

BURUNDIAN LIGUE OF HUMAN RIGHTS "ITEKA"

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Weekly bulletin « ITEKA N'IJAMBO » n°474 of the Burundian Ligue of Human Rights "ITEKA"

Week from 12-18 May 2025



In memory of Madam Marie Claudette Kwizera, Treasurer of Iteka, reported missing since December 10 2015. From December 2015 to 18 May 2025, Iteka has documented at least 729 cases of enforced disappearances

CONTENTS	PAGES
0. INTRODUCTION.....	4
I. CONTEXT.....	4
I.1. POLITICAL CONTEXT.....	4
I.2. SECURITY CONTEXT.....	12
I.3. GOVERNANCE CONTEXT.....	12
I.4. JUDICIAL CONTEXT.....	12
II. CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS.....	13
II.1. RIGHT TO LIFE.....	13
II.1.1. Intentional homicide.....	13
II.1.2. Persons killed by unidentified people.....	13
II.1.3. Persons killed following the settling of scores.....	14
II.1.4. People killed following mob justice.....	14
II.2. RIGHT TO PHYSICAL AND/OR MENTAL INTEGRITY.....	15
II.2.1. Torture, cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment.....	15
II.2.2. Rape.....	15
II.2.3. Gender-Based Violence.....	15
II.3. RIGHT TO FREEDOM.....	16
II.3.1. Arbitrary arrests.....	16
III. ECONOMIC, SOCIAL, AND CULTURAL RIGHTS.....	16
III.1. DISRUPTION OF ECONOMIC LIFE.....	16
III.2. THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION.....	17
III.3. RIGHT TO WORK.....	18
IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	18

ACRONYMS

CDS	: Health Center,
CECI	: Independent Municipal Electoral Commission,
CENI	: Independent National Electoral Commission,
CEPI	: Independent Provincial Electoral Commission,
CNDD-FDD	: National Council for the Defense of Democracy-Forces for the Defense of Democracy
CNI	: National Identity Card,
CNL	: National Congress for Liberty,
DPE	: Provincial Director of Education,
DPEAE	: Provincial Directorate of the Environment, Agriculture and Livestock,
DRC	: Democratic Republic of Congo,
ECOFO	: Basic School,
FDLR	: Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda,
FOMI	: Organo-Mineral Fertilizers,
M23	: March 23 Movement,
RN	: National Road,
SNR	: National Intelligence Service,
UPRONA	: Union for National Progress.

0. INTRODUCTION

This bulletin presents an alarming human rights and security situation in Burundi.

The political context is widely reported, as the country is going through a heated election period with the withdrawal of voter's registration cards and the electoral campaign for the communal and legislative elections scheduled for June 5th.

Cases of human rights violations are also reported.

These cases include 10 people killed, including two women and a newborn, five cases of torture, two cases of GBV, including one rape of a six-year-old child, and two people arbitrarily arrested, including member of Frodebu party and the Burundi Bwa Bose coalition.

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

1. CONTEXT

1.1. POLITICAL CONTEXT

During the week under review, the prevailing political context was largely that of the distribution of voter's cards and the start of the electoral campaign across the country. Irregularities were reported throughout Burundi.

Distribution of voter's cards and some irregularities in eastern Burundi

In Ruyigi province, as throughout the country, the distribution of voter's cards was scheduled for May 12-14, 2025. It was noted that many voter's cards had still not been collected on the last day.

For example, at Ruyigi CECI, on the last day, there were still more than 2,000 cards still uncollected, hence the CEPI's extension of the distribution period by one day. The situation was the same in Cankuzo. For example, at CECI Cankuzo, on the last day, there were still more than 1,800 undistributed cards, which led to CEPI extending the distribution period by one day. Despite this extension, not all cards were collected, and it was recommended that cards not distributed during the scheduled period be returned to the CECI for later collection.

Irregularities were observed, with some who registered missed their cards, while others had their names, place of birth, and age of birth incorrectly transcribed, leading them to file complaints by registering again.

In addition, some voter's were able to retrieve the cards of other people they knew without providing

any proof that they had at least been authorized to vote, leading some to believe that cheating or fraud may be taking place, especially since there are rumors that some people give cards to members of the ruling party to vote in their place on election day.

Cases of more than one card distributed to a single person in Giharo commune, Rutana province

On May 12 to 14, 2025, at ECOFO Rubaho, on Butezi hill and zone, Giharo commune, Rutana province, cases of irregularities were observed, indicating that the 2025 elections may have already been rigged by CNDD-FDD party: the distribution of more than one voter's card to the same person registered on the voter's list. According to local sources, for example, a woman named Cerine Ndayikeza, daughter of Kwizera and Barinakandi, with ID card number 531.1602/58.808, received two voter's cards with the same first and last name, the same first and last names of her parents, and the same ID card number. These cases are also notable throughout Butezi hill, in Giharo commune.

According to the same sources, the 2025 elections have already been rigged through this wrong distribution of voter's cards.

Wearing party uniforms when collecting voter's cards in Cankuzo commune and province

On May 12, 2025, from the morning until all day, at the polling stations at Cankuzo Communal High

School, many people collecting voter's cards wore CNDD-FDD uniforms. According to local sources, no one at the same polling stations was wearing CNDD-FDD clothing as of May 13, 2025. This means that CNDD-FDD party members came first to collect voter's cards, and the rest of the population is dragging their feet.

This also applies to other polling stations, such as those located at Cankuzo Paramedical School and ECOFO Cankuzo II.

According to the same local sources, some people who were on the voter's lists did not receive their cards. The officials at these polling stations are recording their names in their registers to submit the report to the CECI. They add that a one-day extension to May 15, 2025, for the collection of voter's cards has been granted.

Obvious irregularities in the distribution of voter's cards in Muramvya commune and province.

While the distribution of voter's cards began on Monday, May 12, 2025, and ended on Thursday, May 14, 2025, cheating organized by Muramvya CECI and polling station officials, all from CNDD-FDD, has been reported here and there in Muramvya commune.

