

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

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### **Burundi**

#### **A delicate situation in the pre-electoral period 2025-2027**

*Advocacy to prevent the deterioration of human rights in Burundi*

*November 2024*

## CONTENTS

I.	EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....	3
II.	CONTEXT AND JUSTIFICATION .....	4
III.	OBJECTIVES .....	6
3.1	Global Objective .....	6
3.2	Specific Objectifs.....	6
IV.	METHODOLOGY .....	6
4.1	. Chronological delimitation .....	6
4.2	. A network of monitors involved in the data collection.....	6
5.1	. Difficulties faced related to the context .....	7
5.1	. General overview of human rights violations .....	8
5.2	. Cases of illustration of violations (January– September 2024) .....	9
5.2.1	Cases of Victims killed by State agents .....	9
5.2.2	Summary executions by Imbonerakure militiamen .....	14
5.2.4	Cases of persons killed by unidentified people.....	17
5.2.4	Cases of abductions.....	22
5.2.5	Victims of Gender Based Violence (GBV) .....	27
	IN CONCLUSION.....	32

## I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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*The Burundian Human Rights League "ITEKA" is deeply concerned about the deterioration of human rights situation in Burundi in the run-up to the 2025 legislative and 2027 presidential elections.*

*In its various publications, Ligue Iteka has repeatedly demonstrated that human rights violations, which have taken on worrying proportions since the 2015 crisis, with the third illegal term under the late Pierre Nkurunziza's regime, have persisted, even after the political alternation of 2020, under President Evariste Ndayishimiye's regime, as evidenced by its report on the four years and two months in power of President Evariste NDAYISHIMIYE by Ligue Iteka, published on September 12, 2024<sup>1</sup>.*

*Thus, on the eve of the 2025 legislative and 2027 presidential elections, Ligue Iteka has documented, from January to September 2023, 10 cases of extrajudicial executions, 31 cases of people killed by State agents, 173 cases of persons killed by unidentified people, 31 cases of abductions, 28 cases of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, 214 cases of arbitrary arrests and 109 cases of gender-based violence.*

*Most of these violations remain unpunished, such as the cases of abductions where the perpetrators are generally agents of the National Intelligence Service (SNR) who operate openly, mainly targeting CNL party opponents. Then, many bodies of victims killed by unidentified criminals and discovered here and there in the wild are immediately buried by the administration without investigations being carried out in violation of the law.*

*This situation is all the more worrying since the judiciary that was supposed to enforce the laws by punishing crimes and human rights violations is not independent. The same applies to the National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) such as the OMBUDSMAN and the CNIDH.*

*Faced with this worrying situation, Ligue Iteka wishes to lead an advocacy campaign to contribute to preventing the deterioration of human rights situation in Burundi during the electoral period (legislative in 2025 and presidential in 2027).*

*This advocacy report draws up a worrying situation of violations in the pre-electoral period with illustrative cases in order to draw the attention of the UN human rights protection mechanisms to monitor closely this situation, which risks worsening during the electoral period.*

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<sup>1</sup> <https://ligue-iteka.bi/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/RAPPORT-4-ANS-ET-2-MOIS-DU-PRESIDENT-EVARISTE-NDAYISHIMIYE.pdf>

## II. CONTEXT AND JUSTIFICATION

On the eve of the 2025 legislative and 2027 presidential elections in Burundi, the country is characterized by continuous human rights violations that risk worsening the situation.

This electoral process has been hampered from the beginning by the lack of political consensus, particularly on electoral arbitration, because the procedure for appointing members of the National Independent Electoral Commission "CENI", close to the ruling CNDD-FDD party, in December 2023, was questioned<sup>2</sup> by the main opposition party CNL. Subsequently, in March 2024, the president of CNL, Agathon Rwasa, was removed from the head of his party, following an extraordinary congress controlled by people close to the ruling CNDD-FDD party<sup>3</sup>. This decapitation of the main political opposition was preceded by a period of intimidation and persecution of its members across the country.

Then the Electoral Code and the electoral calendar were denounced by different political parties as maneuvers to establish CNDD-FDD as a one-party rule while the Constitution guarantees political pluralism.

This situation already worries the international community because during the 57<sup>th</sup> session of the Human Rights Council held in Geneva in September and October 2024, the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Burundi sounded the alarm on this dangerous turn on the eve of the 2025 legislative elections. According to him, *"The sequence of events around the main opposition party, the National Council for Liberty (CNL, since February 2023, denotes the government's desire to weaken and divide the opposition. Several members of CNL or their relatives are imprisoned. The offices of several opposition political parties are regularly vandalized. Forced contributions are collected from the population for CNDD-FDD, the ruling party "*.

Then the same Special Rapporteur notes that in general *"Civic space remains locked with reprisals against media professionals and civil society organizations. The lack of inclusion does not promote the participation of all the political parties, including those of the opposition, for transparent and credible legislative and communal elections in 2025"*

As the elections approach, signs of tension are increasingly evident in the territorial administration and population circles. Thus, the voter registration process, which took place from October 22 to 31, 2024 to constitute the electoral roll, was marred by threats and intimidation against populations who did not register. As matter of fact, people were prevented from accessing some services or obtaining administrative documents. Across the country, decisions or directives aimed at forcing citizens to register are being made. In Bujumbura mayorship, in Cibitoke, in Bubanza, in Ngozi, in Gitega, in Rumonge, in Mwaro, ... the communal administrators, the zone heads, the provincial or communal directors of

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.iwacu-burundi.org/ceni-des-nominations-qui-posent-question>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.sosmediasburundi.org/en/2024/03/20/burundi-the-turmoil-of-rwasa>

education, the hill heads, ... compete. The watchword: "Everyone must enroll for the 2025 elections, willingly or by force"<sup>4</sup>.

Meanwhile, human rights violations, which have taken on a worrying appearance since the 2015 crisis, continue with complete impunity. The judiciary that was supposed to defend and enforce the laws by repressing crimes and human rights violations is not independent because it remains subordinate to the orders of the ruling party CNDD-FDD. The same applies to National Human Rights Institutions such as the Office of the Ombudsman and the National Independent Human Rights Commission (CNIDH). The latter has been in the downgrading process to Status B since May 2024 by the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Commissions for its lack of independence.

Faced with this worrying situation, Ligue Iteka would like to carry out an advocacy action with the international human rights protection mechanisms of the UN in order to contribute to preventing the deterioration of the human rights situation in Burundi during the electoral period.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.iwacu-burundi.org/enrolement-des-electeurs-un-processus-perplexe-et-non-orthodoxe>

### **III. OBJECTIVES**

#### **3.1 Global Objective**

This advocacy aims to contribute to preventing the deterioration of the human rights situation in Burundi during the electoral period (legislative in 2025 and presidential in 2027)

#### **3.2 Specific Objectifs**

- *Describe the worrying situation of human rights and impunity in the pre-electoral period of the legislative elections in 2025 and the presidential elections in 2027 in Burundi;*
- *Draw the attention of national and international opinion to the risk that this situation worsen human rights violations during the electoral period in Burundi;*
- *Avail the information to the international human rights protection mechanisms to facilitate their monitoring of the worrying human rights situation in Burundi.*

### **IV. METHODOLOGY**

#### **4.1 . Chronological delimitation**

The issues addressed are related to the context of ongoing human rights violations that have worsened since the 2015 crisis and continue despite the 2020 alternation marked by promises of respect for human rights by high authorities, including the President of the Republic, but which are unfulfilled.

