

BURUNDIAN LIGUE OF HUMAN RIGHTS "ITEKA"

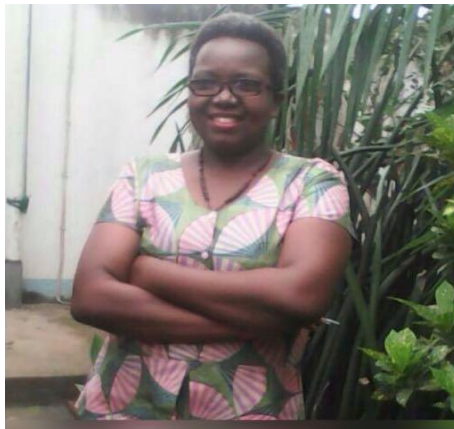
Approved by Ministerial Order n ° 530/0273 of 10 November 1994 revising Order No. 550 /029 of 6 February 1991



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REPORT ON THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN BURUNDI DURING THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY 2025, BY LIGUE BURUNDAISE DES DROITS DE L'HOMME "ITEKA"

MAY 2025



In memory of Madame Marie Claudette Kwizera, treasurer of Ligue Iteka, who went missing on December 10, 2015. From December 2015 to May 30, 2025, at least 736 cases of enforced disappearance were reported to Ligue Iteka.

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ACRONYMS

ANAGESA	: <i>National Agency for Food Stock Management</i>
CDP	: <i>Council of Patriots</i>
CDS	: <i>Health Center</i>
CNDD-FDD	: <i>National Council for the Defense of Democracy-Defense Forces</i>
CNIDH	: <i>Independent National Human Rights Commission</i>
CNL	: <i>National Congress for Liberty</i>
DCE	: <i>Communal Education Directorate</i>
DRC	: <i>Democratic Republic of Congo</i>
ESCR	: <i>Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights</i>
FDLR	: <i>Democratic Liberation Force from Rwanda</i>
FRODEBU	: <i>Front for Democracy in Burundi</i>
GBV	: <i>Gender-Based Violence</i>
M23	: <i>March 23 Movement</i>
PNB	: <i>Burundi National Police</i>
SGBV	: <i>Sexual and Gender-Based Violence</i>
SNR	: <i>National Intelligence Service</i>
TGI	: <i>High Court</i>
UNGA	: <i>United Nations General Assembly</i>
UPRONA	: <i>Union for National Progress</i>

0. INTRODUCTION

This monthly report for May 2025 is a summary of the weekly Iteka n' Ijambo bulletins from 472 to 476. This report covers the political, judicial, economic, and security contexts, as well as the human rights context that marked this period. It also reviews civil and political rights and economic, social, and cultural rights. This report concludes with a conclusion and recommendations.

