

## **BURUNDIAN LIGUE OF HUMAN RIGHTS "ITEKA"**

***Approved by Ministerial Order n ° 530/0273 of 10 November 1994 revising Order No. 550 /029 of 6 February 1991***

"Is a member of the Inter-African Union for Human and Peoples' Rights (UIDH), is an affiliate member of the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH), has observer status with the African Commission of Human and Peoples' Rights



under the reference number OBS.236 and is a member of ECOSOC. Ligue Iteka is decentralized into 17 federations and 32 sections"

### ***REPORT OF THE BURUNDIAN HUMAN RIGHTS LEAGUE "ITEKA" ON THE SITUATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN BURUNDI DURING THE MONTH OF MAY 2024***



***In memory of Madam Marie Claudette Kwizera, Treasurer of Iteka, reported missing since December 10 2015. From December 2015 to 31 May 2024, Iteka has documented at least 690 cases of enforced disappearances.***

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## **ACRONYMS**

|                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| <b>CENI</b>     | : <i>National Independent Electoral Commission</i>     |
| <b>BRB</b>      | : <i>Bank of the Republic of Burundi</i>               |
| <b>CNDD-FDD</b> | : <i>National Council for the Defense of Democracy</i> |
| <b>ECOFO</b>    | : <i>Fundamental School</i>                            |
| <b>MSD</b>      | : <i>Movement for Security and Democracy</i>           |
| <b>DCE</b>      | : <i>Communale Direction of Education</i>              |
| <b>PNB</b>      | : <i>Burundi National Police</i>                       |
| <b>SNR</b>      | : <i>National Intelligence Service</i>                 |
| <b>TGI</b>      | : <i>High Court</i>                                    |
| <b>UPRONA</b>   | : <i>Union for National Progress</i>                   |
| <b>SGBV</b>     | : <i>Sexual and Gender Based Violence</i>              |

## 0. INTRODUCTION

This monthly report for May 2024 is a summary of Iteka n'Ijambo weekly bulletins from number 420 to 423. This report covers the political, economic, security, judicial and governance as well as environmental context that marked this period. It also returns to civil and political rights, economic and socio-cultural rights. This report finally closes with a conclusion and recommendations.

Thus, the human rights situation was reported as follows: at least 74 people killed including 48 bodies found and 1 person victim of summary execution and among them 2 people died following landslides, 11 victims of GBV, 5 people tortured, 4 people abducted and/or missing as well as 49 people arbitrarily arrested.

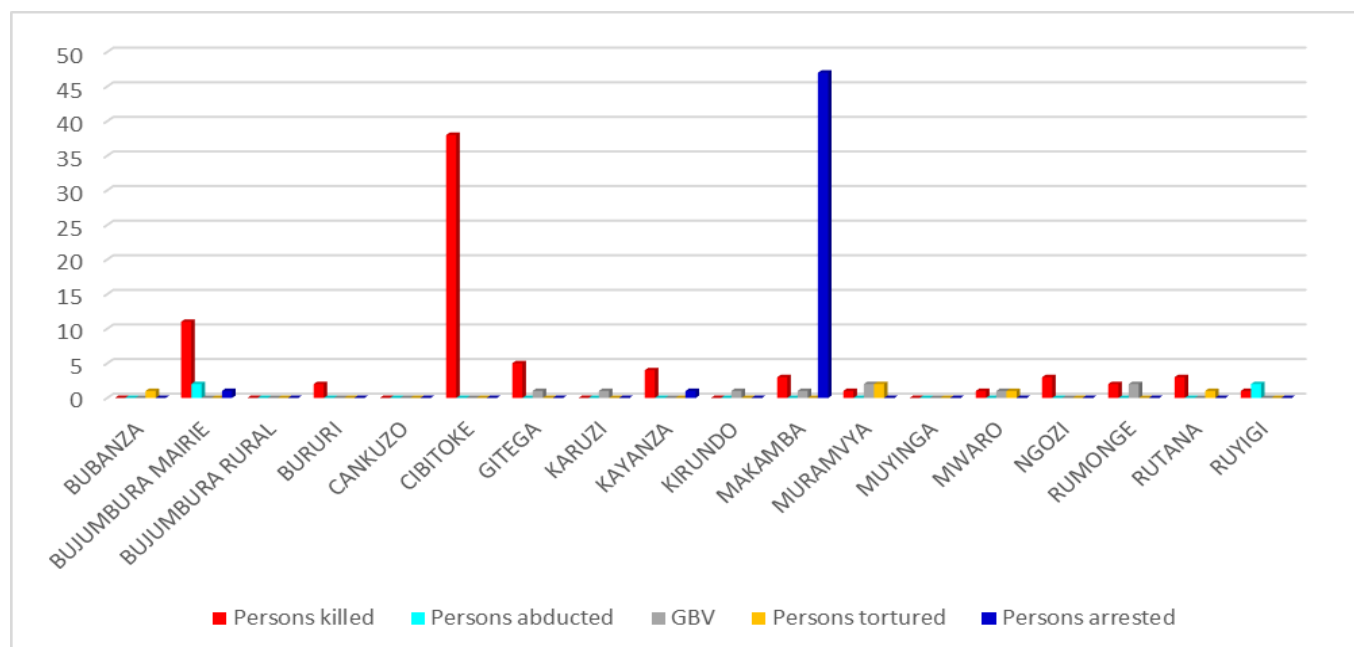
Among the victims are 5 women killed, 2 children killed, 2 newborns killed and 4 girls arbitrarily arrested. Among these dead people, 9 of them were victims of grenade launching in Bujumbura town.

