

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

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



"Is a member of the Inter-African Union for Human and Peoples' Rights (UIDH), is an affiliate member of the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH), has observer status with the African Commission of Human and Peoples' Rights under the reference number OBS.236 and is a member of ECOSOC. Ligue Iteka is decentralized into 17 federations and 32 sections"

*Weekly bulletin « ITEKA N'IJAMBO » n°459 of the Burundian Ligue of Human Rights "ITEKA"*

**Week from 27 january-2 february 2025**



*In memory of Madame Marie Claudette Kwizera, Treasurer of Iteka, reported missing since December 10 2015. From December 2015 to 2 february 2025, Iteka has documented at least 719 cases of enforced disappearances*

<b>CONTENTS</b>	<b>PAGES</b>
<b>ACRONYMS.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>0. INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>I. CONTEXT.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>I.1. POLITICAL CONTEXT.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>I.2. JUDICIAL CONTEXT.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>I.3. GOVERNANCE CONTEXT.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>I.4. HUMAN RIGHTS CONTEXT.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>I.5. HEALTH CONTEXT.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>I.6. SECURITY CONTEXT.....</b>	<b>7</b>
I.6.1. SECURITY FACTS.....	8
I.6.2. BODIES FOUND.....	9
<b>II. CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>II.1. RIGHT TO LIFE.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>II.2. RIGHT TO PHYSICAL INTEGRITY.....</b>	<b>11</b>
II.2.1. SEXUAL AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE.....	11
<b>II.3. RIGHT TO LIBERTY.....</b>	<b>12</b>
II.3.1. ARBITRARY ARRESTS.....	12
<b>II.4. RIGHT TO PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL LIFE.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>III. ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS.....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>III. 1. DISRUPTION OF ECONOMIC LIFE.....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>IV. CATEGORICAL RIGHTS.....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>IV.1. WOMEN'S RIGHTS.....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>IV.2. CHILDREN'S RIGHTS.....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>IV. CONCLUSION &amp; RECOMMENDATIONS.....</b>	<b>15</b>

## **ACRONYMS**

<b>CAMEBU</b>	: <i>Central Purchasing Office for Essential Medicines in Burundi</i>
<b>CDS</b>	: <i>Health Center</i>
<b>CNDD-FDD</b>	: <i>National Council for the Defense of Democracy</i>
<b>CNL</b>	: <i>National Congress for Liberty</i>
<b>DRC</b>	: <i>Democratic Republic of Congo</i>
<b>ECOFO</b>	: <i>Fundamental School</i>
<b>FDLR</b>	: <i>Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda</i>
<b>FLN</b>	: <i>National Liberation Front</i>
<b>M23</b>	: <i>March 23 Movement</i>
<b>OPJ</b>	: <i>Judicial Police Officer</i>
<b>RANAC</b>	: <i>National Rally for Change</i>
<b>REGIDESO</b>	: <i>Water Distribution Authority</i>
<b>RN</b>	: <i>National Road</i>
<b>TGI</b>	: <i>High Court</i>
<b>UPRONA</b>	: <i>Union for National Progress</i>

## 0. INTRODUCTION

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

Thus, during the reporting period of this bulletin, human rights and security situation was reported as follows: at least 6 people died, including 4 people

killed and 3 found dead, 4 victims of SGBV, and 4 victims of arbitrary arrest including a woman and 3 doctors. Among the victims, 1 person was injured by unidentified people.

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

## 1. CONTEXT

### 1.1. POLITICAL CONTEXT

The President of Burundi, Evariste Ndayishimiye, has expressed frustration on the inaction of the international community regarding the security situation in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). During the exchange of greetings ceremonies with the diplomatic and consular corps accredited to Burundi, he warned against a possible regional flare-up of this conflict. *“You see what is happening here very close to home. Why this silence? Does the international community not see the consequences?”*

President Ndayishimiye stressed that the international community seems not to see the consequences of its inaction, despite the presence of international organizations such as the UN in the region. He also mentioned a simmering security threat in the Great Lakes region, which could become widespread if the international community does not take this crisis seriously. *I tell you that if things continue like this, war risks becoming widespread in the region. Because the population cannot let this happen. [...] We have a threat in the region, it is not only Burundi, Tanzania, Uganda, Kenya... it is in the whole region, it is a threat. If Eastern Congo does not*

*have peace, the region does not have peace”*

In addition, President Ndayishimiye expressed concerns about Rwanda’s activities, particularly its alleged support for Burundian refugees. He accused Rwanda of arming and training these refugees in the Democratic Republic of Congo, which could be a threat to Burundi’s security<sup>12</sup>.

It is worth noting that Ligue Iteka reported the presence of FLN and FDLR rebel groups in the western provinces of Burundi, which are allegedly supported by Burundian high authorities. This raises questions about the security situation in the region and the relations between the neighboring countries.

However, these accusations should be taken with caution, as they are difficult to prove credibly. The key to lasting peace lies in close collaboration between countries in the region, strengthening regional security mechanisms, strengthening regional and international diplomacy, and a better involvement of the international community to support peaceful and sustainable solutions.