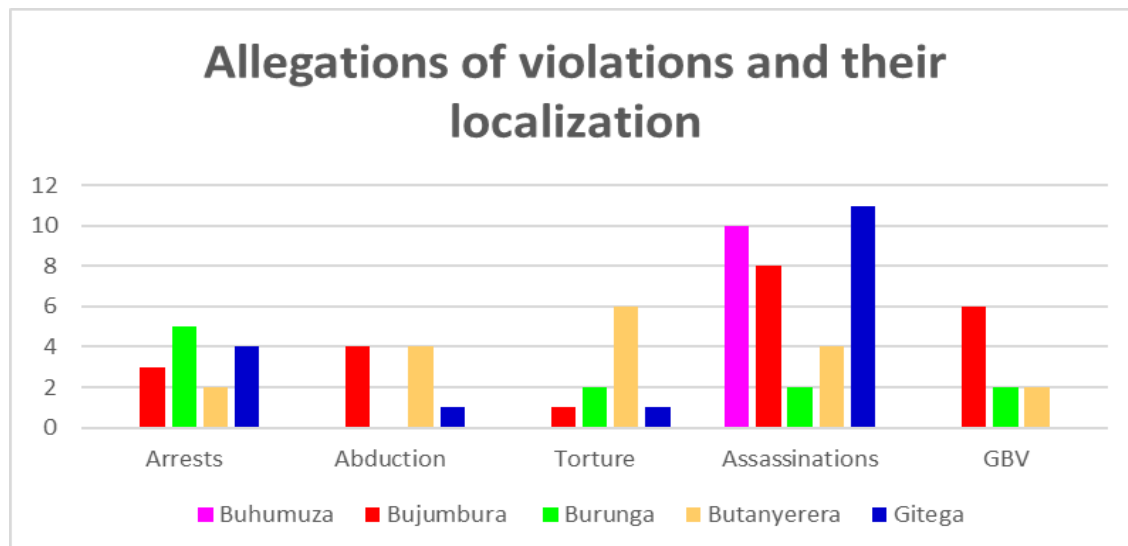
The human rights situation was reported as follows: at least 34 people killed, including 13 found killed in different locations; 9 people abducted and/or missing; 10 people tortured; 11 victims of SGBV, including 4 minors; and 14 people arbitrarily arrested, including 3 CNL party members and 1 member of FRODEBU party and a member of the Burundi Bwa Bose coalition.

Among the dead were four women and two infants.

Imbonerakure, police officers, administrators, and SNR agents are accused of being the alleged perpetrators of most of these human rights violations and murders.

0.1. Mapping of violations identified and their alleged perpetrators

Figure 1: *Chart illustrating the major human rights cases observed in Burundi during the month of May 2025*



The graph above shows the 5 categories of violations in the country's 5 different provinces, Bujumbura with the most allegations of human rights violations with 22 cases, followed by Gitega and Butanyerera with 18 cases each.

During the month of May 2025, a total of 78 cases of alleged violations were recorded by Ligue Iteka across the country. These allegations of human rights violations fall into five main categories: 35 cases of intentional homicide, 14 cases of people arbitrarily arrested, 11 cases of victims of gender-based sexual violence, including two infants, 10 cases of people tortured, and 9 cases of people abducted.

Bujumbura province stands out as the most affected, with a total of 22 allegations of human rights violations, including 8 persons killed, followed by Gitega province with 18 cases of alleged human rights violations, including 10 persons killed.

I. CONTEXT

I.1. POLITICAL CONTEXT

During the month of May 2025, Burundi experienced different significant political events, including pre-election tensions in the country's provinces, where the opposition was severely affected by intimidation and violence. With less than a week to go before the communal and legislative elections, tensions continued to rise, leading to an explosive situation. Opposition parties, including UPRONA, CNL, and the Burundi Bwa Bose coalition, reported attacks orchestrated by the Imbonerakure, the CNDD-FDD party youth wing. This violence, according to witnesses, is accompanied by death threats and even the forced withdrawal of voter's cards, particularly against opposition supporters.

An opposition member confided, on condition of anonymity, that his members were under constant pressure, with some even fleeing to neighboring countries. An official from the Burundi Bwa Bose coalition lamented that the election was already "locked down," calling for an end to acts of intolerance to ensure a peaceful electoral process. Despite denunciations from the opposition, local authorities minimized the seriousness of the situation. Alexandre Ngoraguze, a CNDD-FDD leader, claimed that a calm atmosphere reigned on the ground, while the Governor of Cibitoke argued that he had not received any official complaints.

Events escalated in other provinces. In Bwambarangwe, Butanyerera province, the Imbonerakure campaigned to collect voter's cards, intimidating opposition members and threatening to make votes non-confidential. In Bujumbura province, reports of a climate of fear, repression, and intimidation are growing, worsened by a census conducted on behalf of CNDD-FDD that forced voters to register under threat.

