



ACAT - Burundi

**Report on the monitoring of human rights violations and abuses committed in
Burundi.**

Period: November 2025.

Outline of this report

- INTRODUCTION.
- MURDERS
- KIDNAPPINGS
- ARBITRARY ARRESTS AND ILLEGAL DETENTIONS
- VIOLATIONS OF PHYSICAL INTEGRITY
- CONCLUSION
- RECOMMENDATIONS

I. INTRODUCTION

The political and security crisis that Burundi has been experiencing since April 2015, which remains unresolved, continues to fuel human rights violations to the detriment of the Burundian people, who are paying a heavy price while aspiring, as elsewhere, to the rule of law. The pattern of human rights violations documented since the beginning of the political crisis in April 2015 remains largely unchanged.

These mainly include summary executions, enforced disappearances, arbitrary arrests and detentions, torture and ill-treatment, which continue to be observed.

At the 60th session of the Human Rights Council, held on 19 August 2025, the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights presented his report on the state of human rights.

Between November 2023 and March 2025, numerous civil society organisations documented persistent cases of torture and ill-treatment, attributed mainly to the National Intelligence Service (SNR), the police and the Imbonerakure. These abuses often target members of the opposition, particularly the National Congress for Liberty (CNL) and the Front for Democracy in Burundi (FRODEBU), and take the form of physical and psychological abuse inflicted outside any legal framework, without access to a lawyer, a doctor or a fair trial. Despite the commitments made to the Committee against Torture in 2023, no concrete measures have been taken, and the follow-up report expected in 2024 has not been submitted.

Between August 2023 and June 2025, a total of 89 cases were recorded, often accompanied by illegal detention in secret locations, while 11 extrajudicial executions and 137 arbitrary arrests were reported.

Arbitrary arrests have increased: 86 cases were recorded, nearly half of which involved opponents from ten different parties. The authorities frequently extend preventive detention beyond the legal time limits and sometimes refuse to release individuals who have served their sentences. These practices lead to chronic overcrowding in the prison system, characterised by degrading conditions of detention (overcrowding, unsanitary conditions, lack of healthcare, internal violence).

The Special Rapporteur noted a growing restriction of civic space, marked by limitations on freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly. Human rights defenders and civil society organisations continue to

subjected to intimidation and obstruction of their activities. The report calls on the authorities to guarantee a safe and inclusive environment that promotes citizen participation.

The Special Rapporteur urges the Government to put an end to these practices, to respect freedom of movement, and to release unconditionally all persons detained for the peaceful exercise of their civil and political rights.

Through its publications, ACAT-Burundi remains committed to actively advocating against these serious violations, notably by collaborating with regional and international human rights protection mechanisms in the hope that victims or their families can exercise their right to file complaints with judicial bodies that guarantee a fair trial.

During the period covered by this report, twenty-four (24) cases of murder, three (3) cases of abduction and one (1) case of arbitrary arrest were recorded.

In most cases, the alleged perpetrators are not prosecuted: dead bodies, most of them unidentified, are discovered in various locations throughout Burundi.

II. MURDERS.

Murders and abductions continue to occur in Burundi more than five years after President Évariste Ndayishimiye came to power. Repression has become a recurring phenomenon, despite Article 24 of ***the Burundian Constitution, which guarantees the right to life for all persons. Furthermore, Articles 210 to 220 of the Penal Code criminalise and severely punish anyone who violates this fundamental right.***

In November 2025, ACAT-Burundi recorded 24 cases of assassinations in different regions of the country, in circumstances reflecting flagrant violations of human rights, perpetrated in a climate of total impunity.

1. On 4 November 2025, the bodies of *Nadine* NININHAZWE and her son Axel Beni IRANGABIYE were found in their home on Muzi Hill, Maramvya area, Rumonge commune, in Burunga province. According to local sources, the victims had been missing since 1 November. Alerted by neighbours, local officials went to the scene. They found the child inside the house, his head submerged in a bucket of water, while his mother, Nadine

NININHAZWE, was found in a tree plantation on the same hill. ACAT-Burundi is calling for credible and independent investigations to be opened to clarify the circumstances of these deaths.