<sup>1</sup><https://ligue-iteka.bi/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/Bulletin-ITEKA-N-IJAMBO-451.pdf>

<sup>2</sup><https://ligue-iteka.bi/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/Bulletin-ITEKA-N-IJAMBO-448.pdf>

## ***1.2. JUDICIAL CONTEXT***

### **Public hearing of flagrante delicto in Rutana province**

On January 21, 2025, the Rutana High Court imposed a sentence to Jérémie Kinyomvyi, from Karusi province. He was sentenced to 7 years in prison and a fine of 7,000,000 BIF for human trafficking.

The charges against Jérémie Kinyomvyi are particularly serious. He is accused of having collected children from Karusi province to take them to Tanza-

nia. When he was arrested in Birongozi, Rutana province, he was accompanied by 7 minor children, aged 13 and 14, from Bugenyuzi and Ruhororo communes in Karusi province.

This case was handled in a public hearing, which allows for the most serious and urgent cases to be judged quickly. The sentence imposed to Jérémie Kinyomvyi reflects the severity of the charges against him and the need to protect children from human traffickers.

## ***1.3. GOVERNANCE CONTEXT***

### **Paramilitary training in schools in Rumonge province**

On January 29, 2025, CNDD-FDD party organized a meeting at Rumonge High School, bringing together students of this high school and from Rukinga I to IV fundamental schools. The meeting, reserved for students from grade 9 to final years, aimed to teach the party's ideology and present the upcoming 2025 elections.

The meeting was led by Evariste Ntakarutimana, a teacher and representative of CNDD-FDD party's Imbonerakure youth league. After the meeting, the students were divided into two groups for training on the paramilitary parade. The girls were supervised by teachers who were members of the party, while the boys were led by Evariste Ntakarutimana.

This paramilitary training for students is an initiative of CNDD-FDD party to prepare young people for civic life and civic responsibilities. However, it is important to note that this initiative can also be seen as a way of recruiting young people for the party.

### **Critical fuel shortage in Makamba province**

Makamba province is currently facing a fuel shortage, which has led to the paralysis of public transport. Transport agencies and transport vehicles have been rare or unnoticeable since January 26, 2025, as was observed in the parking of Makamba, Kayogoro, Mabanda and Nyanza-lac communes. Only one agency provided the minimum service with a single bus covering Makamba Bujumbura once a day for the transfer of urgent mail, as some officials of this agency indicated.

The transporters explain that the lack of fuel is the main cause of this situation. They have tried to buy fuel on the Tanzanian black market, but the police have banned them from travelling to the country to buy fuel. The few transport agencies that are still operating have to buy fuel on the Burundian black market at exorbitant prices, forcing them to increase the prices of travel fares.

Transport agency officials denounce the government's inadequate distribution of fuel, which does not allow them to operate normally. They are calling on the government to allow them to buy fuel on the Tanzanian black market to avoid the paralysis of public transport.

The situation is particularly difficult for passengers, who are forced to postpone their trips or make stopovers to reach their destinations. Transport fares have tripled compared to official rates, making public transport inaccessible for many people.

Provincial authorities must find an urgent solution to resolve this fuel crisis and restore public transport in Makamba province.

### **Concerns about fuel shortage in Mukaza Commune, Bujumbura Mairie**

On 27 January 2025, a meeting organized by the Ministry of Interior and CENI was held in Sororezo, Mukaza Commune, Bujumbura Mairie. The aim was to bring together politicians and governors to discuss concerns about the fuel shortage, particularly in view of the upcoming elections.

Some political leaders, such as Gabriel Banzawitonde, president of APDR party, Patrick Nkurunziza, president of the Burundi Bwa Bose

coalition, and Gaspard Kobako, president of AND Intadohoka party, expressed their concerns about the impact of the fuel shortage on their ability to mobilize their members.

They made a strong appeal to the government to find a solution to this persistent problem. Minister Martin Niteretse responded that the government is working to resolve this problem, adding that some

#### **1.4. HUMAN RIGHTS CONTEXT**

On 29 January 2025, Sixte Vigny Nimuraba, resident of the National Independent Human Rights Commission (CNIDH), presented the CNIDH's 2024 annual report to the Lower House of Parliament. This report highlights the human rights situation in Burundi and CNIDH achievements.

According to Sixte Vigny Nimuraba, the report was written when Burundi was showing signs of promoting human rights, including its membership to the United Nations Human Rights Council since January 1, 2024 and the Burundian president, *"champion of the African Union" for the Youth, Peace and Security Agenda as well as the stage already reached in the electoral process for the 2025 elections*. The CNIDH president also stressed that the report shows that 739 referrals were received by the Commission in 2024, of which 527 were declared admissible and 212 inadmissible.

#### **1.5. HEALTH CONTEXT**

##### **Manhunt for doctors in Burundi**

Burundi's doctors in general and general practitioners in particular, like many civil servants, are faced with a difficult economic reality. For several years, their remuneration has remained largely insufficient in relation to the workload, professional demands and growing inflation. Added to this are harsh working conditions and a lack of resources to ensure quality patient care. Faced with this situation, the Union of General Practitioners of Burundi, SYMEGEB, has decided to demand a salary review of at least two million BIF in the public or private sector, in order to preserve not only the quality of care, but also the dignity of health professionals.

Instead of responding positively to this call, the government of Burundi has chosen repression and in-

people hide fuel, which worsens the situation.