In Gitega, incidents of intimidation and confiscation of voter's cards have been reported. Recent election campaigns had many questionable practices, including flag theft and physical assault. In this climate, tensions have widened the political divide, making electoral competition uncertain and perilous. Opposition members are organizing as best they can, struggling to make their voices heard in an environment where civil rights appear to be violated.

A more detailed analysis reveals coercive and manipulative methods, such as campaigns to collect voter's cards forcibly. Statements by a local political expert highlight the risks to the credibility of the elections, already tarnished by the clear exclusion of some parties from the democratic process. In a context where CNDD-FDD presents its program while maintaining an atmosphere of fear, opposition parties continue to worry about the safety of their members and the integrity of the election. Various documented incidents reveal obstruction of the smooth running of opposition political activities, including abductions, arbitrary arrests, and physical violence.

At the end of the campaigns, CNDD-FDD party, while continuing to benefit from public resources, promised the earth to voters, inspiring to consolidate its presence on the ground. Members of UPRONA and the Burundi Bwa Bose coalition are resisting, hoping to preserve the integrity of their political commitment. Despite intimidation, the fight for electoral fairness continued, demonstrating the resilience of a people determined to defend their rights in the midst of a tumultuous period.

The fear of a biased election is palpable, leading to calls from national and international observers to ensure the transparency of the electoral process. The climate of intimidation prevailing during election campaigns contributes to creating a particularly bleak picture for the country's political future.

1.2. JUDICIAL CONTEXT

The month of May 2025 in Burundi is characterized by significant events in the judicial field. A flagrante delicto procedure was initiated at Rutana High Court, where Jean Marie Bizimana, a 40-year-old man from Murembera hill in Gakungu zone of Musongati commune, was sentenced to 20 years of penal servitude. He was found guilty of the murder of his wife, Médiatrice Nkeshimana, he hit to death. This tragedy occurred last Thursday around 11 p.m. Although Jean Marie confessed to the incident, he maintained that there was no premeditation, citing a loss of control due to his anger after his wife came home late that day. The couple leaves behind seven children, the youngest being only 2 years and 4 months old.

Furthermore, the principal of Al Maktoum Communal High School in Gatete, located in Rumonge commune, has been reported as a fugitive since May 16, 2025. He is actively sought by judicial authorities due to the theft of 15 laptops two months ago. The parents of the students are demanding the appointment of a new, qualified and honest principal for a boarding school. It is worth noting that two supervisors of this school are currently jailed in Murembwe, accused of complicity in the theft of the computers.

On May 9, 2025, Rutana High Court also handed down a 10-year prison sentence and a 500,000 Bif fine to Metussera Mugisha, a 22-year-old youth. He was arrested on May 5 while attempting to flee with a stolen goat, decapitated. Mugisha admitted to having previously been arrested for stealing two goats on Rongero hill, and is a repeat offender who recently benefited from a presidential pardon.

On May 21, 2025, on Mwoya hill in Buhiga zone and Karusi commune of Gitega province, a 36-year-old man named Banzirumuhito, identified as a CNDD-FDD member, tore up his voter's card and that of his partner. After his wife reported this act to the quarter head, the latter arrested him. He was then taken to the zone head's home before being handed over to a judicial police officer and jailed awaiting trial.

On May 12, 2025, in Kivoga, Rutana commune, Burunga province, Gilbert Hatungimana, a 22-year-old CNL party member, was arrested for tearing up a child's voter card, even though it did not bear his name. The court ruled on his case on May 16, sentencing him to one year in prison.

Another disturbing case involves Innocent Ntirandekura, known as Rhamadan. From Kibande hill, he has been jailed at the National Intelligence Service (SNR) in Bujumbura since his arrest in Tanzania in 2022. The conditions of his detention are alarming, as he suffers from health problems and lacks access to medical care. His condition is deteriorating, with symptoms of anemia and severe isolation.

