

SOS-TORTURE BURUNDI REPORT NO. 548 PUBLISHED ON 14 JUNE 2026

This report by SOS-Torture Burundi covers the period from 6 to 13 June 2026. It documents cases of human rights violations committed on Burundian territory.

During this period, three (3) people were murdered in the provinces of Bujumbura, Burunga and Gitega.

The report also denounces the case of one (1) Congolese national who is in arbitrary detention for more than two weeks after his arbitrary arrest by agents of the National Intelligence Service (SNR) in Bujumbura.

1. Violation of the right to life

- On Wednesday, June 10, 2026, during the day, the lifeless body of a young woman known as Evelyne Ndayizeye, 24 years old, was discovered on the banks of the Nyakijanda River, at the foot of the Macu hill, in the commune and province of Gitega.

According to eyewitnesses, the victim's body was tied up while her phone was found near the lifeless body.

Family members say Ndayizeye left her home on Tuesday, June 9 to meet with an unnamed person, but had not returned since. His body was buried on the same day as its discovery while no suspect has yet been arrested.

SOS-Torture Burundi calls for an impartial and thorough investigation to determine the circumstances of the murder and identify the perpetrators so that they can be brought to justice and punished in accordance with the law.

- On Thursday, June 11, 2026, in the morning, the lifeless body of a man identified as Gaspard Kabanyegeye, 65 years old, married and father of four children, was found in a small bush on the hill of Rorero, Kayero zone, Musongati commune, in the province of Burunga.

According to the testimonies of the residents of the hill of Rorero, the day before his death, Gaspard Kabanyegeye had gone to the Giharo market before returning to his home in the afternoon, after which he went to a bistro near his residence. Witnesses confirm that they saw him there until around 6 p.m. His body was discovered the next morning in a brush not far from his home. He had injuries, including to the head, while his personal belongings were stolen by his attackers who have not been identified.

The same sources denounce the haste with which the local authorities organized the hasty burial of the body on the same day of its discovery, without waiting for the opening of an investigation to determine the circumstances and the perpetrators of the murder of Gaspard Kabanyegeye.

SOS-Torture Burundi calls for an impartial and thorough investigation to identify the perpetrators of the murder of Gaspard Kabanyegeye, bring them to justice and punish them in accordance with the law.

- On Friday, June 12, 2026, in the morning, a lifeless decomposing body of an unidentified young man was discovered in a bush a few meters from a military position in the Randa farm, on the hill and zone of Mitakataka, Bubanza commune, in the province of Bujumbura. Some residents of Mitakataka hill wonder how a person can be murdered in the immediate vicinity of a military position and suspect the involvement of some soldiers from this position in the murder of the young man.

According to eyewitnesses, children looking for firewood saw the decomposing body and alerted the police who quickly arrived at the scene of the tragedy, along with the

local administration and the surrounding population. They found that the victim's throat had been cut, stabbed in the ears and that the eyes had been gouged out.

The same sources say that the communal administrator of Bubanza, Sabas Niyokindi, ordered the burial of the victim, without waiting for an investigation to identify the victim, the circumstances and the perpetrators of the crime.

SOS-Torture Burundi calls for the opening of a thorough investigation to identify the victim and the perpetrators of the crime so that they can be brought to justice and punished in accordance with the law.

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

- Since Tuesday, May 26, 2026, around noon, Benjamin Babunga Watuna, a Congolese national, international consultant and independent analyst on the history of the Great Lakes region, has been arbitrarily arrested by SNR agents before being taken to the dungeon at the headquarters of this service in Bujumbura. He is currently in arbitrary detention at Bujumbura's central prison, known as Mpimba prison, since June 5, 2026.

According to eyewitnesses, Benjamin Babunga Watuna (see his photo below) was arrested at the Bahizi Café restaurant in Bujumbura, where he had gone for breakfast. SNR agents led by a certain Ramadhan Juma, known by the nickname Rama, approached him in the parking lot of the restaurant, blaming him in turn for poor parking and driving in a forbidden direction. It was indeed a roundabout way to set a trap for him in order to get into his vehicle. Thus, a policeman finally managed to get into his vehicle and they forced him, under threats, to go to the headquarters of the SNR where he was arbitrarily detained for more than a week, under far-fetched interrogations, in a context of apparent absence of incriminating evidence.



Benjamin Babunga Watuna was reportedly arrested at the instigation of the Congolese authorities on charges of collaboration with the M23. The Congolese authorities claim that he would serve as a financial relay through which funds intended for people working for the M23 in Burundi would pass. It was in order to corroborate these accusations that his phone and computer were confiscated as soon as he arrived at the SNR to be handed over to experts in charge of looking for possible evidence, but no element could be detected to confirm Kinshasha's allegations.

It should also be noted that Benjamin Babunga Watuna was born in 1982 in Nyakabiga, Burundi, and that he completed his entire school career there, from

primary school to higher education. Before his arrest, he worked for the Dutch NGO ZOA International.

Although no official communication has yet been published on the charges against him, sources at the Mukaza prosecutor's office reveal that, on the instructions of the Presidency of Burundi, Benjamin Babunga Watuna is accused of four fabricated offences: (1) espionage, (2) undermining the external security of the State, (3) undermining the internal security of the State and (4) acts of terrorism; while, according to those close to him, he did not engage in any political activity.

SOS-Torture Burundi is making a strong appeal to the Burundian President, Évariste Ndayishimiye, to order the immediate release of Benjamin Babunga Watuna.

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.