It is important to note that fuel shortage is a recurring problem in Burundi, with significant consequences on the economy and the daily lives of citizens. The authorities must take effective measures to address this problem and ensure a regular supply of fuel.

However, the report also highlights worrying cases of human rights violations, such as illegal or arbitrary detentions, cases of continued detention of persons with mental disabilities, and bans on the holding of meetings.

Gélase Daniel Ndabirabe, Speaker of the National Assembly, reacted by denouncing the work of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on human rights situation in Burundi, stating that Burundi is ahead of other countries in terms of respect for human rights. He asked the President of the CNIDH to convince Westerners, that Burundi is ahead and that the Special Rapporteur has no place in Burundi.

Ligue Iteka expresses its concern about the position of the Speaker of the National Assembly and demands the State of Burundi to honor its commitments in terms of human rights and to cooperate with UN mechanisms.

timidation, including the arrest of some doctors, in order to silence their salary demands.

The doctors arrested are as follows:

- ⇒ Dr. Nazaire NDEREYIMANA, head of Fota health district, in Muramvya province. He was arrested on January 27, 2025.
- ⇒ Dr. Pierre Claver RURAGAHYE, arrested on January 30, 2025 at his workplace at the nuns' hospital in Musongati commune.
- ⇒ Dr. Achel IGIRANEZA, arrested on January 30, 2024 at his workplace at Gahombo hospital, in Kayanza province.
- ⇒ Dr. Désiré CONGERA, arrested on January 30, 2024 at his workplace at Mpanda hospital.



The arrest of doctors, especially during periods of wage demands, only serves to worsen the country's health crisis. Burundi already suffers from a shortage of qualified medical personnel due to the mass departure of Burundian doctors to work abroad where working conditions and pay are better, and this wave of arrests could not only lead to further shortages of doctors in hospitals and health centers but also increase the departures abroad, for fear of reprisals.

These arrests of doctors also raise questions on fundamental freedoms, including freedom of expression and the right to strike. Health professionals, like all citizens, have the right to demand decent working conditions and pay without fear of reprisals. This repression could therefore be seen as a violation of workers' rights and the principles of social justice. This situation has a negative impact on health, in particular the overload of doctors which leads to a decrease in the quality of care and services offered to the population given that Burundi has 1 doctor for 37,000 inhabitants while the WHO recommends 1 doctor for 10,000 inhabitants<sup>3</sup>.

It should be recalled that in January 2024, the Minister of Public Health and the Fight against AIDS, Dr. Lyduine Baradahana, acknowledged before senators that the mass exodus of doctors is a reality and remains difficult to resolve as long as the issue related to their salaries is not addressed. As an indication, she indicated that a specialist doctor in Burundi earns 650,000 Bif while he earns 1,300,000 Frwa in Rwanda, 3,000 US dollars in Kenya and 1,300 US dollars in Tanzania.

Faced with this reality, it is imperative that the government of Burundi adopts a more constructive approach to resolving this crisis, including the doctors' salaries rise and working conditions, the creation of a constructive social dialogue as well as respect for workers' rights and fundamental freedoms such as freedom of expression and the right to strike, in order to preserve the right to health of the Burundian population.

## ***1.6. SECURITY CONTEXT***

### **MUGINA: Inauguration by the President of the Republic of Burundi of a rabbit breeding center and at the expense of individual freedoms**

The Mugina administration is accused of hindering individual freedoms. During the inauguration of a rabbit breeding center by the President of the Republic on Muyange hill in Rugajo zone, local authorities, namely the communal administrator Julienne Ndayihaya and the police commissioner Martin Tuyishime, ordered the closing of shops, Nyeshenza market and the cessation of the activities of transporters following the absence of the population at the ceremony. This decision was strongly criticized by the population, who denounce interference in their income-generating activities, essential to their survival in a context of growing poverty.

It is important to note that individual freedoms must be protected and that administrative authorities must avoid hindering the economic activities of citizens without their consent. Indeed, as Jacques Petit points out, "the appeal for abuse of power is not a liberal institution primarily intended to defend the freedoms of individuals but is a legal avenue of re-

publican spirit, availed to citizens for the defense of legality<sup>4</sup>.

### **Mabayi-Bukinanyana: return movement of FDLR rebels from Kibira to the DRC**

The FDLR rebels (Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda) started a return movement to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) between January 20 and 23, 2025. According to Burundian intelligence sources, approximately 1,500 men left Kibira to reinforce the front, while the fighting between the M23 and its adversaries had changed direction.

The Burundian military had anticipated a possible failure due to human losses, the loss of occupied territories and the strength of the enemy. The FDLR rebels were called in as reinforcements to support the front, with military vehicles and civilians facilitating their movements. It should be noted that currently recruitment into the Burundian armed forces is experiencing a notable reluctance among young Burundian citizens.

<sup>3</sup><https://data.who.int/fr/indicators/i/CCCEBB2/217795A>

<sup>4</sup><https://www.revuegeneraledudroit.eu/blog/2016/02/02/les-armes-du-juge-administratif-dans-la-protection-des-libertes-fondamentales/>

Some took the Ndora-Ndava road leading to the RN5, while others took the Bubanza-Gihungwe road leading to the same RN. A significant number of FDLR and FLN rebels have reintegrated into the ranks of the FDNB to compensate for the losses estimated at several hundred in recent days.

