

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

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*Weekly bulletin « ITEKA N'IJAMBO » n°446 of the Burundian Ligue of Human Rights "ITEKA"*

**Week from 28 october-3november 2024**



*In memory of Madam Marie Claudette Kwizera, Treasurer of Iteka, reported missing since December 10 2015. From December 2015 to 3 november 2024, Iteka has documented at least 709 cases of enforced disappearances*

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## **ACRONYMS**

|                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| <b>APDR</b>     | : Alliance for Peace, Democracy and Reconciliation                                    |
| <b>CEJP</b>     | : Episcopal Commission for Justice and Peace  |
| <b>CENI</b>     | : Independent Provincial Electoral Commission   |
| <b>CNDD-FDD</b> | : National Council for the Defense of Democracy                                       |
| <b>CNI</b>      | : National Identity   |
| <b>CNL</b>      | : National Congress for Liberty   |
| <b>COMESA</b>   | : Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa                                       |
| <b>DPE</b>      | : Provincial Direction of Education   |
| <b>EAC</b>      | : East African Community  |
| <b>ECOFO</b>    | : Fundamental School  |
| <b>FRODEBU</b>  | : Front for Democracy in Burundi  |
| <b>GBV</b>      | : Gender Based Violence   |
| <b>ITABU</b>    | : Agricultural Technical Institute of Burundi   |
| <b>OPJ</b>      | : Judiciary Police Officer  |
| <b>PARCEM</b>   | : Words and Actions for the Awakening of Consciences and the Evolution of Mentalities |
| <b>PTA</b>      | : Preferential Trade Area   |
| <b>RANAC</b>    | : National Rally for Change   |
| <b>RCA</b>      | : Central African Republic  |

## 0. INTRODUCTION

This bulletin covers the economic, judicial, and security context that marked this period. It also covers civil and political rights, economic, socio-cultural rights, and categorical rights and ends with a conclusion.

Thus, during this reporting period of this bulletin, the human rights and security situation was reported as follows: at least 1 person victim of GBV, 1 person tortured, and 2 people victims of arbitrary arrest.

Among the victims are 2 members of CNDD-FDD party arbitrarily arrested.

Imbonerakure, administrators, and police officers are singled out as alleged perpetrators of most of these human rights violations.

## 1. ECONOMIC, JUDICIAL AND SECURITY CONTEXT

### 1.1. ECONOMIC CONTEXT

#### COMESA regional summit in held Burundi

The 23<sup>rd</sup> COMESA Regional Summit was held in Burundi on October 31, 2024 under the theme *"Accelerating Regional Integration through the Development of Regional Value Chains in Climate Resilient Agriculture, Mining and Tourism"*. At the end of this summit, Burundian President Evariste Ndayishimiye was elected head of COMESA for a one-year period, replacing the Zambian President Hakainde Hichilema.

Created in December 1994, COMESA replaced the PTA dating from 1981. The objective of this regional organization is to strengthen economic integration among the 21 member States, including the vast majority of EAC member countries.

This summit presents economic challenges for Burundi, including strengthening trade through the reduction of tariff barriers, thus facilitating access to regional markets, which could increase Burundi exports. Also, in addition to the fact that this summit has largely contributed to improving Burundi's image in a current unflattering economic context, Burundi will benefit from the expertise and technical support of other member countries in areas such as infrastructure development and natural resource management.

According to the President of PARCEM, it is necessary to strengthen the business environment<sup>1</sup> in Burundi. He indicates that *"to benefit from foreign direct investment, it is imperative to create a strategy to strengthen exports"*.

However, in the context of effective regional integration within COMESA, Burundi must overcome some challenges, including insufficient infrastructure. Indeed, the country suffers from limited hydroelectric, transport and communication infrastructure, which complicates trade and integration into the regional market. Added to this is the weakness of economic and governmental institutions, which could hamper the effective implementation of agreements and initiatives within COMESA.

Another no less sensitive stumbling block is the closure of the Burundian-Rwandan border. Evariste Ndayishimiye has just taken over the leadership of an organization that includes Burundi and Rwanda, two countries currently lacking diplomatic relations that are struggling to warm up.

<sup>1</sup>The business environment includes business regulation; political stability; the quality and accessibility of infrastructure; the availability and conditions of financial services, including loans and investments; and effective combating of corruption.