Thus, according to sources from members of opposition parties such as UPRONA, the CNL, and the "Burundi Bwa Bose" Coalition, this cheating is of three types:

- At ECOFO Mubarazi distribution center in Muramvya commune, two Imbonerakure, Karerwa Étienne and Nikundana Remegie, were seen returning on Tuesday, May 13, 2025, with dozens of voter's cards each. CNL party officials reported this to CECI, but nothing was done.
- At ECOFO Biganda, Muramvya commune, two members of CNL party, Kazungu Laurent and Bukuru Fabien, were called three and five times respectively, but polling station officials gave them only one voter's card, and they are wondering where the others will be put.

- In another case, many people are on the voter's lists but were unable to obtain their voter's cards, and this was noted in several centers. All of this demonstrates a clear way of electoral fraud, according to political opponents.

Control of voter's cards collection in Gitega province.

On May 12, 2025, CNDD-FDD party representatives informed their members that a census had been conducted, involving the heads of ten households (Nyumbakumi), to identify those who had not collected their voter's cards. The next day, anyone was prohibited from going to work without presenting their voter's card.

According to local sources, in several polling stations in the communes of Gitega province, as in other centers, some people found that their cards had been withdrawn by others. According to the same sources, this is a strategy invented and implemented by local CNDD-FDD party representatives to punish those who refuse to support the ruling party.

Even some party members have been targeted, accusing them of not participating in CNDD-FDD party activities. Awareness sessions have been held in the hills to explain that, in the voting booth, a CNDD-FDD party member will be present to show where to stamp the ballot. The uncollected cards have been sent to the communal commissions, which have been ordered to draw up a list of those concerned. These people will then be summoned through the nyumbakumi to explain why they have not collected their cards.

Problems of distributing voter's cards and requests for extension in Cibitoke, Bubanza, and Bujumbura provinces (New Bujumbura Province)

As the voter's card distribution period was ending, several citizens in the provinces of Cibitoke, Bubanza, and Bujumbura faced obstacles in collecting their cards. These difficulties were observed in several communes, prompting calls for an extension to allow all voter's to exercise their civic rights.

Endless queues, useless trips back and forth, and above all, growing concern: in several communes in the provinces of Cibitoke, Bubanza, and Bujumbura, citizens are reporting complications in the voter's card collection process. According to testimonies collected, particularly in the communes of Rugombo, Mugina, and Bukinanyana, as well as in some communes in Bubanza and Bujumbura, many voters are unable to obtain their cards despite having duly registered.

In Rugombo, a mother said she has gone to the registration office twice since Monday without success. *"We're told the cards aren't available yet, while there was a mistake in our information,"* she explained. A similar observation was made by a reporter during his field visits.

Faced with these difficulties, affected residents are calling for an extension of the distribution deadline. They are also requesting that mechanisms be put in place to facilitate access to the cards, particularly for those who, for different reasons, were unable to attend the polling stations on the initially scheduled dates.

"It would be unfair if registered citizens were unable to vote simply because of administrative delays or a tight schedule," laments a teacher from Mugina commune.

The electoral authorities then decided to extend the voter's registration card collection period by one day, in order to guarantee every citizen the enjoyment of this civil right. Despite an additional period of voter's registration card distribution, many voters in Cibitoke province were unable to receive their cards, even though their names were on the lists.

Irregularities in the distribution of voter's cards in northern Burundi

Since May 12, 2025, voters have begun collecting the voter's cards that are currently being distributed, but irregularities have been noted in Kirundo and Karuzi provinces:

For example:

In Kirundo province, at the polling stations in cen-

tral Kirundo, many people have not collected their cards even though they are on the list.

In Busoni commune, the Imbonerakure are intimidating residents who have not yet collected their cards and are not even entitled to communal services such as the National Identity Card or different administrative certificates.

In Karuzi province, on May 12, 2025, an unusual incident occurred on Buhiga hill, Buhiga zone and commune, Karuzi province, right at Buhiga3 polling station. Alexis BANDYATUYAGA, CNDD-FDD zone secretary, and Jérôme, zonal leader of Imbonerakure, and BUHIGA hill head, replaced the CECI distributors and distributed the cards for an hour before leaving. They did not see what they did, but the population is worried by replaced the voter's card distributors.

An electoral campaign marred by shortcomings

- Acts of intimidation during the electoral campaign in Ruyigi province

On May 13, 2025, the electoral campaign began in Ruyigi commune and province. According to local sources, CNDD-FDD party candidates for the legislative elections were presented in the new Buhumuza province. The candidates were introduced per commune of origin. This took place in Rusengo zone on May 15, 2025, around 4:00 p.m., as the convoy was coming from Cankuzo. CNDD-FDD party officials asked the population of Rusengo to vote 100% for CNDD-FDD.

On May 17, 2025, in the vast commune of Ruyigi, CNDD-FDD party held its campaign at Uhuru Stadium in Ruyigi. According to local sources, the candidates for the communal and legislative elections were introduced, as well as the population was mobilized to vote for CNDD-FDD. The Ruyigi market and all kiosks were closed until 3:00 p.m. to force all the population to go to the stadium to follow the message. In Ruyigi province, only CNDD-FDD, UPRONA, CNL parties, the BURUNDI BWA BOSE coalition, and FPI INEZA party are visible on the ground.

- CDP party members represented by Honorable Gaston Sindimwo arrested in Musongati commune, Rutana province

On May 15, 2025, at around 12:00 p.m., CDP party members represented by Honorable Gaston Sindimwo (former Vice President of the Republic during the 2015-2020 term on behalf of Uprona party) were arrested by Musongati communal tax collector along with other local residents by setting up roadblocks. He banned these CDP members from continuing their journey to Mpinga-Kayove commune to participate in a meeting organized by CDP party.

According to local sources, they had taken the wrong route by passing through Musongati commune.

According to the party's president, Anicet Niyonkuru, Honorable Gaston Sindimwo and his companions came from Gitega in a vehicle chanting their party's slogans. Arriving in Ngoma, they took the road leading to Musongati. When they realized they had taken the wrong way, they turned back and found themselves between two roadblocks. Claudine, the communal Administrator of Musongati, accused them of playing CDP party songs, even though the party did not have authorization to hold a meeting in the commune on that date. They were released around 4 p.m., upon the arrival of this administrator after 4 hours.

Amending the Constitution of the Republic of Burundi to avoid perpetual elections that require a lot of resources, and abolishing some budget-consuming institutions such as the Senate and the Ombudsman, in order to allocate the funds allocated to them to development projects, some of the society projects of the Council of Patriots (CDP) party. This was mentioned by Anicet Niyonkuru, the party's president, in Mpinga, in Mpinga-Kayove commune, during a party meeting held for the legislative elections.