### ***1.6.1. SECURITY FACTS***

#### **Hunt for people accused of sorcery in Mugina commune, Cibitoke province**

On 30 January 2025, Carême Bizoya, Governor of Cibitoke province, reacted firmly to the discovery of leaflets inciting violence against people accused of sorcery. During a public meeting, he announced administrative measures against the culprits and called on the population to avoid any form of mob justice.

For two weeks, threatening leaflets have been circulating in Bwayi, targeting 28 people accused of sorcery. These accusations follow a series of suspicious deaths attributed to poisoning. The local population is worried and suspects the possible involvement of local authorities in these events.

The Governor of Cibitoke issued a strong warning, threatening legal sanctions against anyone involved in acts of violence related to sorcery accusations. However, anonymous sources reveal that a large sum of money has already been collected to be given to Imbonerakure to commit these acts of violence.

In the last 5 months, 12 elderly people have been murdered on the same hill and other hills in the commune including Nyamakarabo, Nyempundu, Kagurutsi, Rubona, for the same reason. This situation is particularly worrying and requires firm and immediate action by the authorities to protect the population and prevent further acts of violence.

#### **A man injured in Bururi commune and province**

On January 30, 2025, a motorcycle taxi driver, Salvador Niyonkuru, was the victim of a brutal attack on national road 17, between Bururi and Makamba, on Muzima hill. According to witnesses, the victim was pelted with stones before falling down, and the attackers tried to finish him off.

Fortunately, the arrival of an ambulance from Ma-

This unusual replacement, kept secret, particularly from soldiers from the former FAB (Burundian Armed Forces), aims to maximize the chances of facing a possible attack from Rwanda, especially if South Kivu, which borders Burundi, was attacked.

kamba hospital allowed the victim to be evacuated in critical condition. Salvador Niyonkuru was admitted to Munini health centre and then transferred to Bururi hospital, where he is receiving intensive care.

The perpetrators of the attack are still unknown and fled into the eucalyptus forest on Muzima hill. Local residents are calling for the creation of a security force position to ensure security on the RN 17 road, which connects Bururi and Makamba provinces.

This attack raises concerns about the safety of road users and local residents. The authorities must take measures to strengthen security and prevent similar attacks in the future.

#### **A person killed in Gitega commune and province**

On January 29, 2025, around 7 p.m., a 24-year-old woman, Josiane Niyonkuru, was brutally murdered by Édouard Hagabimana, a 35-year-old trader and member of CNDD-FDD party, in Magarama quarter of Gitega province.

According to the quarter head, Nzibarega Léandre, the victim had spent the day at the construction site as a mason's assistant. Around 5 p.m., Édouard called her to ask her to spend the night at his house. Later, around 8 p.m., Édouard called his brother to ask him to come and help him evacuate a corpse from his house.

Édouard's brother alerted the quarter head, who called the police. When they arrived at the scene, they found Josiane's decapitated body in the bathroom. According to witnesses, the victim had been raped before being killed. Édouard Hagabimana was arrested on the spot and taken to the provincial police station cell, while Josiane's body was taken to the mortuary of Bethaniya Hospital in Songa.



A flagrante delicto trial has been scheduled for February 1, 2025.

It is important to note that Édouard Hagabimana had been living alone since early January 2025, after conflicts with his wife. Josiane's burial will take place as soon as her family, who are in Mwaro, arrive in Gitega.

### **One person died in Buhiga commune, Karuzi province**

On January 30, 2025, around 7 p.m., at Buhiga market in Karuzi province, Nduwayo, a man over 40 years old, a member of CNDD-FDD and a shoemaker, died after drinking 8 bottles of an alcoholic beverage called Tumenyane Wine.

According to witnesses, Nduwayo had bet with another man, Kamuntu, a member of CNDD-FDD and a shopkeeper to drink 10 bottles of this drink in one-hour time. Each had bet 10,000 Burundian francs. Kamuntu brought a jug and poured the 10 bottles into it, which he presented to the victim. Nduwayo quickly drank 80% of the bottles in 20 minutes, then fainted and began to convulse. He was taken to Buhiga hospital, where he died the following day, on 31 January 2025, at around 8pm.

Kamuntu was arrested by the zone head and is currently jailed in Buhiga police cell. The deceased's family wanted to bury him on 2 February 2025, but Kamuntu's family asked the zone head to bring them together to discuss the next steps in the case and prevent Kamuntu from being transferred to Mpimba prison.

### **Controversial release in Muyinga commune and province**

Information received by Ligue Iteka on 25 January 2025 indicates that on 14 January 2025, Nzoyisaba

#### **1.6.2. BODIES FOUND**

### **A body found in Mukaza commune, Bujumbura-mairie**

On 29 January 2025, at around 7 a.m., authorities discovered a body of an unidentified young man in Quarter II, near Ntakangwa River, in Bwiza zone, Mukaza commune, in Bujumbura. According to eyewitnesses, the body was found at a place called "Ku Binyoni", without any visible traces of violence.

Amélie, a wholesaler of Brarudi products and member of CNDD-FDD party, was caught selling bottles of beer at exorbitant prices at her home on Kibogoye hill, in Muyinga downtown. The prices were 5,000 BIF for a bottle of beer and 7,000 BIF for a bottle of Amstel.