In short, the holding of the COMESA summit in Burundi certainly represents a significant opportunity for the country, but it also comes with challenges to overcome. To maximize the economic benefits, Burundi will not only have to strengthen its institutional and infrastructural capacities, but also work towards normalizing its relations with Rwanda. In doing so, it will be able to better integrate into the regional market and promote its economic development.

## ***1.2. JUSTICE CONTEXT***

### **Flagrance trial in Rutana province**

On October 31, 2024, at Rutana TGI, a flagrante delicto trial was held in open court against Evelyne Nyawenda, aged 38, a farmer, member of CNDD-FDD party, from Kayove hill, Rutana zone, commune and province.

According to an eyewitness, Evelyne Nyawenda had beaten Yvan Irakoze, aged 6, a student at the nursery school located at ECOFO Rugari on this hill, on October 30, 2024, injuring him in the eyes, neck and nose.

According to the same witness, the alleged perpetrator had found him in class accusing him that he had said that her son was stealing his pens. The High Court sentenced Evelyne to penal servitude of 2 years in prison.

### **More than a hundred detainees transferred to Mpimba central prison in less than two weeks**

Information received by Ligue Iteka on November 3, 2024 indicates that a hundred detainees were transferred in less than two weeks from Cibitoke provincial police station cell.

At least 105 detainees out of 194 jailed in Cibitoke police station cell were transferred to Mpimba central prison located in the economic capital Bujumbura on November 1, 2024.

This decision is motivated by the wish to relieve congestion in this detention center with a capacity of 40 people, as indicated by Jean Paul Nsavyimana, prosecutor at Cibitoke High Court and even human rights defenders based in this province.

This lawyer speaks of severe fuel shortage that has long delayed this transfer despite the harsh prison conditions linked to promiscuity where minor children are sometimes jailed with adults.

Most of the transferred detainees are accused of murder, rape of girls and women and cross-border theft committed mainly in Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The prosecutor of Cibitoke public prosecutor's office indicated that the work of decongesting this cell will continue depending on the availability of fuel.

At this level, the said transfer work as indicated by our source was made possible thanks to huge quantities of fuel from the Democratic Republic of Congo that entered the country clandestinely out of official circulation of goods seized in households in Rugombo and Buganda communes.

The family members of the detainees who were there for farewell to their loved ones welcome this decision which will both improve the hygiene of this cell while allowing the files to move forward more quickly.

### ***1.3. SECURITY CONTEXT***

#### **A person killed in Makebuko commune, Gitega province**

On October 26, 2024, around 8 p.m., on Murenda hill, Gitega commune and province, Fabien Ntirandekura, aged 55, member of CNDD-FDD party from Murenda hill, Makebuko commune, Gitega province, was beaten by unidentified people. According to an eyewitness, the victim was arrested by people who were suspected to be Imbonerakure and was beaten until he was in agony.

The victim was taken to Kibuye hospital in Bukirasazi commune for medical treatment but died the next day on October 27, 2024 and was buried on October 28, 2024 by his family.

A person named Gilbert Nshimirimana was arrested for investigation purposes and is being jailed in Makebuko communal cell.

#### ***1.3.1. OTHER SECURITY FACTS***

##### **More than 70 houses destroyed following torrential rains in Rugombo, Cibitoke province**

As of October 30, 2023, heavy rains mixed with strong winds destroyed 258 houses on Kagazi, Rusiga and Cibitoke hills, Rugombo commune, Cibitoke province.

According to eyewitnesses, the affected residents are asking for assistance in terms of food, medicine and bedding equipment. They are asking the Government and humanitarians to aid them.

One of the hill heads named Emmanuel Nsabiyumva speaks of a humanitarian disaster because all household goods have been damaged, not to mention the crop fields. This local authority is appealing charities to aid these populations who have just been affected by these natural disasters.

##### **Rain damaging crops in Butaganzwa commune, Ruyigi province**

Information received by Ligue Iteka on October 28, 2024 indicates that on October 26, 2024, around noon, on Kiyabu and Kanyinya hills of Butaganzwa commune, Ruyigi province, rain mixed with hail fell on these two hills and damaged crops.

According to sources on site, all crops including cassava, banana and corn that were already grown were destroyed but also about 100 houses remain without roofs. Isaïe Niyibitanga and Théogène Bangura, advisers to Rémy Ndarufatiye, the administrator, went out in the field to assess the situation.

## ***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 has taken 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 the regularly ratified international texts are an integral part of this constitution, implementing texts are put in place, in particular the penal code of December 29, 2017 and the code of criminal procedure of May 11, 2018 and other institutions for the protection of human rights in Burundi have been created.



