

## **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"

*Weekly bulletin « ITEKA N'IJAMBO » n°437 of the Burundian Ligue of Human Rights "ITEKA"*

**Week from 26 August to 1<sup>st</sup> September 2024**



*In memory of Madam Marie Claudette Kwizera, Treasurer of Iteka, reported missing since December 10 2015. From December 2015 to 1<sup>st</sup> September 2024, Iteka has documented at least 700 cases of enforced disappearances*

<b>CONTENTS</b>	<b>PAGES</b>
<b>ACRONYMS.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>0. INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>I. POLITICAL, HUMAN RIGHTS, GOVERNANCE AND SECURITY CONTEXT.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>I.1. POLITICAL CONTEXT.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>I.2. HUMAN RIGHTS.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>I.3. GOVERNANCE .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>I.4. SECURITY CONTEXT.....</b>	<b>6</b>
1.4.1. PERSONS KILLED BY UNIDENTIFIED PEOPLE.....	6
1.4.2. OTHER SECURITY INCIDENTS .....	7
<b>II. CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>II.1. RIGHT TO LIFE .....</b>	<b>9</b>
II.1.1. PERSONS KILLED BY IMBONERAKURE.....	9
<b>II.2. THE RIGHT TO PHYSICAL INTEGRITY.....</b>	<b>9</b>
II.2.1. GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE.....	9
<b>II.3. RIGHT TO LIBERTY.....</b>	<b>10</b>
II.3.1. PERSONS ARRESTED ARBITRARILY.....	10
<b>III. ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>IV. CATEGORICAL RIGHTS.....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>IV.1. CHILDREN'S RIGHTS.....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>IV.2. WOMENS' RIGHTS .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>V. CONCLUSION.....</b>	<b>14</b>

## **ACRONYMS**

<b>AIDS</b>	: <i>Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome</i>
<b>CDS</b>	: <i>Health Center</i>
<b>CECI</b>	: <i>Independent Communal Electoral Commission</i>
<b>CEPI</b>	: <i>Independent Provincial Electoral Commission</i>
<b>CNDD-FDD</b>	: <i>National Council for the Defense of Democracy</i>
<b>CNL</b>	: <i>National Congress for Liberty</i>
<b>DCE</b>	: <i>Communal Director of Education</i>
<b>ECOFO</b>	: <i>Fundamental School</i>
<b>FRODEBU</b>	: <i>Front for Democracy in Burundi</i>
<b>GBV</b>	: <i>Gender Based Violence</i>
<b>OPJ</b>	: <i>Judiciary Police Officer</i>
<b>SNR</b>	: <i>National Intelligence Service</i>
<b>STI</b>	: <i>Sexually Transmitted Infections</i>

## **0. INTRODUCTION**

This bulletin covers the political, human rights, governance and security context that marked this period. It also deals with civil and political rights; economic social and cultural rights and ends with a conclusion.

Therefore, over this reporting period, the human rights and security situation was reported as follows: at least 8 people killed including 6 found dead and 1 who committed suicide, 2 victims of GBV, 1 victim of arbitrary arrest.

Among the victims are 3 women died and a child beaten up. A member of SahwanyaFRODEBU party was also arrested.

Imbonerakure, administration officials and police officers are singled out as the alleged perpetrators of most of these human rights violations and assassinations.

## **I. POLITICAL, HUMAN RIGHTS, GOVERNANCE AND SECURITY CONTEXT**

### **I.1. POLITICAL CONTEXT**

#### **Celebration of Imbonerakure Day**

For the 8<sup>th</sup> consecutive year since 2017, the CNDD-FDD party celebrated on August 31, 2024 the day dedicated to the Imbonerakure, the youth league of this party. The ceremonies that took place at Cercle Hip-pique of Bujumbura were enhanced by President Evariste Ndayishimiye, under the umbrella of the President of the Council of Elders of CNDD-FDD party and the Secretary General of this party, Révérien Ndikuriyo.

Delegations of young Imbonerakure from all over the country attended this event. The ceremonies were opened by a long military parade of these Imbonerakure in military order of company in the presence of President Ndayishimiye, the Secretary General of the CNDD-FDD and several other high authorities of the country as well as senior officials of the ruling party.

