



Action by Christians for the Abolition of Torture

MONTHLY REPORT ON THE MONITORING OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

JUNE 2026

“Cover-up of Crimes and Denial of Justice: An Examination of the Authorities’ Response to Systemic Violence on the Ground”



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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- ACAT-Burundi: Action by Christians for the Abolition of Torture in Burundi
- BUCECO: Burundi Cement Company (Burundi Cement Plant)
- CNIDH: Independent National Human Rights Commission
- CNL : National Congress for Freedom
- CNDD-FDD: National Council for the Defense of Democracy – Forces for the Defense of Democracy
- NGO: Non-Governmental Organization
- UN: United Nations
- OPJ: Judicial Police Officer
- PNB: Burundi National Police
- SNR: National Intelligence Service
- Ex-FAB: Former Burundian Armed Forces (military personnel from the army prior to the Arusha Agreement)
- G2: Military Intelligence Bureau (within the Burundian army)
- M23: March 23 Movement (rebel group operating in eastern DRC)
- DRC: Democratic Republic of the Congo

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During the month of June 2026, the human rights situation in Burundi continued to deteriorate at an alarming rate. Field investigations confirm that laws and fundamental freedoms continue to be violated on a daily basis. The passivity of the police and the judiciary, combined with the direct involvement of certain state officials in various abuses, perpetuates a climate of total impunity throughout the country.

This month's monitoring highlights the following key figures and trends:

- **11 documented murders:** Brutal violence has struck the country, marked by the use of hammers, clubs, beheadings, and the tragic murder of a pregnant woman. In 27.27% of cases, local authorities destroyed evidence by hastily burying the bodies without investigation or identification. The rate of initial police inaction in response to these homicides reached 90.91%.
- **3 abductions and enforced disappearances:** A secret detention protocol **specifically** targeted individuals with ties to the military (G2, former FAB) or returnees with connections to Rwanda. The victims (Gérard Bizimana, Jean-Claude Nintunze, Jean-Claude Nduwimana) were forcibly taken away in vehicles and transferred to unknown destinations, beyond the reach of the law.
- **2 documented cases of arbitrary arrest and illegal detention:** Security services continue to use illegal procedures and false accusations to imprison specific individuals. International consultant Benjamin Babunga Watuna remains detained at Mpimba Prison without any official notification of charges. Meanwhile, cross-border trader Thaddée Ciza is being illegally held incommunicado in the Kirundo Judicial Police detention cell on false charges of links to the M23.
- **Stifling of civic space:** Civil society leaders are subjected to ongoing intimidation aimed at silencing them, as exemplified by the systematic harassment targeting Faustin Ndikumana, president of PARCEM.
- **Tolerance of lynching:** Vigilante justice is taking root amid the indifference of local authorities, as illustrated by the savage beating with clubs suffered by Rémy Hakizimana, accused of theft, in Bubanza.

In the face of this surge in abuses, ACAT-Burundi, in close collaboration with other Burundian and international civil society partners, continues and will continue tirelessly to denounce these crimes. The strong collective mobilization on International Day, **June 26, 2026** (marked by a joint

statement and a global webinar) served as a reminder that impunity in Burundi has become the norm for institutions, causing a veritable national exodus through the forced exile of citizens.

To address these shortcomings, ACAT-Burundi is making urgent and structural recommendations, calling in particular on the ruling party to ban patrols by the *Imbonerakure* militia, on the Ministry of Justice to create a mandatory national prisoner registry to prevent secret detention sites, and on the international community to make its financial aid to the security and justice sectors contingent on real progress on the ground.

I. INTRODUCTION

Burundi's constitution, particularly through Articles 19, 24, and 25, places the protection of life, personal integrity, and individual liberty at the top of its constitutional priorities. These provisions directly incorporate the international instruments ratified by the State, such as the UN Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights. Despite this, the repercussions of the political instability that began in 2015 continue to severely undermine people's daily lives. While Burundians legitimately aspire to a just society, governed transparently and with respect for fundamental rights, the actual situation remains alarming. The country remains trapped in a cycle of violence marked by a succession of local killings, planned disappearances, unjustified incarcerations, and recurring physical abuse.

I.1 General Context and Rationale for the Monitoring Initiative

Guided by its ongoing mission to safeguard citizens' security, support victims, and eradicate physical and psychological abuse committed with impunity, the organization presents its observations here for the period of June 2026.

Findings from the field demonstrate that the space for civic expression remains under absolute control. This stifling climate has intensified since the June 2025 legislative elections. As noted by Fortuné Gaétan Zongo, United Nations Special Rapporteur¹, these elections served to sideline opposition movements capable of providing constructive criticism of the ruling party. He had emphasized at the time that the exercise of civil liberties was a daily ordeal for the Burundian people. His findings documented arbitrary arrests, indefinite detention without trial, acts of torture, and enforced disappearances attributable to the security apparatus and *Imbonerakure* militants. The diplomatic efforts undertaken by the government abroad have had no tangible

¹ <https://www.ohchr.org/fr/statements-and-speeches/2025/10/declaration-du-rapporteur-special-sur-la-situation-des-droits-de>

effect at home: intolerance of criticism remains strong, the media self-censor out of fear of reprisals, and many independent actors have no choice but to remain in exile.

This June 2026 confirms that arbitrary rule is becoming entrenched over the long term with the tacit approval of state agencies. A review of the cases highlights a highly selective targeting of both victims and perpetrators. Repressive actions primarily target civil society figures or independent professionals, such as international consultant Benjamin Babunga Watuna or PARCEM director Faustin Ndikumana. While the majority of murders discovered in public spaces remain shrouded in anonymity, the documented cases directly implicate government officials—notably the National Intelligence Service (SNR) and the National Police—acting in concert with local leaders of the ruling party’s youth league. Notably, security paranoia is now shifting toward members of the military and security services themselves, targeting active-duty military intelligence personnel (G2) or retirees from the former army (Ex-FAB) suspected, without evidence, of maintaining ties with Rwanda.

I.2 Methodological Approach

Documenting human rights violations on the ground in Burundi faces constant institutional and security barriers. The isolation of certain hills and the risks involved hinder access to information on a daily basis. Furthermore, investigators face witnesses silenced by fear, a lack of cooperation from public officials, and the eagerness of local leaders to bury discovered bodies without first identifying them. This flagrant disregard for Article 109 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, committed by local authorities, fuels a culture of total impunity that has become a method of political governance. This document denounces these violations with the aim of advancing advocacy grounded in the truth and the right to justice for the families.

In the face of these major obstacles, a rigorous investigative methodology is essential to ensure the credibility of this report. The facts presented here stem from the meticulous work carried out by our network of anonymous local observers, who were deployed this month across the country’s various provinces to gather firsthand accounts from victims or their relatives. To counter these attempts at cover-up and the authorities’ lack of transparency, each case must be corroborated by at least two independent and reliable sources in order to be included.

It is this strict protocol that explains our findings: out of a total of 30 violations initially reported, only 18 cases could be definitively documented. The remaining 12 cases (40% of the reports) were suspended due to security issues and a lack of sufficient verification. This high exclusion rate illustrates our refusal to accept approximations: the organization adheres to a principle of extreme caution by publishing only data that has been formally corroborated.

I. 3. Trends Observed for the Month of June 2026

An overall analysis of the violations recorded during June 2026 highlights three major trends:

1. **An increase in the brutality of fatal attacks:** The number of bodies discovered stands at 11 cases, illustrating savage violence committed with blunt weapons or by decapitation, sparing not even the most vulnerable individuals, such as pregnant women.
2. **The systematization of abductions and secret detentions:** Security forces specifically target strategic individuals (3 cases), holding them in secret in order to permanently remove them from the jurisdiction of judges and the law.
3. **The use of illegal detention and torture:** The security apparatus is increasing the number of arbitrary arrests outside due process (as in the cases of Benjamin Babunga Watuna and Thaddée Ciza). These deprivations of liberty are accompanied by serious violations of physical integrity and acts of torture, tolerated or actively perpetrated by de facto agents, such as the brutal lynching documented in Bubanza.
4. **The stifling of civil society and the acceptance of lynching:** The government maintains a psychological campaign against independent civil society leaders, while local authorities allow vigilante justice to flourish (as in Bubanza) without prosecuting the perpetrators.

I.4. Structure of the Report

To clearly convey the reality on the ground, this document is organized as follows:

- **Chapter II: Violations of the Right to Life** (11 documented cases of murder).
- **Chapter III : Abductions and Enforced Disappearances** (3 documented cases : Gérard Bizimana, Jean-Claude Nintunze, Jean-Claude Nduwimana).
- **Chapter IV: Arbitrary arrests and detentions** (Cases of Benjamin Babunga Watuna and Thaddée Ciza).
- **Chapter V: Violations of Physical Integrity** (Case of lynching and brutal violence against Rémy Hakizimana in Bubanza).
- **Chapter VI: Attacks on Civic Space and Harassment of Independent Activists** (The Case of Faustin Ndikumana / PARCEM).
- **Chapter VII:** Advocacy and Media Outreach Activities (Focus on the International Mobilization of June 26, 2026).
- **Chapter VIII :** General Conclusion and Structural Recommendations.

II. MURDERS AND VIOLATIONS OF THE RIGHT TO LIFE

II. 1. General Context and Legal Framework

The security situation in Burundi continues to raise serious concerns, as illustrated by the alarming persistence of attacks on physical integrity and human life, more than six years after the 2020 political transition. This climate of vulnerability for citizens stands in direct contradiction to the solemn legal guarantees proclaimed at the national level. Article 24 of the Burundian Constitution, however, reaffirms the sanctity of human life, a principle protected by the mechanisms for prosecuting homicides set forth in Articles 210 through 220 of the Penal Code. Furthermore, the international commitments undertaken by the Burundian state, notably through the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, impose a strict obligation on it to protect its population.

On the ground, it is clear that there remains a persistent gap between these legal standards and the impunity surrounding the majority of crimes documented by ACAT-Burundi. Institutional failures all too often result in inaction on the part of investigative agencies or, even more seriously, in local administrative decisions that obstruct justice. Burials carried out in haste, without formal identification of the victims or forensic examinations, destroy physical evidence and prevent the initiation of serious prosecutions. This lack of a systematic judicial response perpetuates a cycle of criminal violence and deprives families of any recourse to justice and their right to the truth.

II. 2. Overview of Cases Documented by ACAT-Burundi

The **eleven (11) murder cases** documented in June 2026 are distinguished by the extreme cruelty of the methods used: beheadings, mutilations, lynchings (using hammers and clubs), and grenade attacks. The analysis highlights recurring strategies, notably the use of phone traps and the deliberate relocation of bodies to isolated areas to conceal the crimes and obstruct investigations.

Gitega Province has the highest concentration of cases, with five (5). The remainder are distributed among **Bujumbura** (3 cases), **Buhumuza** (2 cases), and **Butanyerera** (1 case). This indiscriminate violence affects all social groups, including minors, merchants, teachers, and women (including a young girl who was raped and a pregnant woman).

To date, the judicial response has been negligible. Aside from the identification of a suspect on the run in Cibitoke and the arrest of two hotel employees in Gitega, the vast majority of these tragedies remain unpunished, with no credible investigations opened by the authorities.