Members of political parties were also targeted by these violations. Thus, 2 members of the CNL party and 1 member of MSD party were tortured. Two members of CNDD-FDD party and 2 members of CNL party abducted, one member of CNL party arbitrarily arrested as well as 6 members of CNDD-FDD party and 1 member of CNL party killed.

Soldiers, administrative officials, police officers, SNR agents and Imbonerakure are singled out as the alleged perpetrators of most of these human rights violations and murders.

### 0.1. Mapping of the facts noted and distribution by the alleged perpetrators

**Figure 1: Graph illustrating major cases of the human rights situation observed in Burundi as of May 2024**



High cases of people killed were recorded in Cibitoke province with 38 cases followed by Bujumbura Mairie with 11 cases and the province of Gitega with 5 cases and Kayanza with 4 cases.

Among the alleged perpetrators of these killings are unidentified people with 46 cases, Imbonerakure with 4 cases and police officers with 1 case as well as 9 people killed following the armed attacks. Two cases of infanticide were noted, 5 people were killed following security facts; 4 people killed following the settling of scores and 2 people died following landslides.

## **I. CONTEXT**

During this reporting period, Burundi was marked by a political, economic, judicial, governance, environmental and security context.

**I.1. In terms of the political context,** Ligue Iteka reported and indicated a pioneering move by the National Independent Electoral Commission "CENI" in the legislative and local elections of 2025 and presidential elections in 2027, thus indicating the progress of preparations in a meeting with its electoral partners during which the president of this commission also specified the distribution of seats according to the new administrative division of Burundi<sup>1</sup>. During this same period, in our bulletins, we noticed a position taken by Burundi in the conflict between China and Taiwan. In addition, during the period, the United States called for dialogue between Burundi and the sister country of the North (Rwanda)<sup>2</sup>.

**I.2. On the economic level,** Burundi was characterized by irregularities on the purchase of corn by the National Agency for Food Security Stock Management<sup>3</sup>.

**I.3 Concerning judicial domain,** Burundi was marked during this period by the appearance and conviction in the central prison of Rutana province, of 270 soldiers accused of having refused to fight the M23 Movement in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Most of them were arrested in December 2023. Also, a public hearing against two soldiers accused of murdering a biker in Bururi province<sup>4</sup>.

**I.4. Regarding Governance,** during the reporting period, Ligue Iteka noted how Burundi has recorded poor management of financial resources allocated to the Presidency of the Republic, a point which was the subject of discussion in plenary session in the National Assembly in the presence of the Burundian Minister of Finance, Budget and Economic Planning as a guest of the day. Burundi was also marked by an embezzlement of sugar by administration officials in Kirundo province, reporting 30 tons embezzled<sup>5</sup>.

**I.5. The environmental context of Burundi** during this period reported a landslide followed by flooding due to torrential rains which caused damage where several hectares of damaged crop fields were recorded in Cibitoke province<sup>6</sup>. Note that this phenomenon was reported in our previous reports for other localities in the country such as Rumonge, Bujumbura,

**I.6. In terms of security context,** this reporting period, as the graph below illustrates, Ligue Iteka has documented at least 74 people killed including 48 bodies found. Among these victims, 9 were killed by grenade attacks in Bujumbura Mairie, 2 people died following landslides, 5 people were killed following security incidents, 4 people were killed following the settlement of score, 46 people were killed by unidentified people and 2 people were killed following infanticide.