In his speech, President Évariste Ndayishimiye congratulated the Imbonerakure for their bravery demonstrated over the past year and then indicated that thanks to the vigilance of the Imbonerakure, even those who are still planning to torpedo our country have understood that they cannot succeed. As for the Secretary General of the CNDD-FDD party, he indicated that he had not come for speeches but only to thank the Imbonerakure for the work they have accomplished. He ended his speech by issuing a slogan to the Imbonerakure: *"Let us work to develop our country"*

Since the crisis that broke out in Burundi in 2015 to date, members of the Imbonerakure militia are still cited in grave human rights violations such as assassinations, abductions, torture and arbitrary arrests. Today, we observe a trend of militarization of this militia with the complicity of the CNDD-FDD party and its regime, as evidenced by the military parades in company order and wearing uniforms similar to those of the military and police of Burundi, under the complacent eye and applause of the President of the Republic and the Secretary General of the CNDD-FDD party as well as other dignitaries of this party and the State.

We should recall that a few years ago, the UN described the Imbonerakure as a militia responsible for atrocities in the country.

#### **Dissatisfaction of opposition political parties in the establishment of CECI in Burundi**

Independent communal electoral commissions have been set up. The CNL party received 24 out of 294 members of the CECI. Léopold Hakizimana, Secretary General of CNL party was dissatisfied with these places. He announced that CNL is a party that should have a considerable place. In the press release of

August 26, 2024, Leopold said that they have contacted the independent provincial electoral commissions so that there are changes and have places in line with their political size in the country.

## ***1.2. HUMAN RIGHTS***

### **International Day of Enforced Disappearances, 2024 edition**

Enforced disappearances in Burundi are a grave and persistent problem, a phenomenon that has erupted since 2015 with the crisis that the country has experienced and that continues to date.

The International Day of the Victims of Enforced Disappearances, celebrated on August 30 of each year, is therefore an important opportunity to raise awareness of this tragic phenomenon.

From July 2020 to August 2024, corresponding to the period of President Evariste Ndayishimiye's regime, Ligue Iteka has documented 171 cases of abductions and/or enforced disappearances. The security forces, the SNR and members of Imbonerakure militia are often involved in these acts.

We should recall that in his speech<sup>1</sup> in Ngozi province on July 29, 2022, President Ndayishimiye had acknowledged the existence of a group of people, including some members of state institutions involved in the abduction of Burundian citizens. He had also stated that this group had been dismantled.

Given the seriousness and persistence of this phenomenon, the international community should continue to pressure Burundian government to end to these practices and respect the international human rights conventions it has ratified.

## ***1.3. GOVERNANCE***

### **Delay in the start of the general census in Ngozi province**

On August 28, 2024, on different hills of Ngozi province, the general census of the population in Ngozi province began. The census was supposed to start on August 25, but it was delayed due to late distribution of equipment. The equipment were distributed on August 27, 2024 in Ngozi province city, at the provincial office by the president of the National Census Commission, Nicolas Ndayishimiye. Men in white T-shirts and white caps with tablets and other documents crisscrossed the hills but the populations say they are ready for this activity but most are unaware of the importance of these operations, which insinuates that the Burundian population, particularly that of the said province, has not been well sensitized for this 2024 general census.

### **Coffee fraud in Karuzi province**

On August 27, 2024, around 5 p.m., on Buhiga hill, zone and commune, Karuzi province, at Buhiga market, the governor Dévotte Nizigiyimana, accompanied by Nirema, provincial commissioner and Ruburi, provincial intelligence officer searched the warehouses of a trader Désiré, a member of CNDD-FDD and found 30 tons of dry coffee. The governor took them on board and took them to the provincial police station but the owner had taken off. To search they broke the padlock.

On August 28, 2024, around 6 a.m., they searched the home of Jean Baptiste Kirumara, member of CNDD-FDD, another trader and seized 12 tons which were also taken away while he also escaped. According to witnesses on site, the farmers who sold their coffees in the factories and who exceeded 3 million were not paid for the first installment. According to the same witnesses, they were told to wait for the investigations to ensure that they have coffee plantations producing coffee of this value otherwise those who have sold what they bought will not have their money. Towards the evening, Jean Baptiste Kirumara was in Buhiga commune city but on August 29, 2024, around 7 p.m., he was arrested by police officers sent by the head of SNR and jailed at the provincial police station.

According to witnesses, it was already a week ago that Onésime, member of CNDD-FDD, from Mwoya hill, Buhiga zone and commune, Probox taxi driver, Buhiga-Muyinga transport was surprised by the

---

<sup>1</sup>Speech delivered during an exchange session with members of the Burundian diaspora visiting Burundi

intelligence services of Muyinga, his car loaded with 12 of 20-liter cans filled with dry coffee to sell there. He used to go get fuel in Tanzania and went there with cans filled with coffee. He was arrested and imprisoned in a cell in Muyinga and his car seized. According to sources close to his family, investigations carried out on him pointed the finger to the two traders who were searched. He sold this coffee in Tanzania and returned with gasoline in these cans.