Table1 Summary of Murder Cases and Body Discoveries (June 2026)

Details of each case and the legal analysis are included in the Appendix section of this report

Date	Victim and Gender	Age	Location (Municipality, Province)	Circumstances / Condition of the Body	Suspected Motives	Legal Proceedings & Observations
June 10	Evelyne Ndayizeye (F)	24 years old	Gitega, Gitega	Body found bound on the bank of a river. Cell phone found nearby. Had met with an unknown person the day before.	Unknown	No suspects arrested. Body buried on the same day it was discovered.
June 11	Gaspard Kabanyegeye (M)	65 years old	Musongati, Buhumuza	Found in some brush near his home after a night out at a bar. Head injuries. Personal belongings stolen.	Criminal (Theft)	Unidentified assailants. Body buried on the same day it was discovered.
June 12	Unidentified man (M)	Unknown	Bubanza, Bujumbura	Decomposing body with its throat slit found in the bush, near a military post. Eyes gouged out and ears stabbed.	Unknown	Immediate burial ordered by the municipal administrator without prior investigation or identification.
June 12	Unidentified young woman (F)	Unknown	Ntangwa, Bujumbura	Body abandoned in a neighborhood. Signs of rape prior to the murder. Crime scene disturbed.	Sexual / Criminal	Body moved to obstruct the investigation. No suspects arrested.
June 13	Fabien Manirakiza (M)	Unknown	Cibitoke, Buhumuza	Mutilated body discovered in his own home. The victim was a merchant and gold trafficker.	Family/Financial Dispute	The victim's son is the prime suspect. He fled the scene after the incident.

					(Theft of Money)	
June 15	Léonce Ndayumvire (M)	Unknown	Gitega, Gitega	A teacher was the victim of a grenade attack at his home following a hoax call. He died at the hospital.	Unknown	Authorities say an investigation is underway. No suspects have been arrested.
June 17	Emmanuel Damascene Daradangwa (M)	Unknown	Gitega, Gitega	Found hanging inside his home, but his feet were touching the ground.	Suicide or settling of scores (disguised murder)	Conflicting theories at the scene (suicide vs. murder). Official follow-up unknown.
June 21	Annonciate Niyonzima (F)	26 years old	Murwi, Bujumbura	8 months pregnant. Victim of an ambush. Brutally murdered with a hammer.	Family conflict / Dispute with the child's father	Lured by a call from the child's father. Body buried on June 23.
June 22	Unidentified man (M)	Unknown	Gitega, Gitega	Severe injuries to the forehead caused by a blunt object (club). Body moved.	Unknown	Body transferred to the morgue by local authorities. No suspects arrested.
June 23	Unidentified young boy (M)	15 to 17 years old	Tangara, Butanyerera	Decapitated body found in the bush. Signs of extreme violence. No blood at the scene (body had been moved).	Unknown	Body transferred to the morgue of a health center by local authorities.
June 24	Francine Nduwayezu (F)	24 years old	Gitega, Gitega	Body found during the day inside a guesthouse room.	Unknown	Two (2) employees of the guesthouse were arrested and taken into custody for questioning.

II. 3. Statistical Analysis of Documented Cases (June 2026)

A quantitative and cross-sectional analysis of **the eleven (11) homicides** recorded during the month of June 2026 highlights key trends regarding the victims' profiles, the spatial distribution of crime, and the lack of judicial action. Prior to an in-depth descriptive analysis of these violations of the right to life, the summary table below compiles key data illustrating the prevailing insecurity and institutional inaction during this period.

Table2 Numerical Indicators of Violations of the Right to Life and Impunity (June 2026)

Analytical Indicators	Value for the month of June 2026
Total number of documented deaths	11 bodies
Concentration of crimes (Gitega & Bujumbura)	72.73% (8 out of 11 cases)
Unresolved or unknown motives	72.73% (8 out of 11 cases)
Immediate burials by authorities despite clear evidence of murder	27.27% (3 out of 11 cases)
Cases that remained without any investigation or arrests (impunity)	90.91% (10 out of 11 cases)

II.3.1 Sociodemographic Characteristics of the Victims

An examination of individual data confirms that lethal crime occurs indiscriminately, affecting all segments of the population regardless of gender, age group, or occupation:

- **Breakdown by gender:** Males bear the heaviest burden, accounting for 63.64% of cases (7 victims), while women represent 36.36% of recorded cases (4 victims: Evelyne, Francine, Annonciate, and the unnamed young girl).
- **Generational data:** Anonymity or the condition of the bodies prevents age determination in 54.55% of cases (6 cases). For the remaining cases, the average age is 32.8 years, illustrating a particularly wide range extending from adolescence (the decapitated boy aged 15 to 17) to old age (Gaspard Kabanyegeye, 65).
- **Diversity of social profiles:** Acts of violence target a diverse range of economic and social actors. Among the deceased are professionals in the education sector (teacher Léonce

Ndayumvire), workers in the informal and mining sectors (gold trader Fabien Manirakiza), as well as highly vulnerable individuals, such as a young woman who was eight months pregnant (Annonciate Niyonzima).

II.3.2. Analysis of Methods of Execution and Focus on Acts of Extreme Inhumanity

The variety of killing methods documented this month attests to extreme brutality and premeditation on the part of the perpetrators, who often take steps to cover their tracks:

- **The murder of a pregnant woman:** We must highlight, with deep indignation, the case of this 26-year-old woman, who was savagely murdered with a hammer while she was eight months pregnant. This tragedy illustrates an intolerable level of cruelty in which the absolute vulnerability of the victim and her unborn child did not elicit any restraint on the part of her assailant. This despicable act, committed using a highly destructive blunt instrument, simultaneously shattered two human lives and embodies the most inhumane form of criminality documented this month.
- **Head trauma and bodily mutilation (36.36% / 4 cases):** In addition to the use of a hammer, brute force caused irreparable trauma, with several bodies exhibiting major frontal fractures inflicted with clubs. The extreme nature of the violence is confirmed by cases of extreme brutality against the bodies, including a victim whose throat was slit, eyes gouged out, and ears stabbed.
- **Decapitations and the use of explosives (18.18% / 2 cases):** This month's record of terror includes the complete decapitation of a teenager left behind in the middle of the bush, as well as a targeted nighttime attack using a military-grade weapon (a grenade) carried out directly at the victim's home.
- **Deaths in Enclosed Spaces and Suspicious Staging (27.27% / 3 cases):** Three bodies were discovered in enclosed spaces (a residence, a hotel room, and a vacation home), involving contexts of prior sexual assault or staged fake suicides where the victim's feet were touching the ground.
- **Strategy of Moving the Bodies (27.27% / 3 cases):** A major indicator of premeditation lies in the tampering with crime scenes. In at least three cases, the complete absence of bloodstains at the discovery sites attests that the victims were executed elsewhere before being abandoned in isolated areas to mislead investigators.
- **Determination of motives:** Uncertainty remains the norm in 72.73% of cases (8 cases) where the motive remains unknown. In the remaining 3 cases (27.27%), the evidence points to conflicts of a strictly familial, marital, or financial nature (the theft of a

shopkeeper's money in Cibitoke, the ambush orchestrated by a child's father in Murwi, and the theft of Gaspard's personal belongings in Musongati).

The following graph illustrates the method of commission and the severity of the acts observed during the month of June 2026.

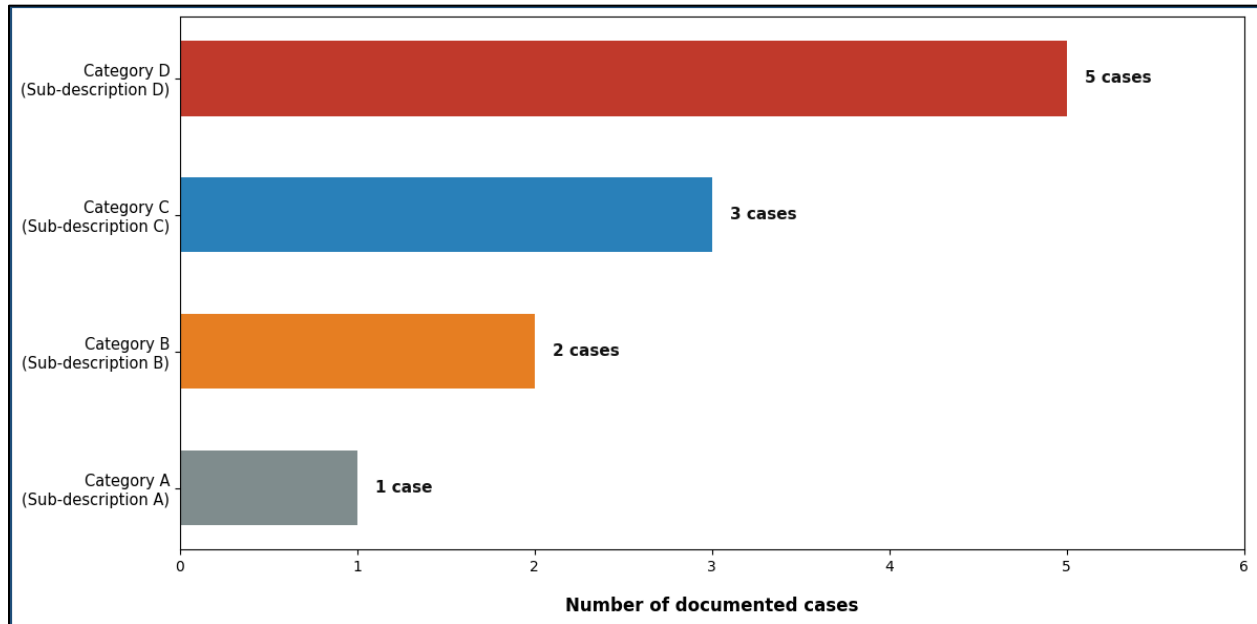


Chart 1: Method of Commission and Severity of the Acts Observed (June 2026)

Beyond the direct perpetrators of the violations, criminal and moral responsibility extends to the administrative and police authorities who took no action in response to the crimes committed. The fact that certain suspects, despite being formally identified by witnesses (such as the son of merchant Fabien Manirakiza in the commune of Cibitoke), managed to flee without immediate prosecution demonstrates an alarming passivity on the part of law enforcement. Furthermore, impunity is exacerbated by the attitude of senior officials in the territorial administration, such as the administrator of Bubanza, who ordered the hasty burial of unidentified victims. This institutional behavior highlights a flagrant failure in the chain of command and a deliberate refusal to enforce the law.

An examination of the data reveals a systemic blockage in the activation of justice and truth-seeking mechanisms, despite the gravity of the documented incidents:

- **Initial police inaction rate: 90.91% (10 out of 11 cases).** With the notable exception of a single case, virtually all of the homicides documented this month did not result in any visible investigative action on the ground. Even when local authorities officially announced the opening of an investigation—as in Gitega regarding the teacher targeted by a grenade—no concrete prosecutorial action has yet been taken.
- **Persistent structural impunity: 90.91% (10 out of 11 cases).** Impunity remains the norm for nearly all crimes this month, as neither the perpetrators nor those who ordered the crimes are being sought or held accountable. The sole exception is the case of the *Guest House* in Gitega, where the placement of two employees in police custody constitutes the only recorded instance of formal legal proceedings being initiated.
- **Administrative obstruction through the destruction of evidence: 27.27% (3 out of 11 cases).** Government agencies and local authorities actively approved or ordered the hasty burial of three bodies on the very day they were discovered (Evelyne Ndayizeye, Gaspard Kabanyegeye, and the unidentified man from Bubanza). This practice, which violates the rules of criminal procedure, prevents any autopsy from being performed, destroys physical evidence, and permanently ensures the anonymity of the perpetrators.