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<sup>1</sup><https://ligue-iteka.bi/bulletin-hebdomadaire-iteka-nijambo-n422/>

<sup>2</sup><https://ligue-iteka.bi/bulletin-hebdomadaire-iteka-nijambo-n423/>

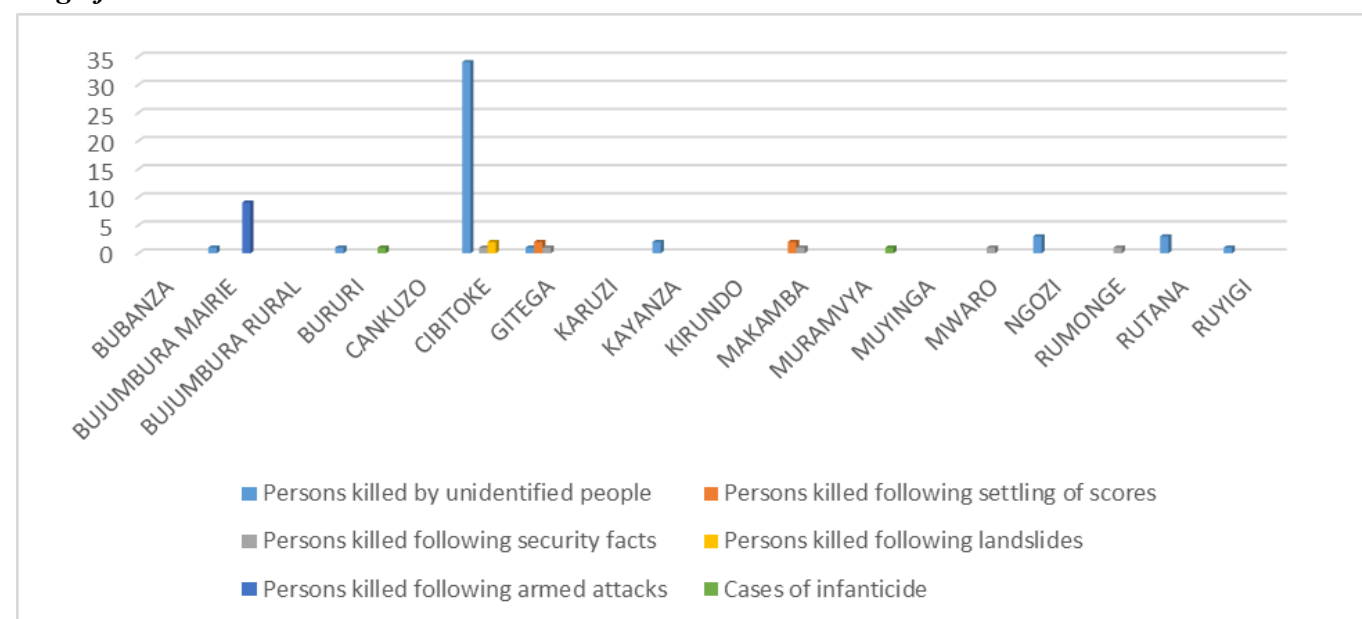
<sup>3</sup><https://ligue-iteka.bi/bulletin-hebdomadaire-iteka-nijambo-n422/>

<sup>4</sup>[https://ligue-iteka.bi/bulletin-hebdomadaire-iteka-nijambo-n421 et 423/](https://ligue-iteka.bi/bulletin-hebdomadaire-iteka-nijambo-n421-et-423/)

<sup>5</sup><https://ligue-iteka.bi/bulletin-hebdomadaire-iteka-nijambo-n420/>

<sup>6</sup><https://ligue-iteka.bi/bulletin-hebdomadaire-iteka-nijambo-n421/>

**Figure 2: Graph of people killed by unidentified people, killed following security facts, killed following armed attacks, killed following infanticide and other killings of children, killed following the settling of scores and landslides.**



## II. CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS

Burundi is one of the countries adhering to the international covenant on civil and political rights (1965) and its optional protocol (1976) without any reservation on May 9, 1990, which as part of its implementation, Burundi took measures in domestic legislation in particular in its constitution of June 7, 2018 (Main Law) in its article 19 which guarantees that all the rights proclaimed and guaranteed by regularly ratified international texts are an integral part of this constitution, implementing texts are put in place, namely the penal code of December 29, 2017 and the criminal procedure code of May 11, 2018 and other institutions for the protection of human rights in Burundi have been created. However, in reality, respect for human rights is a long and difficult path based on the volatile Burundian political and security context that undermines the rights and fundamental freedoms of the population.