The period concerned is limited from January to September 2024 during which the situation is described with particular attention to some serious unpunished human rights violations such as abductions, summary executions by State agents and their Imbonerakure militia accomplices. Other illustrative cases relate to the phenomenon of bodies found here and there in the wild without the perpetrators being identified by the authorized police or justice services. The worrying case of gender-based violations is also mentioned among the cases illustrating the worrying context.

#### **4.2 . A network of monitors involved in the data collection**

The information on the violations was collected by an underground network of Ligue Iteka monitors given the hostile working environment for human rights defenders in Burundi since the 2015 crisis.

### **5.1 . Difficulties faced related to the context**

Despite these hard working conditions, Ligue Iteka monitors manage to collect the maximum information on human rights violations, but the figures presented are below reality because some violations are not brought to the attention of these monitors.

## V. SITUATION : JANUARY - SEPTEMBER 2024

### 5.1 . General overview of human rights violations

*Types of violations and number of victims from January to September 2024*

Types of Violations	Arbitrary arrests	Torture or torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment	GBV	Summary executions	Killed by unidentified people	Killed by State agents	Abduction
<b>Number of victims</b>	<b>214</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>30</b>

*Graphic representation*





## 5.2 . Cases of illustration of violations (January– September 2024)

### 5.2.1 Cases of Victims killed by State agents

*State agents such as the police are guilty of abuses by shooting live ammunition on victims with impunity, such as alleged thieves or fraudsters, sometimes without any reason and generally in circumstances that do not justify the use of firearms. There are also cases of prisoners who succumb to their illnesses because prison officials have denied them access to appropriate health care. The following examples illustrate these cases*

- *Extrajudicial execution of Ndayikeza Thierry in Bugendana commune, Gitega province*

On the night of Tuesday, March 19, 2024 around 10 p.m., on Gitora hill, precisely on the place commonly called "Lourde de Mugera", Mugera zone, Bugendana commune and Gitega province, Thierry Ndayikeza, aged 24, was shot dead by police officers from Mugera position. According to Léonidas Baravuga, father of the deceased, Thierry was with his younger brother Éric Baravuga and their friend Gildas. They were looking for their friends who could help them transport the rocks for the foundation of the deceased's house. Halfway, very close to the police position, these 3 boys came across the police officers and the latter asked them to sleep on the ground without asking them any questions.

These young people tried to introduce themselves and explain telling them where they came from but in vain because these police officers did not want to listen to them. They started beating them. Seeing that these police officers did not want to listen to them, Eric and Gildas preferred to escape while their friend Thierry remained lying on the ground. These police officers fired many shots behind Eric and Gildas then shot Thierry Ndayikeza in the stomach. The latter died on the spot. According to Léonidas Baravuga, Béatrice Bukuru and Bigirimana Éric respectively administrator and communal commissioner arrived at the scene of the crime around 3 am to transport the body to CDS Mugera.

Around 10 am, these two authorities returned to Bugendana to look for OPJ Jean de Dieu Ntakarutimana and asked him to go to Mugera for the report. The OPJ questioned Éric and Gildas to explain in detail what had happened. According to them, these police officers were drunk, which is why they did not want to listen to them.

The interrogation took place in the presence of the surrounding population, the communal administrator, the communal commissioner and the victim's parents. After the interrogation, the body was transported to Gitega regional hospital mortuary by Bugendana commune vehicle.

The OPJ drafted a report saying that the police officers Sergeant Fabien Bigirimuremyi, Corporal Fleury Dukeze and Corporal Thierry Nduwimana were ambushed by unidentified young people and confronted them, which urged the police officers to shoot in the air to scare them.

In his report, he continued saying that a stray bullet hit the deceased Thierry in the stomach. He continued saying that investigations are underway to identify these criminals. The burial took place on March 21, 2024 at Mugera cemetery under the facilitation of expenses incurred by Bugendana commune. As of March 22, 2024, none of the above-mentioned police officers have been arrested.

- ***A woman jailed died in Mpimba central prison in Muha commune, Bujumbura Mairie***

On January 1, 2024, in Mpimba prison, Muha commune, Bujumbura Mairie, Edith Nizigama died. According to sources on site, the victim suffered from asthma and was arrested at her home in Nyakabiga on December 28, 2023 and taken to PJ Jabe cell by police officers before being transferred to Mpimba prison on December 29, 2023. The victim had a debt of 16 million BIF that she had not repaid. Alexis Ngayisenga, husband of the deceased had even presented a sum of 4 million out of the 16 million to reduce the debt, but he was not listened to and he even gave his car as a guarantee to release his wife without success. According to the same sources, the victim's body had spent the night in Mpimba central prison while it should have been evacuated to a mortuary in the capital of Bujumbura without success. The family had brought a vehicle to move this body but did not have the exit ticket because of the absence of the prison director and the head of the infirmary of this prison.

- ***A body found in Kayanza commune and province***

On March 11, 2024, on Musave hill, Kayanza commune and province, a body of Jacques Ririmunda, from Buyumpu hill, Rugazi zone, Kabarore commune, Kayanza province was found decapitated not far from Kayanza hospital. According to sources on site, Jacques Ririmunda had been arrested by police officers from Rugazi police station on March 10, 2024, on the orders of Buvumo hill head, Emmanuel Nduwimana. According to the same sources, this local administration officer accused the victim of having gone to a locality called Katunda, in Rwanda not far from the Burundian-Rwandan border to supply in food. After his arrest, Ririmunda was handcuffed and taken to SNR cell in Kayanza. The victim's family and friends are demanding thorough investigations so that the perpetrators of the crime are punished in accordance with the law.

- ***A detainee died at Bururi central prison***

On the night of January 24, 2024, at Bururi central prison, Antoine Nimpagaritse, aged 50, from the locality of Kigamba, on Taba hill, Mugamba commune, Bururi province died due to the negligence of the head of the health service. According to sources on site, among the inmates of this prison, this inmate had just spent more than a week in poor health. He was receiving health care in the same health center in this prison. The head of this Health Center, Agnès Nshimirimana, refused to grant him a transfer for treatment at Bururi hospital. This inmate ended up dying in this prison. It should be noted that he was arrested on November 14, 2023, accused of killing a person before being detained in Mugamba police cell for two months. On January 15, 2024, he was transferred to Bururi central prison where he died of malaria.