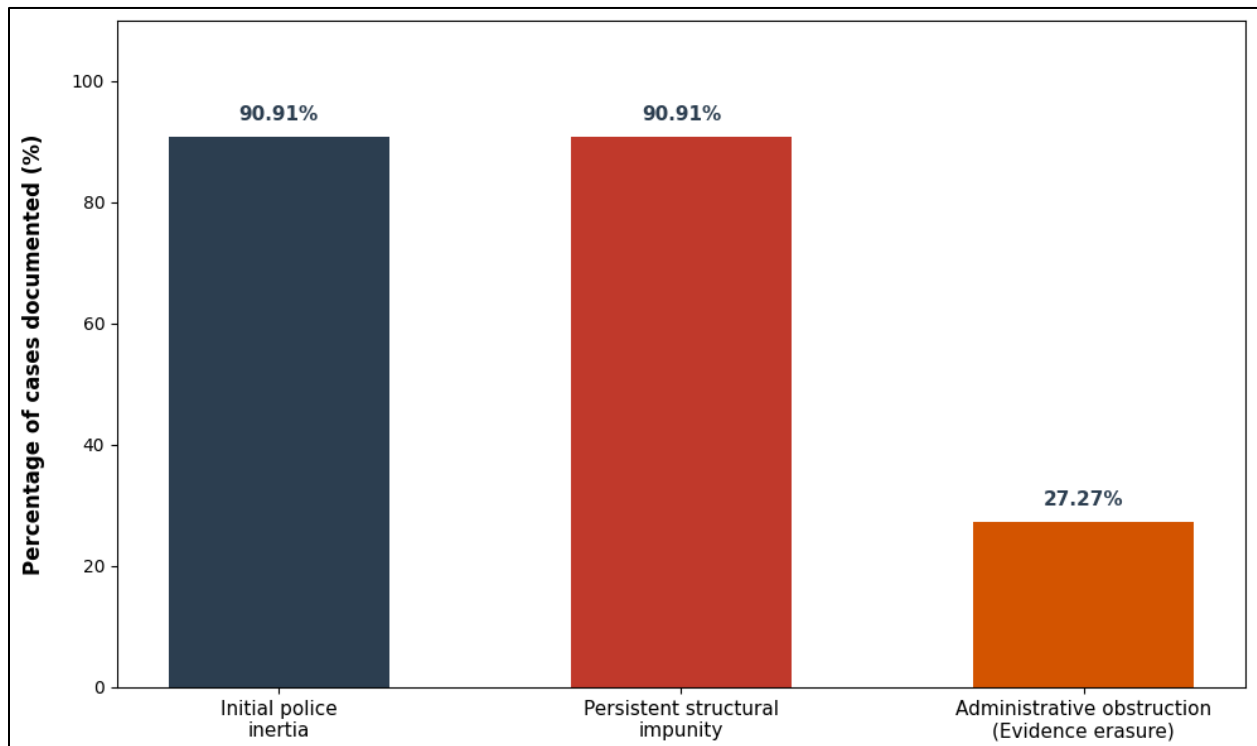


Figure 2: Statistical Indicators of the Public and Institutional Response (June 2026)

This chart on the public response illustrates a near-total institutional paralysis in the face of violations of the right to life. The prevalence of structural impunity and initial police inaction (90.91% of cases) demonstrates the almost systematic absence of public action, thereby shielding the perpetrators from prosecution. This lack of on-the-ground investigations is heavily fueled upstream by obstructionist practices on the part of local authorities (27.27%), who order hasty burials that hinder forensic examinations and thus bury the truth along with the victims.

II. 4. Findings and Legal Violations

As part of its assessment of the violations documented during the month of June 2026, ACAT-Burundi strongly condemns the continued practice of expedited administrative burials of bodies discovered in public spaces, carried out in disregard of the rules governing identification and criminal investigation. An in-depth analysis of the eleven (11) documented murder cases reveals a systematic and flagrant breach of national and international legal obligations by public officials. Beyond the initial homicide, the deliberate failure to pursue criminal prosecution and the passive neutrality of the state apparatus constitute a major breach of the fundamental principles of the rule of law.

II.4.1. The Blatant Violation of the Burundian Code of Criminal Procedure

These operational failures directly contravene the provisions of Article 109 of Law No. 1/09 of May 11, 2018, establishing the Burundian Code of Criminal Procedure. This law requires judicial police officers (OPJ) to immediately proceed to the scene upon the discovery of a body where the cause of death is suspicious or unknown, in order to make initial findings.

Burundian law also stipulates that the public prosecutor's office must request the assistance of qualified experts or medical professionals to determine the scientific cause of death. Above all, the Penal Code mandates the unconditional opening of a judicial investigation whenever the circumstances of the death remain unclear. Failure to implement these legal safeguards contributes to the entrenchment of impunity and structurally deprives the bereaved of their legitimate access to historical truth and justice.

II.4.2. Denial of the Right to Protection of Life and to Justice

The key statistical indicator in this chapter—marked by an initial police inaction rate of **90.91%**—clearly illustrates the disregard for existing laws:

- **Failure to Apply the Constitution:** Article 24 of the Constitution of the Republic of Burundi enshrines the sacred and inviolable nature of human life. Tolerating the proliferation of unsolved murders strips this constitutional protection of its substantive meaning.
- **Inaction by the public prosecutor's offices:** By refusing to order the opening of preliminary investigations into ten of the eleven cases involving violence (use of hammers, clubs, bladed weapons, and decapitation), the Burundian criminal justice system is guilty of a flagrant denial of justice, in direct violation of Article 7 of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights.

II.4.3. The Illegality of Immediate Burials by the Authorities (27.27% of cases)

In the cases of Evelyne Ndayizeye (Gitega), Gaspard Kabanyegeye (Musongati), and the unidentified man found in Bubanza, local government officials rushed the burial of the bodies on the very day they were discovered. By rushing these burials without the mandatory joint examination by a judicial police officer or a medical examiner required by Article 109, local authorities are physically obstructing justice. They irreversibly alter the crime scene and destroy the biological evidence necessary for the subsequent identification of the perpetrators.

II.4.4. The Case of the Guest House in Gitega

The murder of Francine Nduwayezu at a hotel in Shatanya illustrates the current contradictions in the law enforcement response:

- **Asymmetry in police diligence:** While the immediate arrest of two hotel employees proves that police action is technically feasible, it stands in stark contrast to the abandonment of the other ten cases that month. This administrative selectivity violates the principle of equality of citizens before the law (Article 19 of the Constitution).
- **Obligations to Conduct Thorough Investigations:** International human rights standards emphasize that the arrest of mere perpetrators or witnesses does not relieve the State of its obligation to identify those who gave the orders or to uncover the underlying motives behind the crime. The lack of broader prosecutions in this type of case—which took place behind closed doors—indicates that investigations were closed prematurely, relieving the State of its duty of due diligence.
(Full, chronological details on all of these cases are provided in the annexes.)

In summary, the fact that the police do not open investigations and that local authorities hastily bury the bodies proves that the Burundian state is failing to fulfill its role. By acting in this way, the justice system is abandoning its constitutional duty to protect citizens and seek the truth.

II. 5. Recommendations

In light of the resurgence of killings and the targeting of victims documented during the month of June 2026, ACAT-Burundi makes the following specific recommendations:

- **To the Public Prosecutors' Offices:** Open independent criminal investigations **within 30 days** for each of the ten (10) homicide cases that have gone unresolved this month, and gradually extend these proceedings to all bodies discovered in previous months under similar circumstances, in order to definitively break the cycle of inaction and prosecute all perpetrators of these recurring crimes.
 - **Monitoring indicator:** Formal registration of the judicial investigation files with the clerks' offices of the relevant public prosecutors' offices and public communication regarding the progress of the proceedings.
- **To the Gitega judiciary:** Ensure, **throughout the investigation and during the upcoming trial**, that the proceedings concerning the two Guest House employees arrested in Shatanya are conducted with complete transparency and in full compliance with the guarantees of a fair trial.
 - **Monitoring indicator:** Effective authorization for the presence of independent observers, lawyers, and the press at all hearings in the case.
- **To the Burundi National Police (PNB):** **Within 30 days**, intensify nighttime security patrols and monitoring of roadways connecting isolated hills to waterways (particularly along rivers), and extend these measures to all hard-to-reach or remote areas frequently used by criminal networks to execute their victims or dispose of their remains.
 - **Monitoring indicator:** Report on the deployment of new mobile units and a statistical decrease in the discovery of bodies in these specific areas during the following month.
- **To administrative authorities:** Comply with national and international standards regarding the handling of deceased bodies by refraining, **with immediate effect upon the publication of this report**, from burying them before all reasonable measures for identification, documentation, and forensic investigation have been undertaken.
 - **Monitoring indicator:** Systematic preparation of an identification and medical examination report by a judicial police officer and a medical examiner prior to any authorization for burial by the local administration.

III. KIDNAPPINGS, AND ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCES

III. 1. General Context and Legal Framework

Abductions and enforced disappearances are among the most serious human rights violations in Burundi. This practice causes families terrible psychological suffering, as they do not know whether their loved ones are still alive or dead.

Yet the country’s laws strictly prohibit such acts. Article 25 of the Burundian Constitution clearly states that the police or the military may arrest a person only if authorized by law. Furthermore, the Penal Code imposes severe penalties for illegal arrests, whether committed by citizens or by state officials. Burundi has also signed international treaties that oblige it to protect every citizen from secret arrests, to conduct searches to locate missing persons, and to punish those responsible.

III. 2. Overview of Cases Documented by ACAT-Burundi

During the month of June 2026, ACAT-Burundi documented three (3) cases of abduction and enforced disappearance committed outside any legal framework. These violations specifically targeted Bujumbura Province (2 cases) and Butanyerera Province (1 case). In response to these disappearances, the authorities have remained completely silent and refuse to disclose to the families the location where the victims are being held, thereby depriving them of any legal protection through this secret detention. The summary table below outlines the identities of the affected individuals and the circumstances of their capture.

Table3 Summary of Documented Cases of Abductions and Enforced Disappearances (June 2026)

Date	Victim	Profile / Age	Location (Municipality, Province)	Last Known Location	Circumstances of the incident / Disappearance
June 5	Corporal Gérard Bizimana (Alias Muhinga / Aimé)	Military intelligence officer (G2), assigned to the Parachute Battalion / 34 years old	Muha, Bujumbura (Musaga area)	“Chez Lewis” bar in Musaga	Violent abduction by an armed agent in civilian clothing and two uniformed soldiers. Forcibly loaded into the back of a white pickup truck with tinted windows after putting up a fierce struggle.

June 17	Jean-Claude Nintunze <i>(alias Mazuru)</i>	Repatriated from Rwanda (since 2021) on a family visit	Bugabira, Butanyerera	Detention cell in the Bugabira area	Arbitrary arrest in the form of an abduction by military personnel and the Imbonerakure. Forcibly removed from the official detention cell on June 18 by a military pickup truck to an unknown destination (enforced disappearance).
June 20	Jean-Claude Nduwimana	Retired soldier (former FAB), married, father of four children	Muha, Bujumbura (Kanyosha area)	Busoro neighborhood (Bujumbura)	Abducted by unknown individuals while out on his daily jog, following a suspicious call received at his home. His phones were immediately disconnected.

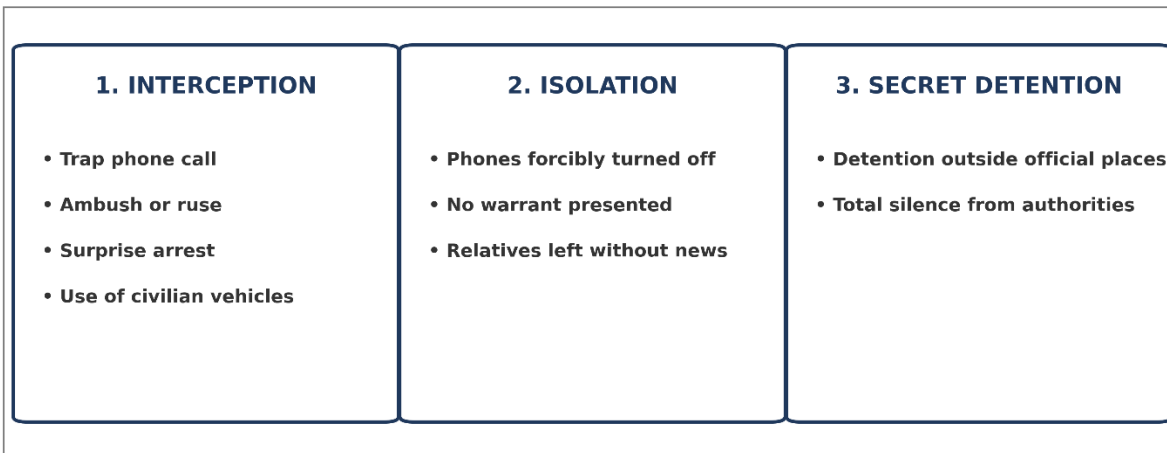
III. 3. Overall Analysis and Characteristics of the Abductions

A thorough examination of the three cases documented this month reveals planned methods and target selection that follow very specific patterns.