- Ban on carrying out activities following CNDD-FDD party's electoral campaign and threats the Imbonerakure, in Cankuzo province.

On May 15, 2025, at Buhumuza stadium, located in Cankuzo province city, CNDD-FDD party cam-

paigned and activities were paralyzed.

According to local sources, the Imbonerakure forcibly closed Cankuzo market, shores, kiosks and boutiques, restaurants, hairdressers, and beauty salons. They forced bicycle and motorbike taxis to go to the stadium without exception. Only Cankuzo hospital, the Cankuzo Health Center, pharmacies, banks, and microfinance institutions continued to operate.

According to the same sources, the Imbonerakure said that anyone attempting to open or operate will be fined 50,000 Bif on the spot, before being punished. In the quarters, the Imbonerakure circulated to check on anyone who did otherwise. Among them, the leaders who commanded them were Ndugi Révérien, former provincial secretary of CNDD-FDD party, who was also the DPE of Cankuzo, currently Director General of the Ministry of Commerce, and Léonidas Bacamurwanko, academic secretary at the University of Burundi, Buhumuza Campus in Cankuzo. At the end of each street, a flag was displayed throughout the city, guarded by an Imbonerakure. These Imbonerakure and their leaders ordered those who did not want to go to the stadium to go home and sleep until the end of the campaign festivities.

The same sources add that these Imbonerakure circulated day and night in household to intimidate the population, saying that a satellite would be installed above the voting booths, and anyone who will not vote for CNDD-FDD party would be seen immediately and receive a corresponding reward (a punishment).

- Involvement of minors in CNDD-FDD party campaign in Cankuzo commune and province

According to a reliable source, on May 15, 2025, Ligue Iteka received news that, in recent days, in Cankuzo province, a high level of participation of minors (under 18) has been observed in campaigns organized by CNDD-FDD party. These children are between the ages of 9 and 12. Some of them are even barefoot, and others suffer from hunger. They often arrive very early in the morning and leave around 5:00 p.m. at the end of campaigning activities.

It is important to note that the electoral code prohibits minors from engaging in election-related

political activities. In fact, these minors do not meet all the conditions necessary to be voters, in accordance with the first chapter of article 4 of organic law no. 1/12 of June 5, 2024, amending organic law no. 1/11 of May 20, 2019 concerning the electoral code.

Concerns related to the election campaign in Gitega province

1. Obligation to participate in campaign activities:

In Gitega province, numerous reports indicate that citizens are being pressured to attend CNDD-FDD rallies. Local authorities are ordering residents to interrupt their activities to listen to the ruling party's messages.

2. Disruption of community activities.

The CNDD-FDD campaign is severely disrupting socioeconomic life in several communes of Gitega: This Thursday, May 15, 2025, Gitega city experienced a near-total shutdown of activities in all quarters due to CNDD-FDD party activities. On May 7, 2025, Bitare market in Bugendana commune was closed for two hours to allow a rally to be held. Merchants were forced to close their kiosks and listen to CNDD-FDD speech before being able to conduct their business.

3. Use of intimidating and threatening speeches:

During CNDD-FDD rallies, threatening statements are made, often by members of Imbonerakure. Slogans such as: *"Udatoye CNDD-FDD wotoriki?" "If you don't vote for the CNDD-FDD, who else would you vote for?" "Watora wareka CNDD-FDD izoguma igutwara" whether you vote or not, CNDD-FDD will continue to rule you "Uwuzorukarisha ru-zomumwa" "Nimba udatora CNDD-FDD genda mu Rwanda" Whoever does not vote for CNDD-FDD will be killed, or will go to Rwanda."* These statements create a climate of fear and intimidation among citizens, particularly those who do not support the ruling party.

4. Unequal treatment between political parties during the election campaign:

Unlike CNDD-FDD campaigns, other parties such as CNL, the Coalition Burundi bwa Bose, and UPRONA organize their activities without cons-

traint, and citizens participate voluntarily. According to supporters of other political parties, this demonstrates an imbalance in respect for political freedoms and the right to free and fair participation.

- Measures violated by CNDD-FDD members

On May 15, 2025, CNDD-FDD party officially launched its electoral campaign in the expanded province of Gitega. The ceremonies took place at Ingoma Stadium in Gitega. While the electoral code prohibits political parties from using state-owned transportation facilities provided to some officials, some party members who left Mwaro province on Thursday morning left in a Dyna-type vehicle belonging to Mwaro High School. Others were transported in a double-cabin van belonging to Isabu/Gisozi. Still others left on official motorcycles with yellow license plates.

- An electoral campaign with threats, with the use of State resources in Cibitoke province

After CNDD-FDD regime excluded Agathon Rwasasa's main opposition party from the elections and excluded the Burundi Bwa Bose coalition from the communal elections, a peaceful electoral campaign was expected, as the ruling party would remain the only master of the political field. With the general election campaign beginning on May 13, 2025, CNDD-FDD party appears to be using worrying strategies to win over voters.

Without any social project, CNDD-FDD party preferred to anticipate the campaign from April, something no other party in Burundi would dare do. Despite the new administrative divisions, each former commune in Cibitoke province seems to have its own strategy for convincing voters.

According to a source within CNDD-FDD party, the goal for each former commune is to compete in order to better position itself for positions after the elections.

Alongside threats against those who would do the wrong choice (not voting for the ruling party), this strategy is used throughout the country:

1. In Mabayi, lies were the preferred strategy. Bordering Rwanda, the threats are directed at those who will not vote for CNDD-FDD, the only party that protects them from attacks by Rwandan Tutsis. Not

to mention the FDLR in Kibira, which has been hunted since January 2025 to fight the M23, these Rwandan rebels protected by CNDD-FDD regime are confused with the RED-Tabara, which Paul Kagame allegedly sent to disrupt the elections. Most of Mabayi's residents make their living from gold mining, Kagame is blamed for restrictive policies in the mining sector, which are causing the population to continue to become impoverished and the country to continue to lack foreign currency. The only solution to this poverty is to renew confidence in CNDD-FDD, which has power to fight Kagame.