- ***A person killed in Rugombo commune, Cibitoke province***

Information received by Ligue Iteka on February 12, 2024 indicates that on February 11, 2024, around 11 p.m., not far from Cibitoke province city, on the 8<sup>th</sup> street hill, Cibitoke hill, Rugombo commune, Cibitoke province, Ismail Nizigiyimana alias Mangarara, fifty-year-old farmer, was shot by one of the police officers from Cibitoke police station while drunk. According to sources on site, the victim had just attended a football match at his neighbor's house and when he arrived very close to his house, he met police officers on patrol who shot him and he died on the spot. The victim's body was evacuated to the mortuary of Cibitoke hospital by the vehicle of the communal administrator of Rugombo, Gilbert Manirakiza.

- ***A person shot in Kabarore commune, Kayanza province***

Information received by Ligue Iteka on June 3, 2024 indicates that on May 28, 2024, around 7 p.m., very close to Kanyaru river, on Ryamukona hill, Kabarore commune, Kayanza province, Cleoplace Manirumva, aged 38 years old, married and father of 2 children, was shot by police officers from Kanyaru police station who were patrolling the area. According to eyewitnesses, the victim was carrying a bag of coffee and police believed he was trafficking it to Rwanda. Cleoplace was suspected of trafficking but no one had caught him yet. On the morning of May 29, 2024, Berchmans Nsanguye, administrator of Kabarore commune, ordered the population to bury Cleoplace without carrying out investigations.

- *A person shot in Nyanza-Lac commune, Makamba province*

On June 4, 2024, around 4 p.m., on Mukubano hill, Muyange zone, Nyanza-Lac commune, Makamba province, Jean Bosco Dukundane, aged 28, farmer, was shot and killed by APC Boniface Hakizimana, number 11245, police officer from Makamba police station, ex-PMPA of CNDD-FDD. According to eyewitnesses, the latter was part of the team of police officers who were on a mission to secure the examination centers for the national test in Muyange zone but afterwards they took advantage of the opportunity to confront the bikers who were violating the traffic laws. When APC Boniface began to impose a fine without receipt of 50,000 Bif on the first biker Elie Ntakirutimana, member of CNDD-FDD party, his colleagues revolted. So, these police officers imposed force by shooting live bullets into the air. As these bikers were also veterans, they decided to fight with police officer Boniface who responded by shooting two bullets into Jean Bosco's chest and he died immediately. His body was buried the next day and the alleged perpetrator was taken to Makamba police station cell. Biker taxis have always accused the police in Makamba province of carrying out brutal seizures of their motorcycles, some without even wearing police uniforms, where there have even been injuries to passengers, bikers or police officers.

- *A person killed in Kabarore commune, Kayanza province*

On June 8, 2024, on Mpungenge sub-hill, Mugoyi hill, Jene zone, Kabarore commune, Kayanza province, Joseph Habiwaremye aged 28, member of CNDD-FDD party, was killed by the communal police commissioner Moïse Arakaza nicknamed "Nyeganyega" accompanied by his two AT.

According to sources on site, these bodyguards went to Joseph's home around 6 a.m. to carry out a search without a warrant and they accused the victim of trading coffee to Rwanda but they did not find no coffee in his house. According to the same sources, he was beaten a lot when he was asked to show the bags of coffee that he fraudulently markets in Rwanda. Two of his neighbors, including Pierre alias Sunzu and Sindayigaya, were also beaten before being transferred by these police officers to the communal police station located on Bukanya hill.

Arriving at the police station, Nyeganyega then took Joseph Habiwaremye on a motorcycle into a forest of pinus trees at Karama hill where he killed him with bullets to the heart and head while Sunzu and Sindayigaya were kept in Kabarore communal police station cell in Bukanya. Arakaza Moïse then ordered his police officers to ensure that the body of the deceased was not taken by anyone from his family.

On June 9, 2024, the governor of Kayanza province, Rémy cishahayo, the police and the prosecutor went to Mugoyi hill and asked the victim's family to come to his funeral but the family refused to do so before the murderer is punished. The body of the deceased was

taken to Rubura Health Center mortuary where it is kept today even though it does not have a cold room.

### 5.2.2 Summary executions by Imbonerakure militiamen

*The Imbonerakure militiamen of the ruling CNDD-FDD party assume the right to intimidate and harass political opponents. Generally illegally involved in the maintenance of order and security by the administrative authorities, they take advantage of this to impose illegal fines and do not hesitate to kill those who do not comply while the death penalty is abolished in Burundian law.*

*Sometimes, they are arrested by the justice to calm the anger of the victims and the population but nothing guarantees fair and equitable trials in the criminal cases that concern them because they generally benefit from the support of the ruling party and the political-administrative administration.*

- *A member of CNL party killed in Kanyosha commune, Bujumbura Rural*

On January 12, 2024, on Gisovu sub-hill and hill, Kiyenzi zone, Kanyosha commune, Bujumbura rural province, Rodrigue Irakoze, member of CNL party, succumbed to torture by Imbonerakures, on January 1, 2024. According to sources on site, on January 1, 2024, Imbonerakure armed with clubs including Stanislas Nduwimana, head of Imbonerakure in Kanyosha commune and Canésius and other Imboneakure who were wearing police uniforms attacked people mostly members of CNL party who were celebrating the New Year and started beating them. According to the same sources, Rodrigue Irakoze had received several blows with a stick to the chest.

- *A CNL member killed in Mbuye commune, Muramvya province*

Information received by Ligue Iteka on February 25, 2024, indicates that on February 17, 2024, around 10 a.m., on Masama hill, Mbuye commune, Muramvya province, Oscar Mbonihankuye, aged 41, member of CNL party, was killed by Éric Ndayizeye, Eraste Niyonzima alias Rasta, Aimable Gahungu, Thierry Harerimana and Donatien Bizimana alias Wariraye, young people from the Imbonerakure militia of the same hill. According to sources on site, the victim was in the fields with his wife Judith Nijimbere, when these Imbonerakure arrived and asked him to pay a fine of 180,000Bif because he had been absent in community works. When the victim said that he could not have this amount, these Imbonerakure roped him and threw him in into Mubarazi River which is next to the scene of the crime and they left. His wife cried for help to alert the neighbors who searched for the body but in vain until today. According to the same sources, on February 19, 2024, the victim's wife went to complain to the communal administrator of Mbuye Evelyne Ndayisasirire the next day and the 5 Imbonerakure, alleged perpetrators of the crime were

summoned by the administrator for hearing, and the police jailed them in the communal police cell. It should be noted that the population of this locality does not hope for anything regarding their punishment because they should be taken immediately to Muramvya prosecutor's office for judgment of flagrante delicto.

- ***A person killed in Isare commune, Bujumbura rural province***

On July 2, 2024, at around 9p.m., on Kibuye hill, Isare commune, Bujumbura rural province, Dionise Mbonabirama, aged 78, a farmer and member of CNL party, was clubbed to death by his son Ezéchiél Ndagijimana, aged 39, also a member of CNL party. According to local sources, land disputes were at the root of the murder. Dionise was buried in Kibuye cemetery on July 3, 2024.