III.3.1. Mechanism and Standardized Protocol of the Abductions

Analysis of the testimonies collected shows that the agents do not act at random. In each case, they apply the same method, designed to trap the victim quickly, prevent them from calling for help, and cover their tracks before law enforcement or the family can intervene.

Figure 1: The three stages of the abductions documented in June 2026



III.3.2. Victim Profiling: Suspicion Centered on Rwanda and the Former Army

The analysis shows that the people who were abducted and reported missing were not chosen at random. They belong to well-defined categories that are subject to particular surveillance or suspicion on the part of the current security apparatus:

- **Citizens with ties to Rwanda:** The victim’s profile is directly marked by a connection to the neighboring country, as in the case of Jean-Claude Nintunze, a Burundian citizen who returned from exile in Rwanda in 2021 and was captured during a family visit.
- **Security professionals:** The other two targets are from the military. One is an active-duty officer at the heart of the army’s intelligence services (Corporal Gérard Bizimana), and the other is a retired former member of the former armed forces (ex-FAB, Jean-Claude Nduwimana).

III.3.3. The Political Exploitation of Accusations of Collaboration

To legitimize these secret detentions and stifle dissent, the security apparatus routinely invokes grounds of extreme political gravity. Although the cases of Corporal Gérard Bizimana, the returnee Jean-Claude Nintunze, and the former soldier Jean-Claude Nduwimana fall under the category of enforced disappearance, they perfectly illustrate this dynamic: these men are targeted and accused of “collaboration” because of their status as former members of the armed forces or as returnees from exile.

The use of this accusation of collusion with or support for hostile elements allows their cases to be arbitrarily classified under the guise of national security. This serves as a systematic pretext for the army and the *Imbonerakure* League to impose secrecy on families, block access to official detention facilities, and permanently deprive these victims of the rules of a fair trial.

III.3.4. Assessment of the Public Response and the Distress of Families

An examination of the attitude of government agencies toward this month's enforced disappearances highlights a systematic refusal to enforce protective laws. This dashboard provides a simplified summary of how institutions responded on the ground to the three cases of abduction and enforced disappearance:

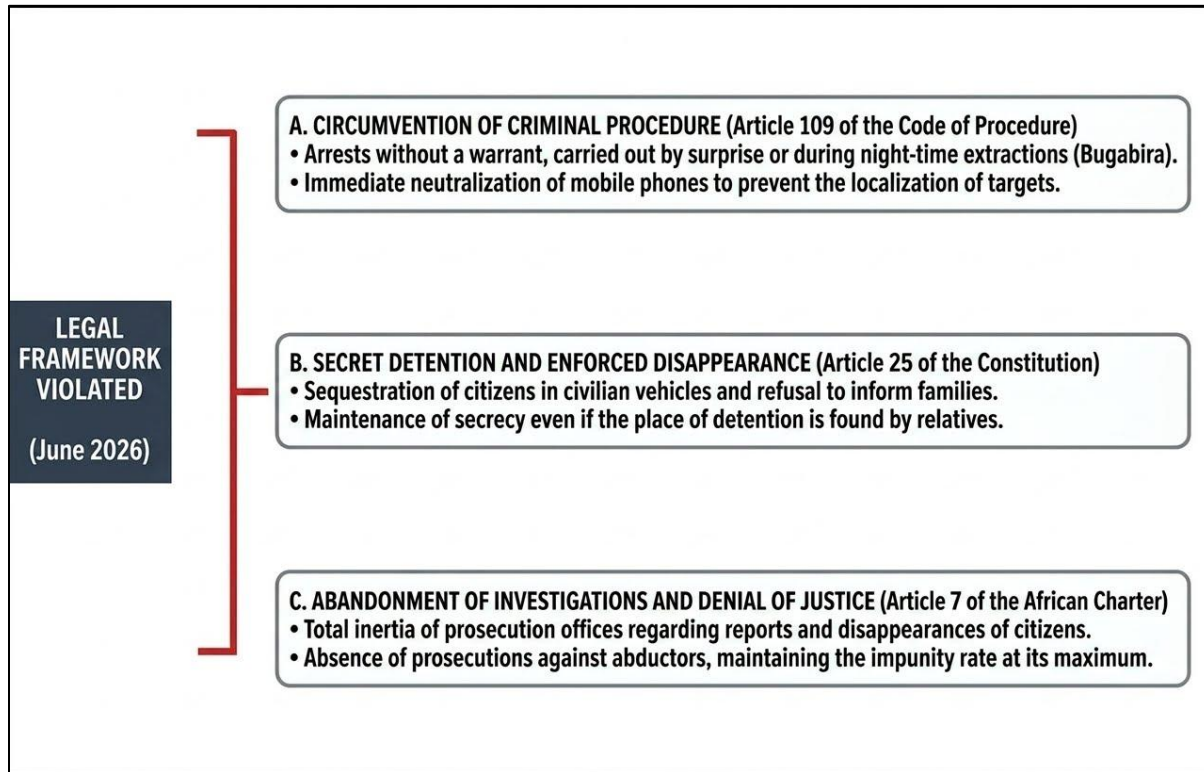
Table4 Assessment of the State's Response to Abductions (June 2026)

What the Law Says	Alert Level	What Is Actually Happening on the Ground
Searching for the Missing	● <i>Alert</i>	The police and the courts have not opened any investigation to locate the three abducted individuals.
Notifying the families	● <i>Alert</i>	The authorities refuse to tell the families whether their loved ones have been arrested and where they are being held.
Use official prisons	● <i>Alert</i>	Victims are held incommunicado in locations that are unknown or inaccessible to their loved ones (such as in Kirundo).

III. 4. Findings and Legal Violations

An analysis of the abductions documented this month highlights a flagrant breach of the rule of law. Security forces are acting outside the oversight of prosecutors' offices, while judicial authorities are failing to search for the missing persons. The diagram below summarizes the three major violations identified under Burundian and international law.

Diagram 2: Summary of Laws Violated During the Abductions and Enforced Disappearances of June 2026



In summary, the fact that the police are not opening investigations and that local authorities are hiding citizens outside of legal procedures proves that the Burundian state is failing to fulfill its role. By acting in this manner, the justice system is abandoning its constitutional duty to protect citizens and seek the truth.

III.5. Recommendations

In light of the ongoing abductions and the use of incommunicado detention documented during the month of June 2026, ACAT-Burundi makes the following specific recommendations:

- **To the National Intelligence Service (SNR) and the Army:** Officially disclose, **within 7 days**, the location where Corporal Gérard Bizimana, Jean-Claude Nduwimana, and Jean-Claude Nintunze are being held, and end their incommunicado detention outside any legal framework.
 - **Monitoring indicator:** Official notification sent to the families and effective authorization for the victims' relatives and attorneys to visit them.

- **To the civil and military prosecutors’ offices:** Open urgent investigations **within 30 days** to identify and criminally prosecute plainclothes agents and military personnel who use unmarked vehicles to carry out abductions and forcibly remove citizens from official detention facilities (as documented in Bugabira and Musaga).
 - **Monitoring indicator:** Official seizure of the detention records from the Bugabira area detention facility and the opening of a judicial investigation file at the relevant provincial prosecutors’ offices.

IV. ARBITRARY ARRESTS AND DETENTIONS

IV. 1. General Context and Legal Framework

Deprivation of liberty carried out outside any legal framework continues to undermine the foundations of the rule of law in Burundi. Yet national and international rules are clear: Article 25 of the Burundian Constitution guarantees that individual liberty is the rule and detention the exception. Furthermore, Article 9 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights requires that any person who is arrested be immediately informed of the reasons for their arrest and brought promptly before an independent judge. Holding a citizen in prison without officially notifying them of the charges against them constitutes a major violation of human rights.

IV. 2. Presentation of Documented Cases

During the period covered by this report, two emblematic cases of arbitrary arrest and detention were closely monitored. They highlight the security apparatus’s systematic use of administrative pretexts or unfounded political charges to justify arrests and detentions outside due process.

Table 5 Documented Cases of Arbitrary Arrest and Detention (June 2026)

Date of Arrest	Victim	Profile / Age	Location (Place of Arrest)	Current place of detention	Circumstances and reasons for detention
May 26	Benjamin Babunga Watuna	Congolese national (DRC), long-time resident of Burundi. International consultant, independent	Bahizi Café parking lot, Mukaza district, Bujumbura	Mpimba Central Prison (Bujumbura)	Detained by the National Intelligence Service (SNR) under the false pretext of a traffic violation. Transferred to Mpimba on June 5, he has been held in

		analyst on the Great Lakes region, employee of the NGO ZOA / Born in 1982			secret there for more than three weeks without any official charges.
June 2	Thaddée Ciza	Burundian national. Cross-border trader (Burundi-Rwanda), married and father of five children / 46 years old	Border crossing, Kayanza, Butanyerera Province	Kirundo Judicial Police Detention Cell	Apprehended during the day by the Burundi National Police (PNB) immediately after crossing the border. His phones were forcibly confiscated, and he is being illegally detained on false political charges of collaborating with the M23 rebel movement.

IV. 3. Analysis of Cases and Characteristics of Detention

A review of these cases reveals that the security apparatus uses subterfuge and false accusations to circumvent legal rules.

IV.3.1. Operational Traps and Lack of Charges

- **The Case of Benjamin Babunga Watuna:** Arrested by the SNR under the false pretext of a traffic violation, his electronic devices were searched without result. Transferred to Mpimba Prison, he has been held there for more than three weeks without any official notification of charges.
- **The Case of Thaddée Ciza:** Intercepted at the border by the PNB, he was immediately stripped of his phones to cut off all contact with his loved ones. He remains detained in the Kirundo holding cell on a false political charge of having ties to the M23.

In both cases, continued detention without material evidence demonstrates the authorities’ intent to prolong incarceration while they fabricate charges.

IV.3.2. The Profile of the Victims and the Diplomatic Dimension

The targets of these arrests are independent civilians with no partisan political affiliations, whose activities are centered in the Great Lakes region:

- **Benjamin Babunga Watuna:** A neutral consultant and analyst of Congolese nationality (DRC). When asked about his case, Burundian Minister of Foreign Affairs Edouard Bizimana publicly stated: *“When a citizen commits a wrongdoing, his country cannot defend him² .”* The lack of specifics regarding this alleged “wrongdoing” turns this case into an opaque affair with obvious diplomatic implications.
- **Thaddée Ciza:** A cross-border trader who regularly commutes between Burundi and Rwanda. His economic activity was immediately criminalized through a baseless accusation of complicity with the M23, illustrating the exploitation of regional tensions.

IV. 4. Findings and Legal Violations

An analysis of these two detentions reveals a flagrant violation of national and international legal procedures:

- **Denial of the right to information (Code of Criminal Procedure):** The failure to officially notify the detainees of the charges against them and the exceeding of the legal time limits for police custody violate the obligation to bring detainees before a judge.
- **Breach of international principles:** Holding Benjamin Babunga in incommunicado detention (following a negative technical assessment) and Thaddée Ciza (without material evidence) constitutes unlawful detention, contrary to the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights.

