

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

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*Weekly bulletin « ITEKA N'IJAMBO » n°468 of the Burundian Ligue of Human Rights "ITEKA"*

**Week from 31 March to 6 April 2025**



*In memory of Madam Marie Claudette Kwizera, Treasurer of Iteka, reported missing since December 10 2015. From December 2015 to 6 April 2025, Iteka has documented at least 723 cases of enforced disappearances*

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## **ACRONYMS**

<b>BRARUDI</b>	: <i>Breweries and Lemonade Shops of Burundi</i>
<b>CDS</b>	: <i>Health Center</i>
<b>CNDD-FDD</b>	: <i>National Council for the Defense of Democracy-Force 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>FDN</b>	: <i>National Defense Force</i>
<b>FLN</b>	: <i>National Liberation Front</i>
<b>FOMI</b>	: <i>Organo-Mineral Fertilizers</i>
<b>TGI</b>	: <i>High Court</i>
<b>UPRONA</b>	: <i>Union for National Progress</i>

## 0. INTRODUCTION

This bulletin presents an alarming human rights and security situation in Burundi. Four people died, one person has been abducted, one person has been tortured, and three victims of GBV have been reported.

Civil and political rights, as well as socioeconomic and cultural rights, are also covered in this bulletin.

The political, judicial, and security context is reported.

Imbonerakure, police officers, and administrative officials are accused of being the main alleged perpetrators of these human rights violations.

## I. CONTEXT

### I.1. POLITICAL CONTEXT

The political context in Burundi during the reporting period was marked by various events illustrating preparations for future elections. On April 5, 2025, the fourth edition of the CNDD-FDD Women's Day celebration, known as Umukenyererarugamba Day, was held in Gitega at Ingoma Stadium. The event opened with a parade of women and girls affiliated with the party. Several speeches followed, including those by Marie Goreth Yamuremye, President of Abakenyererarugamba Women's League, and Révéruen Ndikuriyo, Secretary General of CNDD-FDD. Yamuremye expressed her gratitude to the party for organizing the event, while highlighting the role of women in key positions within institutions, emphasizing their significant impact on Burundian society. In his address to thousands of members, the Secretary General emphasized that success requires effort and warned his supporters of the persistent threats from enemies of the State, exemplified by his statements regarding the failure of opponents to overthrow the established order.

That same day, in Ruyigi province, young Imbonerakure from Busoro zone engaged in morning sports activities, displaying intimidating behavior toward political opponents. After gathering, they walked a considerable distance to return to their starting point, where they continued their physical exercises. Wearing party uniforms, they chanted threatening slogans intended to intimidate supporters of other parties, particularly those in the opposition, revealing a tense atmosphere within the political community.

On March 30, 2025, a UPRONA party meeting took

place in Rusengo, where influential members such as Jean Claude Ndayiragije and Innocent Hakizimana expressed their support for local members. Fear prevailed among the opposition, worsened by nighttime patrols carried out by Imbonerakure to monitor the activities of opposition members. These patrols seek to eavesdrop on and prevent clandestine meetings between opponents, which instill a feeling of fear and mistrust within this political fringe. UPRONA leaders encouraged their base to overcome this fear and recruit new members in preparation for the upcoming elections. Furthermore, a CNDD-FDD party meeting took place on March 31, 2025, where local directors were urged to ensure that the entire population of their sub-hills join the party.

Despite objections and notable absences at this meeting, efforts were made to raise funds for the renovation of the local party office. Finally, on April 5, two other meetings were held in Cankuzo province, led by leaders of Imbonerakure and the Women's League, aimed at mobilizing members of these leagues for the upcoming elections. An analysis shows that Mutero hill, Cankuzo zone, commune and province, has a weak CNDD-FDD representation according to the two meetings held, one of the young Imbonerakure on Rusange sub-hill and at Mutero sub-hill of the Bakenyererarugamba, while a majority of the inhabitants express their support for opposition parties, such as UPRONA and CNL. These events illustrate complex political dynamics and an electoral landscape characterized by tensions between the ruling party and its opponents.