### **Injustice in fuel distribution in Ngozi province**

As of August 30, 2024, after about 3 weeks without fuel in Ngozi province, the gas station commonly called "ku rya Mivo" received fuel of 5 thousand liters of gasoline and 5 thousand liters of fuel oil. According to eyewitnesses, people who had been waiting for fuel for 2 days were informed that the fuel is for vehicles intended to transport CNDD-FDD members who will travel to Bujumbura on August 31 for the celebration of Imbonerakure Day. Nestor, the driver of the secretary of CNDD-FDD, acted as a pump attendant at this gas station.

### **Critical lack of food in Bururi prison**

Information received by Ligue Iteka on August 30, 2024 indicates that since August 24, 2024, the food stocks (beans and flour) in Bururi prison were empty. According to eyewitnesses, those who eat are the only ones who are visited by their families bringing them food, others risk dying of hunger if nothing is done as soon as possible." These prisoners are asking civil society to shout loudly so that the general directorate of penitentiary affairs brings food before deaths are recorded in this prison. This detention center has, as of August 26, 2024, 536 prisoners and 3 infants, including 177 convicts and 359 remand prisoners, with a capacity of 250 people.

## ***1.4. SECURITY CONTEXT***

### ***1.4.1. PERSONS KILLED BY UNIDENTIFIED PEOPLE***

#### **A body of an Imbonerakure found in Ntega commune, Kirundo province**

Information received by Ligue Iteka on August 30, 2024 indicates that on August 25, 2024, on Mugendo hill, Ntega commune, Kirundo province, a body of Jean Claude Niyomufasha, a very influential Imbonerakure in the locality, married, was found with his throat cut in his house very early in the morning. According to sources on site, his wife says that someone called him around 2 a.m. and since he used to leave at night leaving the door half-closed, she was not worried about anything. According to the same sources, the local administrators went there but said nothing and the neighbors say that they too were bothered by the actions of this Imbonerakure. On August 29, 2024, a nicknamed Musobotsi, logistics officer of the National Police in Ntega ex-rebel of CNDD-FDD, was arrested by the prosecutor of Kirundo, Jean Claude Ndemeye, for the purpose of investigating the death of this Imbonerakure. Niyomufasha sowed terror on this hill by demanding goods (goats or chickens) from neighbors in case of absence in a meeting of CNDD-FDD party and the trauma he had been causing to CNL members for a long time. He was accused of two Rwandans thrown into Kanyaru River in 2016 and other CNL members mistreated. This police officer was arrested because he had a conflict with this Imbonerakure linked to the sharing of goods that they had dispossessed people from Rwanda illegally then aggravated also that he was doing illegal trade with this Imbonerakure to Rwanda. The CNDD-FDD party also influenced his arrest because Jean Claude Niyomufasha was a known Imbonerakure of CNDD-FDD. The victim was buried on August 26, 2024 in Mugendo.

#### **Two persons killed in Mugina commune, Cibitoke province**

On the night of August 26 to 27, 2024, around 11 p.m., in the locality of Rwamagashwa, on Nyempundu hill, Nyamakarabo zone, Mugina commune, Cibitoke province, Charles Mpawenimana, aged 67 and his wife Frédiane Ndayisavyimana, aged 52, were killed by unidentified people armed with machetes. According to witnesses, unidentified people armed with machetes burst into the household where the victims lived while they were sleeping and killed them with machetes and the bodies were seen in the morning around 6 a.m. by the neighbors. Information from the local administration officials indicates that they

were accused of sorcery and other neighbors of the victims talk about land conflicts. Death threats weighed on them because they had already found leaflets on their banana plantations indicating that they will be killed because they are murderers. The same sources add that Imbonerakure are alleged perpetrators of these killings because they are often seen prowling close to the house of the deceased late at night. The bodies of the victims were buried on August 27, 2024 by the families of the victims accompanied by the administration at the cemetery of Mugina commune. Administrative authorities including Julienne Ndayihaya, administrator of Mugina commune, confirm the facts and indicate that police investigations have begun. The couple leaves three orphans. They woke up seeing the bodies.