### II.1. RIGHT TO LIFE

The law guarantees it, human dignity must be respected and protected by the State and in the event of violation, sanctions should be applied to the alleged perpetrators, art 21 of the Constitutional Law of the country.

During the reporting period, Ligue Iteka recorded at least 5 people killed by state agents, including 1 person who was the victim of extrajudicial execution. The perpetrators of these killings are members of Imbonerakure militia with 4 cases and police officers with 1 case. These victims were recorded in the provinces of Kayanza, Gitega, Cibitoke and Rumonge.

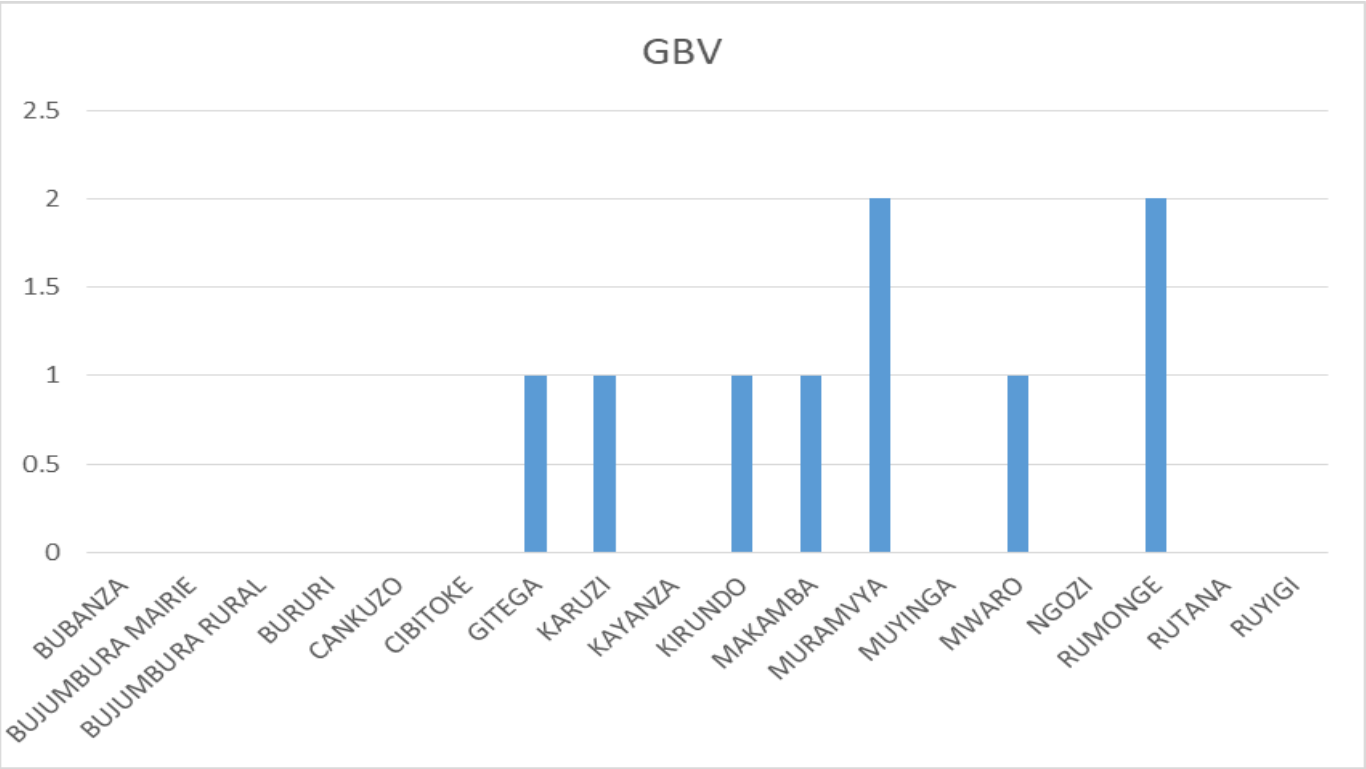
### II.2. RIGHT TO PHYSICAL INTEGRITY

#### II.2.1. GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

The Law on Gender-Based Violence adopted in Burundi in 2016 constituted a major step forward. It guaranteed better protection, notably by providing a definition of rape that took into account the question of consent and by prohibiting harmful traditional practices.