## 1.2. JUSTICE CONTEXT

### Police officer sentenced to life imprisonment for the murder and mutilation of his wife

On March 31, 2025, Muyinga High Court (TGI) rendered a verdict in the case of Anicet Niyonzima, a police officer convicted of the murder of his wife, Violette Tuyisenge, followed by mutilation of her body. Anicet Niyonzima was sentenced to life imprisonment, the most severe penalty available under the law. In addition to this primary sentence, Muyinga High Court ordered Anicet Niyonzima to

## 1.3. SECURITY CONTEXT

The security situation in Burundi during this reporting period reveals a worrying intensification of paramilitary maneuvers orchestrated by Imbonerakure in Nyabitsinda commune, located in Ruyigi province, as well as in other parts of the country. These operations are causing growing tensions and creating an atmosphere of mistrust within the local community, highlighting the instability of the situation.

On April 5, 2025, on Nyabitsinda hill, Ruyigi province, young Imbonerakure, including Augustin nicknamed Kajisho, leader of Imbonerakure in Nyabitsinda zone, Eric, Damien, Déo and Désiré nicknamed Commander, from all the hills in this zone gathered for sports and paramilitary exercises. According to sources on site, at 5:30 a.m., the inhabitants of Nyabitsinda woke up to the chants of these young Imbonerakure who were gathering. Still according to the same sources, these Imbonerakure gathered at Nyabitsinda communal stadium at 6 a.m. They then took the road to Kinyinya singing songs of the ruling party as well as songs encouraging members of other parties to join it.

Among the slogans heard, it was said: “Barabahenze inkona ntiyaruzwa, burakeye tuvuyereke abagabo, uwutazokwishikana azoza kurondera kwinjira bitagishoboka”: (*They deceived you, the eagle cannot be stolen, people will be witnessing, whoever does not join today, tomorrow will be too late*). Dukeneye amajwi yose ijana kw’ijana mumatora yimirije. Amatora yaraheze dusigaje guharura gusa. Dukeneyeko mumwaka wa 2026 atawundi mugambwe uzoba ukivugwa muri zone Nyabitsinda, *these young Imbonerakure continue to say. (We want a 100% victory for the forthcoming elections. The elections are over, all that remains is the*

pay 50 million BIF to the victim's family in damages. Once the court decision is final and unappealable, Anicet Niyonzima will be publicly exhibited in a central place in Muyinga commune to emphasize the gravity of the crime and serve as a warning to the community.

This judgment sparked widespread emotion and outrage, reflecting horror and condemnation of such acts. The case highlighted the importance of justice and the protection of human rights in Burundi.

*counting. We want CNDD-FDD to be the only party to be present in Nyabitsinda zone by 2026.)*

After the sport, around 10 a.m., they once again returned to Nyabitsinda communal stadium for paramilitary training in preparation for the party's show of force to take place in Kinyinya commune on April 12, 2025, the same sources added. These young people wore party T-shirts and simple pants, with grass on their heads like soldiers during training. They also had tree branches, especially cassava. According to the same sources, during the communal elections, CNDD-FDD is the only party authorized to run in Gisuru commune, according to the new administrative division that brings together the former communes of Gisuru, Kinyinya and Nyabitsinda.

In Kirundo province, information received by Ligue Iteka on April 1, 2025, indicates that since February 13, 2025, following the speech of the President of the Republic in Bugabira commune, Burundi has been preparing for a fight with Rwanda. The leader of the Imbonerakure in Butanyerera province, according to the new administrative division, Abel Ahishakiye, provincial head of SNR, accompanied by the provincial police commissioner and the governor, ordered to install roadblocks in all communes, the suspension of the movement of motorcycle drivers from 8 p.m. and the closure of bars at midnight in order to monitor the movement of unknown persons.

Roadblocks were installed and the distribution of rifles for some roadblocks was carried out by Abel Ahishakiye on March 15, 2025. In Busoni commune, 9 main roadblocks were installed and 13

rifles distributed, including 3 rifles kept at Jean Baptiste Nzigamasabo alias Gihaha, serving two roadblocks in Kabanga, 4 rifles kept at Ndururutse Vital for the two roadblocks in Bishisha and Gatete, 3 rifles at Minani Jean Paul, teacher at ECOFO Kumanana I for two roadblocks in Nyagisozi, and 3 rifles in Sigu kept at the police position, recovered every evening by a man named Thomas, a nurse and former CDS Sigu manager for three roadblocks installed in Sigu.

