of Éric Ndayisenga, 42 years old, he was found hanging from a tree on the Rutaba sub-hill of the hill and zone of Nyamakarabo, in the commune of Mugina. According to local sources, Eric Ndayisenga left a letter in which he asked for forgiveness from the people he had offended or wronged. He was known as an Imbonerakure¹ who had a reputation for having conflictual relationships with several people in his neighborhood. Indeed, he is said to have repeatedly threatened

¹ The Imbonerakure are members of the youth league of the ruling party, the National Council for the Defense of Democracy-Forces for the Defense of Democracy.

or assaulted the population of his locality considering himself untouchable, because of his political affiliation.

SOS-Torture Burundi calls for impartial and thorough investigations to determine the exact circumstances of these deaths and to discover the possible perpetrators so that they can be brought to justice and punished in accordance with the law.

- On Monday, March 9, 2026, in the afternoon, around 5 p.m., the body of Beatrice Mpawenimana, 40 years old, was discovered in her room at her home located on Kibati hill, Masango zone, Bukinanyana commune, in Bujumbura province.

According to eyewitnesses, a rope was found around his neck. However, neighbors and family members believe that as-yet-unidentified individuals murdered the victim before placing a rope around her neck to make it look like a suicide.

According to administrative sources, Béatrice Mpawenimana had recently moved to the capital of the commune of Kayanza, in the province of Butanyerera, to join her husband who is trading in cattle. However, she regularly returned to Kibati hill to take care of agricultural work.

According to the same sources, Beatrice Mpawenimana had arrived on Kibati hill since Saturday, March 7 and her body was found two days later.

Beatrice Mpawenimana's body was subsequently transferred to Ndora hospital for an autopsy, before being handed over to her family for burial.

SOS-torture Burundi calls for the opening of a thorough and impartial investigation in order to identify and bring to justice the perpetrators of the crime, in accordance with the law.

- On Monday, March 9, 2026, in the morning, the lifeless body of a man identified as Pascal Gahungu, 66 years old, was found floating in the waters of the Kaniga River at the foot of Gihehe hill, in the commune and province of Gitega.

According to eyewitnesses, Pascal Gahungu's body had deep head wounds, suggesting that he was murdered by as-yet-unidentified individuals who then threw his body into the river to simulate drowning. The chief of Gihehe hill, Donatien Nkunzimana, says that Pascal Gahungu had been missing since March 6, 2026. His body was buried the same day after the report was made by a Judicial Police Officer (JPO).

SOS-Torture Burundi calls for an immediate and thorough investigation to identify the perpetrators of the crime and punish them in accordance with the law.

- On Tuesday, March 10, 2026, in the morning, schoolchildren on their way to school discovered the lifeless body of a young man identified as Cédric Iteriteka, 20 years old, in the Nyakigezi river, at the foot of Gitobo hill, Muhweza zone, Bururi commune, in Burunga province.

According to eyewitnesses, the body had head wounds that show the young man was murdered by as-yet-unidentified individuals.

SOS-Torture Burundi calls for the opening of an immediate and thorough investigation in order to identify the perpetrators of the crime and punish them in accordance with the law.

- On Thursday, March 12, 2026, early in the morning, the lifeless body of the local leader of the CNDD-FDD party in the Ndora zone, Abraham Niyigarura, 41 years old, was found in the Kaburantwa River, not far from his home, at the foot of Bitare hill, Ndora zone, Bukinanyana commune, in Bujumbura province.



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According to eyewitnesses, Abraham Niyigarura's body had head injuries, showing that he was murdered by as-yet-unidentified individuals, before dumping his body into the Kaburantwa River. A relative of the deceased's family said that he had spent the day at home the day before and wondered how his body could have ended up in the river the next morning.

SOS-Torture Burundi calls for the opening of a thorough investigation in order to identify the perpetrators of the crime and punish 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.