Still in Mabayi, CNDD-FDD party officials reportedly threatened representatives of the Burundi Bwa Bose coalition after the latter gathered a large crowd.

2. In Mugina, the fear of losing the upcoming elections has translated into threats against those who will vote for the independent candidate Schadrack, a merchant whose father is a very influential member of CNDD-FDD who supported CNDD rebellion, but who chose to campaign for his son. This father also lives in fear following the threats he has received since his son chose to run as an independent in the upcoming legislative elections. According to campaign rhetoric, anyone who will vote for a civilian without an army is seen as the main enemy of the country and Burundians and deserves to flee to Rwanda, as others chose in 2015.

In this commune, a CNDD-FDD party member named Joseph threatened to death voters on Rusagara hill who would not vote for his party.

3. In Rugombo, Buganda, and Mugwi, CNDD-FDD has chosen the war in eastern DRC as a campaign topic. Not voting for CNDD-FDD would mean supporting Kagame's M23, which wants to impose Tutsi rule over the entire region. It would also be a betrayal of the sons of the communes and the province (a reference to the Imbonerakure who have gone to the front in the DRC).

4. In Bukinanyana, threats are not uttered as they are elsewhere. A commune where three generals, including the Prime Minister and a former Vice President, are born, the residents of Bukinanyana do not need threats to support CNDD-FDD. They only need reassurance that the socio-economic and

political climate their commune is experiencing will continue. Although there is no bad coexistence between members of different parties, the commune had a woman MP from CNL party in 2020. For this part of the population that lacks confidence in CNDD-FDD, their votes for CNDD-FDD would contribute to the development of a new, stronger Bukinanyana commune. There are promises to buy consciences. Even though the price of meat has risen, those campaigning for CNDD-FDD promise to do as in 2020, when meat was distributed to voters of other parties or to those whose affiliation is unknown.

It should be noted that other parties such as UPRO-NA, Nestor Girukwishaka's CNL wing, and the Burundi Bwa Bose coalition are campaigning, but their visibility is limited due to a lack of logistical resources and fuel.

For the ruling party, vehicles with State-registered GB and IT plates are more visible in the campaign, which consequently paralyzes public services. In all the communes of Cibitoke province, it has been difficult to find an open office since May 13, 2025. Health center managers, school principals, and communal officials are almost absent from their offices.

- Tensions between members of CNDD-FDD party and members of the Burundi bwa Bose coalition in Burunga province (former provinces of Bururi, Makamba, Rumonge and Rutana)

Opposition political parties and the Burundi Bwa Bose coalition are denouncing the work of the CEPI in the face of CNDD-FDD party's domination. Not only the opposition is sounding the alarm, but even within the CEPI Burunga and the CECI, some members are denouncing the authoritarian sense of President Philémon Nahabandi, accused of blocking the electoral process in favor of CNDD-FDD.

According to several sources in the new Burunga province, the electoral situation is becoming increasingly worrying. The president of the CEPI, Philémon Nahabandi, is accused by opposition parties of refusing to publish the lists of polling stations, thus preventing competing parties from appointing their representatives, resulting in him being the sole detainee of polling station officials.

Even members of the CEPI and CECI are protesting. Several members of the CEPI Burunga and the CECI are expressing their frustration with the exclusive management of the process.

"The CEPI no longer acts in a collegial manner. All decisions are from a single man, who seems to take his orders from CNDD-FDD party. This is unacceptable," confided one of them, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Tough instructions to the Imbonerakure

On May 12, 2025, during meetings throughout the hills, the Imbonerakure were tasked with monitoring the election process, as well as the electoral agents themselves. *"Although the latter are all appointed by CNDD-FDD, they are considered unreliable because the unemployed and young graduates are not fully controlled by the party. If they don't cooperate, intimidate them. And if they resist, eliminate them,"* some members reportedly ordered their party members.

Another chilling statement was heard: "Some voters registered without intending to vote. We will use their cards and vote for CNDD-FDD." It should be noted that these hill meetings precede those held in all the zones.

Paralysis of activities, forced mobilization, and use of State vehicles in Makamba and Rutana

The CNDD-FDD party's electoral campaign in the new Burunga province continues to make waves. As of May 17, 2025, many residents of Makamba and Rutana provinces saw their daily lives severely disrupted by campaign activities by the ruling party.

In Makamba, the central market remained closed until 1 p.m. Traders and buyers report finding the doors locked, without explanation. Food products such as tomatoes, eggplants, and amaranth (called lengalenga) were exposed to the sun for several hours, threatening to spoil.

Witnesses also report that Imbonerakure militiamen were closely monitoring movements around the market and on the national road leading to the private stadium of CNDD-FDD Secretary General Révérien Ndikuriyo, located about 8 kilometers from the city center.

The night before the ceremony was not peaceful. Residents of Makamba and Rutana report that groups of members arrived as early as 2 a.m., disrupting their sleep. Students were even forced to arrive at the stadium as early as 5 a.m. to participate in the festivities.

Yet Révérien Ndikuriyo had called for a campaign that would not suspend economic and educational activities.

Another notable development: State vehicles were widely used to transport members, and license plates were covered with CNDD-FDD logos, raising concerns about the use of public property for partisan purposes. Finally, President Évariste Ndayishimiye participated in these activities.

Three government vehicles used in CNDD-FDD party campaign in Bururi province

Three government vehicles used in CNDD-FDD propaganda since May 13, 2025:

- ⇒ A double-cabin vehicle from Rutovu commune: Registration number: D 006A;
- ⇒ A double-cabin vehicle from Matana commune whose license plate number is hidden by gift wrapping;
- ⇒ A double-cabin vehicle from the mutual insurance agency whose license plates are also hidden by gift wrapping and a photo of the President of the Republic.

The campaigners travel through their native hills.

Irregularities in the electoral campaign in the north of the country

In Kirundo province, on May 12, 2025, all CNDD-FDD members went to Ngozi for the electoral campaign using State vehicles and ambulances from the health districts with the president's stickers that read "Tora CNDD-FDD."

The notable vehicles are the ambulances from Busoni, Bwambarangwe, and Vumbi districts, as well as vehicles provided by the NGO GAVI and vehicles from the DPAE and DPE.

On May 14, 2025, at "KOKAR" gas station, a gas tanker truck delivered 6,000 liters of fuel, but no

one received the fuel. The governor claimed that CNDD-FDD had purchased fuel for their meetings and that no more vehicles would be supplied. The population and other members of different parties are complaining about the injustice that characterize the leaders.