In Bugabira commune, 8 roadblocks were installed and 10 rifles distributed, including 4 rifles kept at Nyandwi alias Dorokas to serve 3 roadblocks in Kiri and Kiyonza, 2 rifles in Ruhehe kept at Buringo, a trader in Ruhehe center, and 4 rifles kept at Marcel, former Gitwe hill head to man the three barriers installed in Gitwe and Nyamabuye. In Kirundo commune, 5 roadblocks were installed and 8 rifles distributed, including 4 kept at Ryambabaje of Kavomo for the three roadblocks in Murama, Kavomo and Kigozi, and 4 kept at Rukingamubiri of Ceru for the two roadblocks in Ceru and Rukuramigabo.

In Bwambarangwe commune, four roadblocks were installed and seven rifles distributed, three of which were kept at Mutabazi's for the two roadblocks in Kimeza, and four rifles, two of which were kept at Bizimana's and two others at a man named Philbert, for the two roadblocks in Buhoro and Kabuyenge.

In Vumbi commune, three roadblocks were erected and four rifles distributed to the Imbonerakure, including four rifles held by unidentified Imbonerakure serving two roadblocks in Nyagatovu and Gahe, and one roadblock in Kabuye toward Gitobe without a rifle, but guarded by Imbonerakure armed with machetes.

In Ntega commune, five roadblocks were erected

with five rifles distributed, three of which were in Mugendo near Kanyaru River, with two rifles kept at the home of an Imbonerakure, Ndikuriyo, and two roadblocks in Ntega center with three rifles. In Gitobe commune: two roadblocks were erected and three rifles distributed. The two roadblocks are located at the entrance and exit of Gitobe commune, and the three rifles are kept at the former communal administrator's house, guarded by Imbonerakure on a rotating basis. It should be noted that anyone passing through these barriers must have National Identity Card.

From March 31 to April 2, 2025, CNDD-FDD branch leaders in Karuzi province conducted a census of party members and non-members. This process involved house visits, aimed at establishing an accurate list by questioning residents about their membership status, their participation in elections, and any opposition to the party. This information gathering is raising concerns among non-members, who are apprehensive about possible consequences. The census was completed on April 2, 2025 at 7:00 p.m.

Finally, theft incidents have been reported in the commune of Butaganzwa, Ruyigi province. According to a communication received by Ligue Iteka on April 5, 2025, residents of this commune are expressing their distress at the increasing thefts occurring both in their fields and in their homes, a situation that is reaching worrying proportions.

In hills such as Caragata, Nyangurube, Kivumu, Musenga, and Titi, located in Mugege zone of Butaganzwa commune, local sources have reported a worrying increase in the theft of small livestock and poultry. Animals such as goats, rabbits, and chickens are particularly targeted, causing serious concern among the local population and herders who feel threatened in this region.

## **II. CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS**

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

#### **I.1.1. Intentional homicide**

##### **II.1.1.1. Persons killed by unidentified people**

###### **A Child died in Buhiga commune, Karuzi province**

On April 2, 2025, at around 8:00 a.m., on Buhiga hill, zone and commune, Karuzi province, a one-year-old child of a man named Joseph, a CNDD-FDD party member, aged over 48, and his wife named Mwiza, a CNDD-FDD party member, aged 37, died after drinking a local anti-poisoning medicine. According to witnesses on the scene, the family went to the home of a man named Laurent, a 45-year-old teacher and CNDD-FDD party member, to

test whether the child had been poisoned, as the latter claimed to be capable of doing so and administered medication. According to the same sources, Laurent confirmed that the child had been poisoned and given medication, and the child died 30 minutes after taking the so-called medication. When the family took the body to Buhiga hospital mortuary, the workers asked the cause of death and informed the police, who arrested Laurent. He was imprisoned in Buhiga police cell to protect him from the victim's father's revenge and was released on 5 April 2025 after the child's burial.