IV. 5. Recommendations

In light of these prolonged and unjustified detentions, ACAT-Burundi makes the following specific requests:

- **To the Ministry of Justice and the public prosecutors’ offices:** Order, **within 30 days**, the immediate and unconditional release of Mr. Benjamin Babunga Watuna and Mr. Thaddée Ciza, given the complete absence of material evidence that could justify their continued detention.

² Statement by H.E. Ambassador Édouard Bizimana, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Development Cooperation, during the biannual public broadcast hosted by members of the government, Ingoma Stadium in Gitega, June 11, 2026.

- **Monitoring indicator:** Formal signing of the release orders by the competent judge or prosecutor and the actual physical release of the two individuals concerned.
- **To the leadership of the National Intelligence Service (SNR) and the Burundi National Police (PNB):** Cease, **within 60 days**, the use of arbitrary pretexts or baseless political accusations to arrest civilians, and ensure strict respect for the rights of the defense.
 - **Monitoring indicator:** Formal reminder of legal arrest procedures during high-level command meetings and distribution of written instructions prohibiting arrests not based on serious evidence of guilt.

V: VIOLATIONS OF PHYSICAL INTEGRITY

V. 1. General Context and Legal Framework

The right to security and protection against physical violence is an absolute obligation. Article 25 of the Constitution of Burundi clearly stipulates that “no one may be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment.” Furthermore, the Burundian Penal Code severely punishes intentional assault and battery, as well as vigilante justice (mob lynching).

At the international level, the United Nations Convention Against Torture, ratified by Burundi, obligates the State to conduct immediate investigations as soon as a serious act of violence is reported, to punish the perpetrators, and to ensure that victims receive emergency medical care.

V. 2. Presentation of the Documented Case

During the month of June 2026, a serious case of lynching and abandonment of the victim by local authorities was recorded in Bubanza Province.

Table 6 Case of serious physical harm (June 2026)

Date	Victim	Profile / Occupation	Location (Site of the attack)	Current Condition	Medical	Circumstances of the assault and the standoff
June 4	Rémy Hakizimana	Night watchman (well-known in the area)	Buringa area, Mpanda commune, Bubanza province	Very serious internal injuries	(swollen abdomen, blood in the urine). Transferred to Gihanga, he was denied specialized	Arrested by four field guards (Yves Kwizera, Samson Ndayisenga, Fabrice Nduwayo, Bikorimana) under the false pretext of rice theft. Beaten

				care in Bujumbura due to lack of resources.	with clubs to the abdomen.
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V. 3. Analysis of the Case and Characteristics of the Violence

V.3.1. Physical Brutality and Severe Internal Injuries

The attackers acted with full knowledge of the facts. Although they knew the victim and his job as a night watchman very well, they used the pretext of rice theft to carry out a savage lynching. The blows with clubs and kicks were deliberately aimed at the lower abdomen. Examinations conducted at the Gihanga Hospital revealed alarming clinical signs (a severely swollen abdomen and blood-filled urine), which prove that internal organs (such as the bladder) were ruptured. The judiciary’s refusal to intervene is preventing the victim from obtaining the financial resources needed for emergency treatment in Bujumbura, putting his life in immediate danger.

V.3.2. The Local Administration’s Passive Complicity

Faced with this medical emergency, the family took the victim back to the village chief of Village 5 to demand that the four assailants pay the hospital bills. This administrative effort was a complete failure. Not only did the village chief take no action to force the perpetrators to pay, but he also failed to alert the police. The four assailants continue to move about freely in the area without facing any legal consequences. This behavior on the part of local authorities amounts to passive complicity and encourages vigilante justice.

V. 4. Findings and Legal Violations

An on-site analysis of this assault reveals two major violations of the law:

- **Failure to assist a person in danger (Penal Code):** The village chief’s refusal to act in the face of a dying victim constitutes gross negligence and an obstruction of justice.
- **Tolerance of vigilante justice:** By leaving the four perpetrators of the lynching at large, local authorities are flouting the constitutional obligation to punish physical violence.

V. 5. Specific Recommendations

Given the severity of the victim’s injuries and the impunity of the attackers, the following requests are made:

- **To the provincial health and administrative authorities (Bubanza):** Coordinate and arrange, **within 72 hours**, the medical and financial transfer of Mr. Rémy Hakizimana to a specialized hospital in Bujumbura to ensure he has access to the emergency surgical care essential to his survival.

- **Monitoring indicator:** Effective provision of a properly equipped ambulance and formal admission of the patient to a referral hospital in Bujumbura.
- **To the Public Prosecutor in Bubanza:** Issue arrest warrants **within 15 days** and order the initiation of criminal proceedings against Yves Kwizera, Samson Ndayisenga, Fabrice Nduwayo, and Bikorimana for acts of torture and aggravated assault based on unfounded allegations.
 - **Monitoring indicator:** Formal registration of the complaint, issuance of arrest warrants by the public prosecutor’s office, and execution of the arrests by the Bubanza judicial police.
- **To the Ministry of the Interior, Community Development, and Public Security:** Initiate disciplinary proceedings, **within 30 days**, against the village chief of Village 5 for his complicit inaction in the face of a flagrant assault and his serious breach of the duty to assist a person in danger.
 - **Monitoring indicator:** Official notification of an administrative sanction (reprimand, suspension, or dismissal) by the municipal administrator of Mpanda or the governor of Bubanza.

VI. VIOLATIONS OF CIVIC LIBERTIES AND HARASSMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

VI. 1. General Context and Legal Framework

Respect for civic space and the freedom of action of civil society actors are essential conditions for the existence of the rule of law. At the national level, Article 31 of the Constitution of the Republic of Burundi guarantees every citizen freedom of expression and opinion, which includes the right to disseminate one’s ideas and to criticize the management of public affairs.

At the international level, this protection is reinforced by the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, adopted on December 9, 1998 (Resolution 53/144). Article 12, paragraph 2, of this international text reiterates Burundi’s strict obligation in the following exact terms:

“The State shall take all necessary measures to ensure that the competent authorities protect every person, individually or in association with others, against any violence, threats, reprisals,

de facto or de jure, discrimination, pressure, or other arbitrary measures resulting from the legitimate exercise of the rights set forth in this Declaration.”

Ensuring the safety of activists, union members, and community leaders from harassment related to their professional activities is therefore a mandatory duty for Burundian institutions.

VI. 2. Presentation of the documented case: Intimidation against Faustin Ndikumana

In complete disregard for these legal protections, pressure and intimidation against Mr. Faustin Ndikumana, president of the organization PARCEM (Parole et Action pour le Réveil des Consciences et l'Évolution des Mentalités), intensified significantly during the month of June 2026.

This key figure in Burundian civil society is regularly targeted because of his public stances on issues of general interest. Through his reports and media appearances, Mr. Ndikumana carries out independent work to raise awareness about major governance issues, the mismanagement of public resources, and the economic hardships affecting the population.

This harassment, observed in June 2026, is part of an ongoing and long-standing campaign of pressure waged by the government. As a reminder, on November 5, 2025, Mr. Faustin Ndikumana had already been the target of direct verbal attacks and threats made publicly by the President of the Republic, Mr. Évariste Ndayishimiye, during an official meeting. The resurgence of these acts of intimidation this month confirms the authorities' intent to silence an independent critical voice and to stifle public debate in Burundi.

VI. 3. Findings and Legal Violations

An analysis of this ongoing harassment highlights two major violations of the rule of law:

- **Violation of freedom of expression (domestic law):** The targeted threats against the president of PARCEM directly violate Article 31 of the Burundian Constitution and aim to punish a citizen for his opinions on the country's governance.
- **Failure to Respect International Commitments (International Law):** The climate of pressure perpetuated by the authorities' statements violates Article 7 of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights. The Burundian state is failing to fulfill its obligation to protect the exercise of fundamental freedoms.

VI. 4. Recommendations

In light of the repeated threats against civil society actors, the following specific requests are made:

- **To the Burundian authorities:** Formally guarantee, **within 30 days**, the cessation of all forms of harassment, judicial intimidation, or reprisals targeting Mr. Faustin Ndikumana, as well as all human rights defenders and civil society activists.
 - **Monitoring indicator:** The dismissal of any foreseeable investigative cases and the absence of new summonses by security services without justification during the following month.
- **To the Ministry of the Interior, Community Development, and Public Security:** Establish, **within 30 days**, an alert and direct contact mechanism to report any threat to the physical safety of Mr. Faustin Ndikumana, and formalize, **within 90 days**, clear measures guaranteeing that civil society organizations can carry out their activities in the public interest with complete independence and without fear.
 - **Monitoring indicator:** Effective establishment of a security dialogue channel and the issuance or renewal, without administrative obstacles, of permits for public activities for the PARCEM organization.

VII: ADVOCACY AND PUBLIC AWARENESS ACTIVITIES

VII. 1. Chronological Overview of Interventions and Position Statements

During the month of June 2026, numerous communication, advocacy, and exposé campaigns were carried out through various independent Burundian media outlets broadcasting from exile, in order to alert national and international public opinion to the human rights situation in Burundi.

Table7 Calendar of Advocacy Activities (June 2026)

Dates	Campaign Themes	Method of Action / Channels	Summary of the intervention and demands
June 9	Harassment of activist Faustin Ndikumana	Joint Statement	Joint statement demanding an end to intimidation against the PARCEM leader and calling for justice for his employees.
June 20 & 21	World Refugee Day	Statement	A reminder of the international obligation of States to prohibit the forced return of Burundian refugees as long as the reasons for their flight persist.
June 26	International Day in Support of Victims of Torture	Joint Statement	A joint statement by the organizations ACAT-Burundi, SOS Tortue Burundi, Mouvement Inamahoro, CAVIB, and GLa-Juris, in partnership with FIACAT, OMCT, and CCPR Center, denouncing the inaction of Burundian authorities in the face of torture despite the commitments they have made, and calling for reparations for survivors.

VII. 2. Highlight of the Month: Mobilization on the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture (June 26)

The most significant and in-depth advocacy effort of the month took place on **June 26, 2026**. It brought together national and international forces to denounce the use of torture in Burundi.

- **The Joint Statement:** Early this morning, Burundian civil society organizations **ACAT-Burundi, SOS-Torture/Burundi, the Inamahoro Movement, CAVIB, and Gla-Juris**, in direct partnership with **FIACAT, OMCT, and CCPR Centre**, issued a joint statement titled “Justice for Torture Survivors in Burundi: Challenges and Prospects.” This strong statement condemns the inaction and silence of the Burundian authorities in the face of torture, despite their official commitments, and demands concrete reparations for survivors.
- **The afternoon international webinar:** To further this condemnation, the same coalition organized a major conference titled: *“JUSTICE FOR TORTURE SURVIVORS IN BURUNDI: CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS.”*

VII. 2.1. Strategic Conclusions of the Webinar

The analyses shared by the various experts and panelists during this global event made it possible to draw an uncompromising assessment, summarized under four fundamental themes:

- **Impunity as a State System:** The webinar highlighted that Burundi is undergoing a silent yet systematic crisis. Testimonies demonstrate that **impunity is not merely a flaw in the system; it is the system itself**. Torturers are not isolated criminals acting in secret. They are official agents of the National Intelligence Service (SNR), the National Police, the army, and the *Imbonerakure* militia, who operate with complete impunity. This institutional complicity creates a climate in which torture has become a normalized state practice.
- **Forced Exile and National Hemorrhage:** Faced with this widespread impunity, survivors have no choice but to flee their own country. They abandon their families, their land, and their careers—not by choice, but out of sheer necessity for survival. In this way, Burundi as a whole loses its citizens, its talents, and its youth—a veritable **national hemorrhage**.
- **A monster that destroys humanity and shatters souls:** Torture is far more than physical violence; it is a monster that strips its victims of their humanity and leaves them without dignity. In the darkness of official or anonymous dungeons, it is not only bodies that suffer, but **souls that are shattered**. Every blow, every stifled scream, and every tear shed erases a little more of the very essence of being human. Survivors bear the invisible scars of this barbarity forever—wounds that no bandage can heal.
- **The moral and legal obligation to provide redress:** Survivors of torture are not invisible. Today, they are not asking for pity; they are demanding justice and insisting that Burundi finally acknowledge what was committed in its name. Their wounds do not fade with time: many live with permanent disabilities, can no longer work, and see their families torn apart. This is why financial, medical, and psychosocial reparations are a **moral and legal obligation**.