Finally, a flagrant trial at Bururi High Court convicted Minani Mechack of causing the death of his half-brother, Ndayihereje. Due to a tragic dispute, he was sentenced to two years and six months and will have to pay a huge sum to the victim's widow. Other family members, including his sister Renilde, were also tried. This tragic occurred in Rushemeza, in Bururi commune and Burunga province, highlighting the family tensions that can lead to tragedy.

1.3. ECONOMIC CONTEXT

The Burundian economic context in May reveals a striking fact: the significant in coffee price rise in the former Bubanza province, located in the current Bujumbura province, which is causing both satisfaction and concern. According to information reported by Ligue Iteka on May 30, 2025, the cost per kilo of coffee beans has increased considerably, from 1,380 to 2,800 BIF in Bubanza commune in

Musigati zone, in the new administrative structure. While this increase is viewed positively by some producers, others still consider it insufficient given the rising cost of living.

Local officials are showing some optimism, noting an encouraging dynamic for the revival of coffee production. In Musigati, this recent price rise is generating different opinions among farmers. For some, it represents a long-awaited step forward, while others remain skeptical about its real impact, given rising living expenses and rising production costs.

"This is a step in the right direction. We've been waiting for years for a rise in coffee prices. This gives us some hope," summarizes the opinion of a producer from Kivyuka hill. In opposition, other, less optimistic producers consider this increase insufficient: "Food prices keep rising. With this price, it's becoming difficult to make ends meet. If the situation doesn't change, many might give up growing coffee," emphasizes another farmer in the region.

In response to these concerns, local authorities are trying to reassure the population. The communal administrator of Musigati, the former administrative structure, states that interest in coffee growing is experiencing a revival. "Many farmers are returning to this crop and replacing old coffee trees with young plants, which is a good sign for the sector," he said. The provincial director of Environment, Agriculture, and Livestock in Bubanza supports this view. He points out that this dynamic is supported by support programs for coffee growers, such as the distribution of young plants and technical assistance.

Despite the differences over remuneration levels, it appears that the coffee sector is beginning to recover in Musigati commune. However, the question remains whether this revival will be sustainable and sufficiently beneficial for farmers to prevent a gradual withdrawal from this sector.

1.4. SECURITY CONTEXT

The security context in Burundi in May 2025 presents significant events. A fire destroyed a carpentry workshop in Rutana commune, causing considerable material losses, with electrical machinery worth approximately 30 million Burundian francs and a large stock of planks and materials completely reduced to ashes. This incident, which occurred at 2 a.m. in Birongozi quarter, raises serious concerns about the effectiveness of firefighting measures, especially since the fire truck usually assigned to this area was deployed elsewhere. This lack of appropriate response reflects the State's inability to ensure the protection of property and people, thus constituting a violation of human rights, particularly the right to property and security. This case illustrates that this workshop has already experienced two similar devastating fires in the past.

Furthermore, the analysis of the military situation shows that a contingent of more than 600 Burundian soldiers crossed the border from Uvira, in the Democratic Republic of Congo, to support Congolese forces in the fight against the M23 offensive. The troop movements, which took place on May 22 and 24, illustrate an escalation of tensions in this already troubled region. The mobilization is also concerned by the inclusion of local militias such as the Wazalendo and the FDLR, the latter with a genocide background. This deployment has caused significant anxiety among border populations, thus increasing the risk of community tensions. On the ground, fighting is intensifying, contributing to massive displacements of Congolese civilians fleeing to safer locations. This reflects an urgent need for the international community to intervene and foster a peace dialogue between the parties involved.

An analysis of events in Bujumbura province reveals worrying electoral preparations. With forthcoming local and legislative elections, persistent reports point to the massive distribution of weapons to the Imbonerakure, the youth wing of the presidential CNDD-FDD party, to potentially intimidating the opposition. This militarization of young members is alarming and raises concerns about the legitimacy of an electoral process already considered vulnerable. Moreover, this increase in violence has led several opposition members, particularly those of CNL, to flee to neighboring countries.