The intervention of the communal police commissioner, Donatien, and the Imbonerakure Karinda led to the discovery of a hemp field in her home. Photos were taken to document the facts, and Amélie was taken to the judicial police cell.

However, the authorities took charge of the matter and decided to release Amélie on 17 January 2025. Those involved in this decision include Jean Claude Barutwanayo, provincial governor, prosecutor Azarias and the chairman of Brarudi product management commission, Kayumba Laurent.

### **Demolition of bridges linking Muyinga and Tanzania in Muyinga province**

On 28 January 2025, the Tanzanian military destroyed the bridges linking Tanzania to Shoza, Kabogo and Mukoni hills, located in Giteranyi and Murama communes, Muyinga province, Burundi. This decision is said to be a direct consequence of the activities of fuel fraudsters who incurred debts to Tanzanian suppliers.

According to witnesses, the Tanzanian suppliers went to Ngozi to demand their money, leading to the imprisonment of two of them. This situation sparked great anger among Tanzanians, who decided to destroy the bridges.

It is important to note that this area is a major transit point for motorcycles heading to Tanzania to refuel. In fact, between 15 and 20 motorcycles from Ngozi regularly cross the border to refuel.

However, witnesses suspect that the victim may have been killed elsewhere before being transported and abandoned there.

The body was transported to Prince Regent Charles Hospital mortuary by the authorities for an autopsy and identification. The investigation is ongoing to determine the circumstances of the death of this young man.

### **A body found in Muha commune, Bujumbura province**

On 28 January 2025, a body of an unidentified man was discovered in Kanyosha River, at the bottom of Kamesa quarter, in Kanyosha zone, Muha commune, in Bujumbura.

According to witnesses on the scene, the body was naked and had injuries in the head. Witnesses suspect that the man may have been killed elsewhere before being thrown into the river.

The head of Kanyosha zone, Arthémon Mvuyekure, recovered the body and took it to the mortuary of a Bujumbura hospital, where it awaits burial. The identity of the victim and the circumstances of his death remain unknown.

### **A body found in Buraza commune, Gitega province**

On January 25, 2025, around 8 a.m., on Bugega hill, Buraza commune, Gitega province, the neighbors of Pascal Minani, a 73-year-old man, discovered his body in his house. The body was hanging from a tree in the living room. The neighbors noticed that the house had remained closed until 8 a.m., which was unusual. According to them, the deceased was a widower and lived alone, without any conflict with the neighbors.

However, witnesses suspect that Pascal Minani was killed elsewhere and that the criminals transported his body to his house to hang it on the tree. They noticed traces of boots in front of the back door of the house, which led them to this conclusion.

Pascal Minani's burial took place the same day, leaving questions about the circumstances of his death unanswered.

## **II. DROITS CIVILS ET POLITIQUES**

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

#### **A person killed by soldiers in Gitega commune and province**

Information received by Ligue Iteka on February 1, 2025 indicates that on January 15, 2025, at Rutonde center on Birohe hill, Gitega commune and province, Kwizerima Désiré, aged 40, a cloth seller, was beaten by two soldiers until he died. The victim lived in Rutonde. According to his wife, Suzanne Niyonizigiye, the deceased was at Jean de Dieu Nkengurutse's bar located nearby in Rutonde. Early in the evening, around 7 p.m., two soldiers, one in military uniform and the other in civilian clothing, came to this bar to take primus. These soldiers Lambert and Jonathan rushed to the deceased, beat him without any reason, which prompted all those who were on the scene to alert other soldiers to calm the situation. Seeing other soldiers coming, these two criminals took off. Around 8:30 p.m., they came back secretly by passing behind the bar, beat him for the second time with a club, and he died on the spot. But they ended up being arrested and jailed at the provincial police station and the body was taken to Gitega hospital mortuary. Our

source told us that they refused to bury the victim before the perpetrators were punished. Apart from Lambert who is jailed at Gitega central prison, his friend Jonathan fled according to our source. The burial was scheduled for Saturday, February 1, 2025 on the orders of Nishemezwe Félicité, Attorney General of Gitega.

#### **A child Killed in Kayanza Commune and Province**

On January 30, 2025, in Kayanza province, a 15-year-old student, Nishimwe Patrick, son of Nyabenda Evariste and Ndayishimiye Charlotte, a student at ECOFO Bubezi died in hospital following injuries by his school principal, Fabien, on January 23, 2025.

According to parents and students, the principal had hit Nishimwe Patrick while he was in a humiliating position, with his legs in the air on the wall and his head turned down against the ground. The child had not returned to school since the incident and complained of continuous headaches.

On January 28, the parents confronted the principal, who advised them to take their child to the hospital and offered to pay the hospitalization fees. However, on January 30, Nishimwe Patrick died.

On the orders of the provincial governor, Rémy Cishahayo, Fabien, the school principal, was arrested and taken to Kayanza police station cell for judicial investigations.

## ***II.2. RIGHT TO PHYSICAL INTEGRITY***

### ***II.2.1. SEXUAL AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE***

#### **A girl raped in Mutimbuzi commune, Bujumbura province**

On January 21, 2025, a 16-year-old student from ECOFO Kinyinya I was raped by her neighbor, Pascal Itangishaka, aged 21, a trader and member of CNDD-FDD party. The victim, who regularly visited Pascal's family, had spent the night at his house in his room. When the victim's father noticed her absence, he filed a complaint and the search led to the discovery of the victim in Pascal's room. However, Pascal has since disappeared. The victim was taken to the hospital "chez Magnus" by her parents.

