

SOS-TORTURE BURUNDI REPORT NO. 559 PUBLISHED ON AUGUST 30, 2026

This report by SOS-Torture Burundi covers the period from 22 to 29 August 2026. It documents cases of human rights violations committed on Burundian territory.

During this period, five (5) people were murdered in Bujumbura and Gitega provinces and six (6) others were arbitrarily arrested by police in Gitega province.

1. Violation of the right to life

- On Sunday, August 23, 2026, in the night, Isaac Habonimana, 39, succumbed to his injuries after being severely beaten by Raphaël Nduwimana, chief of the Gitongo police station, in the commune of Bugendana, Gitega province.

According to eyewitnesses, Isaac Habonimana was accused of disrupting security at a bistro.

The same sources said that the head of the Gitongo police station was arrested and taken to the police cell in Bugenda.

- On Monday, August 24, 2026, in the morning, a lifeless body of an unidentified man was discovered on the hill of Nyamabere, in the commune of Mpanda, province of Bujumbura.

According to eyewitnesses, no identification was found on the victim's body, and local residents were unable to identify him.

- On Monday, August 24, 2026, during the day, the lifeless body of Népomucène Ntakarutimana, was discovered in the Kiruhura Valley, on Kireméra Hill, in the commune and province of Gitega.

According to testimonies collected from the residents of this hill, Népomucène Ntakarutimana was allegedly caught attempting to steal rabbits belonging to Anitha Nshimirimana. Individuals, in anger, then rushed at him and violently beat him with clubs, inflicting serious injuries that led to his death.

The same sources say that three people, Anitha Nshimirimana, Arsène Ciza and Jacqueline Ndayishimiye, were arrested as part of an investigation and placed in custody at the police cell in Giheta.

On the same day, the lifeless body of a male infant was discovered in the Karonga valley, located between the Yoba and Rukoba neighborhoods, in the commune and province of Gitega. The circumstances surrounding the death, as well as the identity of the alleged perpetrators of this murder, have not yet been established.

According to eyewitnesses, the body of the infant was buried on the same day at the place where it was discovered, without a prior investigation being opened to determine the circumstances of his death and to identify the perpetrators.

- On Tuesday, August 25, 2026, at dawn, Désiré Nshimirimana, a 25-year-old man, was killed by a police officer on Gaterama hill, in Bugendana commune, Gitega province.

According to eyewitnesses, a group of policemen broke into Joseph Bandora's home on Gaterama Hill to arrest some people in connection with a land dispute. However, residents categorically opposed the intervention, which they considered illegal.

During the ensuing confrontation, a policeman opened fire and hit Désiré Nshimirimana in the heart. The victim immediately succumbed to his injuries.

According to the same sources, the body of Désiré Nshimirimana was transported to the morgue of the Kibimba hospital. In addition, six people were arbitrarily arrested

during the same operation and taken into the police custody. They are Duido Nahimana, Venant Ndayisenga, Olivier Nkurunziza, Rémy Bigirimana, Édouard Bigirimana and Rénovat Nimbona.

The residents are calling for the arrest of the policeman involved so that he can be brought to justice and tried in an expedited trial.

SOS-Torture Burundi calls on the competent authorities to open without delay independent, impartial, thorough and effective investigations in order to identify the perpetrators of these crimes, to shed light on the circumstances of their commission and to bring those responsible to justice, in accordance with the law.

The organization deplores the fact that, since the beginning of this year, and more particularly in the last three months, the province of Gitega has been marked by a worrying recurrence of the discovery of lifeless bodies and deaths in violent and unsolved circumstances. The succession of these cases, reported in different communes of the province, reveals a worrying climate of violence and raises serious concerns regarding the effectiveness of the protection of the right to life in Burundi.

Some deaths are said to have occurred as a result of interventions by members of the security forces, while others are linked to acts of mob justice or family disputes, particularly land-related conflicts. The lack of immediate and thorough investigations in almost all cases, particularly in the case of bodies found dead in suspicious circumstances, reinforces concerns about impunity and victims' access to justice.

This recurrence should call on the competent authorities to conduct prompt, independent, impartial and transparent investigations into all these deaths, to establish individual and institutional responsibilities and to ensure that all violations of the right to life are prosecuted and judged 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.