Irregularities observed by UPRONA party.

On 15 May 2025, UPRONA party observed the following:

- More than 300 voter's cards not distributed on the polling center located on Rugando sub-hill, Rugasa hill, Bugabira commune.
- 420 voter's cards not distributed on the polling center at the Islamic High School of Kirundo, on Murama hill.
- 200 voter's cards not distributed on Ecofo Murama in Kirundo.
- 180 voter's cards not distributed on Ecofo Kavomo in Kirundo commune, among others.

After reporting these incidents, the party's leaders informed the CECI. However, it is surprising that during the afternoon, a few cards were distributed without their origin being known. Furthermore, it was noted that the presidents of these offices were responsible for collecting and storing them. It was also subsequently noted that all these cards were intended for members of opposition parties.

Campaign irregularities in Nyarunazi zone.

On May 15, 2025, CNDD-FDD party campaigned in Nyarunazi, in Kirundo commune. This party continued its activities until 6:30 p.m. in Kirundo downtown, precisely opposite the gas station. Although the law stipulates that the deadline is 5:00 p.m., they continued their meeting. Surprisingly, the police, the main commissioner, and the head of SNR were all 30 meters away of this meeting.

In Ngozi province, members of political parties in the province, except those of CNDD-FDD, are lamenting that they are not supplied with fuel for the

legislative and communal council elections scheduled for June 5, 2025.

According to eyewitnesses, gas stations are stocked with gasoline and fuel, but only members of the ruling CNDD-FDD party are served at Delta stations in the locality commonly known as Kuryamivo and at the new gas station located near the Ombre des Patriotes hotel in Gabiro quarter of Ngozi city.

Only CNDD-FDD members going to campaigns get fuel at these gas stations, and authorities claim it is the party's fuel. They go there with party vouchers or are served by CNDD-FDD members who distribute this fuel. Of the eight gas stations in Ngozi province, one is open to everyone, causing queues, and the other five have no fuel.

Members of other political parties denounce this injustice imposed by CNDD-FDD and in the eyes of the CENI.

In Muyinga province, on May 13 and 14, 2025, all activities were paralyzed in Muyinga province as President Évariste Ndayishimiye and CNDD-FDD Secretary-General Révérien Ndikuriyo came to Muyinga to open the presidential palace and the election campaign.

All roads were blocked, the market, shops, public secretariats, administrative offices, and all public services were closed. All department heads and the general public, particularly CNDD-FDD members, were required to attend the Mukoni stadium to honor these CNDD-FDD activities.

While the presidential decree on the election campaign prohibits the use of government vehicles during the campaign, the ruling party appears to be affected by it.

All public service vehicles in Muyinga were adorned with CNDD-FDD stickers and a photo of General Évariste Ndayishimiye, including the provincial doctor's jeep, the double-cab car of the DPE, the DPEAE, and the CDFS, while the license plates of the V8 of ministers and other high-ranking officials were replaced with civilian license plates for camouflage.

1.2. SECURITY CONTEXT

Disturbing cases of robbery in Buhiga commune, Karuzi province

On May 15, 2025, at unknown times, three crimes were committed by as yet unidentified thieves. One incident took place on Buhiga hill, zone and commune. Thieves stole an electric sewing machine worth 1,500,000 Burundian francs from a sewing workshop owned by Ndayikengurutse, alias Metessi. These thieves broke the locks with hammers, and there was no watchman.

The other incident took place on the same hill in Kikwati quarter, 800 meters from the market, in

household of Ntahinduka Désiré. The thieves stole a TVS motorcycle worth 5,000,000 Bif.

According to witnesses in Karusi, the same day, on Magamba hill, in Buhiga zone and commune, not far from Buhiga hill, criminals stole a goat worth 450,000 Bif from Bazompota Patrick. These thieves first slaughtered the goat behind the stable, leaving its entrails behind. They took only the body and the head. The population does not understand how all this can happen without a trace, given that Imbone-rakure patrol every night and that the police station in Buhiga is 600 meters from the scene of the theft.

1.3. GOVERNANCE CONTEXT

Ransoms during the distribution of chemical fertilizer in Giharo commune, Rutana province

On May 6, 2025, Jonathan Ntakirutimana, head of Gakungu zone, Giharo commune, Rutana province, as usual, gave himself the power to distribute the fertilizer in place of the FOMI workers while demanding ransoms. According to sources on the ground, Jonathan told the people on the scene that

the fertilizer was finished, and this was done in Gakungu zone, where this zone head had hidden 60 bags of TOTAHAZA fertilizer among the 100 bags that were planned for distribution. He demanded a ransom of 50,000 Bif for a 50-kilogram bag.

Residents of the zone are calling on the authorities to prevent Jonathan Ntakirutimana from continuing to distribute the fertilizer.

1.4. JUDICIAL CONTEXT

Flagrance trial of a member of CNL party, in Rutana commune and province

On May 12, 2025, on Kivoga hill, Gitaba zone, Rutana commune and province, Gilbert Hatungimana, aged 22, a member of CNL party, was arrested by the public and taken to Rutana communal police station cell. He was accused of tearing up a voter's registration card held by a child but belonging to his father, a member of CNDD-FDD party.

(SNR) in Bujumbura.

According to local sources, Innocent was arrested in Tanzania in 2022 and transferred to Burundi, where he was accused of collaborating with terrorist groups. After two years of detention in Bujumbura without trial, he fell ill. He was hospitalized and subsequently transferred to Gitega prison, before being returned to the National Intelligence Service (SNR) on March 28, 2025.

According to local sources, on May 16, 2025, the Rutana High Court held a public flagrante delicto hearing against Gilbert and sentenced him to a one-year principal sentence. He was taken to Rutana Central Prison to serve this sentence.

A person detained in difficult conditions in Mukaza commune, Bujumbura mairie

Information received by Ligue Iteka on May 12, 2025, indicates that Innocent Ntirandekura, also known as Rhamadan, from Kibande hill, Cendajuru commune, Cankuzo province, is being jailed at the headquarters of the National Intelligence Service

According to the same sources, Innocent Ntirandekura's health has deteriorated: swollen legs, signs of anemia, and isolation without access to medical care. No family member or visitor has been able to see him, and no legal justification has been provided for this new detention at the National Intelligence Service (SNR). According to the same sources, where he is being jailed, he is alone in a cell. Innocent Ntirandekura's prolonged detention, without access to a fair trial or adequate medical care, constitutes a violation of human rights such as the right to a fair trial, the right to health, and the prohibition of arbitrary detention.

II. CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS

II.1. RIGHT TO LIFE

II.1.1. Intentional homicide

A body of a newborn found in Gitega commune and province

On May 12, 2025, at around 6 a.m., in Magarama quarter, Gitega commune and province town, the body of a newborn was discovered. According to eyewitnesses, the body was wrapped in a bag and found in a place where local residents dump garbage. This newborn was reportedly killed shortly

after birth. This hypothesis is based on the presence of an umbilical cord still wrapped around his neck. Nzibarega Léandre, quarter head, also confirmed the facts and indicated that an investigation is underway to identify the perpetrator of this crime. He added that the body was transported to the mortuary at Songa Hospital, commonly known as Bethaniya, run by the sisters of the Bene Thérèse congregation.

II.1.2. Persons killed by unidentified people

A body found in Buhiga commune, Karuzi province

Information received by Ligue Iteka dated May 12, 2025, indicates that on May 11, 2025, on Kigoma hill, Buhinyuza zone, Buhiga commune, the body of a 42-year-old free woman (prostitute), BWAJEMBONA, of the Twa social class, was found roped in an unfinished house below the Cinquantenaire hospital in KARUSI.

According to local witnesses, this house is being watched by a 20-year-old boy named Benjamin, from BIHEMBA hill, who alerted the population. This watchman was arrested by the police and is being jailed in the provincial police station cell for investigation. The reason for this murder is still unknown.

One person killed in Kabarore commune, Kanyanza province

On the night of May 13-14, 2025, in the center of Rugwiza, Kabarore commune, Kanyanza province, Evariste NSABIMANA, aged 35, was killed and strangled by as yet unidentified individuals.

According to local witnesses, the victim worked as a guard at the center, where he guarded shops and stores. The same witnesses added that the perpetrators of this murder burglarized a shop, and loin-cloths and shoes were stolen after the attack. Two suspects are in the custody of the judicial police for investigation purposes.

A body found in Muha commune, Bujumbura-Mairie

On May 12, 2025, at around 8 a.m., on Ruziba side, phase 4 in Muha commune, residents of the locality who were drawing water from Lake Tanganyika discovered the body of a man floating in the water, his arms and legs roped. These residents were able to observe that the victim had been beaten and tortured before being dumped into the lake because he had injuries on his body.

According to an eyewitness, the body was found on Nyabugete 4 side and was buried on May 13, 2025, at around 10 a.m., on the orders of Nyabugete 4 quarter head, Ferdinand Nahabandi. He was buried in the sand on the shores of Lake Tanganyika.

Two bodies in Congolese military uniform found in Rugombo commune, Cibitoke province

On the afternoon of May 15, 2025, two bodies, dressed in Congolese military uniforms, were found by children tending their goats on Rusiga hill, Rugombo commune, Cibitoke province, on the Burundian-Congolese border. The circumstances of their death, the supposed identities of the victims, and the prompt intervention of the Burundian intelligence services have sparked intense speculation.

The incident occurred at dusk, on street 11, along Rusizi River, which delimits the border between Burundi and the DRC.

Security sources on border patrol quickly confirmed the presence of the two bodies, identified as belonging to men in Congolese army uniforms.

According to these same sources, the victims were in fact young Imbonerakure members, the youth league of the Burundian ruling party. These young people were reportedly integrated into the ranks of the Congolese army fighting the M23 rebels, a complex conflict involving various armed actors, including Burundian soldiers, the Wazalendo militia, and the FDLR.

These same sources suggest that, faced with the intensity of the fighting and the heavy losses suffered, some Imbonerakure attempted to desert. They were then executed to prevent any disclosure of sensitive

information. A vehicle with registration D0517A, belonging to Cibitoke National Intelligence Service (SNR), reportedly intervened quickly to take the bodies to an unknown destination, an operation deemed suspicious.

When contacted, the local head of the National Intelligence Service (SNR) declined to comment. The communal administrator of Rugombo acknowledged the facts, stating that he was awaiting the official report from an SNR agent in charge of the investigation. In this climate of uncertainty, residents, overcome by fear, are demanding clear explanations regarding the identity of the victims, the exact causes of their death, and the destination of their bodies. The authorities' silence only exacerbates their growing concern.

II.1.3. Persons killed following the settling of scores

A body found in Rutegama commune, Muramvya province

On May 14, 2025, the body of Casimir Mvuyekure, aged 52, a farmer and member of CNDD-FDD, was found in Kaniga River, located on Munanira hill, in Rutegama commune, Muramvya province. According to eyewitnesses, the body had wounds on the head and neck. The victim had been missing since Monday, May 12, when he told his wife, Kantungeko Angèle, that he was going to Gitega. According to the same eyewitnesses, family land disputes were the cause of his death. His two brothers, Hagerimana Roger, aged 46, and Nsanzerugeze Paul, aged 49, were arrested and are being jailed in Rutegama communal police cell for investigation.

A body found in Ryansoro commune, Gitega province

Information received by Ligue Iteka on May 17, 2025, indicates that on May 7, 2025, around 8 a.m., in Ruvyironza River in Ryansoro commune, Gitega province, the body of Léopold Mbisamatore, aged 42, a member of CNDD-FDD, was found by employees of the company building the Bururi-Mahwa-Gishubi Road. According to eyewitnesses, the victim had been missing since May 2, 2025, and Ryansoro police were the first to report that the deceased had drowned while trying to reach Rutovu. His family was surprised by this police conclusion without any investigation. According to the same eyewitnesses, family land disputes were the cause of this case.

II.1.4. People killed following mob justice

Two people killed in Butaganzwa commune, Ruyigi province

On May 8, 2025, on Rugongo hill and zone, Butaganzwa commune, Ruyigi province, two people, including 60-year-old Judith Gakobwa, were killed at 11:30 a.m. by the local population, who accused them of sorcery.