- ***A person killed in Mugina commune, Cibitoke province***

On August 19, 2024, on Rugajo hill, Mugina commune, Cibitoke province, Audace Ngendahayo, aged about fifty, was killed in a banana field by Imbonerakure including Matayo alias Cobra and Pierre Nzokizwa. The administrator of Mugina commune, Julienne Ndayishimiye and Rugajo zone head, Ézéchiél Ziremakwinshi alias Mobutu, indicate that the victim was a thief because he had been arrested many times in the past accused of robbing household objects in his neighborhood. According to a police source, Ngendahayo was caught red-handed by Imbonerakure stealing in banana fields located on Rugajo hill, Mugina commune in Cibitoke province. According to witnesses on site, Imbonerakure hit the victim several times before cutting off his head with a machete. On the orders of Julienne Ndayihaya, administrator of Mugina commune, Imbonerakure immediately went to bury the victim not far from where he was killed without the presence of his relatives.

- ***Two persons killed in Gatara commune, Kayanza province***

Information received by Ligue Iteka on March 17, 2024 indicates that on March 5, 2024, in the morning, on Mbirizi hill and zone, Gatara commune, Kayanza province, two men alleged to be thieves were killed. According to sources on site, Salvator Yambwa, aged 25, from the Twa social component and Pascal Niyonkuru, aged 28, stole 150 kg of corn seeds from Spéciose Manirambona, on the night of March 4, 2024. Spéciose alerted Jean Marie Niyonzima, Mbirizi hill head in collaboration with young Imbonerakure including Eric alias Veterinaire, Evariste alias Musenyeri and Pascal alias Lisuba and conducted a search on the night of March 5, 2024, around 2 a.m., at the home of a trader named Elysée who confessed to having bought corn seeds from these thieves. According to the same sources, around 4 a.m., these Imbonerakure, on the orders of Jean Marie, the hill head, attacked the home of the alleged thieves and the latter took off before being caught at Kinyangoma

River. Yambwa's body was seen by passers-by on the morning of March 5, 2024, around 9 a.m. on the banks of Kinyangona River and Pascal's body remains untraceable. The public prosecutor in Kayanza, Isaac Ningabira ordered immediate burial in one of Yambwa's family's land properties.

- *A body of a member of CNL party found in Butaganzwa commune, Kayanza province*

On May 11, 2024, in the morning, on Busokoza hill, Butaganzwa commune, Kayanza province, a body of Epipode Yamuremye, aged 35, member of CNL party running a bar on Busokoza hill was found very close to his home.

According to the hill head, Medick Nsengiyumva, on the morning of May 10, 2024, the victim was at the commune city to register with his fiancée at the civil registry.

That same afternoon, the victim shared a glass of beer with his friends. Some of the Imbonerakure including Léonard Ndayambona, Mamberesi, Claude, Onias Ntunzwenayo and Ezéchiél came to have beer at this Yamuremye bar. At the closing time of the bar, these Imbonerakure insisted to accompany Epipode at home. When they arrived at Kirwati sub-hill, these Imbonerakure killed him with sticks on the head and took his body near his home at Busokoza hill. The body of the deceased was seen in the morning by passers-by who informed the hill head Medick Nsengiyumva and he informed the administrative authorities.

These Imbonerakure were taken to Butaganzwa communal cell and Yamuremye's body was buried the next morning by his family at Busokoza hill.



#### 5.2.4 Cases of persons killed by unidentified people

*The phenomenon of bodies discovered here and there in the wild without the judiciary arrest the perpetrators is very recurrent in Burundi and Ligue Iteka has mentioned it in its different reports published previously. Sometimes, the victims are killed and their bodies are dumped in localities where they are not recognized.*

*The bodies are often buried hastily by the administration and the Imbonerakure in violation of Article 109 of the Code of Criminal Procedure which states that "In the event of the discovery of a body, whether or not it is a violent death, but if the cause is unknown or suspicious, the Judicial Police Officer who is notified shall inform the Public Prosecutor if possible before going to the scene and making initial observations.*

*The Judicial Police Officer must go to the scene and make observations when it has been impossible for him to contact the Public Prosecutor. The report of the findings must be communicated to the latter without delay.*

*The Public Prosecutor goes to the scene, if he deems it necessary and is assisted by any doctor, expert or technician capable of assessing the nature, cause and circumstances of the death. However, he may delegate for the same purposes a Judicial Police Officer of his choice.*

*When the circumstances of the death remain unknown, whether or not the offence has been established, the Public Prosecutor must open an investigation to determine the causes of death.*

- *A body of a man found in Buganda commune, Cibitoke province*

On January 8, 2024, on Kaburantwa hill, Buganda commune, Cibitoke province, a body of an unidentified man in decomposition was found by farmers who were going to the fields. According to sources on site, Pamphile Hakizimana, communal administrator of Buganda, ordered the populations of this locality to immediately bury this body on the same site.

- *A body of a man found in Gatara commune, Kayanza province*

On January 12, 2024, around 3 p.m., on Nyarurambi hill, Gatara commune, Kayanza province, a body of an unidentified man was found. According to sources on site, this man had been caught stealing a goat from Damienne Mpawenimana, on Nyamirama sub-hill, Murago hill, in the same commune. According to Louis Ndayihimbaze, the communal police commissioner in Gatara, the victim was beaten by unidentified people and died from blows and injuries received. According to the same sources, on the afternoon of January

12, 2024, Damienne Mpawenimana, owner of the goat, Constantin Ciza, Jean Paul Nsengiyumva and Elvis Duhimbazimana, all neighbors of Damienne, were arrested and jailed in Gatara commune police station cell for investigation purposes. The body of the deceased was taken to Kayanza Hospital mortuary while waiting for the family of the deceased to be known.

- ***A body of a CNDD-FDD member found in Bururi commune and province***

On January 19, 2024, on Nyarugera hill, Bururi commune and province, a body of Moise Nibasumba, member of CNDD-FDD party, head of this hill was found by the inhabitants of this hill under the rubble of his small house uninhabited for some time. According to sources on site, the victim's family indicated that the victim had not been found since January 17, 2024. According to the same sources, the victim was killed by unidentified people in another location and dumped his body in his house to distort the investigation leads. The victim's body was evacuated by his family members to Bururi hospital mortuary.

- ***Three bodies found in Bukinanyana commune, Cibitoke province***

On January 25, 2024, in the morning, on Ruhembe hill, Bumba zone, Bukinanyana commune, Cibitoke province, three bodies of unidentified men in decomposition wearing Burundian police uniforms were found by the forest rangers of Kibira nature reserve. According to sources on site, these three bodies were roped and tied separately to a tree and had signs showing that they had been hit by objects in the face. The forest rangers quickly alerted the soldiers ensuring border security in this Kibira nature reserve but these soldiers did not want to listen to the appeal made to them. According to the same sources, they then alerted Christian Nkurikiye, administrator of Bukinanyana who intervened and immediately ordered the young Imbonerakure to bury these bodies in the same place without conducting any investigation.