##### **II.1.1.2. People killed following the settling of scores**

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

Information received by Ligue Iteka dated March 31, 2025, indicates that on March 24, 2025, on Muyaga sub-hill, Kinyota hill, Muyinga zone, commune and province, Violette Tuyisenge, nicknamed Maman Divine, mother of three children, was killed by her husband Anicet Niyonzima, a police officer. According to local witnesses, the criminal killed the victim at home and mutilated her, then put the body in a bag for easy transport. He loaded it on a motorcycle and dumped it on Kayenzi hill, on Muyinga-Cankuzo road. According to our sources, the victim was not on good terms with her husband, who had a concubine and was always trying to drive out his wife and replace her with his concubine. The court conducted an investigation, and the motorcyclist disclosed the facts. The trial was held on March 31, 2025. Anicet Niyonzima was sentenced to life imprisonment with payment of 50 million in compensation to Violette Tuyisenge's family.

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

On April 2, 2025, on Biganda hill, Muramvya commune and province, Anitha Nduwayo, aged 31, was killed by her husband, Ndayishimiye Méthode, aged 39, a member of CNDD-FDD party. According to eyewitnesses, the victim had been dismissed by her husband since January 2025, accusing her of sterility because they had just gone three years without having children. The husband had unsuccessfully sought a formal divorce. He even offered her a sum of 500,000 Bif to get her to agree to a divorce, but she refused. He then offered a sum of 20,000 Bif to a Batwa member named Nyaritama to physically eliminate the victim. According to police sources, Nyaritama accepted that he had been mandated by Méthode, Anitha's husband. Méthode was arrested by the police on April 3, 2025, in Gatumba, where he was planning to flee to the DRC. He is currently in Muramvya provincial police cell. According to the same police sources, he had already admitted that he was the one who had killed his wife during preliminary interrogation conducted by OPJ Nimparitse Fabien.

### ***II.1.1.3. Persons abducted and/or missing***

A person was abducted in Ntakangwa commune, Bujumbura Mairie province, on April 2, 2025, at around 7:00 a.m. The tragic incident occurred at the market in the locality, commonly known as Kw'isamariro, located on the 15<sup>th</sup> Maramvya street, in Buterere zone, Ntakangwa commune, Bujumbura Mairie. The victim, Fidèle Nkurembone, a 46-year-old CNL party member, pro-Agathon Rwaswa, and father of seven children, resided on the 15<sup>th</sup> street.

He was brutally abducted by police officers, including Athia Nduwimana, a police officer, and an SNR officer. According to testimonies from several eyewitnesses present in the locality, it appears that the victim was heading towards Kw'isamariro market, where he was carrying out his daily business. A white Toyota double-cab vehicle with tinted windows and registration number BA049 was waiting for him.

Inside this vehicle were individuals dressed in police uniforms. One of them immediately pointed at Fidèle Nkurembone, and the abductors then rushed at him, violently snatching the keys of his shop and his backpack. They started beating him, and despite Fidèle Nkurembone's attempts to defend himself against the assault, he was forcibly taken away. The

### ***II.1.1.4. Threats to life***

#### **Attempted murder at Gitega central prison**

Information received by Ligue Iteka on April 4, 2025, indicates that on March 29, 2025, at around 6:00 a.m., Nyabenda Richard almost died in Gitega central prison. According to an eyewitness, a man named Elvis, also a detainee, took a knife and

abductors took him to an unknown location, heading towards Bujumbura city.

It is important to note that Fidèle Nkurembone was the right-hand man of Elie Ngomirakiza, the CNL party leader in Mutimbuzi commune, who was abducted on July 9, 2021, an abduction of which there has been no news since. According to Fidèle Nkurembone's relatives, he had recently returned to the country in December 2024, after a stay in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, where he had migrated in 2022 hoping to find employment. Following his mysterious disappearance, his family and loved ones have undertaken a desperate search in numerous prisons in Bujumbura, but their efforts have unfortunately been in vain so far.

Fidèle Nkurembone's family is extremely concerned for his safety and well-being, fearing for his life in such conditions. The circumstances surrounding this abduction are particularly disturbing, especially given the involvement of individuals in police uniform and a potential intelligence agent. This raises serious questions about the legality of these acts as well as the reasons behind such an unacceptable abduction.

stabbed Richard in the stomach while he was still asleep in bed. The same witness stated that the perpetrator had a mental disorder. The victim was quickly evacuated to Gitega Regional Hospital for urgent care, while the perpetrator remains handcuffed in prison.