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

On January 26, 2025, a 14-year-old girl, Clairia Niyomwungere, a 5<sup>th</sup> grade student at ECOFO Magara II, was raped by Ezéchiél Nduwimana, a member of CNDD-FDD party, on Rukamba sub-hill in Rumonge.

According to witnesses, Ezéchiél Nduwimana had rented a house on Rutumo hill and had taken Clairia as his wife. When Clairia's parents noticed her absence, they began searching and found her in Rutumo.

Ezéchiél Nduwimana was arrested and jailed in Minago zone cell, before being transferred to Rumonge police station cell on January 30, 2025. Clairia, for her part, was admitted to Rumonge hospital for medical treatment.

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

On January 29, 2025, around 7 p.m., at Bugendana center located on Mukoro hill, Bugendana commune, Gitega province, Iteriteka Lahayi Rôti, aged 6 and a first-year schoolgirl at Ecofo Bugendana II, was raped by a 32-year-old Passy who lives with a physical disability (moves using a wheelchair). According to Nibogora Anastasie, the victim's mother,

Passy came to the restaurant around 6 p.m. as usual. He took this child and told him: "urira aka kaduga kanje ndaguhe umunyenga tugende kugura imyembe" as he used to do. Back, other vendors noticed that the child had difficulty to walk quickly, these two women Evelyne and Medy called Anastasie. The child explained that Passy put her on his legs and inserted his sex into hers. According to Anastasie, a lot of sperm were on her skirt and on her sex as well as small wounds on the vulva. This was confirmed by a nurse from CDS Bugendana who in turn asked the victim's mother to go to Mutoyi hospital. At Mutoyi hospital, the child was examined and received medication. Unfortunately, according to Anastasie, Opj Mahinja Antoine after seeing the medical record of Mutoyi hospital, advised Anastasie to accept an amount of 200 000 Bif given by Murekerisoni Félicité, Passy's mother, so that the case could be settled amicably for the perpetrator is physically disabled, but Anastasie refused this money and instead asks that justice be done. So far, the perpetrator has not yet been arrested.

#### **A woman raped and killed in Gitega commune and province**

On January 29, 2025, around 7 p.m., a 24-year-old young woman, Josiane Niyonkuru, was savagely murdered by Édouard Hagabimana, a 35-year-old trader, member of CNDD-FDD party, in Magarama quarter of Gitega province. According to the quarter head, Nzibarega Léandre, the victim had spent the day at the construction site as a mason's assistant. Around 5 p.m., Édouard called her to ask her to spend the night at his house. Later, around 8 p.m., Édouard called his brother to ask him to come and help him evacuate a body from his house.

Édouard's brother alerted the quarter head, who called the police. When they arrived at the scene, they found Josiane's decapitated body in the bathroom. According to witnesses, the victim had been raped before being killed. Édouard Hagabimana was

arrested on the spot and taken to the provincial police station cell, while Josiane's body was taken to the mortuary at Bethaniya Hospital in Songa. A flagrante delicto trial has been scheduled for February 1, 2025.

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

#### ***II.3.1. ARBITRARY ARRESTS***

##### **A woman arrested in Kayogoro commune, Makamba province**

On 28 January 2025, Immaculée Nibizi was arrested by police officers and young Imbonerakure on Buhema hill, Mugeni zone, Kayogoro commune, Makamba province on the border between Burundi and Tanzania. She was carrying 275 kg of first-quality beans to support her family. According to witnesses, she was intercepted by police officers who were controlling the Maragarazi River and then taken to Kayogoro communal cell with her seized merchandise.

After two days of pre-trial detention, she was transferred to the public prosecutor's cell awaiting trial scheduled for 31 January 2025. The value of the seized beans is estimated at 1,375,800 Burundian francs, while the local population lives in extreme poverty. The Makamba Attorney General said the prosecution could decide to release Immaculée Nibizi, but the seized goods should remain in the store at the prosecution's office.

##### **A person arrested in Musongati commune, Rutana province**

On January 30, 2025, at around 2 p.m., Dr. Pierre-Claver Ruragahiye, a 45-year-old doctor and member of CNL party, was arrested by police officers at

It is important to note that Édouard Hagabimana had been living alone since early January, after conflicts with his wife. Josiane's burial will take place as soon as her family, who are in Mwaro, arrive in Gitega.

the Sisters' Hospital in Musongati, Rutana province. The police officers, who were in a white vehicle with no registration number, stopped in front of Dr. Ruragahiye's office and forcibly took him away. Two people in police uniform were present in the back of the vehicle. Initially, no one knew where he was being taken, but it was later revealed that he had been taken to the intelligence cell of Rohero quarter, near the Regina Mundi Cathedral in Bujumbura mairie.