2. On 4 November 2025, Barahiraje's lifeless body was found in a eucalyptus plantation on Gahweza hill, in the Kiganda area and commune, Gitega province. According to local sources, both his feet and his genitals had been amputated. ACAT-Burundi calls for credible and independent investigations to be launched to shed light on the circumstances surrounding this death.
3. On 5 November 2025, two unidentified bodies, one of a man aged around 50 and one of a child aged around 12, were found in a savannah on the banks of the Nyamagana River, in the Cibitoke area and commune, Bujumbura province. According to local sources, the bodies had multiple injuries. ACAT-Burundi calls for credible and independent investigations to be opened to clarify the circumstances surrounding these deaths.
4. On 7 November 2025, the lifeless body of a woman named Nibizi Donavine was found with her arms tied behind her back with a rope in the Mucunda River at the foot of Mugano Hill, Buraza area, Gishubi commune, Gitega province. According to local sources, the victim had left to seek medical treatment on 5 November 2025 but never returned. ACAT-Burundi calls for credible and independent investigations to be opened to shed light on the circumstances surrounding this death.
5. On 8 November 2025, the lifeless body of 40-year-old Léonard Kwizera was found hanging from a tree with a rope made from a piece of mosquito netting on Bugumbasha hill in the commune and province of Gitega. According to local sources, he was tied up and killed before being hung to make it look like suicide. The next day, his body was buried on the orders of the local administrative authorities without any prior investigation. ACAT-Burundi is calling for a credible and independent investigation to shed light on the circumstances surrounding this death.
6. On 8 November 2025, the lifeless body of Joseph NDAYIZEYE was discovered at his home, located at 6^e avenue in the Buyenzi area, Mukaza commune, in the province of Bujumbura. According to local sources, the body was hastily buried the same day, on the orders of the neighbourhood chief without conducting any preliminary investigations . ACAT-Burundi calls for

the opening of a credible and independent investigation to shed light on the circumstances surrounding this death.

7. On 9 November 2025, the lifeless and decomposing body of Ntahondereye Jean Berchmas was found in a house belonging to Hicuburundi Charles, his employer, located on the hill in the Ryasoro area, Gishubi commune, Gitega province.

According to local sources, the victim had injuries to his legs and traces of blood around his mouth. According to the same sources, the police and administrative authorities ordered the burial on the same day, without conducting a preliminary investigation. ACAT-Burundi calls for a credible and independent investigation to shed light on the circumstances surrounding this death.

8. On 11 November 2025, the lifeless body of Jean Cimpaye, aged 60, was found hanging from the roof frame of his house, located on Nyakeru hill, in the commune of Bugendana, in Gitega province. According to local sources, he was killed elsewhere and then brought back to his home to make it look like suicide and thus divert the investigation. ACAT-Burundi calls for a credible and independent investigation to shed light on the circumstances surrounding this death.

9. On 11 November 2025, the lifeless body of a young man named Boris was discovered at his home on Kizingoma hill in the commune of Makamba, Burunga province. According to local sources, the body showed signs of strangulation around the neck. ACAT-Burundi is calling for a credible and independent investigation to shed light on the circumstances surrounding this death.

10. On 12 November 2025, the lifeless body of an unidentified man was discovered by farmers on the banks of the Rumpungwe River, on Nyabigozi Hill, Nyabitsinda commune, in Buhumuza province. According to local sources, the victim's face showed injuries suggesting that he had been killed with a metal object. According to the same sources, the victim was buried by the municipal administration in collaboration with the Red Cross without any prior investigation. ACAT-Burundi calls for a credible and independent investigation to shed light on the circumstances surrounding this death.