- ***A body found in Buganda commune, Cibitoke province***

On February 12, 2024, on 3<sup>rd</sup> street, Gasenyi hill, Buganda commune, Cibitoke province, a body of Justin Bucumi, a farmer was found. According to sources on site, the body had club wounds on the head. According to the same sources, the body was evacuated to Cibitoke hospital mortuary by the vehicle of the communal administrator of Buganda, Pamphile Hakizimana.

- ***A body found in Bukemba commune, Rutana province***

On March 1, 2024, around 11 a.m., on Bugiga hill, Butare zone, Bukemba commune, Rutana province, a body of an unidentified man was recovered from Musasa River waters, a few meters from the rice plantations. According to sources on site, the victim's body had injuries to the head and private parts and was dressed in a red shirt with long sleeves but undressed at the lower part and the testicles were swollen. The body was in an advanced state of decomposition and was recovered by volunteers from Rutana Red Cross. The body was buried the same day by the population on the banks of the same Musasa River, on the orders of Françoise Twagirayezu, communal administrator of Bukemba.

- ***A body found in Muha commune, Bujumbura Mairie***

On March 8, 2024, around 10 a.m., in Nyabugete quarter, Ruziba zone, Muha commune, Bujumbura Mairie, a body of an unidentified man was found near Ruziba cemetery on the RN3 by pedestrians and bicycle taxi drivers. According to Ferdinand Nyabugete, head of this quarter, the victim's body showed signs of strangulation. According to the same administrator, this body had been dumped into a ditch from which a body had recently been removed because all the bodies that were buried 9 meters from the RN3 are being moved for rehabilitation. Around 3 p.m., the Red Cross buried this body in the same cemetery on the orders of the head of Nyabugete quarter.

- ***A body found in Bururi commune and province***

On March 20, 2024, around 8 a.m., on Kibasi sub-hill, Burarana hill, Bururi commune and province, a body of Elvis Nshimirimana, aged 28, single, farmer, was found hanging from a tree using a rope at a height of 20 meters. According to sources on site, the victim had left his home around 8 p.m. the day before and in the morning, his body was found on this tree. Abel Ndayishimiye, OPJ of Bururi communal police station made a report and indicated that the victim committed suicide, which his family rejected but the latter affirms that the victim had no conflict with anyone.

- ***A girl killed in Bukinanyana commune, Cibitoke province***

On March 18, 2024, around the morning, less than 500 meters from the hotel of the Prime Minister, Gervais Ndirakobuca, on Nyamyeha hill, Bukinanyana commune, Cibitoke province, a body of Emelyne Nishimwe, aged 17, was found. According to sources on site, Emelyne was beheaded with a machete by Jules Nkundimana, her fiancé in complicity with Théophile Nimpaye, both Imbonerakure on the night of March 17, 2024. According to Christian Nkurikiye, administrator of Bukinanyana, the victim was killed after being raped.

According to the same sources, this administrator ordered to bury this headless body in the same place because one searched everywhere to try to find the head of this young girl but without success. According to this same administrator, Jules Ndikumana, Théophile Nimpaye, Jonas Iradukunda, Bosco Nduwimana and Théogène, all Imbonerakure were arrested and jailed in Bukinanyana police station cell for investigation reasons.

- ***Two bodies of women and a man found in Bukinanyana commune, Cibitoke province***

On March 24, 2024, around the morning, on Kiruhura hill, Ndora and Bumba zone, Masango zone, Bukinanyana commune, Cibitoke province, two unidentified bodies of a woman and a man were found. According to Christian Nkurikiye, administrator of Bukinanyana commune, the body of the woman had wounds all over her body and was seen at Kibira rice field and the decapitated body of the man was found very close to Rwegura River. According to the same administrator, these victims were killed elsewhere and dumped in these places to distort the investigations. The bodies of the victims were buried at these same discovery sites by Imbonerakure on the orders of this administrator, Christian Nkurikiye.

- ***Two bodies found in Ntakangwa commune, Bujumbura Mairie***

On April 11, 2024, on the banks of Ntakangwa River, very close to the small market of Mutanga Sud, opposite Mugoboka quarter, Ntakangwa commune, Bujumbura Mairie, two bodies of unidentified men were found. According to sources on site, these bodies were roped and had wounds on their faces and heads.

The administrator of Mukaza commune, Florent Nkezahizi made the observation on the scene and these bodies were left on the scene but guarded by young Imbonerakure and police officers to prevent the public from approaching the place. The administrator of Mukaza commune indicated that these bodies are not in his constituency and asked Gihosha zone head to take responsibility. These bodies spent the night at this location and were buried on April 12, 2024, around 11 a.m. at Mpanda cemetery, on the orders of Gihosha zone head, Floribert Sibomana without investigations to find the identity of these men and their origins.

- ***A body found in Buganda commune, Cibitoke province***

On May 7, 2024, in the morning, on the 5<sup>th</sup> street, Kaburantwa hill, Buganda commune, Cibitoke province, a body of a 21-year-old Niyonzima, a bicycle taxi driver, was found by farmers. These farmers quickly alerted the administration and security forces. According

to Kaburantwa hill head, Fidèle Ntikarahera, the deceased was transporting goods as usual on his bicycle. Fidèle Ntikarahera adds that the victim was killed using the knife that was used to decapitate him halfway by unidentified people. The police have started investigations and have already arrested one person for investigation purposes.

- ***Thirty-two bodies found in Bukinanyana commune, Cibitoke province***

Information received by Ligue Iteka on May 20, 2024 indicates that from April 12, 2024 to May 15, 2024, in Kibira nature reserve, on Ruhembe and Kiruhura hills, Bukinanyana commune, Cibitoke province, 32 bodies in FARDC military uniforms were found by forest rangers. According to witnesses who participated in the burial of these bodies, 7 bodies were found on April 12, 2024, 4 bodies on April 15, 2024, 5 bodies on April 18, 2024, 3 bodies on April 24, 2024, on Ruhembe hill, 2 bodies on May 4, 2024, 4 bodies on May 10, 2024, 6 bodies on May 14, 2024 and 1 body on May 15, 2024, on Kiruhura hill. These bodies were all men and showed signs of injuries on the heads and ribs showing that they had been shot. All these bodies were buried in the same places of discovery by the population of this locality accompanied by Imbonerakure on the order of Christian Nkurikiye, communal administrator of Bukinanyana. The inhabitants near this natural reserve of Kibira are scared and are asking for a light to be shed on these crimes of people found.

- ***Five bodies, including two women, found in Buganda commune, Cibitoke province***

According to information received by Ligue Iteka on July 15, 2024, 5 decomposing bodies were found in Buganda commune, Cibitoke province, over a period of no more than a week.

On July 16, 2024, a decomposing and roped body of a man was found on Ruhagarika hill, some 800 meters from Rusizi coastline on the border with the DRC. On the same date, two bodies of men were found on the 7th street of the same area and commune.

On July 12, 2024, two unidentified decomposing bodies were found on the 3rd street in Ndava zone of the same Cibitoke commune, close to Kagunuzi river. All these bodies were buried without investigation by Imbonerakure youths on the orders of the commune administrator.