## ***II.2. PHYSICAL AND/OR MENTAL INTEGRITY***

### ***II.2.1. Persons tortured by Imbonerakure***

#### **A person tortured in Buhiga commune, Karuzi province**

Onésime Citegetse, a 20-year-old member of CNDD-FDD party, was tortured by Imbonerakure on Rwingoma hill, Buhiga commune, Karuzi province, on March 31, 2025. According to eyewitnesses, the Imbonerakure, led by Egide and Ezéchiél, accused him of trampling on his CNDD-FDD party T-shirt and of being a member of CNL party. According to the same witnesses, they also accused him of wanting to kill the Imbonerakure of

Muyange hill because he was carrying a knife. Onésime Citegetse was arrested as he was about to join his mother in the dark. He was beaten for 30 minutes before his mother arrived and the Imbonerakure decided to postpone the case until the next day. The next day, he was awakened and ordered to pay a fine of 30,000 Bif. Two days later, on April 2, he was welcomed into CNDD-FDD party. The victim said he had been a longtime member of CNDD-FDD party and owned the party's T-shirt, but he does not know why he was treated this way.

## ***II.2.2. Rape***

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

Information received by Ligue Iteka on April 2, 2025, indicates that on March 25, 2025, on Gashasha hill, Kigwena zone, Rumonge commune and province, 17-year-old Merveille Niyera was raped by Bizoba Jean Marie. According to witnesses, the alleged perpetrator, a young Imbonerakure member of the ruling party on this hill, forcibly took the young girl from a cassava field and raped her. The girl, who was crying for help, was rescued by palm oil watchmen. This young man was arrested the same day by Rumonge police and jailed in Rumonge the police cell. The victim was referred to Humura center in Rumonge commune.

### **A girl raped in Muyinga commune and province.**

On March 9, 2025, at Hope 2 Hotel in Muyinga commune and province, Gateka Nicole narrowly escaped rape by the head of Imbonerakure in Buhumuza province, Shabani Nimubona. According to local eyewitnesses, on March 28, 2025, Shabani Nimubona went to the hotel with another man and was received and served by Nicole without any unusual occurrences. On March 29, 2025, Shabani Nimubona returned alone to the hotel in his car with tinted windows and asked security guards if the Tutsi girl from Bururi who works at the hotel was serving. He intimidated them into calling him and

forced Nicol to enter the vehicle where Shabani was. Shabani began touching her private parts and ordering her to take off the pants she was wearing. Nicole told him to give her time to get ready and locked herself in the room, then alerted her boss, who came to pick her up in his car and then took her out to hide her in a secret location. Until April 4, 2025, Shabani Nimubona stopped by the hotel every day to check if she had returned. Nicole Gateka and her family are in great fear and fear for her abduction and enforced disappearance.

### **A little girl raped in Mukike commune, Bujumbura province**

On March 25, 2025, L.B.I, a 3-year-old and 2-month-old girl, was raped by Willy Irangabiye, a 32-year-old domestic worker, on Ruzibazi hill, Mukike commune, Bujumbura province. According to the information gathered, the alleged perpetrator took advantage of the victim's parents' absence to rape her at the family home. The assailant allegedly first inserted his finger into the girl's genitals before raping her. Medical examinations confirmed the abuse suffered by the victim. Upon their return, the victim's parents were alerted by their child's cries and immediately took legal action. The alleged perpetrator was arrested and jailed at Bujumbura prosecutor's office.

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

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

#### **Gold trafficking orchestrated by the President of the Republic and the Prime Minister**

##### **◇ The President**

The President of the Republic and his Prime Minister are in the heart of a mafia system accused of plundering Burundi's mineral resources. In addition to multiple cases of corruption, fraud, money laundering, illicit enrichment, and expropriations attributed to them, the commune of Mabayi has become a new victim of their actions.

Since the withdrawal of the last FDLR positions

from Kibira forest, which they had occupied for more than fifteen years, to join the fighting in the DRC, President Évariste Ndayishimiye has reportedly conveniently deployed his own gold miners to this area. To ensure complete control over this illegal exploitation, these workers are paid daily in cash. In addition, a military guard, including elements of the National Intelligence Service (SNR), was specifically assigned to prevent any administrative interference in this exploitation of Kibira National Park, a protected area. An unknown number of FDLR members reportedly remained in Kibira to collaborate in this lucrative activity.