11. On 13 November 2025, two unidentified male bodies in an advanced state of decomposition were discovered by residents of Gisaba hill, in the Buhindo area of Cibitoke commune, Bujumbura province. According to local sources, a foul odour alerted them, prompting them to inform the administrative and police authorities. The authorities immediately secured the area, covered the bodies with tarpaulins, disinfected the site and ordered the victims to be buried on the spot, where they were found, without conducting any preliminary investigations. ACAT-Burundi is calling for credible and independent investigations to be opened to clarify the circumstances of these deaths.
12. On 14 November 2025, the lifeless body of Générose Gakecuru, aged 45 and mother of three children, was found tied up a few metres from her home on Macu hill, in the commune and province of Gitega. According to local sources, she was buried the same day, without waiting for an investigation to be opened to identify the perpetrators and determine the circumstances of the incident. ACAT-Burundi calls for a credible and independent investigation to be opened to shed light on the circumstances surrounding this death.
13. On 13 November 2025, the lifeless body of Labani Nsengiyumva, a 19-year-old farm worker, was found bound, with his eyes gouged out and numerous machete wounds, in an irrigation canal in the rice fields located on the hill and in the Gihanga area, in the commune of Mpanda, Bujumbura province. ACAT-Burundi is calling for a credible and independent investigation to shed light on the circumstances surrounding this death. According to local sources, the victim had been missing for three days after his release. He had just spent a week in detention in the cells of the Gihanga municipal police station. His employer, an Imbonerakure named Ayloy Akimana, had accused him, without providing any evidence, of stealing two rabbits, a chicken and 500,000 Burundian francs from her. The same sources report that Labani Nsengiyumva had been released on the undertaking of his parents, but that Ayloy Akimana had previously threatened to kill him herself. ACAT-Burundi calls for the perpetrator of this crime to be punished in accordance with the law.
14. On 13 November 2025, two unidentified male bodies, found in an advanced state of decomposition, were discovered by farmers in an old gold mining well located on Gisaba hill, Muhindo area, Cibitoke commune, Bujumbura province. According to local sources, the bodies were buried the same day on the orders of the municipal administrator, Éloge Najeneza, without any prior investigation. ACAT-

Burundi calls for credible and independent investigations to be opened to clarify the circumstances of these deaths.

15. On 15 November 2025, the lifeless body of Emmanuel Rucumuhimba, 70, was discovered in a coffee field located about 500 metres from his home on Rutegama hill, Buhevyi area, Rutegama commune, Gitega province. According to local sources, he was beheaded by unidentified individuals, who also took his bicycle and a bag of rice that he had just had husked. ACAT-Burundi calls for credible and independent investigations to be opened to shed light on the circumstances surrounding these deaths.
16. On 16 November 2025, the lifeless body of Isaac Nahimana, aged 27, was found in a house under construction in the Masenga neighbourhood, in the commune and province of Gitega. According to local sources, Isaac Nahimana was killed elsewhere and his body was then moved to this location in order to mislead the investigation. ACAT-Burundi is calling for a credible and independent investigation to be launched to shed light on the circumstances surrounding this death.
17. On 17 November 2025, the body of an unidentified young man in his twenties was discovered in a gutter in the Zege neighbourhood of Gitega commune and province. The body was taken to Gitega Regional Hospital. ACAT-Burundi calls for a credible and independent investigation to shed light on the circumstances surrounding this death.
18. On 20 November 2025, the decomposing body of Sazoya André, aged 62 and originally from Biganda hill, was discovered by passers-by on the banks of the Mubarazi River. According to local sources, the man had been missing since 16 November 2025, and his family had been searching for him in vain. The same sources report that he was killed before being thrown into the river. ACAT-Burundi is calling for a credible and independent investigation to shed light on the circumstances surrounding this death.
19. On 22 November 2025, the lifeless body of Égide Gahitira, a guard at the central market in Rutana, was found in front of the market office. The causes and circumstances of his death remain unknown. The body was transferred to the Rutana morgue. ACAT-Burundi calls for an independent and credible investigation to shed light on the circumstances of this death.

20. On 29 November 2025, the body of an unidentified man aged between 35 and 40 was found in the Mwizero neighbourhood, Kamenge area, Ntahangwa commune. Ntahangwa, in province of Bujumbura. According to local sources, the man was strangled by unidentified individuals and then abandoned at the site where he was found in order to divert or distort the investigation. ACAT-Burundi calls for a credible and independent investigation to shed light on the circumstances surrounding this death.