In conclusion, the mobilization around this webinar proves that the struggle for justice in Burundi is not solely the survivors' fight, but a collective responsibility that concerns us all: the Burundian government, which must urgently regain control of its institutions; the international community, which can no longer remain silent; and the Committee Against Torture, whose mandate is to prosecute these crimes.

VII.2.2 Recommendations

The political and strategic conclusions drawn from this international webinar have led to the formulation of the following fourteen priority recommendations, aimed at restoring the rule of law and ensuring the comprehensive protection of survivors:

1. Prevention of torture and structural reforms of the state

- Intensify efforts to prevent and eradicate torture, which constitutes a grave violation of human dignity and humanity.
- Undertake a comprehensive reform of the security sector to ensure respect for human rights and prevent acts of torture and other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment.
- Strengthen the fight against impunity by ensuring that perpetrators of torture are prosecuted and that victims have effective access to justice.
- Ensure the full respect, protection, and promotion of women's rights, taking into account the specific forms of violence and torture they endure.

2. Recognition, Rehabilitation, and Full Redress for Victims

- Fully recognize the suffering of torture victims, preserve their memory, and promote their dignity.
- Ensure that victims receive care, including psychological support, to facilitate their rehabilitation and reintegration.
- Strengthen legal support for victims, particularly in preparing and presenting their testimonies for submission to national, regional, and international human rights protection mechanisms.
- Guarantee full, effective reparations centered on the needs and rights of victims, in accordance with international standards.

3. Consolidation and Expansion of Civil Society in Exile and Within the Country

- Increase financial support for civil society organizations, both in Burundi and in exile, that work to document human rights violations and support victims.
- Develop stronger coordination among civil society organizations in the region to facilitate information sharing, harmonize documentation methodologies, and ensure cross-border monitoring of cases of torture.

4. Mobilizing international bodies and combating cross-border impunity

- Strengthen cooperation between African human rights protection mechanisms and those of the United Nations, while improving the implementation of their recommendations.

- Encourage more systematic use of African human rights protection mechanisms, particularly the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights.
- Mobilize regional and international mechanisms so that they play a more active role in monitoring the implementation of recommendations addressed to States.
- Ensure complementary and coordinated cooperation among States, civil society organizations, African mechanisms, and the United Nations to prevent cross-border impunity and ensure that perpetrators of human rights violations do not evade accountability.

VIII: GENERAL CONCLUSION AND STRUCTURAL RECOMMENDATIONS

VIII. 1. General Conclusion of the June 2026 Report

Field investigations conducted during the month of June 2026 show that the human rights situation continues to deteriorate severely in Burundi. Violence now affects all areas: the lives of citizens, the freedom of professionals, and civil society's right to speak out. The passivity of the police and the judiciary, as well as the direct involvement of certain state officials in abuses, demonstrate that laws and fundamental freedoms continue to be disregarded on a daily basis.

This month's report highlights three major issues:

- **Savage and unpunished violence:** The discovery of eleven (11) bodies and the lynching of Rémy Hakizimana in Bubanza reveal extreme cruelty (use of hammers, clubs, or beheadings). The barbaric murder of a pregnant woman illustrates that this violence no longer spares even the most vulnerable people. The police do not open investigations in more than 90% of cases. Worse still, local authorities destroy evidence by hastily burying the bodies without attempting to identify them (27.27% of cases).
- **Targeted and Secret Arrests:** The three (3) cases of abduction and the two (2) cases of arbitrary arrest and detention prove that the National Intelligence Service (SNR) selects its targets with great precision. The security services prioritize the arrest of active-duty military personnel, retired officers, or citizens with ties to Rwanda. They use false political pretexts (such as accusations of collaboration with the M23) to imprison people in secret, without any evidence.
- **The use of torture and mob lynchings:** The case of night watchman Rémy Hakizimana, who was beaten to death with clubs in Buringa (Bubanza) by four identified individuals, illustrates the authorities' tolerance of physical violence. Despite severe internal injuries requiring emergency medical transfer, the lack of financial coverage doomed the victim, while his attackers enjoy total impunity.

- **An effort to silence critical voices:** The repeated threats against Faustin Ndikumana, president of the organization PARCEM, show that the government seeks to intimidate those who denounce the mismanagement of public funds and the country's economic problems.

An analysis of these various cases bitterly reveals that the judicial system too often serves as a cover for the perpetrators of these violations. Whether it involves murders, kidnappings, or illegal arrests, the lack of police investigations perpetuates a climate of total impunity that destroys lives and forces many citizens into exile.

Faced with this situation, the organization, in close collaboration with other civil society partners, continues and will continue tirelessly to denounce these crimes and carry out advocacy efforts. The numerous media interventions, collective denunciation campaigns, and strong international mobilization carried out during the month of June are living proof of this.

In conclusion, the Burundian Constitution's promises regarding the protection of life and liberty remain mere words on paper. Unless the government immediately orders a halt to hasty burials, punishes the perpetrators of abuses, and protects whistleblowers, injustice will continue to grow and fuel fear among the population.

VIII. 2. General and Structural Recommendations

To address systemic flaws and ensure compliance with the law, the organization makes the following urgent requests:

- **To the CNDD-FDD Party:** Immediately prohibit members of the Imbonerakure youth league from conducting patrols, detaining citizens, or acting as a substitute for law enforcement.
 - **Monitoring indicator:** Signing and distribution of an official circular from the party's national leadership reminding all local chapters of this ban.
- **To the Ministry of the Interior and Security:** Severely punish SNR and police officers who commit abuses, in accordance with the law, and closely monitor any misconduct by local authorities.
 - **Monitoring indicator:** Publication of the number of police officers or agents suspended or transferred for professional misconduct or complicity in abuses.
- **To the Ministry of Justice:** Order prosecutors to immediately launch open and independent investigations into the urgent cases of (*Nintunze, Bizimana, Nduwimana, and*

Hakizimana), and establish a mandatory, digitized national registry of all prisoners to prevent secret detentions.

- **Monitoring indicator:** Actual opening of case files at the clerks' offices of the relevant prosecutors' offices and approval of the technical protocol for centralizing detention records.
- **To the CNIDH (National Human Rights Commission):** Fully implement its mandate **within the next 30 days** to conduct unannounced visits to all detention facilities, including those operated by the intelligence service, and publish the truth about its findings.
 - **Monitoring indicator:** Number of reports on unannounced visits published by the CNIDH and the rate of effective access granted to SNR detention cells.
- **To the International Community: During upcoming political dialogue sessions or cooperation reviews,** systematically make technical and financial support for Burundi's justice and security sectors contingent upon genuine reforms in the area of civil liberties.
 - **Monitoring indicator:** Formal introduction of "human rights" conditionality clauses in signed aid agreements and memoranda of cooperation.

APPENDICES: CASE STUDIES ON THE VARIOUS CASES IDENTIFIED

Appendix 1: Cases of Murder

CASE STUDY NO. 1: Serious Violation of the Right to Life and Destruction of Physical Evidence

I. Chronology of Events and Circumstances

- **Date of the event:** June 10, 2026.
- **Identity of the victim:** Evelyne Ndayizeye, age 24.
- **Location:** Banks of the Nyakijanda River, at the foot of Macu Hill, in the municipality and province of Gitega.
- **Initial findings:** According to witnesses at the scene, the victim's body was bound, and her phone was found near her lifeless body.
- **Last Known Whereabouts:** Family members state that Evelyne Ndayizeye left her home on Tuesday, June 9, to meet with an unidentified person, but had not returned since.
- **Administrative follow-up:** Her body was buried on the same day it was discovered, while no suspects have yet been arrested.

II. Legal Analysis

The burial of Evelyne Ndayizeye on the very day she was found, while no suspect has been arrested, poses a major legal problem under Burundian criminal procedure. In cases of suspicious or violent death, the Code of Criminal Procedure requires that a medical examiner be summoned to perform an autopsy. Proceeding with burial without a thorough examination destroys crucial evidence (fingerprints, signs of sexual assault, exact causes of death).

CASE STUDY NO. 2: Violent Homicide and a Flagrant Breach of the Duty to Investigate

I. Chronology of Events and Circumstances

- **Date of discovery:** June 11, 2026.
- **Identity and profile of the victim:** Gaspard Kabanyegeye, 65 years old, married, and father of four children.
- **Location:** In a small patch of bush on Rorero Hill, Kayero area, Musongati commune, Burunga province.
- **Last known movements:** The day before his death, Gaspard Kabanyegeye had gone to the Giharo market before returning home in the afternoon, after which he went to a bar near his residence. Witnesses confirm seeing him there until around 6:00 p.m.
- **Initial findings:** His body was discovered the following morning in some brush not far from his home. He had injuries, particularly to the head, and his personal belongings were stolen by his assailants, who have not been identified.
- **Administrative follow-up:** The body was buried on the same day it was discovered.

II. Legal Analysis

Burying a citizen found dead as a result of a violent act on the very day of discovery without a prior investigation constitutes gross negligence on the part of the local administrative authorities and the judicial police. Article 49 of the Burundian Code of Criminal Procedure requires judicial police officers (OPJ) to preserve evidence. By authorizing or tolerating the immediate burial, the authorities deprive the justice system of the opportunity to conduct a forensic examination or autopsy and deprive the family of its right to redress.

CASE STUDY No. 3: Homicide Involving Mutilation Near a Military Zone and Burial as an Unidentified Person

I. Chronology of Events and Circumstances

- **Date of discovery:** June 12, 2026.
- **Identity and profile of the victim:** Unidentified young man (held as “unknown”).
- **Location:** In the bush a few meters from a military post at the Randa farm, on the hill and in the Mitakataka area, Bubanza commune, Bubanza province.
- **Circumstances of the discovery:** The decomposing body was discovered by children searching for firewood. They immediately alerted law enforcement, along with local authorities and residents of the surrounding area.
- **Initial findings and observed signs of violence:** Witnesses at the scene reported that the victim’s throat had been slit, he had been stabbed near his ears, and his eyes had been gouged out.
- **Administrative follow-up and chain of command:** The municipal administrator of Bubanza, Sabas Niyokindi, ordered the immediate burial of the victim without waiting for an investigation to identify the victim, the circumstances, and the perpetrators of the crime.

II. Legal Analysis

Burying an unidentified body without taking fingerprints or DNA samples violates the victim’s right to be identified and the family’s right to be informed. To restore legality, the Public Prosecutor in Bubanza should immediately take up the case on his own initiative to order the exhumation of the body to allow for a comprehensive forensic medical examination.

CASE STUDY No. 4: Violent Intrafamilial Homicide and the Obligations of the Criminal Investigation Police

I. Chronology of Events and Circumstances

- **Date of discovery:** June 13, 2026.
- **Identity and profile of the victim:** Fabien Manirakiza, merchant and gold dealer.
- **Location:** At his home on Munyika Hill, Rugombo area, Cibitoke commune and province.
- **Initial Findings and Evidence of Violence:** The victim’s lifeless body was discovered mutilated inside his own residence.
- **Suspected motive and family background:** According to local sources, the alleged perpetrator is the victim’s son. Witness accounts indicate that Fabien Manirakiza frequently complained that his wife and children were stealing money from his gold business.
- **Status of the alleged perpetrator:** The son fled immediately after the incident.