It is crucial to recall that as early as 1998, the first Interahamwe settled in Kibira, planning to attack Rwanda. This forest, rich in gold and coltan and blessed with fertile land for subsistence farming, provided them with a prosperous refuge despite the war in Burundi. The extracted minerals provided them with weapons and nurtured a new generation of FDLR fighters. Drawing on their Hutu rebel origins and past alliances with CNDD-FDD in eastern former Zaire between 1996 and 2000, Nkurunziza regime had forged close ties with the FDLR and the FLN. Several regime figures, including Nkurunziza himself, are believed to have organized gold and arms trafficking. The gold was notably used to arm the Imbonerakure in Kiriba training camps in the DRC, groups aimed at creating a Hutu militia parallel to the FDN, potentially allied with Rwandan Hutu genocidaires to attack Rwanda or intervene in the event of an uprising by Tutsi soldiers and civilians placed in key positions following the Arusha Accords.

More recently, Ndayishimiye and his Prime Minister have reportedly expressed their covetousness for Kibira gold. Between 2022 and 2023, they allegedly ordered soldiers, supported by civilians and these rebels via Dominique Nyamugaruka, commander of the first military region, to illegally exploit Kibira gold resources. However, this undertaking reportedly failed to yield expected financial returns.

During recent clashes with FDLR elements tempted by the precious metal and reluctant to join their comrades in the DRC against the M23, Ndayishimiye allegedly used administrators and camp commanders to encourage the population to distance themselves from these rebels, a move aimed at improving his image in Rwanda. Behind this facade lies a plan to monopolize gold mining in Kibira, similar to the Prime Minister's activities in his home commune of Bukinanyana, which also borders the Kibira.

#### ◇ **The Prime Minister**

Like the President, the Prime Minister is involved in multiple cases of corruption, expropriations, fraud, and trafficking of various kinds, particularly minerals. Since 2024, evidence of gold has been discovered on Buhoro hill, within OTB Buhoro

property. Local farmers had begun artisanal mining, but the Prime Minister reportedly quickly installed his own workers there. Ironically, while the OTB is on the verge of bankruptcy due to mismanagement, money laundering by senior officials, and chronic fuel shortages, this same State Company is now suffering the direct consequences of illegal gold mining, with tea plantations affected.

#### **Disastrous consequences for local and national economy**

In an already fragile national economic context, this fraudulent gold trafficking involving civilians, senior officials, and Rwandan rebels is beginning to have significant negative repercussions on the economy of the people of Mabayi commune and ultimately threatens the economy of Burundi as a whole.

The presence of two banks (Interbank and Bancobu) and two microfinance institutions (Coopec) in Mabayi does not prevent a critical shortage of cash. It has become extremely difficult, if not impossible, for non-gold traffickers to withdraw money from these institutions. Corruption has plagued these structures to the point that a customer with 100 million BIF in their account can be refused a withdrawal of 2 million, while another, without sufficient funds, can easily obtain 15 million with a bribe. Faced with this situation, some residents are forced to travel to Bujumbura, located 106 km from Mabayi, to access their own funds. Others, lacking confidence in the corrupt banking system, are starting to keep their money at home, a risky practice that could have disastrous consequences for local economy.

#### **Rising food prices in Ruyigi commune and province**

Information received by Ligue Iteka on April 5, 2025, indicates that Ruyigi province is experiencing a significant increase in food prices, particularly in Rusengo and Ruyigi zones. This increase is attributed to several factors, including the high cost of transportation due to fuel shortages at gas stations, pushing vehicle owners to stock up on black markets. Affected food products, including palm oil, can fetch up to 10,500 BIF per kilogram at Rusengo market. BRARUDI's new Amstel Bright drink is

considered too expensive, and its near monopoly in bars displeases Primus drinkers.

### **III.2. RIGHT TO EDUCATION**

#### **Student strike at Matana high school in Bururi province**

Students at Matana High School in Bururi province rioted since the morning of April 3, 2025. Local sources indicate that instead of attending class to prepare for the current second-term exams, these students demonstrated along National Road 7. The demonstration was blocked near Matana Hospital by police operating in the commune, and the students returned to school.