On the night of July 11, 2024, local residents reported a vehicle with tinted windows driving around the surrounding area. The Buganda administrator admits that investigations are underway. As for the hasty burials without investigation, he claims that they were carried out to protect the population from possible illnesses.

#### 5.2.4 Cases of abductions

*The phenomenon of abduction remains worrying and is intensifying as the 2025 elections approach. The targeted victims are mainly opponents of CNL party. The perpetrators are mainly agents of the National Intelligence Service (SNR), police officers and unknown persons but operating openly with vehicles whose registration numbers are identified by the public. This assumes that they benefit from the complicity of the security services as they remain unpunished. It is then necessary to wonder whether this phenomenon of abduction is not linked to the bodies discovered in the wild and immediately buried by the administration without investigation in violation of the law. The following cases illustrate this phenomenon:*

- *A provincial representative of CNL party abducted in Muramvya commune and province*

On January 3, 2024, around 11 a.m., in front of the offices of Muramvya High Court, Muramvya commune and province, Longin Nindagiye, vice-president of CNL party in Muramvya province and provincial coordinator of the civil service branch in Muramvya was arrested by Police Colonel Pontien Bigiruwuhiriwe, provincial head of SNR. According to sources on site, Longin was handcuffed by two police officers who immediately took him aboard a vehicle that headed to the SNR office. After a few minutes, the vehicle took Muramvya-Bujumbura road. According to the same sources, his family and friends searched for him everywhere but in vain.

- *A girl abducted in Ntakangwa commune, Bujumbura Mairie*

On January 8, 2024, around 8 p.m., in Gasenyi quarter, Gihosha zone, Ntakangwa commune, Bujumbura Mairie, Corinne Nizigama, aged 28, was abducted by SNR agents. According to sources on site, Corinne was coming from Bujumbura downtown and was returning to Gasenyi and when she got off a public transport bus in Gasenyi, she was taken manu militari into a TI vehicle with registration B 058145 A with tinted windows. According to the same sources, her family is not aware of where she was taken.

- *A member of CNL party abducted in Gihanga commune, Bubanza province*

Information received by Ligue Iteka on January 29, 2024 indicates that on January 28, 2024, around 10 p.m., at the bar called "Kumukaratusi" located on Buringa hill, Gihanga commune, Bubanza province, Georges Nimbona, a trader and youth leader of CNL party

in Buringa, was abducted by six SNR agents wearing balaclavas and armed with pistols. According to sources on site, his friends and others who were at the bar contested this abduction but in vain. According to the same sources, Georges was taken away in a pick-up vehicle with tinted windows to an unknown destination. The family and his friends searched for him in Bubanza cells but in vain.

- **A person abducted in Ntahangwa commune, Bujumbura Mairie**

As of February 1, 2024, Alain Trésor Niyukuri, aged 29 and father of one child, living in Carama3 quarter, Kinama zone, Ntahangwa commune, Bujumbura Mairie has been without a trace since he left for work. According to sources on site, the victim left his home around 7 a.m. and did not return while he had gone to town to his business. According to the same sources, he spoke with his wife on the phone between 7 p.m. and 8 p.m. and after this conversation his phone rang without anyone answering before it was turned off permanently. As of February 2, family members searched all the cells in Bujumbura but without success.

- ***A member of CNL party abducted in Buganda commune, Cibitoke province***

Information received by Ligue Iteka on January 19, 2024 indicates that on February 13, 2024, around 4 p.m., on Ruhagarika hill, Buganda commune, Cibitoke province, Jacques Manirakiza, member of CNL party was abducted by Rénovat Ntungicimpaye, head of SNR in Cibitoke province, accompanied by Imbonerakure from Buganda including Eric Nduwayo and Pascal Niyonkuru. According to sources on site, the victim was in a hairdressing salon in this commune. According to sources on site, Jacques was taken by this official to an unknown location.

- ***A member of CNL party abducted in Gihanga commune, Bubanza province***

On February 21, 2024, around 8 p.m., on Kagwema hill, Gihanga commune, Bubanza province, David Bamporiki, member of CNL party was abducted by Imbonerakure led by Olivier Nahimana, head of Imbonerakure in Gihanga commune. According to sources on site, David was in a bar where the local drink Fangas is sold and saw two police officers get out of a Toyota Hilux vehicle without a registration number and came towards him and snatched his cell phone. Olivier Nahimana, head of Imbonerakure in Gihanga commune, threatened to shoot the population who wanted to rescue the victim. Olivier and these other Imbonerakure told the victim that Philippe Masabarakiza, the communal commissioner of Gihanga, needed him. According to the same sources, the victim defended himself but in vain. David Bamporiki was taken into a Hilux vehicle without a registration number that took the RN5, towards Bujumbura. Olivier Nahimana accused the victim of cooperating

with rebel groups after refusing to join CNDD-FDD party as he had suggested. The victim has not been found by his family and friends since that day.

- ***A member of CNL party abducted in Mabayi commune, Cibitoke province***

Information received by Ligue Iteka on March 4, 2024 indicates that on February 26, 2024, around 9 a.m., on Rugongo hill, Butahana zone, Mabayi commune, Cibitoke province, Gilbert Irakoze, aged 25, member of CNL party, from Rutorero hill, Butahana zone, gold miner, was arrested by SNR agents in Cibitoke province. According to sources on site, these SNR agents were in the vehicle of Rénovât Ntungicimpaye, provincial head of SNR in Cibitoke. On board this vehicle was Mozaire Bazirutwabo alias Mazahari, head of Mabayi zone and communal head of veterans in the new commune of Mugina. Since Gilbert's arrest, neighbors and family members have been searching for him in all the cells of Cibitoke province but in vain.

- ***A female member of CNL party abducted in Muyinga commune and province***

On March 13, 2024, on Mugano hill, Muyinga commune and province, Jacqueline Uwizeyimana alias Hafsa, representative of CNL party in the new province of Buhumuza, from Mukoni, Muyinga zone and commune, was abducted by the head of SNR in Muyinga province, Félix Havyarimana and taken to the SNR office in Muyinga.

According to sources on site, Jacqueline was then taken into the Hillux vehicle, plate E 0535 A, of the head of SNR in Muyinga to a destination not yet known to her family. According to the same sources, the victim came from her work at ECOFO Rubenga, Mugano zone, Giteranyi commune where she teaches.

- ***A doctor abducted in Muha commune, Bujumbura Mairie***

On March 20, 2024, around 12 noon, on University Avenue, Muha commune, Bujumbura Mairie, Dr. Patrick Bitangumutwenzi, pediatric specialist at Bwiza Maison Medicale hospital, was arrested by three people in police uniforms and armed with rifles who were on board a Hilux double cab with registration number D3980A and tinted windows. According to sources on site, Dr. Patrick was in his taxi and was blocked by this vehicle then abducted and taken to an unknown destination.