## **II.1. RIGHT TO PHYSICAL INTEGRITY**

### **II.1.1. GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE**

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

#### **A person raped in Giheta commune, Gitega province**

On October 28, 2024, at around 5 p.m., on Ruhanza hill, Giheta commune, Gitega province, B R A, aged 3 years 8 months, was raped by Pascal Nkunuzimana, aged 100, while his parents were away working in the fields. When the victim's mother arrived around 5 p.m., she found her child alone at home, crying.

She asked her why she was crying and the child replied "*Mutama yancumise kugapipi aca ansobako*" *The old man inserted his sex into mine and then ejaculated on me.* Immediately, the mother alerted the neighbors then Jean Nibigira, Ruhanza hill head and the latter called the police officers from Giheta communal office to arrest this old man, at the same time, the child was rushed to Saint Joseph hospital in Giheta.

According to the same eyewitness, this old man was interrogated by Mbonicura Jean Michel, OPJ, during the interrogation, the old man confessed to the crime while refusing that he did not ejaculate in the sex. He is being jailed in Giheta communal cell while waiting to be transferred to Gitega prison. The alleged perpetrator was arrested on October 28, 2024 in the same evening of the day of the crime, and was arrested by the police and he is in custody at the communal cell of Giheta for interrogations and the victim was taken to Saint Joseph hospital in Giheta to protect her against sexually transmitted diseases and to also monitor her health.

According to the same witness, on October 31, 2024, the alleged perpetrator was sentenced in a flagrante delicto trial by TGI Gitega to life imprisonment with damages of 1,000,000 BIF.

### **II.1.2. PERSONS TORTURED**

#### **A person tortured in Ntega commune, Kirundo province**

On October 28, 2024, on Makombe hill, Mugendo zone, Ntega commune, Kirundo province, KWIGIZE Evariste, member of CNL party, Agaton Rwasa's wing, was beaten up by Imbonerakure including Pancras, Makandi and Bebe under the orders of Nzobonimpa, leader of Imbonerakure youth league of Mugendo zone.

According to eyewitnesses, the victim was unjustly accused of refusing to join CNDD-FDD party and of boycotting the 2025 voter registration.

According to the same witnesses, these Imbonerakure beat him up and took him away from his home around 10 a.m. and took him to Carubambo trading center where he was beaten up again by other Imbonerakure.

On October 26, 2024, the Imbonerakure had prevented six employees who were working in his rice fields in Magombe from continuing to work and then seized their hoes. His employees were arrested and imprisoned in Mugendo zone cell and paid a fine of 8,000 BIF for each hoe in order to be released.

## ***II. 2. RIGHT TO FREEDOM***

### ***II. 2.1. ARBITRARY ARRESTS***

#### **A person arrested for not having a registration receipt in Ruyigi province**

On October 30, 2024, Mireille Nkurunziza, residing in Sanzu quarter, Ruyigi commune and province, left for Ruyigi market for some shopping as usual.

According to eyewitnesses, upon arriving at the market entrance, she was stopped by Imbonerakure to present the registration receipt but she was not registered yet and had an urgent need to go to the market and had to borrow a receipt from her friend.

She came back a few minutes later and presented this document to these Imbonerakure but there was one who knew the real name of this girl. They discovered that this document did not belong to this girl.

According to the same sources, these Imbonerakure including Désiré Nimubona, Eric Nizigiyimana and the nicknamed Mangué who were positioned at the market of Ruyigi province called Gentil, the provincial police commissioner of Ruyigi and the latter came with his pick-up vehicle and took the girl to the cell. She was released in the afternoon of the same day after paying a fine.

The same sources add that these Imbonerakure had blocked all the entrances to the markets of Ruyigi province and to have access, the population had to present receipts as proof of registration.

#### **A member of CNDD-FDD party arrested in Makamba commune and province**

On October 29, 2024, during class at Saint Pierre Claver communal high school, in Makamba commune and province, Leonidas Ndayishimiye, a teacher at this school, member of CNDD-FDD party was arrested by police officers. According to eyewitnesses, the victim was arrested after the parents of a girl in 2<sup>nd</sup> pedagogical class filed a complaint against this teacher, accusing him of having impregnated his student.

Sources within the family of this student say that the arrest of Leonidas Ndayishimiye faced several difficulties despite all the evidence were available to the parents.

Information from her family says that the child even has telephone messages from this teacher calling for an abortion.

