



LIGUE BURUNDAISE DES DROITS DE L'HOMME

"ITEKA" association sans but lucratif

Agrée par l'ordonnance ministérielle n°530/0273 du 10 novembre 1994 revoyant l'ordonnance 550/029 du 6 février 1991

Membre affilié de la fédération Internationale des Ligues des Droits de l'Homme (F.I.D.H)

LBDH/012 /2024

Kampala, 14 June 2024

Declaration by Ligue Iteka on press freedom in Burundi.

A year before the legislative elections in Burundi, the National Communication Council is moving up a gear: three acts of intimidation to the media in less than ten days.

On the evening of June 5, 2024, Pascal Ntakirutimana, one of the journalists and head of the political department at the Iwacu Press group who had interviewed Professor Julien Nimubona on an article published on May 24, 2024, was almost abducted by two police officers on Forces Armées Avenue, commonly known as "Kurya Kanyoni".

Since that day and in an interval of less than ten days, the CNC has already issued three ultimatums to different media operating in Burundi:

1° An undated letter to the Iwacu press group, on June 6, 2024, warning this newspaper on serious professional misconduct published through its different platforms¹.

2° The CNC refused a media synergy of RADIO BONESHA FM; ISANGANIRO RADIO-TELEVISION; SHIMA FM, REMA FM; JIMBERE MAGAZINE AND IWACU JOURNAL of June 6, 2024 on the draft of the press law, arguing that the law had not yet been promulgated.

3° The CNC banned the rebroadcast of Bonesha FM radio debate shows "Inkuru y' Imvaho and Tribune Bonesha", on June 11 and 12, 2024 pretexting that the guests exaggerated. These two broadcasts focused on the finance bill "budget for fiscal year 2024-2025"² and the guests were honorable Rwasa Agathon, leader of CNL party not recognized by Gitega regime, Gaspard Kobako, president of AND Intadohoka party and Gabriel Rufyiri, president of OLUCOME.

Ligue Iteka notes these facts as evident censorship and a violation of the independence of the press in Burundi guaranteed by national regulatory texts, namely the Constitution of the Republic of Burundi³.

¹ Letter of CNC dated 06 juin 2024 No 100/CNC/340/2024

² https://youtu.be/4S7HtI4WITM?si=n_ZueBHQHITuA93e

³ Freedom of expression is guaranteed. The State respects freedom of religion, thought, conscience and opinion. Constitution of the Republic of Burundi, article 31.



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Ligue Iteka calls on the Government of Burundi to end the restriction of civic space; to cease acts aimed at obstructing the work of the press; stop harassing and intimidating the media and their workers;

Ligue Iteka recalls that free, independent and pluralistic media, online and offline, are essential for a democratic society for informed decisions, hold governments, institutions and individuals accountable, and hear a diversity of opinions.

Ligue Iteka invites the government of Gitega and its technical and financial partners to meet to develop sustainable solutions aimed at strengthening key essential institutions of journalism and supporting a resilient and viable independent media sector.

Done in KAMPALA, 14 June 2024

For Ligue ITEKA

Anschaire NIKOYAGIZE.



President