According to local sources, a few days before the crime, leaflets were found on this hill containing a list of five people, including three women and two men, to be killed. Two of the five people on this list were caught and beaten to death. According to the

same sources, the alleged perpetrators, including Juvénal Nimbona, Barbatus Kwizera, Ernest Ntahorija, and Justin Ntirandekura, all from this hill, fled to Tanzania.

After the crime, on May 10, 2025, the administration attempted to conduct peacekeeping sessions, but the population of this hill lived in fear and panic, asking the administration to ensure their safety. The same sources added that all five people on the list were of the same Tutsi ethnic group. The population is beginning to worry that political reasons may be behind these killings, as less than three weeks ago, another Tutsi woman was killed

by as yet unidentified individuals in Nyabitsinda him of sorcery.
commune, Ruyigi province, who was also accused

II.2. RIGHT TO PHYSICAL AND/OR MENTAL INTEGRITY

II.2.1. Torture, cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment

A person tortured and threatened in Giharo commune, Rutana province

On May 16, 2025, at around 7:00 a.m., on Kibimba hill, Butezi zone, Giharo commune, Rutana province, Paul Ntiragomba, a member of UPRONA party, was tortured by the hill head Zacharie Batungwanayo and CNDD-FDD party representative for that hill. They told him they would kill him if he refused to give his cow to Léonard Ruhoranyi, even though the cow belonged to the cow breeders' association to which Ntiragomba belonged.

According to local sources, Leonard Ruhoranyi and Zacharie Batungwanayo do not belong to this association, except that one is CNDD-FDD representative on this hill and the other is the hill head. These two people, Zacharie and Leonard, were accompanied by Imbonerakure who carried batons. Paul Ntiragomba was able to resist that day because they were unable to remove the cow, but they said they would return on Wednesday, May 21, 2025.

For this reason, Paul Ntiragomba is calling on everyone, left and right, for rapid intervention from anyone to protect his life and his family.

II.2.2. Rape

A girl raped in Rumonge commune and province

Information received by Ligue Iteka dated May 15, 2025, indicates that on May 7, 2025, on Mutambara hill, Rumonge commune and province, Mr. N, aged 6, was the victim of sexual violence.

According to witnesses, the alleged perpetrator's name is Didace Ndayimirije, married and a member of CNDD-FDD party, president of the youth forum

II.2.3. Gender-Based Violence

A girl injured by her mother in Musongati commune, Rutana province

On May 4, 2025, Scholastique Kwizera, a 21-year-old girl residing on Kamaramagambo hill, Musongati commune, Rutana province, was beaten by her

Four members of the Burundi Bwabose coalition tortured in Busiga commune, Ngozi province

On May 16, 2025, on Caga hill, Mihigo zone, Busiga commune, Ngozi province, four members of the Burundi BWABOSE coalition, including Dismas MINANI, president of the coalition in the new Bütanyerera province, were tortured by Imbonerakure members including Gilbert, head of Imbonerakure in Mihigo, Pascal Nyabenda, and the man nicknamed Binimbwa.

According to witnesses in Ngozi, they were roped and then taken to Masama hill in Ngozi in a double-cabin car from the countryside, where they were untied and stripped of all their belongings, including money and coalition symbols. According to the same witnesses, the victims are from Nyange hill, Busiga commune, Ngozi province for these party members. Dismas Minani, along with other members of the aforementioned coalition, filed complaints with the prosecutor's office but have not received justice to date. The authorities did nothing despite being asked and told him not to consider this a political act. The stolen items, even his client's motorcycle, were not returned until May 18, 2025.

on Kanyenkoko hill. The latter owns a house at Mutambara IDP site and had gone there for a visit. He took the opportunity to call the victim, who was with other children, giving the team money to go buy candy, and then called her into the house to commit the incident. The parents noticed it during the child's shower, and the child described the incident. The alleged perpetrator had already left. The police are looking for him, while the child has been taken to Humura center for holistic care.

mother by attempting to strangle until blood flowed from her nose. Following the victim's screams, neighbors came to her aid.

According to local sources, in collaboration with her father and the hill heads, the police intervened

after releasing this girl from her mother, who wanted to kill her. This threat has been repeated many times. Two weeks ago, she was imprisoned at Musongati police station and released. She was accused of having burnt her daughter and her clothes, and she confessed to it in front of the public and security officers.

II.3. RIGHT TO FREEDOM

II.3.1. Arbitrary arrests

One person arrested in Kirundo commune and province

On May 15, 2025, at ECOFO Yaranda polling station in Kirundo commune and province, Safia, a CNDD-FDD member who was distributing cards, was arrested by the provincial commissioner. Safia refused, but the polling station head, Metusera Iran-kunda (imbonerakure), forced her to give it to the child.

At around 7 p.m., Safia appeared before the judicial police officer for questioning but was not released and has just been jailed in Kirundo prosecutor's office cell.

The public reports that Safia's husband, Ndikumana Emery, was an influential member of CNDD-FDD but stopped engaging in party activities more than five years ago; he often criticizes the party.

The mother was not worried this last time, even though she says the young girl must be buried so that peace can reign in the family. According to the same sources, her daughter is suffering greatly from her injuries and still lacks clothes or financial means to seek treatment.

A member of Frodebu party and Burundi Bwa Bose coalition arrested in Nyanza-Lac

On May 14, 2025, around 10 p.m., Siméon, member of Sahwanya-FRODEBU party and member of Burundi Bwa Bose coalition, was arrested on his home hill of Kazirabageni, located in Nyanza-Lac commune.

According to eyewitness, he was in a bar with a CNDD-FDD member, nicknamed Kametero. They were discussing voter's registration cards while showing them. Kametero allegedly questioned Siméon's right to publicly display his FRODEBU card before calling two men, a local elected official from the hill and Emmanuel, the leader of Imbonerakure in the same zone.

These two men, accompanied by Imbonerakure, arrested Siméon without presenting a warrant. He spent the night at Kazirabageni police station before being transferred Thursday morning to Nyanza-Lac police station, where he is currently jailed.

III. ECONOMIC, SOCIAL, AND CULTURAL RIGHTS

III.1. DISRUPTION OF ECONOMIC LIFE

Some consequences related to the purchase of corn by ANAGESSA in Cankuzo province

Information received by Ligue Iteka on May 12, 2025, indicates that, in general, the population at the national level no longer trusts the government's statements regarding the purchase of corn production for various reasons: there are controversial messages between the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Agriculture. Even the authorities at both the national and provincial levels do not see it the same way.