Some CNDD-FDD party activists had opposed it since the author is an influential member of this party. His arrest would have been possible after the intervention of the provincial secretary of CNDD-FDD party in Burunga province Sylvain Nzikoruriho.

The same source says that the family members called the latter after some local CNDD-FDD party officials had opposed his arrest. Some educators at this school explain that in addition to this phenomenon of impregnating students, fraud in examinations has also become almost unacceptable in recent times.

### ***II.3. RIGHT TO FREE VOTE***

"According to Article 25 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, everyone has the right to participate in periodic, genuine elections, by universal and equal suffrage, and by secret ballot. However, as the 2025 elections approach, the preparation process is marred by numerous irregularities.

The Imbonerakure representatives accused the civil society observers of not informing the administration and asked to see their reporting notebooks. The observers were held in police custody for more than 4 hours before being released.



### ♦ **Irregularities observed**

- ⇒ An electoral census marked by multiple irregularities in Cibitoke province and in the country, from October 22 to 31, 2024.
- ⇒ Use of force in markets and fields to force people to be counted, this was observed in all the communes of Cibitoke, from the hill head to the administrator through the zone head with a strong collaboration of Imbonerakure. No one will ever deny that since October 25, 2024, the fourth day of said census, the markets were closed to open at 11 a.m. or 12 p.m., the activities of schools paralyzed and people banned from going to the fields, all this to demand that people be counted.
- ⇒ Closure of markets and paralysis of school activities to force people to be counted.

### ♦ **Cheating and fictitious voters during the census.**

In schools especially, Cibitoke province will have had the number of voters increase in figures thanks to many students whose age is between 12 and 16 years old who saw their age increased by the granting of free identity cards on condition of presenting in exchange proof of having been registered. This cheating went so far as to exhaust the identity cards in all the communes. Identity card forms were later used, these also exhausted, birth certificates as well as the student cards were accepted to be registered.

As in a film, fiction was used in this electoral process which will end in 2027. This is particularly the case for deceased persons whose identity cards have been registered, which means that there will be omnipresent voters with multiple identities. Even living people who were registered more than once using 3 or 4 identities were observed, but one had to be CNDD-FDD party member to participate in this cheating.

### ♦ **Foreigners who will vote as Burundians**

Allegations of electoral manipulation have emerged in Burundi, particularly in the communes of Rugombo, Mabayi and Mugina, where Rwandans and Congolese were reportedly registered to vote in 2025 and 2027. According to these allegations, these individuals were motivated by the wish to obtain an identity card, which costs between 1,000 and 2,000 Bif, an amount inaccessible to many Burundians.

It is also alleged that even Burundians must provide a letter from the hill head to obtain an identity card, which is an additional obstacle to exercising the right to vote. The 2025 elections are considered crucial for CNDD-FDD party, which hopes to win by any means necessary.

Cases of imprisonment for undermining the electoral process have also been reported, including that of Eric Muhimpundu, mediator and member of CNL party. In addition, administrators allegedly tried to trap school officials to accuse them of compromising the electoral process. This is the case of the head of Rugajo zone, Mugina commune, Cibitoke province, who simulated the loss of 91 identity cards of students from ITAB SINAÏ. He wanted to accuse the director of the said school who is not well seen by CNDD-FDD party members. Fortunately, the alleged victim alerted the administrator who ordered that the students in question be counted on the basis of the forms that the commune reserves for each applicant for an identity card.

### ♦ **Political party leaders deplore irregularities in voter registration**

Information received by Ligue Iteka on November 3, 2024 indicates that some political party leaders, most of them, first agree that the use of force to be registered is a violation of the law and that it is an eloquent sign that augurs unfree elections. They denounce restrictive measures by some administration officials such as the closure of markets, taps, for example in Kabezi in Bujumbura rural province where the administration has banned access to health care for people not having registration receipt. Other irregularities noted by some leaders of political parties CNL, FRODEBU, RANAC, APDR is the granting of CNI

to minors: in the province of Cibitoke, Kayanza, Ngozi, Makamba, Bujumbura rural and sometimes these cards recovered and issued in CNDD-FDD party offices.

People who had enrolled several persons while proxies are not allowed at this stage, others were enrolled via the WhatsApp network without their physical presence, other observations of political parties members, tables with several identity cards without owners were observed in some registration centers.

These leaders of political parties denounce some registration agents who went home with registration books to continue working at home without any supervision while this work should be done at officially recognized registration centers. The same sources deplore the presence of Imbonerakure who prowled around the registration centers to intimidate while they did not have accreditations to supervise this work, these leaders denounce that even among the registration agents, more than 80% are CNDD-FDD party members.