#### **A body found in Bweru commune, Ruyigi province**

Information received by Ligue Iteka on August 26, 2024 indicates that on August 25, 2024, in the morning, on the waters of the River commonly called Kumashanyarazi, Nkanda hill, Kayongozi zone, Bweru commune, Ruyigi province, a body of an unidentified man was found floating on the waters. According to sources on site, the victim was from Karusi province and had spent a few days at Kireka sub-hill, Gas-hurushuru hill, Bwagiriza zone, Butezi commune where he was sawing wood. The funeral of the deceased was organized by the administration.

#### **A body of a woman found in Muhuta commune, Rumonge province**

On August 30, 2024, on the shores of Lake Tanganyika, on Rutunga hill, Muhuta commune, Rumonge province, a body of an unidentified woman was found. According to witnesses who saw the body, the victim was naked and had a catheter on one of her arms and had signs that she had been raped before being killed and thrown there. The police made the report and the administrative authorities ordered the evacuation of the body to the mortuary of Gitaza health center. The administrator of Muhuta commune, Scholastic Niyonsavye, indicated that the perpetrators and the reason for this crime were not known.

### ***1.4.2. OTHER SECURITY INCIDENTS***

#### **A woman injured in Buhiga commune, Karuzi province**

On August 29, 2024, around 7 p.m., on Rweya hill, Buhiga zone and commune, Karuzi province, Nduguyangu, aged 26, a member of Imbonerakure militia, almost killed his own mother Agathe, member of CNDD-FDD, aged 56, after injuring her in the head with a stick. According to witnesses in Mwoya, the wife of this young Imbonerakure insulted her mother-in-law and the latter told her not to return in the shop built by her husband. Oscar Nizigiyimana, Nduguyangu's father, had bought a property on the same hill and offered it to her, in addition he bought her a plot of land on the hill where he had a shop built for her. This young Imbonerakure is used to causing trouble to his parents but they ignore him and calm down. After kicking him out of his shop, the young woman called her husband informing him that his mother chased her out of the shop and the latter rushed to see what was happening. He found his mother in the door of the said shop and pushed his mother accompanied by two punches to the cheeks and the father intervened but his son beat them all. His father retrieved a stick, which he hit his son on the forehead and blood gushed out and the latter snatched it from his father and beat his mother on the head above the right ear and she was injured and fell into a gutter. According to witnesses, the mother of this Imbonerakure was taken to Buhiga hospital where she was admitted while the perpetrator remained free because those who were there looked for an OPJ from Buhiga zone to intervene but he told them that they should look for the Imbonerakure to arrest him but they refused. On August 30, 2024, the police went to look for him and found him also injured then they heard them and forced him to pay his mother's medical bill.



## **Gold miners dead in Mabayi commune, Cibitoke province**

On the night of July 5, 2024, on Gafumbegeti hill, Butahana zone, Mabayi commune, Cibitoke province, about ten gold miners were trapped by the waters of a stream while looking for gold. According to witnesses, the water entered their site through holes in other abandoned sites while they were mining. Since they were more than 50 meters away, not all of them were aware of the danger they were in. Those who were able to escape first alerted the first passers-by around 5 a.m. and fled in order to hide their identity.

The rescuers found the body of Jean Claude Bimenyimana, thirty-year-old from Rubuye locality, Rutore-ro hill in the same zone. Those who were rescued were taken to Mabayi hospital for treatment and others to Rutorero dispensary. According to the survivors, there are 10 to 15 people missing. But the question that still remains is where they disappeared, in the site or in the wild while fleeing. Like the victim who died, the survivors as well as those who disappeared whose identity is still hidden, were all from Butahana zone, on Gafumbegeti, Rutorero and Ngara hills. Commissioner Hassan Rumbeti as well as the local administrators who arrived on the scene refused to give the population the real number of the accident.

In this part of Mabayi zone, the nighttime habit of gold mining known as "Kunyangaza", "Kwihemba" is very common. Some owners of mining sites, not wanting to pay the gold miners well, offer them days where they will work at night to pay themselves the remuneration which is either monthly or weekly. This is a practice that often causes accidents especially during the rainy season like this dramatic accident that cost the lives of 16 gold miners in April 2023.

## **Land conflicts in Murwi communes, Cibitoke province**

On August 30 around 5 p.m., on Ngoma hill and zone of Murwi commune, Cibitoke province, two families of brothers including that of Fabrice Rukundo aged 49 and that of Gaston Nzeyimana aged 58 almost killed each other.

According to eyewitnesses, the incident was narrowly avoided following the intervention of the police and the local administration. According to various concordant sources, the deceased father left a large land property in dispute between his two sons.