- *A member of CNDD-FDD party abducted in Gihanga commune, Bubanza province*

On April 17, 2024, around 9 p.m., towards the direction of RN 5: Bujumbura- Rugombo, Gihanga commune, Bubanza province, Guillaume Gahungu, native and resident of Gihanga, member of CNDD-FDD party, supervisor of ITAB Gihanga and member of the provincial football federation committee in Bubanza, was abducted by SNR agents.

According to his family, Guillaume answered a phone call around 9 p.m. and was taken by Nestor Munezero nicknamed Mbike on Nestor's motorcycle, president of the football team in village II and former leader of Imbonerakure in village II, in Gihanga commune. They headed towards RN5. According to the same sources, Nestor Munezero returned with his motorcycle but since then, Guillaume has not been found. Neighbors and colleagues saw during the day, the vehicle of Pontien Bigiruwuhiriwe, the head of SNR in Bubanza crisscrossing very close to Guillaume's house in Gihanga commune city and this same vehicle was seen following the motorcycle that was transporting Guillaume. Family members and neighbors alerted Gihanga communal administration, Gihanga police and the judiciary but in vain.

- *A woman member of CNL party abducted in Ngozi commune and province*

Information received by Ligue Iteka on March 17, 2024 indicates that on March 10, 2024, around 10 a.m., Agnès Nibirantije, a teacher at ECOFO Ruhande, Kayanza commune and province and head of the Women's League of CNL party in Kayanza province was arrested by the police at the Oasis Hotel and taken to the provincial police station cell in Ngozi with other members of Agathon Rwasa's CNL party.

According to Benoît Barutwanayo, secretary of CNL party in Kayanza commune and Ngaruko Ildephonse, provincial secretary of this party, around 5 p.m., Espérance Kayitesi, OPJ in Ngozi removed her from the police station in Ngozi cell and took her to an unknown location. Agnès Nibirantije remains untraceable by her family and friends.

- *A member of Agathon Rwasa's CNL party abducted in Nyabitsinda commune, Ruyigi province*

On May 20, 2024, around 9 p.m., at his home, on Nyabitsinda hill and commune, Ruyigi province, Rémégie Gahungu, aged 34, communal representative of Agathon Rwasa's CNL party in Nyabitsinda, was abducted by police officers. According to eyewitnesses, Rémégie Gahungu was at home bringing in household items that were outside. Police officers with other people in civilian clothes arrived, handcuffed him, beat him, searched his house but

found nothing and took his phone and that of his wife. They took him to Nyabitsinda communal Lycée not far from his home, where they had left their double cabin vehicle with registration number C051AIT, black with tinted windows, which had been used during the abduction of Ezéchiel Ndayisenga, around 3 p.m. on the same date. The family was not informed of Rémégie Gahungu's destination.

- ***A person abducted in Ntakangwa commune, Bujumbura Mairie***

As of June 7, 2024, in the industrial quarter, very close to the roundabout commonly called Chanic, Ntakangwa commune, Bujumbura Mairie, Jean Marie Bizimungu, native of Gihanga commune, Bubanza province, residing at the 7<sup>th</sup> avenue, Mutakura quarter, Cibitoke zone, Ntakangwa commune, was abducted by three individuals in Burundian police uniforms. According to eyewitnesses, the victim was put on board a Probox type vehicle with tinted windows which headed to Bujumbura downtown. The victim's family, friends and relatives do not know the reason for this abduction and are worried for his safety. His wedding godfather, Brice Irakoze, was found dead recently in Carama quarter, on the roadside with his vehicle parked very close to the body.

### 5.2.5 Victims of Gender Based Violence (GBV)

*Cases of gender-based violence are numerous in Burundi. The alleged perpetrators are generally arrested and prosecuted to the satisfaction of the victims and their relatives.*

- ***A girl raped in Bugabira commune, Kirundo Province***

On January 3, 2024, on Ruhehe hill, in Bugabira commune center, Kirundo province, B., aged 12, native of Nunga sub-hill, Kiyonza hill and zone of Bugabira commune was raped by Erphase, aged 35, a farmer and member of CNDD-FDD party. According to sources on site, the victim had left her native hill in search of work at Bugabira commune center and was staying with Wimana, a sex worker. According to the same sources, the latter handed her over to one of her clients, Erphase. The victim cried for help and Erphase took off. Two days later, the alleged perpetrator was arrested by Ndemeye, Kirundo prosecutor on January 15, 2024 while the victim was taken to Kirundo hospital for medical care and was only walking on a wheelchair. The same sources add that Erphase was provisionally released by Ndemeye prosecutor but he disappeared.

- ***A body of a woman found in Rugombo commune, Cibitoke province***

On January 4, 2024, on Rubuye sub-hill, Mparambo I hill, Rugombo commune, Cibitoke province, a body of Eliane Kwizerimana, aged 30, was found in her house. According to sources on site, the body of the victim who was lying in blood, naked and an underwear was next to the victim, which suggests that the victim had been raped before being killed. According to the same sources, two people including Djuma Niyonkuru, member of Imbonerakure militia were arrested for investigation purposes.

- ***A body of a woman member of CNDD-FDD party found in Buganda commune, Cibitoke province***

On January 26, 2024, around 10 a.m., on Bihache sub-hill, Gasenyi hill, Buganda commune, Cibitoke province, a body of Jacqueline Nsavyimana, aged 35, a farmer and member of CNDD-FDD party was found inside her house, decapitated after being raped. According to sources on site, Jacqueline's body was in a pool of blood inside her house without clothes and had signs of rape. According to the same sources, in this locality, Imbonerakure patrol day and night. The residents and the victim's family are calling for investigations to apprehend the criminals and bring them to justice. The body was transported to Cibitoke hospital mortuary by Pamphile Hakizimana, administrator of Buganda.

- ***A little girl raped in Kibago commune, Makamba province***

Information received by Ligue Iteka on January 30, 2024 indicates that on January 27, 2024 on Bukeye hill, Kibago commune, Makamba province, Chris Love Gakiza, aged 6, was raped by Nimpaye Pacifique, a police officer from Kibago police station. According to sources on site, the alleged perpetrator called her and then raped her in an uninhabited house on this hill. The victim was taken to Bukeye health center and the alleged perpetrator was arrested by police officers and taken to the police station cell in Kibago.

- ***A little girl raped in Muramvya commune and province***

On February 8, 2024, around 3 p.m., on Mpehe hill, Muramvya commune and province, C.N.N. aged 8, a second-year student at ECOFO Mpehe, was raped by Mélance Manirambona, a mason's assistant, a member of CNDD-FDD party, aged 20, single and living on the same hill. According to sources on site, the victim had just handed in a workbook she had borrowed from her classmate and was called along the way by Mélance, who took her to a house under construction and raped her. According to the same sources, the victim came home crying and told her mother what had just happened. The latter sent her to Bugarama hospital for STIs prevention. Medical tests confirmed that there had been rape. The perpetrator was arrested the following day by Claver Nimbona, head of Bugarama police station, and taken to the police station cell and then transferred to Muramvya communal police station cell on 9 February 2024.