♦ **In Bujumbura mairie : Restrictions were put in place to force urban residents to register for the 2025 elections**

On October 28, 2024, some town markets were closed and only those who already had their registration receipt could enter. The markets concerned were those of Kamenge, Kinama and Ruziba, where young Imbonerakure checked citizens' documents.

These restrictions are not limited to markets. In the zones of Cibitoke, Kinama, Kamenge, Gihosha and Kanyosha, administrative services are banned to those who cannot prove their registration. Residents of these zones believe that this violates their right, as registration for the elections should be voluntary.

The education sector is not spared. The DPE Bujumbura has ordered school principals to verify that all teachers and students of voting age are registered for the 2025 elections. Only those who are already registered are allowed to attend schools.

The mayor of Bujumbura has declared that registration for the elections is not optional, but mandatory. This decision has sparked negative reactions among urban residents, who feel that it infringes on their freedom of choice.

♦ **Restrictions on access to public spaces for anyone not yet registered for the 2025 elections in Cibitoke province**

Since the morning of October 27, 2024, in the communes of Buganda and Rugombo in Cibitoke province, Imbonerakure have prohibited anyone who does not have a receipt attesting their registration for the 2025 elections from entering the markets.

According to an eyewitness, residents do not understand such restrictions in a country that claims to be democratic. People who come down from the mountains to the markets located in the plain region after having traveled several kilometers are denied access.

The administrators of Buganda and Rugombo contacted on this subject confirm the facts and say that these are motivational measures to encourage citizen voters to register.

♦ **In Ruyigi province : services offered upon presentation of a receipt**

As of November 1, 2024, at Ruyigi post office, services were offered upon presentation of a receipt to post office agents giving access to the 2025 elections.

According to sources on site, to pay for the fertilizer, the deposit and for the withdrawal, the receipt was required.

According to the same sources, as of October 30, 2024, to have access to the central market of Ruyigi, one had to present to the Imbonerakure a receipt showing that one will take part in the 2025 elections.

♦ **No access to various services without receipt in Nyabitsinda commune, Ruyigi province**

On October 30, 2024, in Nyabitsinda commune, Ruyigi province, the population was required to present receipts to have the right to recover the fertilizers.

According to eyewitnesses, on the same day, this document was required from the population by the communal administration to have access to some administrative documents issued by the civil status services.

♦ **Absence of political party representatives at the registration sites in Ruyigi province**

According to information from Ruyigi province, Ligue Iteka reports that the registration period for the 2025 elections was marked by the absence of representatives of opposition political parties, except those of CNDD-FDD party. In addition, only observers from the Episcopal Commission for Justice and Peace were present in some registration centers, while civil society observers were denied access to information on the number of voters registered.

**Illustration cases:**

⇒ Gisuru Commune: Civil society observers were denied access to information on the numbers of registered voters at Gisuru Communal High School registration center on October 28, 2024.

⇒ Biyorwa zone, Butaganzwa commune: Civil society observers were denied access to information on the numbers of registered voters at Musenga I and Musenga II registration centers on October 31, 2024.

♦ **Refusal to continue the journey without a registration receipt in Gisagara commune, Cankuzo province**

On October 30, 2024, in Gisagara commune, Cankuzo province, Imbonerakure set up a barrier on the road passing through the commune city center and each passer-by had to present his receipt to continue the journey, otherwise, he was denied to continue.

♦ **Forcing the registration for the 2025 elections in Mwaro province**

On October 30, 2024, in Kayokwe commune, Mwaro province, at Kibumbu car park, any person who had not yet registered for the 2025 elections was not allowed to take a vehicle, motorcycle or bicycle.

In Rusaka commune, some principals told teachers and students that anyone not yet registered should return to these registration centers and for some students who are not yet 18 but will be next year, some principals told them to bring photos and a sum of 1,500 BIF so that they could give them identity cards themselves.

In Nyabihanga commune, anyone not yet registered to participate in these 2025 elections was not allowed to enter the market.

Marie Chantal Niyonzima, administrator of Nyabihanga commune, went herself to this market to check if everyone had receipts.

It is important to note that the National Independent Electoral Commission (CENI) has begun preparations for the 2025 and 2027 elections, after the revision of the electoral code to take into account the new

administrative division of Burundi, the CENI has just published the number of voters already registered. However, concerns persist about the transparency and legitimacy of the electoral process.