One of them, Fabrice Rukundo, member of Imbonerakure youth league, was not satisfied with the sentence by Cibitoke High Court on August 29, 2024, which established the equitable sharing between the families of these two brothers.

Information collected on site indicates that Fabrice, at the head of many young Imbonerakure, attacked Gaston's home with machetes and clubs on the purpose of physically eliminating him.

Gaston's family members resisted and, had it not been for the intervention of the police, according to a security source, heads would have rolled. For the moment, Gaston's family has fled and is under the protection of the police and the administration.

The administrator of Murwi confirms the facts and indicates that investigations have been opened and the culprits risk being prosecuted for rebellion against the decision of justice and attempted murder against peaceful citizens.

In the meantime, the communal administration fears the risk of increasing land disputes which have already caused 2 deaths in a period not exceeding two months in this locality including Ferdinand Manariyo aged 43 killed on June 17, 2024 and Jean de Dieu Uwizeyimana aged 60 killed on July 28, 2024.

The administrator of Murwi commune, Melchiad Nzokizwanayo threatens severe sanctions in accordance with the law to any person involved in acts of killing and attempted assassination linked to land conflicts.



## ***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.

### ***II.1. RIGHT TO LIFE***

The law guarantees it, human dignity must be respected and protected by the State and in the event of infringement, sanctions should be applied to the alleged perpetrators, art 21 of the constitutional law of the country, as for the observed and convincing facts, the political will overrides it.

#### ***II.1.1. PERSONS KILLED BY IMBONERAKURE***

##### **A body found in Songa commune, Bururi province**

Information received by Ligue Iteka on August 28, 2024 indicates that on August 23, 2024, on Gitsinda hill, Songa commune, Bururi province, a decomposing body of Jean Claude Nimubona, aged 34, a teacher at ECOFO Jenda, member of CNDD-FDD party was found around 3 p.m., in a wooded area, on Mutsinda hill, Kiryama zone of the same commune. According to his family member, this body was seen for the first time by children who were looking for firewood. According to witnesses, the victim had signs of beatings on his body, injuries to the neck and some parts of his body mutilated. Police sources also say that his phone and national identity card had been seized from the hands of one of the young Imbonerakure. The victim was arrested by young Imbonerakure on August 3, 2024, accusing him of having sex with a young girl working in a shop located very close to his home on Gitsinda hill and he had been missing since August 4, 2024 and then found dead afterwards. Police sources say that 23 young Imbonerakure including Ntirandekura Bidos, Semabaya Sylver, Sindayihebura Protails, Nzigamasabo Jean, Rukundo Ferdinand, Ndayizeye Frédéric, Ndayizeye Marc, Ndayishemeze Audace and Ntirampeba Laurent have been in the hands of the judicial police in Bururi since August 29, 2024. They were arrested on Gitsinda hill, Kiryama zone, Songa commune, Bururi province. They are suspected of having killed Jean Claude, a member of the youth league of the ruling party.

### ***II.2. THE 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.

##### **A girl raped in Itaba commune, Gitega province**

On August 27, 2024, around 11 a.m., on Gihamagara hill, Itaba commune, Gitega province, K.R., aged 15, an 8<sup>th</sup> grade student at ECOFO Buhoro was raped by Firmin Hakizimana, aged 35, a community animal health agent, married, father of two children and member of CNDD-FDD party. According to sources on site, the girl's father alerted the neighbors saying that Firmin had just left with his child to an unknown location. According to the same sources, community health workers (Abaremeshakiyayo) as well as some members of the hill committee for child protection started searching and found Firmin and the girl having sex in a hotel located in Bugumbasha. The victim was immediately taken to Kidonzi

hospital to protect her against pregnancy and STIs while the alleged perpetrator was taken to Itaba commune cell where he is being jailed. According to the same sources, amicable arrangements are underway for this man to be released, but the hill defenders of children's rights in Itaba have decided to follow the case so that he is brought to justice.

### **A girl raped in Kayanza commune and province**

On August 26, 2024, around 10 a.m., on Kinga hill, Kayanza commune and province, E.N., Adelin Havyarimana, 47, a sorcerer, raped a 20-year-old woman. According to the victim, she had gone to this sorcerer to get painkillers for the pains she had in her lower abdomen, and this was without her parents' knowledge. The sorcerer poured the medicine into the girl's sex using a small bottle and raped her. According to the same victim, she fought to escape but in vain. She screamed loudly, and a person who was passing by heard the screams and rescued her. The sorcerer told the people who had come to see the situation that he was treating her but the victim denied it by confessing what happened. When she got home, she was taken to Kayanza hospital by her parents for medical care. The parents filed a complaint with OPJ Samuel Nsabimana. The police arrested the perpetrator. The girl is now on medication because the medical expertise testified that the victim had a tear in the genitals.