- ***A girl raped in Giharo commune, Rutana province***

On February 5, 2024, in a bush, on Giharo hill, zone and commune, Rutana province, I.A., aged 14, a student in 8<sup>th</sup> A of Saint Joseph Communal High School, was raped by Ernest Niyonizeye, representative of young Imbonerakure of Giharo zone. According to sources on site, this girl is pregnant and the alleged perpetrator was not arrested because he was supported by Alexis Baraguma, zonal leader of CNDD-FDD party. According to the same sources, the alleged perpetrator and Alexis Baraguma wanted to hide the situation by bringing together the victim's family and explaining to them to leave the alleged perpetrator in peace. According to the same sources, Joseph Ndabirorere, the victim's father, convinced by his son Bernard Ndayizeye, pardoned upon payment of a sum of 1,000,000 Bif. After investigations, the alleged perpetrator and the victim's father were summoned by the police on February 9, 2024. Ernest Niyonizeye was arrested and jailed in the communal police station cell in Giharo.

- ***A girl raped on Renga hill, Kiganda commune, Muramvya province***

Information received by Ligue Iteka on February 26, 2024, indicates that on February 21, 2024, on Renga hill, Kiganda commune, Muramvya province, M.N, aged 15, was raped by Deus Habonimana, aged 60, a member of CNDD-FDD party, traditional practitioner and head of Rwankanyambo sub-hill, Kiganda commune.

On February 21, 2024, the girl's parents sent her to get traditional medicines from Deus. Upon her return, she arrived home around 6 p.m. crying, saying she had been raped. The next morning, she was taken to Kiganda hospital and medical tests confirmed the rape. On the orders of the Public Prosecutor in Muramvya, Jean Paul Bizindavyi, who was called by the victim's father, the alleged perpetrator was arrested on February 23, 2024 and taken to the provincial police station cell in Muramvya.

- ***A girl killed in Bukinanyana commune, Cibitoke province***

On March 18, 2024, around the morning, less than 500 meters from the hotel of the Prime Minister, Gervais Ndirakobuca, on Nyamyeha hill, Bukinanyana commune, Cibitoke province, a body of Emelyne Nishimwe, aged 17, was found. According to sources on site, Emelyne was beheaded with a machete by Jules Nkundimana, her fiancé in complicity with Théophile Nimpaye, both Imbonerakure on the night of March 17, 2024. According to Christian Nkurikiye, administrator of Bukinanyana, the victim was killed after being raped.

According to the same sources, this administrator ordered to bury this headless body in the same place because one searched everywhere to try to find the head of this young girl but without success. According to this same administrator, Jules Ndikumana, Théophile Nimpaye, Jonas Iradukunda, Bosco Nduwimana and Théogène, all Imbonerakure were arrested and jailed in Bukinanyana police station cell for investigation reasons.

- ***A little girl raped in Muramvya commune and province.***

On June 10, 2024, around 2 p.m., on Gakenke hill, Muramvya commune and province, M.I, aged 11, was raped by Thierry Itangiteka, aged 26, a farmer and member of Imbonerakure militia. According to the victim, she was going to get herbs for the rabbits, when Thierry stopped her and took her to his house and raped her because he lives alone in this house. The victim told her father what happened to her and the latter alerted the OPJ, Fabien Nimpagaritse by telephone. The OPJ was quick to arrive on the scene and the victim was rushed to Muramvya hospital where medical tests confirmed

that there had been rape. The alleged perpetrator was arrested and jailed in the police cell in Muramvya.

- ***A girl raped in Muruta commune, Kayanza province***

On May 29, 2024, around 5 p.m., on Nkongwe hill, Muruta commune, Kayanza province, K.I, aged 12, a 6<sup>th</sup> grade student, was raped by Jean Pierre Manirakiza, aged 28, a brick maker in Nkongwe marshlands. According to the victim, she was coming from school and on the way, she met Jean Pierre who took her by force and put her in a bush near the road on this hill and then raped her. According to the same victim, when she arrived home, K.I told her mother N.P what had just happened to her and the victim was taken to Remera health center in Muruta commune for medical treatment. The perpetrator of the rape was arrested the same day and taken to Muruta commune police station cell. He was transferred to the provincial police station cell the next day.

- ***A girl raped in Giharo commune, Rutana province***

Information received by Ligue Iteka on July 8, 2024 indicates that on July 4, 2024, on Giharo hill, zone and commune, Rutana province, around 8 p.m., Fabrice Burakeye, Father of Giharo parish, Rutana diocese, raped L.N, aged 17, domestic worker at Alexis Nduwayo, teacher at Saint Joseph Communal Lycée on Giharo hill.

According to eyewitnesses, around 8 p.m. upon returning home, Alexis and his wife found their house closed, an unusual thing while it was still early, they knocked. The servant (victim) heard that her bosses were arriving and she gently opened her room and took Father Fabrice out through the back door.

Alexis asked the victim why she closed the door so early and the neighbors came to see what was happening in Alexis' house, and they found that the victim had been raped.

Following a maneuver by the Father trying to cover up the affair, Alexis Baragomwa, representative of CNDD-FDD party on Giharo hill, arrived at the scene, and called the police in Giharo zone in order to arrest this professor, Alexis Nduwayo for in-depth investigations. Around 9 p.m., the professor was taken to Giharo commune cell in Rubaho. Seeking to protect himself, the Father called that same night, Ernest, representative of the young Imbonerakure of Giharo zone. In agreement with Ernest and Alexis Baragomwa, the Father was hidden.

Information relating to this rape spread throughout the zone, to the commune and up to the level of Rutana diocese. Under the order of Gitega Archdiocese, Bonaventure,

Father Fabrice was arrested on the morning of July 5, 2024 and was taken to Rutana province police station cell for investigations.

## IN CONCLUSION

The 2025 and 2027 electoral process in Burundi is taking place in a context of continuous human rights violations without the empowered institutions such as security and justice services putting an end to the impunity of the perpetrators.

These violations are committed while the country has the Constitution, promulgated on June 7, 2018, which provides in its article 19 that *"the rights and responsibilities proclaimed and guaranteed by the international texts relating to human rights regularly ratified are an integral part of the constitution"*

Among these ratified international texts are the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights by the Decree of March 14, 1990, the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment by the Decree of December 31, 1992, the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights by the Decree of July 28, 1989; The Convention on the Rights of the Child by the Decree of August 16, 1990 etc.

These instruments are equipped with monitoring mechanisms at the UN Human Rights Council and the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, which constitute important assets to challenge the Burundian authorities on the continuous violations of human rights such as the recurring phenomenon of bodies discovered in the wild and immediately buried by administrative authorities without judicial investigation in violation of the law. Added to this are the abuses and exactions perpetrated by State agents and their Imbonerakure accomplices against victims to the point of violating their right to life.

For all these above mentioned reasons, Ligue Iteka, whose mission is to promote and protect human rights in Burundi, is making itself available to these mechanisms by providing them with the information it has to monitor closely the situation in Burundi, which risks deteriorating with the electoral fever that is beginning to be manifested through the locking of democratic space and political intolerance in the run-up to the 2025 legislative elections.