Particularly in the case of Cankuzo province, on May 1, 2025, this International Labor and Employment Day was celebrated in Mishiha commune and was enhanced by the presence of the Minister of the East African Community, Youth and Sports. Among the grievances submitted to him by the Governor of Cankuzo Province, Boniface Banyiyeko, for consideration by the government and the President of the Republic, who mandated him, was one related to the purchase of maize in response to complaints from the population:

⇒ The Governor, in his speech, deplored the fact

that the maize purchased by ANAGESSA last year has not yet been cleared from the stocks, and more than 8,000 tons of maize is rotting in different stocks.

- ⇒ The owners of the stocks have not yet been paid, and therefore the government has no way of obtaining additional stocks, as these storage sheds are still full of last year's production.
- ⇒ The staff hired by ANAGESSA have not been paid in full.
- ⇒ Cooperatives and other individuals who have applied for loans fear they will not be able to repay the loans they have taken out because there is no market for maize.
- ⇒ Those who attempt to sell it in Tanzania are treated as fraudsters, arrested, and tried in flagrante delicto, accused of high treason and disrupting the national economy.

Other grievances submitted to him related to the promised paved roads (RN13 and RN11) by the government in several periods, and the electrification of communes, including Mishiha.

Closure of central market to force the population to collect their voter's cards in Rumonge

Faced with the population's reluctance to collect their voter's cards, the administrative authorities ordered the closure of the central market in Rumonge as of May 14, 2025.

The imbonerakure were at some entry points to this

III.2. THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION

Teachers forced to fund performance assessments in Makamba province

Teachers in Makamba province are protesting against a practice they consider abusive: being forced to pay out of pocket for the printing and preparation of the "performance assessment" file.

An official message exchanged by the Communal Directors of Education reads: *"Amahoro bayobozi. All officials are invited to complete performance evaluations from May 2 to 10, 2025. These evalua-*

market to check voter's cards in order to authorize those who had them and to turn away those who had not yet collected them so that they could collect them. In various polling centers, several people were gathered to collect these voter's cards after noticing that they could not enter this market, but the queues were still visible, especially since it was the last day. Some said they had not found their cards even though they were on the lists, while others did not see their names on the lists.

Activities Paralyzed in Kayanza Commune and Province

On May 14, 2025, CNDD-FDD ruling party in the new Kayanza commune, composed of the former Kabarore, Kayanza, and Muruta communes, held a meeting to introduce to party members the members of the communal council and the deputies who will be elected in Butanyerera province.

The Kayanza market and all shops were closed from morning until 4:00 p.m., the closing time of this activity. Traders and buyers alike complained that they had not been able to carry out their commercial activities. While the country's authorities continue to tout the vision of an emerging and developed Burundi by 2040 and 2060, the population of Kayanza is wondering how this development will be realized, while the ruling CNDD-FDD party's meeting paralyzed commercial activities all day long.

Others wonder how Vincent Ndagijimana, who has never been at school, can be on the list of MP candidates. Once elected, he will sit on a body responsible for analyzing and promulgating laws governing the country's life.

tions must be typed, and each teacher will cover the printing costs. As for those who don't understand, forget it."

This wording was perceived as a form of disguised intimidation, according to several teachers. The teachers explain that they must have up to six copies of the evaluation file printed out at the public secretariat, divided between the Ministry of Education, the Civil Service, the DCE and DPE, the school administration, and the personnel file.

Not only must they print these documents themselves, but they must also type them, without any logistical support or compensation. *"This is a form of disguised abuse. Each administrative level has an operating budget. Why is it always up to us, with our poverty wages, to finance the administration?"* wonders one teacher. Teachers are demand-

ing an end to these abusive demands.

Faced with this situation, they are asking the government to stop burdening operating costs on already precarious employees. "How can you expect the quality of education to improve when teachers are constantly forced to pay to do their job?" concludes another teacher.

III.3. RIGHT TO WORK

Payment required obtaining a performance assessment in some DCEs in Gitega province

In Gitega province, many teachers are expressing concerns about a new requirement introduced in some DCEs since early May 2025. Indeed, the payment of 7,500 Bif is required to obtain their performance assessment, a crucial document for managing their careers as civil servants. Several questions are emerging among teachers:

1. Is this requirement based on an official ministerial decision or is it a form of corruption?
2. Why does this measure appear to be applied in such a vague and uneven manner that some consider it a rumor?
3. Will teachers who refuse to pay this amount receive their performance assessment? And will those who have already made the payment be refunded if the measure is canceled?
4. Is this payment required only from teachers or from all civil servants?

Specific observations regarding the DCE:

DCE Bugendana: the ECOFO officials requested authorization from the DCE to impose these fees. This raised doubts among the teachers, who question the legitimacy of this decision.

DCE Buraza: The fees provoked strong opposition, to the point that the DPE had to intervene to overturn this decision.

DCE Ryansoro: The funds had been collected, but were later returned to the teachers.

General concerns:

Some teachers perceive this requirement as corruption, especially in the absence of clear information regarding the use of the funds. Others believe it could be an illegal local initiative.

Finally, the teachers are demanding official and formal clarification from the ministry to verify the legality of this practice. It is also imperative to harmonize procedures between DCEs to ensure fairness and respect for rights. It should be noted that the teachers at ECOFO BUGENDANA II categorically refused to pay this amount during the pedagogical meeting led by the school's Director on Tuesday, May 13, 2025.

IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Ligue Iteka strongly denounces the persistent deterioration of human rights in Burundi and condemns the impunity of perpetrators of crimes. It calls on the Burundian authorities to take all necessary measures and recommends the following :

To the Government of Burundi :

- ⇒ Prohibit intimidation activities by the Imbonerakure, especially during elections;
- ⇒ Guarantee the protection of fundamental rights and end violence committed by the Imbonerakure.

To the CENI and its branches :

- ⇒ To ensure the fair and accessible distribution of voter's cards;
- ⇒ To ensure the safety of all political actors and citizens;
- ⇒ To facilitate a fair and transparent electoral campaign;
- ⇒ To respect fundamental freedoms by guaranteeing respect for the freedoms of expression, assembly, and association for all citizens and political actors during the election period.