II. Legal Analysis

Upon discovering the body, the criminal investigation officer (OPJ), acting under the direction of the Cibitoke District Attorney’s Office, is required to open a murder investigation. He has a legal duty to conduct the standard examination of the crime scene and to immediately request a forensic medical examination in order to precisely determine the time of death and the exact causes of the mutilations and death.

CASE STUDY No. 5: Sexual Assault Followed by Homicide and Tampering with the Crime Scene (Unidentified Body)

I. Chronology of Events and Circumstances

- **Date of discovery:** June 12, 2026.
- **Identity and profile of the victim:** Unidentified young girl (Held as “Unidentified”).
- **Location:** Bukirasazi neighborhood, Kinama area, Ntakangwa commune, Bujumbura province.
- **Initial Findings and Evidence of Violence:** The victim’s lifeless body was abandoned in a public place. According to on-site sources, she was raped prior to her murder.
- **Suspected modus operandi:** The same sources indicate that the young girl was murdered in another location before her body was moved and abandoned in this area—a deliberate criminal maneuver intended to throw investigators off the trail and mislead on-the-ground investigations.

II. Legal Analysis

Upon the discovery of an unidentified body, the criminal investigation unit has a priority obligation to take steps to identify the victim. This requires a thorough review of recent missing persons reports in Bujumbura Province and surrounding provinces, the public release of her description, or the use of fingerprints if they are on file. Furthermore, a forensic autopsy is essential to provide physical evidence of sexual assault, determine the time of death, and confirm the exact causes of death.

CASE STUDY No. 6: Homicide Using a Military Weapon Preceded by a Targeted Phone Trap

I. Chronology of Events and Circumstances

- **Date of the assault and death:** Attack occurred on the night of June 14, 2026; death was pronounced on June 15, 2026.
- **Identity and profile of the victim:** Léonce Ndayumvire, a teacher at Notre-Dame School located in Gitega Province.
- **Location:** Nyabiharage neighborhood, in the city and province of Gitega.
- **Modus operandi of the crime:** During the night of Sunday into Monday, June 15, 2026, at 2:15 a.m., Léonce Ndayumvire received a phone call from a person claiming to be coming to deliver a letter to him. After getting up to open the door and speak with the caller, a grenade was thrown at him immediately following a brief exchange.
- **Medical findings and outcome:** The explosion caused him serious injuries, particularly to his head and arm. He was rushed to the Gitega Regional Hospital and admitted to the intensive care unit, where he succumbed to his injuries the following day.
- **Administrative and judicial follow-up:** No suspects have yet been arrested, although local authorities state that an investigation has been launched to identify the perpetrators of this murder.

II. Legal Analysis

The fact that the victim was awakened by a phone call at 2:15 a.m. provides a crucial piece of forensic evidence. The public prosecutor at the Gitega High Court must immediately issue a judicial subpoena to mobile phone operators in Burundi. This mandatory investigative measure will make it possible to identify the caller's number, the full identity of the SIM card holder who made the call, and the exact location of the cell tower (telephone relay station) activated by the perpetrator at the time of the call, in order to trace the perpetrators and masterminds behind this attack.

CASE STUDY No. 7: Discovery of a Hanged Body and Suspicion of a Staged Suicide

I. Chronology of Events and Circumstances

- **Date of discovery:** June 17, 2026.
- **Identity of the victim:** Emmanuel Damascène Daradangwa.
- **Location:** Inside his home on Mirama Hill, Mubuga area, Gitega commune and province.
- **Initial Findings and Suspicious Details:** The victim's lifeless body was discovered hanging inside his own residence. Eyewitness accounts on the scene point to a major physical clue: the victim's feet were touching the ground, which casts serious doubt on the possibility of a voluntary hanging.
- **Contradictory accounts at the scene:** Some local sources immediately put forward the theory of suicide, while others claim that the victim was murdered, suggesting a criminal cover-up involving a staged hanging.

II. Legal Analysis

When a body is found under circumstances where the cause of death is unknown, suspicious, or disputed, the theory of suicide cannot be empirically accepted by the authorities. The Judicial Police Officer (OPJ) and the Gitega Prosecutor's Office have a legal obligation to immediately open a judicial investigation to "determine the causes of death." The involvement of a medical examiner is required to analyze signs of strangulation (complete or incomplete ligature marks), verify the presence of defensive wounds or prior trauma, and scientifically determine whether death occurred before or after the body was suspended.

CASE STUDY No. 8: Intentional double homicide of a mother and her fetus using a blunt weapon

I. Chronology of Events and Circumstances

- **Date of the murder:** June 21, 2026.
- **Identity and profile of the victim:** Annonciate Niyonzima, 26 years old and eight months pregnant.
- **Location:** On the hill and in the Gitohera area, Murwi commune, Cibitoke province.
- **Modus operandi of the crime:** The victim was ambushed after being lured to the scene by a phone call from the father of her unborn child. She was brutally murdered with a hammer.
- **Suspected motive:** Consistent information from the scene links this fatal violence to preexisting family hostility.
- **Administrative follow-up:** The body was buried on June 23, 2026; to date, no suspect has been arrested.

II. Legal Analysis

The victim's burial just two days after the incident, while no suspect is in custody, constitutes a flagrant breach of the criminal investigation unit's investigative duties. Given the cruelty of this double homicide (involving the mother and her eight-month-old fetus), the absence of a formal autopsy to precisely document the cranial injuries and collect DNA samples (from under the victim's fingernails or on her clothing) seriously compromises the establishment of the truth. The Public Prosecutor must immediately order the exhumation of the body for forensic purposes and issue an arrest warrant for the person who made the phone call.

CASE STUDY No. 9: Discovery of a body with severe head trauma at a suspected dumping site (Unidentified Body)

I. Chronology of Events and Circumstances

- **Date of discovery:** June 22, 2026, during the day.
- **Identity and profile of the victim:** Unidentified male (Held as "Unidentified").
- **Location:** On the banks of the Ruvyironza River, at the foot of Rwingiri Hill, in the commune and province of Gitega.
- **Initial findings and observed injuries:** According to eyewitnesses, the body had severe injuries to the forehead, indicating that the victim was killed with a blunt object, such as a club.
- **Suspected modus operandi:** Observers at the scene believe the man was murdered in another location before his body was transported and abandoned at this specific site to throw off any potential investigation.
- **Administrative follow-up and preservation of evidence:** Unlike in other documented cases, the chief of Rwingiri Hill reported that the victim's body was transferred to the morgue at the Gitega Regional Hospital. However, no suspects have been arrested to date.

II. Legal Analysis

The absence of physical signs of a struggle or massive bleeding commensurate with the severity of the head injuries found on the banks of the Ruvyironza River scientifically confirms the hypothesis of a secondary crime scene: the victim was murdered elsewhere and then transported to the site to conceal the crime. The transfer of the body to the morgue at Gitega Hospital is a positive step that must be capitalized upon. ACAT-Burundi formally requests that the Public Prosecutor in Gitega immediately open a judicial investigation and order a comprehensive forensic examination of the body being held at the morgue so that the truth may be revealed.

CASE STUDY No. 10: Homicide Involving Decapitation and Tampering with the Crime Scene (Unidentified Body)

I. Chronology of Events and Circumstances

- **Date of discovery:** June 23, 2026.
- **Identity and profile of the victim:** A young boy, not yet identified, aged approximately 15 to 17 (held as "Unidentified").
- **Location:** In a bush on Nkoto Hill, Taba area, Tangara commune, Butanyerera province.

- **Circumstances of the discovery:** The body was discovered by children searching for firewood.
- **Initial findings and observed signs of violence:** According to sources on the ground, the victim's body showed signs of extreme violence and had been completely decapitated.
- **Suspected modus operandi:** Field observers believe the child was killed elsewhere before his killers abandoned his body in this bush, given the complete absence of bloodstains at the discovery site.
- **Administrative follow-up and preservation of evidence:** Local authorities decided to transfer the body to the morgue at the Nyarunazi health center pending burial.

II. Legal Analysis

The discovery of a decapitated body with no traces of blood confirms the existence of a secondary dumping site, intended to conceal the initial homicide. The transfer of the remains to the morgue at the Nyarunazi Health Center is a critical step that must be fully investigated. It is crucial that a medical examiner thoroughly examine the body before any burial takes place. The autopsy must determine whether the decapitation occurred while the victim was still alive (as the direct cause of death) or postmortem (intended to conceal the crime or prevent identification of the face), while also searching for traces of the assailants' DNA under the young boy's fingernails or on his clothing

CASE STUDY No. 11: Discovery of a lifeless body at a hotel and the launch of a criminal investigation

I. Chronology of Events and Circumstances

- **Date of discovery:** June 24, 2026, during the day.
- **Identity and profile of the victim:** Francine Nduwayezu, age 24.
- **Location:** Inside a room at a guest house operating in the Shatanya neighborhood, Gitega municipality and province.
- **Initial police response:** The police were immediately notified of the discovery. Two (2) employees of the hotel were taken into custody by law enforcement officers at the scene.
- **Legal status of the suspects:** The two employees are currently being held in custody at the provincial police station in Gitega for questioning.

II. Legal Analysis

At the time of the discovery, the exact circumstances surrounding Francine Nduwayezu's death had not yet been determined. The Public Prosecutor in Gitega and the Judicial Police Officers (OPJ) are acting in strict accordance with the law by opening an investigation to "determine the cause of death." To move the case forward, the judicial police must obtain the guest house's guest registry to identify the person who shared the room with the victim, analyze the contents of the victim's phone, and appoint a medical examiner to determine whether the death was criminal, accidental, or due to poisoning.

Appendix 2: Cases of Abductions and Enforced Disappearances

CASE STUDY No. 12: Violent Abduction of a Military Intelligence Officer by State Forces

I. Chronology of Events and Circumstances

- **Date of the abduction:** June 5, 2026.
- **Identity and profile of the victim:** Corporal Gérard Bizimana, nicknamed Muhinga or Aimé, aged 34, an agent of the military intelligence service (G2), assigned to the Parachute Battalion based in Kinanira (Bujumbura).
- **Exact location:** At the “Chez Lewis” bar (owned by former Member of Parliament Lewis Niyongabo), located in Musaga, near the New Force gas station, in the commune of Muha (Bujumbura).
- **Immediate context:** The victim was sharing a meal with one of his relatives, Cédric Ishimwe, identified as an active member of the local Imbonerakure youth league.
- **Modus operandi of the abduction:** A white double-cab pickup truck with tinted windows pulled up near the premises. An individual in civilian clothing, carrying a concealed pistol, got out to keep watch on the target. The plainclothes officer then attempted to apprehend Corporal Bizimana, who put up fierce resistance. To ensure the capture, two uniformed soldiers got out of the pickup truck to assist the plainclothes officer, physically subdue the victim, and force him into the back of the vehicle, which sped away.
- **Current status of the victim:** To date, Corporal Bizimana remains missing, and no official place of detention has been disclosed by the authorities (**enforced disappearance**).

II. Legal Analysis

Corporal Gérard Bizimana’s arrest took place without a judicial warrant, outside the context of any flagrant offense, and in flagrant violation of legal procedures. Under Burundian law, the victim’s status as a member of the military does not deprive him of his constitutional rights: any arrest must comply with strict rules of jurisdiction (carried out by the military police or military justice system) and be accompanied by immediate notification of the grounds for the arrest. The refusal to acknowledge his detention and the concealment of his place of confinement place the victim beyond the reach of the law, which constitutes the international crime of enforced disappearance. ACAT-Burundi demands that the military prosecutor’s office immediately launch an independent investigation so that the victim can be located and the perpetrators of this abduction brought to justice.