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

#### **Non-granting of seeds due to lack of receipt in Giharo commune, Rutana province**

On October 28, 2024, on Kabingo hill, Butezi zone, Giharo commune, Rutana province, during the distribution of corn seeds given by the President of the Republic to Burundian farmers, the criteria were first to be registered on the list of beneficiaries and then to have a 2025 electoral receipt.

According to sources on site, if the beneficiary is not a member of CNDD-FDD party, he is registered but he is not read by the readers of the lists and the latter are selected from CNDD-FDD party and also can be registered but has no access to these seeds because he does not have the receipt.

According to the same sources, Laurent Barekebavuge, a communal agronomist, distributed these seeds hill by hill and the hill heads together in agreement with the hill monitors who distribute the seeds at the sub-hills level. It is at this level where CNDD-FDD leaders' party were involved to verify whether the beneficiary really meets the required conditions.

For example, Jean Baptiste Ntawuyamara from Kabingo hill, did not receive the seeds because he did not have the receipt, as well as Emmanuel Ndagijimana from Mura hill, Giharo zone, he also missed the seeds due to not having the receipt.

#### **About forty families sleep outside in Rumonge commune and province**

Since November 1, 2024, forty families made up of 230 persons from Rutumo hill, Rumonge commune and province no longer have a home.

Sources among the inhabitants of the locality say that their houses were demolished by torrential rains that fell on this hill.

Some have seen the roofs of their houses blown away by the wind and several other houses have been partially demolished. These inhabitants say they have lost everything, clothes and bedding equipment as well as food have been damaged.

They are asking for emergency aid to save them from this situation. The head of Rutumo hill, Frédéric Sinkibakira, says that many houses have been destroyed, small livestock and school equipment for children of these families have been damaged. He is alarming the benefactors to aid the victimized families.

### ***III.1. RIGHT TO EDUCATION***

#### **Students expelled from school for failure to register for elections**

On October 28, 2024, at 7:30 a.m., just after the flag salute, at ECOFO Muramvya II, located on Muramvya hill, commune and province, all the students aged 16 and over who have not presented the registration receipts for the 2025 elections to the direction were expelled.

According to sources on site, the school principal, Nitunga Anthère told them that they will return to school either with the CNI, the baptismal card or the birth certificates (to register them). According to the same sources, the parents of these students feel overwhelmed by the behavior of some school officials.

## **Students expelled for enrollment documents in Giharo commune, Rutana province**

Information received by Ligue Iteka on November 1, 2024 indicates that at ECOFO of Mutaha, Rubaho, Kabingo I and II as well as Muhafu, students spent days without studying because they were expelled for enrollment and others to search for the identity card.

According to eyewitnesses, they spent days there and sometimes they returned without receiving them because there were many people.

## **Massive enrollment of students in Cankuzo province**

Information received by Ligue Iteka on November 2, 2024 indicates that massive enrollment of students was observed in Cankuzo province.

According to eyewitnesses, a circular from the Minister of Education and Scientific Research ordered school officials, both public and private, to systematically check that every student of voting age had registered, and this order was implemented on October 28, 2024, when every student who had not registered was expelled.

It was noted that students aged 16 and over were enrolled, which raised concerns because this could lead to cheating, which would lead to fraud during the elections, by registering those who were not of the required age.

According to the same sources, there were also comings and goings of Imbonerakure in the enrollment centers as well as CNDD-FDD party leaders at different levels.

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

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

#### **A child injured in Mutimbuzi commune, Bujumbura province**

On October 27, 2024, Blaise Nduwayezu, 10 years old son of Pierre Nyabenda and Espérance was injured with a stick on the cheek by Alexandre Ciza, Imbonerakure, bicycle taxi driver, on Kinyinya 1 hill, Mutimbuzi commune, Bujumbura province.

According to an eyewitness, this incident happened while they were watching a football match on television. The children were discussing on the match and the alleged perpetrator wanted to silence them. The child was taken to Baho Hospital in Kajaga for medical care.

## ***V. CONCLUSION***

Ligue Iteka notes and denounces the persistent deterioration of human rights across the country. Ligue Iteka is concerned about the electoral process which records irregularities in full violation of the right to freedom to vote explicitly recognized to citizens. The Burundian authorities should take measures to prevent these practices and ensure that all citizens can exercise their right to vote freely and fairly.

It recommends that the Burundian government guarantee transparency and legitimacy of the electoral process to avoid any manipulation or fraud.