##### **Two doctors arrested in Mpanda commune, Bubanza province**

On 31 January 2025, two Burundian doctors were arrested by intelligence agents. Désiré Congera, a doctor at Mpanda Hospital in Bubanza province, was arrested around 6 p.m. while on duty. Witnesses say he was arrested without a warrant or explanation and then taken to an unknown destination. Later that day, around 10 a.m., Dr. Ntakarutimana Bonaparte was arrested at his office at Mivo Hospital in Ngozi province. He was taken in a double-cabin intelligence vehicle to an unknown location.

These arrests raise concerns about the human rights situation in Burundi, where intelligence agents have previously been involved in cases of torture and enforced disappearances.

### ***II.4. RIGHT TO PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL LIFE***

##### **CNDD-FDD party activities aimed at preparing for elections in the communes of Cankuzo province**

On February 1, 2025, several CNDD-FDD party meetings were held in different communes of Cankuzo province to prepare for the upcoming elections: In Cankuzo commune, a meeting was held at the communal office, led by Valérie Seshahu, president of the women's league, whose main purpose

was the celebration of "Umukenyererugamba day" in March in Gitega. Women were encouraged to prepare for this celebration and the elections. The meeting followed tree planting community activities.

In Gisagara commune, the communal office called on members to strengthen electoral security committees with special attention paid to members of the other UPRONA party who can not participate

in the elections in this locality, while recalling that the Burundi bwa Bose coalition was not accepted.

In Kigamba commune, a meeting of CNDD-FDD members was held on Rwamvura hill after community work. The emphasis was on mobilizing voters to vote massively for the CNDD-FDD. The communal representative declared that the party's victory was assured.

In Cendajuru commune: young Imbonerakure started their day with sports, singing party slogans and threatening the opposition. A meeting at Kabageni hill aimed to prepare electoral propaganda and show their strength.

CNDD-FDD activities as of February 1, 2025 demonstrate their commitment to mobilize and prepare their members for the upcoming elections, while confirming their determination to win these elections

#### **CNDD-FDD party meetings to prepare for elections in Kinyinya and Gisuru communes, Ruyigi province**

On February 1, 2025, CNDD-FDD held meetings in Kinyinya and Gisuru communes, Ruyigi province, to prepare for the communal elections. In Kinyinya commune, party representatives reminded members of the importance of electing their leaders this year. A positive speech based on the word of God was given, urging respect for leaders to avoid problems. It was mentioned that Imbonerakure youth should mobilize voters on election day to vote before 10 a.m. Those who vote after 10 a.m. would be considered as opponents, called "Ibipinga". Another meeting on Kinyinya hill reaffirmed the importance of discipline and respect for the law for party members.

In Gisuru commune, the communal committee urged members to remain vigilant against those who might disrupt CNDD-FDD activities, stating that the party is the only one participating in the elections.

Incitement to violence was made so that Imbonerakure would keep those suspected of not voting for CNDD-FDD locked up in their homes until the night of the election.

These meetings emphasized vigilance to counter anyone who would disrupt party plans and discipline within the party, especially in view of the forthcoming elections.

#### **Threats against members of other political parties in Butihinda commune, Muyinga province**

On 15 January 2025, intimidation meetings were held in Butarugera, Kamaramagambo and Buvumbi zones in Butihinda commune, Muyinga province. Shabani Nimubona, leader of Imbonerakure in Buhumuza province, humiliated and intimidated members of the opposition parties, threatening to kill them if they did not side to the ruling party. He also singled out specific targets, including Basuku, Zacharie and Domitien, members of the pro-Rwasa CNL party.

These meetings were followed by another meeting on 28 January 2025 on Wingoma hill, where Maman Dia, Mbariza Danie, Miburo Amuri and Karingiye intimidated people, urging some to join CNDD-FDD party out of fear. These events raise concerns about the human rights situation and freedom of political expression in Burundi and in particular in this commune.

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

#### **III. 1. DISRUPTION OF ECONOMIC LIFE**

##### **Consequences related to REGIDESO transformer, in Cankuzo province**

On January 26, 2025, around 8 p.m., at Cankuzo hospital, in Cankuzo province, the REGIDESO transformer caught fire. According to sources on site, the cause of this fire is not yet known. There was no human damage, but the hospitalized patients tried to flee the hospital, even those who were on

transfusions or serum. Calm returned after 30 minutes, the patients returned one by one. According to the same sources, the entire city of Cankuzo was in darkness but around 4 a.m., electricity returned except AMSAR and residential quarters which were lit following this transformer. Most public and private services have no electricity following this incident. There is a total paralysis of activities and there is no hope of having another transformer.

According to Doctor Moïse Nyabenda, Director of Cankuzo hospital, the hospital is unable to keep reagents in the fridges, to admit patients, the operating rooms become paralyzed, billing is impossible especially since we are relying on the digitalization system. The civil service mutual insurance points out that this service is paralyzed and it is impossible to serve patients. The hospital mortuary is not functional, when a person dies, he is buried quickly or the body is transferred to mortuaries of Ruyigi or Muyinga but it is expensive.

It is the same difficulty for preterm infants, there are no incubator services. There is also the difficulty of having fuel. Even if fuel existed, the generator of Cankuzo hospital consumes between 8 and 10 liters per hour, which is too expensive.

According to sources on site, at Buhumuza university campus, university teaching is paralyzed because teaching is done by projection or remotely. Without electricity, everything is paralyzed.

Except the BPEAE service installed in the quarter that can get electricity, all other services, both public and private, are concentrated in a place that has suffered this power outage.