## ***II.3. RIGHT TO LIBERTY***

### ***II.3.1. PERSONS ARRESTED ARBITRARILY***

#### **A member of Sahwanya FRODEBU party arrested in Rumonge commune and province**

Information received by Ligue Iteka on August 26, 2024 indicates that on August 21, 2024 Désiré Nzisabira, head of Sahwanya FRODEBU party in Kigwena zone, Rumonge commune and province, was arrested by young Imbonerakure from Mayengo hill, Kigwena zone. According to sources on site, in the evening, this Mayengo hill head decided to transfer him to Kigwena zone cell. He was released on the orders of the administrator of Rumonge commune, Augustin Minani. Désiré Nzisabira says he was a victim of his Sahwanya FRODEBU party and refused to contribute by force to finance CNDD-FDD party's election campaign. The Imbonerakure had asked him to contribute for the ruling party and he refused, hence the beginning of the mistreatment until he was taken to the cell. He claims to have been threatened to death by these Imbonerakure.

## ***III. ECONOMIC SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS***

Burundi ratified accession to the international covenant on economic, social and cultural rights dated March 14, 1990, adopted in New York on December 16, 1966.

#### **The communal administrator in the target of fuel fraudsters in Mabayi commune, Cibitoke province**

Information received by Ligue Iteka on August 30, 2024 indicates that on August 19, 2024, Jeanne Izomporera arrived at Mabayi gas station to ask for 500 liters of gasoline. As there were many consumers, the pump attendant Emery Ndizeye responded to this authority that there was not enough gasoline for everyone and took the opportunity to remind her that she had 750 liters of debt.

The next day, Jeanne Izomporera with Jean-Marie Hakizimana, communal secretary of CNDD-FDD party in Mugina commune threatened to imprison the gas station attendant if he ever refused to give them fuel, accusing him of being an "igipinga" (opponent of the government).

In a bar in Mabayi, these two authorities even threatened Emery to chase him out of the commune, saying that they do not understand why a man of Tutsi can work in Mabayi while there are many unemployed Hutus from CNDD-FDD party. They even went so far as to ask the owners of the station to chase the gas

station attendant. The victim decided to no longer work at this gas station for fear of his safety.

There are many victims because the owners of this gas station grouped within Dukorere Hamwe Dusoze Ikivi Cooperative, active in gold mining, say that they cannot supply their machines with fuel. A source within the cooperative says that its production has decreased too much in the last three months and accuses the administrators including Jeanne Izomporera who are grabbing large quantities at the expense of these owners who need it most in the operation of the equipment used in mining.

### **Forced contribution to access the market in Cendajuru commune, Cankuzo province**

As of August 29, 2024, on Twinkwavu hill and zone, Cendajuru commune, Cankuzo province no one was allowed to enter Twinkwavu market without showing the Imbonerakure a contribution receipt. According to eyewitnesses, those who did not have a receipt contributed on the spot.

In Cankuzo province urban center, a 1000 Bif receipt is collected by street leaders if they are CNDD-FDD party members but if a family does not pay they move to the next family. At ETS, the nicknamed Bakari collects this contribution. The contribution is generalized everywhere.

### **The 2025 election forced contributions on the Burundian population**

Forced contributions are collected by CNDD-FDD party in several provinces of Burundi, including Kirundo, Cibitoke, Mwaro, Muramvya, Cankuzo and Bururi. Traders and residents are ordered to pay sums ranging from 1,000 to 100,000 Burundian francs to finance the party's election campaign. Those who refuse are threatened with sanctions, including the inability to access administrative and health services. The collectors are often party members or young Imbonerakure. Residents denounce these practices as illegal and restrictive. Local authorities and the governor of Cibitoke have denied these allegations. Forced contributions are widespread and even affect non-party members. Residents are calling for government intervention to stop these practices.