In this report covering the month of November 2025, ACAT-Burundi notes with concern a resurgence of burials of dead bodies discovered in various parts of the country, without prior identification of the victims or the opening of a judicial investigation, in clear violation of Article 109 of Law No. 1/09 of 11 May 2018 on the Code of Criminal Procedure of Burundi.

This article clearly stipulates that:

"In the event of the discovery of a corpse, whether or not it is a violent death, but if the cause is unknown or suspicious, the Judicial Police Officer (OPJ) shall, if possible, inform the Public Prosecutor before going to the scene and making the initial findings. The OPJ must go to the scene and make observations when it has been impossible to contact the Public Prosecutor. The report of observations must be communicated to the latter without delay."

The same article provides that the Public Prosecutor shall go to the scene if he or she deems it necessary, accompanied by any doctor, expert or technician competent to assess the nature, cause and circumstances of the death. He or she may also delegate this task to a Judicial Police Officer of his or her choice. In the event of a death whose circumstances remain unknown, whether or not an offence has been committed, the Public Prosecutor is required to open an investigation to determine the cause of death.

In light of the above, ACAT-Burundi recommends that:

- Administrators to systematically inform the judicial police when a dead body is discovered, so that a report can be made and an investigation opened immediately.
- That the judicial police and the public prosecutor's office fulfil their legal obligations and ensure that no body is buried without a credible investigation having been carried out beforehand.

III. KIDNAPPINGS

1. On 11 November 2025, Ndayishimiye Juvénal, a trader at the Ruyigi market, originally from the commune of Butezi, resident in Ruyigi, married and father of three children, was abducted from his workplace at the central market in Ruyigi. According to local sources, a man got out of a double-cab vehicle with tinted windows, approached Juvénal, ordered him to close his shop and follow him. He was then taken away in the vehicle and driven to an unknown destination. The same sources report that after five days, Juvénal contacted some of his friends, asking them to look after his family, without specifying where he was.
2. On 11 November 2025, Mugisha Moise, a nurse at Rema Hospital in Ruyigi, was abducted by unidentified individuals in a double-cab vehicle with tinted windows. According to local sources, the same vehicle then returned to arrest Ndayishimiye Juvénal. Since then, their families have had no news of their fate.
3. On 21 November 2025, at around 5 p.m., a 27-year-old man, Yves Irakoze, was abducted while working at the Chez Béa restaurant and catering service in the Kinindo neighbourhood, south of Bujumbura. According to his family, Yves Irakoze, originally from the Gasenyi neighbourhood in the commune of Musinga, Buhumuza province, and residing in the Asiatique neighbourhood of Bujumbura, received a phone call and informed his colleagues that he was leaving briefly to answer it. He has not been seen since. Members of his family attempted to locate his phone and found that it was near Regina Mundi Cathedral, suggesting that he may be being held at the headquarters of the National Intelligence Service (SNR) in Bujumbura. Members of his family attempted to locate his phone and found that it was near Regina Mundi Cathedral, suggesting that he may be being held at the headquarters of the National Intelligence Service (SNR) in Bujumbura.

ACAT-Burundi reiterates its condemnation of arrests carried out in the form of abductions, as well as detentions in secret locations, by the National Intelligence Service. These practices constitute a violation of the provisions of the Code of Criminal Procedure relating to arrest and detention, the Burundian Constitution, and international conventions ratified by Burundi, which have constitutional status.

IV. ARBITRARY ARRESTS AND ILLEGAL DETENTIONS

On 8 November 2025, Nshimirimana Jean Paul was imprisoned in Ngozi Central Prison on the orders of the Ngozi Public Prosecutor. He is accused of having released two people who had been illegally detained for two months in the Kirundo Public Prosecutor's Office, where they had been taken by the National Intelligence Service without any formal charges. According to local sources, before proceeding with their release, Nshimirimana Jean Paul submitted the case to the prosecutor, who authorised the release of these two individuals.

V. VIOLATIONS OF PHYSICAL INTEGRITY

In November 2025, in addition to the killings and arbitrary arrests, other human rights violations were also documented. The *Imbonerakure*, young people affiliated with the ruling party, the CNDD-FDD, and described as militias by the United Nations, continue to abuse the power conferred on them by the Burundian state by mistreating and torturing the population, particularly members of the opposition, with complete impunity.