CASE STUDY No. 13: Abduction and Enforced Disappearance of Jean-Claude Nintunze in Bugabira

I. Chronology of Events and Circumstances

- **Date of initial arrest and transfer:** Arrested on June 17, 2026; forcibly removed and transferred on June 18, 2026.
- **Identity and profile of the victim:** Jean-Claude Nintunze, alias Mazuru, a Burundian citizen repatriated from Rwanda in 2021.
- **Exact location:** Bugabira hill and surrounding area, in Butanyerera Province (Kirundo Region).
- **Immediate context:** The victim was temporarily in this area for strictly family-related reasons.
- **Modus operandi of the capture (June 17):** The operation took the form of a targeted abduction, carried out jointly by members of the regular army and the local leader of the CNDD-FDD party’s Imbonerakure youth league, outside any legal framework.

- **Initial Detention:** From June 17 to 18, 2026, the victim was detained and spent the night in the official detention cell in the Bugabira area.
- **Abduction and Enforced Disappearance (June 18):** In the morning, a large military detachment arriving in a pickup truck forcibly removed the victim from the official detention cell and transferred him to an unknown destination.
- **Current status of the victim:** Despite intensive and active searches conducted by his family at all official detention facilities in the country, Jean-Claude Nintunze remains completely untraceable.

II. Legal Analysis

The arrest of Jean-Claude Nintunze by state agents associated with a militia affiliated with the ruling party (the Imbonerakure), followed by his clandestine removal from an official detention cell and the systematic refusal to reveal his fate, constitutes the elements of the international crime of enforced disappearance. The complete absence of a judicial warrant and the use of unauthorized actors flagrantly violate the legal procedures governing deprivation of liberty guaranteed by the Burundian Constitution and the Code of Criminal Procedure. By deliberately placing the victim beyond the reach of justice and his loved ones through this secret detention, the authorities are violating international covenants on civil rights. ACAT-Burundi demands the immediate opening of an independent criminal investigation so that the victim can be located as a matter of urgency and the perpetrators and instigators of this abduction can be brought to justice.

CASE STUDY No. 14: Abduction on a Public Road and Enforced Disappearance of Jean-Claude Nduwimana

I. Chronology of Events and Circumstances

- **Date of abduction :** June 20, 2026.
- **Identity and profile of the victim:** Jean-Claude Nduwimana, a retired soldier from the former Armed Forces (Ex-FAB), married and the father of four (4) children.
- **Place of Origin and Residence:** Originally from Gitaba Hill (Rutana commune, Burunga province); currently residing in the Busoro neighborhood, Kanyosha area, Mugere commune, Bujumbura province.
- **Trigger:** The victim received a suspicious phone call at his home before leaving.
- **Modus operandi of the abduction:** At around 10:00 a.m., he left his residence wearing athletic clothing for his usual jogging session in the city of Bujumbura. While jogging, he was intercepted and abducted by unidentified individuals.
- **Communication disruption measures:** His cell phones were immediately turned off by his abductors upon his capture to prevent any geolocation or calls for help.
- **Current status of the victim:** The victim never returned home and remains completely untraceable (**enforced disappearance**).

II. Legal Analysis

Apprehending a person in a public place and detaining them against their will, without a legal order or authorization from a legitimate authority, constitutes the crime of kidnapping. The immediate and systematic deactivation of the victim's cell phones by his abductors demonstrates a deliberate intent to sever all contact with the outside world, prevent loved ones from being alerted, and keep the victim in absolute secret detention. Given his background as a former member of the armed forces (Ex-FAB), this

abduction is part of the pattern of targeted attacks documented this month. ACAT-Burundi demands that the Bujumbura Public Prosecutor's Office launch an immediate and independent judicial investigation so that the victim can be found and the perpetrators of this abduction identified and brought to justice.

Appendix 3: Cases of Arbitrary Arrest and Detention

CASE STUDY No. 15: Arbitrary Arrest Through an Operational Trap and Illegal Detention of an International Consultant

I. Chronology of Events and Circumstances

- **Date of initial capture and transfer:** Apprehended on May 26, 2026; transferred to prison on June 5, 2026.
- **Identity and profile of the victim:** Benjamin Babunga Watuna, born in 1982 in Nyakabiga (Burundi), a Congolese national (DRC) but a long-time resident of Burundi (completed his entire academic career in Bujumbura). He is an international consultant, an independent analyst specializing in the history of the Great Lakes region, and an employee of the Dutch NGO ZOA International. He is a neutral intellectual with no known political affiliations.
- **Exact location:** In the parking lot of the Bahizi Café restaurant, in the municipality of Mukaza (Bujumbura).
- **Modus operandi of the abduction:** Agents of the National Intelligence Service (SNR), acting under the direct command of a man named Ramadhan Juma (alias Rama), used the false pretext of a traffic violation to forcibly enter his vehicle and take him away by force.
- **Period of interrogation and technical search:** Taken to SNR headquarters, he was subjected to interrogations outside the legal framework for ten days. His professional tools (cell phone and laptop) were confiscated and subjected to a technical forensic analysis. The results of this analysis were entirely inconclusive, as no material evidence was found.
- **Current Detention Status:** In the complete absence of any evidence, the victim was transferred to the Mpimba Central Prison (Bujumbura), where he remains unlawfully detained to this day, without any official notification of charges.

II. Legal Analysis

The National Intelligence Service (SNR) held the individual in custody for ten days (from May 26 to June 5) before transferring him to Mpimba Prison. The Burundian Code of Criminal Procedure (CPP) strictly limits police custody to a period of 7 days, extendable only once for a maximum of 14 days, solely upon prior, written, and reasoned authorization from a magistrate of the Public Prosecutor's Office. In the absence of such a formal extension on record, this detention at the SNR constitutes unlawful confinement. Furthermore, keeping him in pretrial detention at Mpimba Prison—despite the fact that the forensic analysis of the tools in question was negative and no charges have been filed—violates the fundamental right to a fair trial. ACAT-Burundi demands the immediate and unconditional release of Benjamin Babunga Watuna due to the flagrant illegality of his initial police custody and the ongoing denial of his rights to a defense.

CASE STUDY No. 16: Arbitrary arrest, criminalization of cross-border activity, and illegal incommunicado detention

I. Chronology of Events and Circumstances

- **Date of arrest:** June 2, 2026, during the day.
- **Identity and profile of the victim:** Thaddée Ciza, 46 years old, married and father of five (5) children, residing in Burundi. He is a cross-border trader, originally from Rubagabaga Hill (Mbirizi area, Gatara commune, Butanyerera province) and has been living in Kimironko (Kigali, Rwanda) for nearly two decades.
- **Location of the abduction:** On Mparamirundi Hill, in Kayanza commune (Butanyerera province).
- **Circumstances of the arrest:** While crossing the border to rejoin his family, he was apprehended by officers of the Burundi National Police (PNB) without being given any reason for the arrest or presented with an arrest warrant.
- **Restrictive measures:** His cell phones were immediately turned off and confiscated by law enforcement, cutting off all contact with the outside world and plunging his loved ones into anguish for several weeks.
- **Current place of detention and alleged reason:** According to information cross-checked on the ground, Mr. Ciza is being held incommunicado in a cell at the Judicial Police headquarters in Kirundo (the capital of Butanyerera Province). He faces a serious political charge—made without any material evidence—of collaborating with the M23 rebel movement.

II. Legal Analysis

The arrest without a warrant of Thaddée Ciza and his continued incommunicado detention constitute a flagrant violation of Article 39 of the Constitution of Burundi, which guarantees that no one may be deprived of their liberty except under the conditions and in the manner strictly provided for by law. Although the victim is now being held in the Kirundo Judicial Police detention cell—which reclassifies the offense as arbitrary detention—the initial phase of total isolation and the prolonged refusal to notify his family of his arrest violate the human right to recognition as a person before the law. Furthermore, the use of a charge related to state security (alleged collusion with the M23) to justify exceeding the time limits for police custody and depriving a citizen of access to a lawyer constitutes an abuse of process. ACAT-Burundi demands that Mr. Ciza be immediately brought before an investigating judge or automatically released in light of the flagrant illegality of his detention.

Appendix 4: Violation of Physical Integrity

CASE STUDY No. 17: Brutal lynching, torture by de facto agents, and impunity guaranteed by local authorities

I. Chronology of Events and Circumstances

- **Date of the attack:** June 4, 2026.
- **Victim's identity:** Rémy Hakizimana, a night watchman.
- **Exact location :** Village 5, Buringa area, Mpanda commune, Bubanza province.
- **Perpetrators of the attack:** Four individuals identified as Yves Kwizera, Samson Ndayisenga, Fabrice Nduwayo, and a certain Bikorimana, acting under the direction of their Village 5 chief.
- **Modus operandi and violence suffered:** Intercepted by the group, the victim was systematically beaten with clubs and kicked. The attackers deliberately targeted his abdomen under the false

pretext that he had attempted to steal rice from the fields under their guard, even though they knew the victim and his profession very well.

- **Medical Findings and Condition:** Emergency-transported to Saint-Augustin Hospital in Gihanga, the patient presented with a distended abdomen (swollen belly) and gross hematuria (a large amount of blood in the urine)—clear clinical signs of severe internal trauma (rupture of abdominal organs or the bladder). The medical staff demanded an immediate transfer to specialized facilities in Bujumbura.
- **Administrative follow-up and status of the assailants:** Lacking the financial means to pay for the transfer, the family was forced to take the victim back to the village chief of Village 5 to demand that the perpetrators cover the cost of treatment. This effort proved unsuccessful: the authorities did not intervene, and the assailants faced no consequences whatsoever.

II. Legal Analysis

The acts committed against Rémy Hakizimana constitute serious violations of physical integrity and acts of torture or cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment, which are expressly prohibited by the Constitution of Burundi and the UN Convention Against Torture. The conduct of the local administrative authority exacerbates the State's liability: by refusing to compel the perpetrators to cover the costs of vital medical care and, even more seriously, by failing to immediately notify the Judicial Police Officers (OPJ) to arrest the culprits who "continue to move about freely," the village chief is guilty of passive complicity and institutional tolerance of mob violence. ACAT-Burundi demands the immediate opening of a criminal investigation by the Public Prosecutor in Bubanza, the immediate arrest of the four assailants, and the provision of for the victim.

Appendix 5: Violations of Civil Liberties and Harassment of Human Rights Defenders

CASE STUDY No. 18: Systematic Harassment of Mr. Faustin Ndikumana

I. Chronology of Events and Circumstances

- **Date of the incident:** Acts of harassment and threats documented during the month of June 2026.
- **Identity of the victim:** Mr. Faustin Ndikumana, president of the organization PARCEM.
- **Location:** City of Bujumbura, Burundi.
- **Initial Findings:** The victim has been subjected to acts of intimidation, harassment, and threats by the authorities following his public statements on governance issues.
- **Major Background:** On November 5, 2025, the victim had already been subjected to verbal attacks and threats made directly by the President of the Republic, Mr. Évariste Ndayishimiye, during a public meeting.
- **Harassment strategy:** To put pressure on the activist, the authorities are resorting to indirect tactics, including the arrest and prolonged detention of six bar employees who had themselves alerted the police after discovering a bag containing a weapon.
- **Administrative Monitoring:** Instead of conducting a thorough investigation to identify the person who planted the weapon, the police are keeping this case shrouded in secrecy to exert pressure, which prompted an advocacy intervention by ACAT-Burundi on the RPA.

II. Legal Analysis

The use of the bar incident to exert pressure on Mr. Faustin Ndikumana raises a major legal issue under Burundian law. The imprisonment of the whistleblower employees and the lack of investigations to identify the actual person who left the weapon demonstrate a misuse of police procedures for the purpose of political intimidation. This strategy violates Article 31 of the Constitution on freedom of expression and Article 25, which prohibits arbitrary detentions aimed at silencing critical voices in civil society.