#### **Case of illustration:**

**Bururi province and commune:** On August 28, 2024, groups of young Imbonerakure were wandering in Bururi market and others at the livestock market located near Kabuye stadium in Bururi province city with receipts. According to eyewitnesses, they were forcibly collecting the contribution for the elections. These witnesses say that they demanded from the sellers an amount varying between 1000 Bif and 5000 Bif depending on the products sold. For example, at the livestock market, they demanded 5000 Bif per cow sold and 2000 Bif per goat or sheep sold. No one from the owners of the livestock sold had the right to leave without paying this amount. At Bururi market, Salvator, a teacher, and Ferdinand were identified among the collectors. At Kabuye livestock market there was Giswaswa, advisor to Bururi administrator and also president of Imbonerakure youth league in Bururi commune, Frédéric secretary at DCE Bururi, Gordien teacher at CFPP Bururi and Toyi seller of meatballs.

**In Kirundo province and commune:** On August 29, 2024, in the afternoon, in the meeting room of Kirundo high school, in Kirundo province, all the traders of Kirundo province were invited and participated in a meeting of the Provincial Secretary of CNDD-FDD party, Ferdinand Habimana, of the new Butanyerera province. The only item on the agenda is to collect the traders' contributions to the upcoming elections. The secretary of CNDD-FDD party in Butanyerera demanded each trader, whether a member of CNDD-FDD party or not, to stand up and say the amount of their contribution and then forced them to start with their party greeting "*Tugire CNDD-FDD, CNDD-FDD Ramba*" "*Let's have CNDD-FDD, CNDD-FDD is sustainable*" then the commune of origin, the name and the amount to be contributed and it was recorded. All the traders are lamenting because this party had already collected this contribution via a team that went to their stores leaving CNDD-FDD receipts per store and per household against a sum paid.

Since August 25, 2024, Afazari HAMUDU, Rwandan, former member of the army of Havyarimana Juvénal, representative of the traders of Kirundo province, distributed invitations by force and demanded that

traders who are not even members of CNDD-FDD to attend a meeting of the secretary of CNDD-FDD party of the future Butanyerera province on August 29, 2024 in the DPAE room and demanded a sum of 30,000 Bif per trader. He said that those who will not be present will be considered as opponents (ibipinga) and that no one will be excused anymore. The said meeting was attended by 35 traders and started at 12:00 when the organizer arrived while the traders had been waiting for him from 8:00am. As the number of those present was not sufficient, he ordered another afternoon meeting in the meeting room of Kirundo high school around 3 p.m. He intimidated them that whoever is absent will pay a fine of 500,000 Bif. Hamudu was the first organizer of the demonstrations against Rwanda under Nkurunziza regime.

***In Cibitoke province:*** the money collection operation takes place in the 6 communes of Cibitoke province. According to witnesses interviewed, each household must pay willingly or by force a sum varying between 1000 Bif and 100,000 Bif. According to the same witnesses, this situation irritates members of the opposition parties and believes that these forced contributions according to them should only concern CNDD-FDD party members and sympathizers.

According to Deo Nsabimana, head of Imbonerakure youth league, the money collected will contribute to financing the next elections and this is valid for each population residing in the country. However, doubts persist about the transparent management of the money collected. Some believe that this kind of disorderly money contributions are managed in an opaque manner without respecting any measure of good governance.

According to a local source, anyone who does not fulfill this civic duty according to one of the members of the Imbonerakure youth league does not have the right to access administrative papers, much less the services offered by the health and education structures in their locality. What scares the residents is that most of the young people from the ruling party involved in fundraising are not from the localities where they operate. This also confirms, according to some residents contacted, the assumption of embezzlement and theft of the money collected that will not reach its destination.

One of the independent election observers established for a decade in Cibitoke province city speaks of an electoral process biased in advance. For him, it is inconceivable to demand that a citizen who is unable to feed his family finance the elections when it is a matter that falls within the prerogatives of the State.

In addition, he insists, elections that are often non-transparent and marred by irregularities generate less enthusiasm from voters before indicating that the electoral process for the next elections seems to be off to a bad start. The current fundraising for the 2025 elections is confirmed by Deo Nsabimana, head of Imbonerakure youth league in the new administrative and territorial constituency of Bujumbura.

Deo Nsabimana states that the ruling party must ensure that it fulfills its national obligations, including when it comes to seeking funds for the elections. However, the Governor of Cibitoke refutes all this information because according to him, no one has yet come to complain about the so-called contributions of money denounced by the population.

**In Bujumbura mairie:** Since August 19, 2024, a collection of money for CNDD-FDD election campaign has begun in all provinces of the country. According to an eyewitness, each person of voting age who is a member of CNDD-FDD party should pay 1000 Bif to finance the election campaign.

According to the same witness, Imbonerakure and some members of the committee of this party extended this collection to anyone living in their constituencies, which shocked several people not affiliated with this party. "We do not understand how we can finance the campaign of a party of which I am not a member", confided a resident of Muha commune who was asked to pay this sum.