ACAT-Burundi also notes that agents of the National Intelligence Service continue to torture people arrested in detention centres. The organisation also deplores the night-time transfers of detainees, carried out in order to conceal the critical condition of people who have been tortured.

✓ TORTURE

1. On 11 November 2025, a driver named Eric Irakoze was tortured by police officers in a restaurant near the COOPEC in Rumonge. According to local sources, the victim refused to tell the police who had consumed a bottle of beer. The police officers then allegedly beat him violently, even stomping on his chest, which led to his death. The officers involved were arrested and detained at the Rumonge police station.
2. On 19 November 2025, Joseph Bishajuko was tortured by *Imbonerakure* patrolling Mutobo hill, Ruhororo area, Tangara commune, Butanyerera province, on the pretext that he was returning home late. According to local sources, he was found the next day, 20 November 2025, in critical condition in the savannah located in the *Kw'ijiti* area. He was then transported to a nearby health facility to receive the necessary care.

3. On 9 November 2025, a man named HAKIZIMANA Pascal was attacked by three *Imbonerakure* members, HARERIMANA Janvier, NSABIMANA Elie and ININHAZWE Thierry, who had set a trap for him in order to steal money from him, as the victim owned a shop. They then beat him and slit his throat. Alerted by his cries for help, neighbours intervened, rescued the victim and took him to hospital, where he sadly succumbed to his injuries. According to local sources, the three *Imbonerakure* were arrested and detained by a judicial police officer in Mutaho. ACAT-Burundi calls for the perpetrators to be punished in accordance with the law.

ACAT Burundi condemns these acts of torture perpetrated by state agents, who are responsible for ensuring respect for citizens' rights. These actions constitute a clear violation of Article 206 of Law No. 1/27 of 19 December 2017 revising the Penal Code. ACAT Burundi calls for an investigation to be opened so that the perpetrators are brought to justice and the victims are compensated, in accordance with Article 349 of the Burundian Code of Criminal Procedure.

VI. CONCLUSION.

The month of November 2025, covered by this report, continues to be marked by serious human rights violations, in line with previous months. The recurring phenomenon of dead bodies being found in various locations, rivers, bushes or other isolated places, followed by their hasty burial by the administrative authorities, raises serious suspicions of complicity between certain senior officials and the perpetrators of these crimes.

In a context where the judiciary and national human rights institutions, such as the Independent National Human Rights Commission (CNIDH) and the Ombudsman, appear to be under the control of the executive branch, investigations opened by the public prosecutor's office into violations of the right to life or cases of enforced disappearances are struggling to come to fruition, particularly when the victims are political opponents or human rights defenders.

Some local authorities, in collaboration with police officers and members of the *Imbonerakure* militia, are guilty of these abuses with complete impunity. This reflects a worrying tendency on the part of the authorities to neglect their duty to protect the population in favour of partisan or ideological interests.

Furthermore, the judiciary continues to condone these acts, which are in flagrant violation of the criminal procedures in force in Burundi. Many crimes committed within communities or households go unpunished, often

due to corruption, widespread impunity or the status of the perpetrators, whether they are government officials or members of the Imbonerakure.

In view of this alarming situation, it is imperative that the Burundian authorities fully appreciate the seriousness of the ongoing violations and make a genuine commitment to putting an end to them.

- **RECOMMENDATIONS.**

- *To the Government of Burundi:*

- ✓ Ensure the safety of the population and investigate these bodies that are regularly found in different parts of the country without the perpetrators of these murders being identified.
- ✓ Address the crimes committed by the Imbonerakure youth during night patrols, which are becoming commonplace due to the impunity that plagues the judicial system, security must be provided solely by the defence and security forces.

- *National human rights institutions should:*

- ✓ Regain control by using their legal powers to promote respect for human rights in Burundi in the face of numerous recurring cases of human rights violations.

- *To the international community:*

- ✓ Closely monitor the situation, taking into account risk factors that could aggravate the human rights situation in Burundi.