These students were demanding the return of an 8<sup>th</sup>-grade student named André Dushime, who had been expelled from the school a week earlier. The school principal reported that the boy was punished for causing a disturbance in the refectory, where some food was spilled and some was stolen by students. Sylvestre Ndikuriyo indicated that this student was the first to break down the door of the refectory, and others followed. These students are also demanding improved food conditions.

The communal director, who organized a meeting in the afternoon at the school to find a solution to the riot, called on the students to end their riot. Désiré Bizosa indicated that their riot was unfounded, especially since they had no right to make demands on behalf of the punished student. Regarding the food, Désiré Bizosa indicated that the meeting decided to closely monitor food conditions.

#### **Forced participation of students to welcome the deputy secretary of CNDD-FDD party in Kayanza province**

On April 3, 2025, between 9 a.m. and 1 p.m., on

The economic situation in Ruyigi province is worrying. Previously, the province had experienced a drop in food prices during the harvest season. However, the current situation is different.

Kirema hill in Kayanza urban center, the deputy secretary of CNDD-FDD party in the greater commune of Kayanza visited the party members on Kirema hill. Students at Kirema Primary School were forced to leave their classrooms to welcome this party authority, leaving their notes behind. Some are worried about the future of these children's education, especially their academic performance during this crucial second-term exam period.

#### **Schools in poor condition in Rusaka commune, Mwaro province**

At Nkundusi Primary School, located on Nkundusi hill, Makamba zone, Rusaka commune, Mwaro province, students in 8<sup>th</sup> grade are attending classes in poor conditions. The windows on the right side of this classroom remain gaping. The old wooden windows were destroyed long ago and have not been replaced. This 8<sup>th</sup> grade class at this school has about twenty students who must attend classes exposed to the cold due to the strong winds from Gihinga massif, located to the east of the school. Also, when there is sun, the students who sit on the side of these open windows all the time are exposed to the sun's rays from the morning until around 10 o'clock when the sun is still coming from the horizon in the East. The other 2 classes (7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>) have wooden windows and when they are closed, there is darkness in the classroom. Some parents of students of this school claim that these 3 rooms were built 10 years ago when the fundamental education system was established so that the primary level reaches up to 9<sup>th</sup>. These 3 rooms were built with the efforts of parents and the surrounding community

## **IV. CATEGORICAL RIGHTS**

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

#### **Children arrested in the process of human trafficking to Tanzania**

Child trafficking has resurfaced in the provinces of Rutana and Makamba, with the arrest on April 4, 2025, of minors en route to Tanzania, likely destined for domestic work. In Rutana, on Gitaba hill, four young boys were arrested by the police along with a suspected trafficker. These minors, from Bukirasazi and Buraza communes of Gitega province, claim to have left their communities on foot. According to children's rights activists who met with them, the children were visibly exhausted after a long journey.

The same sources denounce a new strategy adopted by traffickers, consisting of having children travel on foot or by motorcycle to avoid security checks, often passing through the communes of Bukemba

in Rutana province and Kayogoro in Makamba province, all the way to the Tanzanian border. The children and their alleged chaperone are currently jailed at Rutana communal police station, awaiting their hearing.

On the same day, in Nyanza-lac commune in Makamba province, four minor girls from Kagongo hill in Rumonge province were also arrested on Kabonga hill as they attempted to cross the border. Unlike other cases, these girls were not escorted by any adult, further worrying the authorities. They were taken to Nyanza-lac communal police station, awaiting their release to their parents, who have been identified by the authorities. These alarming cases revive the issue of child trafficking for exploitation in neighboring countries and call for strengthened controls, awareness-raising, and protection of minors in border areas.

## **V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Ligue Iteka denounces the deterioration of human rights in Burundi and impunity enjoyed by perpetrators. It calls on the Burundian authorities to take immediate action to end these violations and guarantee justice and equality for all citizens. Therefore, it recommends:

#### **To the Government of Gitega to:**

- ⇒ Conduct investigations into human rights violations, prosecute, and punish those responsible;
- ⇒ Immediately end the actions of the Imbonerakure to prevent any abuse of power and violence against the population;
- ⇒ Open civic space and allow for free and transparent elections that respect democratic principles;
- ⇒ End the anarchic exploitation of the country's minerals and the unjust enrichment of dignitaries to the detriment of the Burundian population.