During the reporting period, Ligue Iteka recorded at least 9 people victims of gender-based violence. As shown in the graph below, the province of Rumonge comes first with 3 cases followed by the provinces of Karuzi and Muramvya with 2 cases each.

Figure 3: Graph of gender-based violence victims



**II.2.2. TORTURE**

During the reporting period, Ligue Iteka recorded at least 5 people tortured. The alleged perpetrators of these cases are Imbonerakure with 1 case, police officers and SNR agents with 2 cases each. These cases were recorded in the provinces of Bubanza, Muramvya, Mwaro and Rutana.

**II.3. RIGHT TO LIBERTY**

**II.3.1. ABDUCTIONS AND ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCES**

The constitutional law of Burundi guarantees in article 38, to every individual, the benefit of a fair trial and that their case is heard and judged within a reasonable time.

During the month of May 2024, Ligue Iteka listed at least 4 people were abducted and/or missing in the provinces of Bujumbura Mairie and Ruyigi with 2 cases each. The alleged perpetrators of these abductions are SNR agents and police officers.

**II.3.2. ARBITRARY ARRESTS**

International and national texts in Burundi recognize the principle of innocence until proven guilty, and that detention is an exception.

During the reporting period, Ligue Iteka recorded at least 49 people arbitrarily arrested, including 4 girls. The alleged perpetrators are administrative officials with 48 cases and police officers with 1 case. Victims are recorded in Makamba provinces with 47 cases, Kayanza and Bujumbura Mairie with 1 case each.



### **III. CATEGORICAL RIGHTS**

#### **III.1. CHILDREN'S RIGHTS**

The International Convention on the Rights of the Child, which Burundi ratified on October 19, 1990, guarantees the child the right to be protected from violence, mistreatment and all forms of abuse and exploitation. The Burundian constitution also through its article 44 stipulates that “every child has the right to special measures to ensure or improve the care necessary for their well-being, health, physical security and to be protected against ill-treatment, abuse or exploitation.”

During the reporting period, Ligue Iteka recorded at least 4 children killed, including 2 newborns killed.

#### **III.2. WOMEN'S RIGHTS**

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women was adopted by the UNGA on December 18, 1979 and around a hundred countries ratified it in 1990, including Burundi on January 8, 1992.

During the reporting period, Ligue Iteka recorded at least 5 women killed and 4 girls arbitrarily arrested.

### **IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

During the reporting period, the deterioration of the human rights situation continues to be observed across the country. This report highlights cases of violations of the right to life; physical integrity and freedom; categorical rights.

This report also shows issues linked to security facts as well as the context that prevails in the country.

Ligue Iteka returns in this same report to the highlights which marked the political, economic, judicial, governance, environmental and security context. It protests against the impunity by the Government of the alleged perpetrators of crimes observed.

Given the situation of human rights violations in Burundi which continues, Ligue Iteka recommends the following:

#### **♦ Burundian government**

⇒ Proceed immediately to restore the necessary security and political conditions and create a political climate conducive to all for the organization of free, inclusive, democratic and transparent elections.

#### **To the Burundian Minister of Justice**

⇒ To fight against impunity by bringing to justice all the alleged perpetrators of crimes; to rehabilitate the rights of all victims of human rights violations observed.

#### **♦ To the Minister of the Interior, Security and Community Development**

⇒ To guarantee public rights and freedoms for all; to preserve peace and security for all.

#### **♦ To the regional and international community**

⇒ Remind the government of Burundi to respect its own commitments in terms of respect for human rights, in particular public freedoms including freedom of expression, freedom of the press and the right to express one's opinions.



♦ **To the European Union and countries accredited to Burundi**

- ⇒ To use its influence to force the Burundian Government to restore a rule of law and democracy;
- ⇒ Encourage the government of Burundi to adjust the electoral calendar following a dialogue with all stakeholders in the electoral process to create the right conditions for the organization of free, democratic, fair and peaceful elections;
- ⇒ To support human rights organizations, institutions and mechanisms operating in Burundi.