**In Bujumbura Mairie,** bars, shops, stores and other income-generating activities: hairdressing salon; carpentry workshop; welding workshop, etc. were targeted for this collection and the owners were ordered to pay because they say: we pay to continue operating in this locality and avoid being mistreated by these young Imbonerakure".

According to witnesses on site, people who refuse to pay this contribution are written on lists of which they do not know the continuation and destination. These residents deplore this behavior of these Imbonerakure because this contribution should be mandatory for CNDD-FDD members and ask that the Government can intervene to stop this scam organized by CNDD-FDD party because even the President of the Republic has clearly indicated that there will be no contributions to support the elections because the funds allocated to this event are available.

***In Mwaro province:*** information received by Ligue Iteka on August 30, 2024 indicates that in Mwaro province, some officials or CNDD-FDD party members are traveling through the hills asking members and some non-members for contributions to CNDD-FDD party. This is done at the hill level in households. An invitation to contribute to this activity for the new province of Gitega, also including Mwaro, was launched on social media, specifying that the entire new Gitega province needs 2 billion Bif for this campaign. The invitation also mentions the bank account number opened at BANCOBU, called "Campaign CNDD-FDD Gitega 25-27". For some traders in Mwaro, were told "You will consider what you can give and bring the payment slip to the party officials"

***In Muramvya province:*** information received by Ligue Iteka on August 30, 2024 indicates that since August 24, 2024, members of CNDD-FDD party have been going door to door in all quarters and hills of Muramvya province, to collect by force the contribution for the next 2025 election campaign of CNDD FDD. According to sources visited at home by these 'collectors', each adult man must give between one thousand and 5 thousand Bif. Those who accept receive a receipt marked with CNDD-FDD logo, and those who refuse are noted in a register of people called 'abakeba' or 'ibipinga' meaning opponents, according to the same sources. Those who refuse learn that they will have problems with the administration, particularly obtaining documents such as certificates, birth certificates and others.

## ***IV. CATEGORICAL RIGHTS***

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

#### **Street children guarding the CNDD-FDD party flags in Bujumbura Mairie**

On August 26, 2024, during the ceremonies to celebrate the day dedicated to Imbonerakure youth that took place in Bujumbura Mairie, children aged between 12 and 15 years old were placed in all the quarters of the town to guard the party flags and the majority of these children were girls.

According to an eyewitness, the majority of these children were street children given the way they dressed but all wore CNDD-FDD party T-shirts. According to the same witness, some children were placed on Muha bridge, next to La Mutuelle, next to the Ministry of Finance, Budget and Economic Planning, next to the Ministry of Commerce, Transport, Industry and Tourism.

### ***IV.2. WOMENS' RIGHTS***

#### **A woman killed and her husband committed suicide in Bukinanyana commune, Cibitoke province**

On August 31, 2024, on Nyagumba hill, Masango zone, Bukinanyana commune, about a hundred kilometers from Cibitoke province city, André Bucumi, aged 52, a member of CNDD-FDD party, killed Spéciose Cimpaye, his wife aged 41, a member of CNDD-FDD party. Neighbors of this family speak of an organized killing because this man killed his wife and then hanged himself with a rope. According to these same sources, the cause of this assassination is the disagreement between the alleged perpetrator and the victim who prevented him from selling his landed properties. A close relative of the killed woman said that this couple was in everlasting disagreement because the husband accused his wife of preventing him every time he wanted to sell some of his landed properties. The facts are confirmed by Christian Nkurikiye, the communal administrator of Bukinanyana. This authority asks the population to seize the judicial authorities each time when disagreements arise within households.

The two dead people were buried by their family members accompanied by the administration the same day at the cemetery of Nyagumba hill, Bukinanyana commune, Cibitoke province.

## ***V. CONCLUSION***

Ligue Iteka notes a continued deterioration of human rights situation across the country. Particularly in this period close to the 2025 elections, Ligue Iteka is outraged against the forced electoral contributions underway among the population by the presidential party.

It recommends the Government of Gitega to:

- ⇒ Ensure the strictly voluntary nature of contributions for the purpose of the organization of the 2025 elections, and beyond, but not harassing and intimidating those who do not want to or cannot contribute;
- ⇒ Communicate regularly and publicly the amounts collected, particularly at the communal and provincial level in order to maximize transparency and accountability;

It protests against the impunity of the crimes observed and asks asks the Minister of Justice to ensure the strict application of the law against the perpetrators of the crimes.