#### **Shortage of some medical products in Cankuzo province**

Information received by Ligue Iteka on January 30,

2025 indicates that there is a shortage of some medical products, for example, there are no more gloves in public hospitals. According to sources on site, normally, hospitals obtain supplies from provincial health districts and the latter obtain supplies from CAMEBU at the national level. For the moment, these products are not available at CAMEBU. It is up to patients to buy gloves in private pharmacies. According to the same sources, this situation is due to the current situation of price increases: some 3 months ago, a pair of gloves could be bought for 300 BIF. At the moment, the price is 700 BIF per pair. Hospitals are becoming unable to stock up on them.

#### **Price rise for some products in Cankuzo province**

Information received by Ligue Iteka on January 30, 2025 indicates that in Cankuzo province, there is price rise of some products in some quarters of Cankuzo city. For example, the normal price of an Amstel is 3,500 BIF, but in some bars, it is 6,000 or 7,000 BIF. A bottle of primus is 2,500 BIF at normal price, but it is sold in some places for 5,000 or 6,000 BIF. Sugar is at 6,000 Bif at the normal price but it is hidden to be sold at 9,000 Bif, even 10,000 Bif. The blame is thrown on the irresponsibility and complicity of some administration officials and police officers.

## **IV. CATEGORICAL RIGHTS**

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

#### **A woman killed in Gitega commune and province**

A murder was committed on 29 January 2025 in Gitega, in Magarama quarter, Burundi. Josiane Niyonkuru, a 23-year-old woman, a member of CNDD-FDD party and a mason's assistant, was raped and killed by Edouard Hagabimana, a 25-year-old man who was also a member of CNDD-FDD. According to reports, the crime took place in the house of the alleged perpetrator, in the absence of his wife. Hagabimana had called the victim with the intention of raping her, and when she resisted, he killed her to prevent her from reporting him.

The alleged perpetrator was arrested by the police and jailed. On February 2, 2025, the High Court (TGI) of Gitega sentenced Edouard Hagabimana to life imprisonment, with damages of 50 million Burundian francs. The body of Josiane Niyonkuru was taken to the mortuary of Songa hospital. This case raises questions about security and justice in Burundi, as well as the responsibility of CNDD-FDD party in preventing such crimes.

#### **A girl beaten in Butaganzwa commune, Kayanza province**

Information received by Ligue Iteka on 1 February 2025 indicates that on 13 January 2025, on Musema hill, Butaganzwa commune, Kayanza province,



Kelissa Nishimwe, aged 17, a student at Lycée technique Kigarama in 2<sup>nd</sup> year of accounting & management, daughter of Nsabumukiza Josué and Ndikumana, was beaten on the head by her teacher Habarugira Tharcisse. According to the victim, she was accused of looking at her teacher through the window when Tharcisse was passing by Kelissa's house because her house is next to the school. Arriving at school, Tharcice started accusing Kelissa that she looked at him through the window, then Kelissa refused, the reason why Tharcice beat Kelissa on the head (mu gakomokomo) using a stick. Kelissa is hospitalized at Musema hospital. Tharcice was arrested by the police. He is jailed in the commune cell of Butaganzwa. The victim is seriously ill.

#### ***IV.2. CHILDREN'S RIGHTS***

##### **A child Killed in Kayanza commune and province**

On January 30, 2025, in Kayanza province, a 15-year-old student, Nishimwe Patrick, son of Nyabenda Evariste and Ndayishimiye Charlotte, a student at ECOFO Bubezi died in hospital following injuries by his school principal, Fabien, on January 23, 2025.

According to parents and students, the principal had hit Nishimwe Patrick while he was in a humiliating position, with his legs in the air on the wall and his

##### **A woman beaten in Kayanza commune and province**

On January 23, 2025, around 8 p.m., on Kirema hill, Kayanza commune and province, a woman Dusabe Josepha, a teacher was beaten by her husband Nduwayo Albert, a soldier. According to eyewitnesses, the victim was accused of not well educating their 21-year-old daughter Iradukunda Mixella because she was caught in prostitution at Maravilla hotel. According to the same eyewitnesses, Albert came home angrily and hit his wife saying that their daughter was a shame to the family. At that time, the girl had not yet arrived home and the fight continued until the neighbors came to rescue her. The woman was sheltered by the hill head Busimbo Diomède.

head turned down against the ground. The child had not returned to school since the incident and complained of continuous headaches.

On January 28, the parents confronted the principal, who advised them to take their child to the hospital and offered to pay the hospitalization fees. However, on January 30, Nishimwe Patrick died.

On the orders of the provincial governor, Rémy Cishahayo, Fabien, the school principal, was arrested and taken to Kayanza police station cell for judicial investigations.

#### ***V. CONCLUSION ET RECOMMENDATION***

Ligue Iteka notes and denounces the persistent deterioration of human rights across the country. It condemns the impunity of the perpetrators of crimes and launches an urgent appeal:

- ⇒ To the Burundian Government to guarantee respect for human rights, including freedom of expression, association and assembly;
- ⇒ To the Government of Gitega to put an end to impunity by bringing to justice and holding accountable for their actions the perpetrators of human rights violations;
- ⇒ To the same government to take measures to improve the security situation in the country, including by combating violence and crime.