Regarding the conflicts in Kibira, a complex dynamic is emerging, with commonplace secret arrests and detentions of civilians linked to Rwandan rebels. These operations, often marked by human rights violations, reveal a pretense of control over elements perceived as threats to regional stability. On May 8, 2025, a police operation in Ruyigi targeted businesses, while incidents of theft involving Imbonerakure were reported. Prison escapes and arrests related to criminal acts indicate continued instability. A woman was arrested for human trafficking, revealing pressing social issues and worrying dynamics in the locality.

Finally, the administration of justice and law enforcement appear to lack rigor and security, particularly during incidents such as prison escapes or targeted attacks on political opponents. Rising community tensions and the lack of adequate judicial responses add an additional layer of complexity to the already tense security situation in Burundi. This overall picture emphasizes not only immediate challenges facing the country but also the need to closely monitor evolving political tensions and security dynamics.

1.5. HUMAN RIGHTS CONTEXT

May 2025 represents a decisive period for the human rights situation in Burundi, marked by the appointment of new commissioners to the Independent National Human Rights Commission (CNIDH), following the exile of its previous President. On May 8, 2025, an official decree, identified as No. 100/056, was published regarding the appointment of CNIDH members.

This development followed a plenary session of the National Assembly held on May 5, 2025, where the commissioners were selected. Among those elected was Bishop Martin Blaise Nyaboho, Anglican Bishop of the Diocese of Makamba and a member of the Hutu ethnic group, who was appointed President. Gérard Rugemintwaza serves as Vice-President, Béatrice Nkurunziza has been appointed Secretary, while Jean Bosco Manirambona, Ambassador Issa Ntambuka, Gloriane Nimenya, and Dyna Ndayumvire complete the list of members. The MP Niyonzima Constantin, head of the ad hoc commission responsible for recruitment for the CNIDH, reported to the National Assembly during the plenary session that 114 applications had been submitted and 21 were selected for the election of seven commissioners.

The new team is composed of four Hutus and three Tutsis, an ethnic parity that the authorities present as a guarantee of inclusivity, although critics point to a lack of diversity in viewpoints and experiences related to human rights. This appointment is intended to replace all five members, as the terms of the five members were due to end in June 2027. This development is taking place while Law No. 1/04 of January 5, 2011, governing the creation of CNIDH, was under review, thus causing more uncertainty. Even before the implementation of the pending legislative amendments, Presidential Decree No. 100/056 of May 8, 2025, appointed a new team of seven commissioners, raising questions about the legality of this approach.

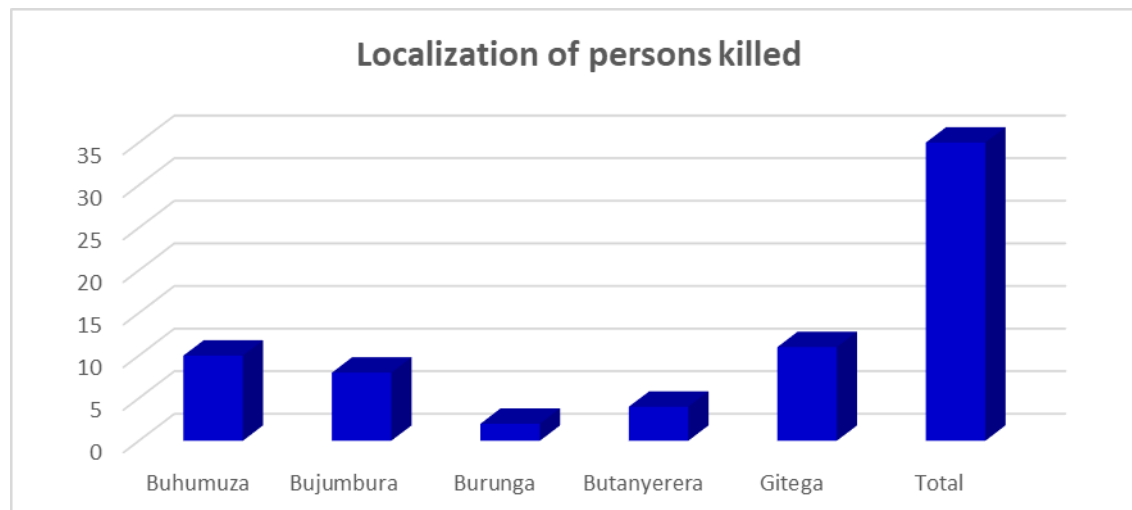
This process is taking place in an environment marked by mistrust, sensitive internal divisions, and obvious rivalries. Moreover, although the former commission kept its A status following an evaluation, it is marred by allegations of mismanagement and financial misappropriation, recently reported in the media. In mid-April 2025, the President of the National Assembly, Gélase Ndabirabe, started an initiative to replace the CNIDH members, in response to accusations of dysfunction. His predecessor, Dr. Sixte Vigny Nimuraba, was examined just before leaving the country with his family. In response to the MPs' concerns, Gélase Ndabirabe clarified that the new commissioners are from political parties, which could compromise the objectivity of the human rights mission. Furthermore, the appointment of Bishop Nyaboho, whose background is controversial, does not reassure all stakeholders. His alleged ties to CNDD-FDD party, as well as some of his past statements, fuel fears about his ability to guarantee the autonomy of the CNIDH.

II. CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS

Burundi is one of the countries that acceded to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1965) and its Optional Protocol (1976) without reservation on May 9, 1990. As part of its implementation, Burundi has taken steps in its domestic legislation, notably in its Constitution of June 7, 2018 (Main Law), Article 19 of which guarantees that all rights Proclaimed and guaranteed by duly ratified international texts are an integral part of this Constitution. Implementing texts have been put in place, notably the Penal Code of December 29, 2017, and the Code of Criminal Procedure of May 11, 2018. Other institutions for the protection of human rights in Burundi have been created.

II.1. RIGHT TO LIFE

II.1.1. INTENTIONAL HOMICIDE



During this reporting period, a total of thirty-four (35) cases of intentional homicide were recorded by Ligue Iteka across the country. Of these cases, eleven (11) were perpetrated by unidentified people and/or found dead; five (8) were attributed to members of the Imbonerakure, and five (5) others occurred as part of settling scores and 3 cases of infanticide. One (1) case was attributed to national police officers, and one (1) case of mob justice. Respectively, the most affected provinces are Gitega with 11 cases and Buhumuza with 10 cases.

Illustrative examples:

Example 1: On May 12, 2025, at around 8 a.m., in Ruziba, phase 4 in Mugere commune, Bujumbura province, 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 observed 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.

Ex2: On the afternoon of May 15, 2025, two bodies, dressed in Congolese military uniforms, were found by children herding their goats on Rusiga hill, Rugombo zone, Cibitoke commune, Bujumbura province, on the Burundian-Congolese border. The circumstances of their death, the supposed identity of the victims, and the quick intervention of the Burundian intelligence services have raised heated speculation. The events occurred at dusk, on the 11th street, along Rusizi River, marking the border between Burundi and the DRC. Security sources on border patrol quickly confirmed the presence of the two bodies, identified as men in Congolese army uniforms. According to these same sources, the victims were in fact young Imbonerakure, the youth Ligue of the Burundian ruling party. These young people were reportedly integrated into the ranks of the Congolese army engaged in a fight against the M23 rebels, a complex conflict involving different 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 the 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 SNR declined to comment. The communal administrator of Rugombo acknowledged the facts, specifying that he was awaiting the official report from an SNR agent in charge of the investigation. In this climate of uncertainty, residents, scared, are demanding clear explanations regarding the identity of the victims, the exact causes of their death, and the destination of the bodies. The silence of the authorities only worsens their growing concern.

Example 3: A person killed in Kirundo commune and Butanyerera province by Imbonerakure

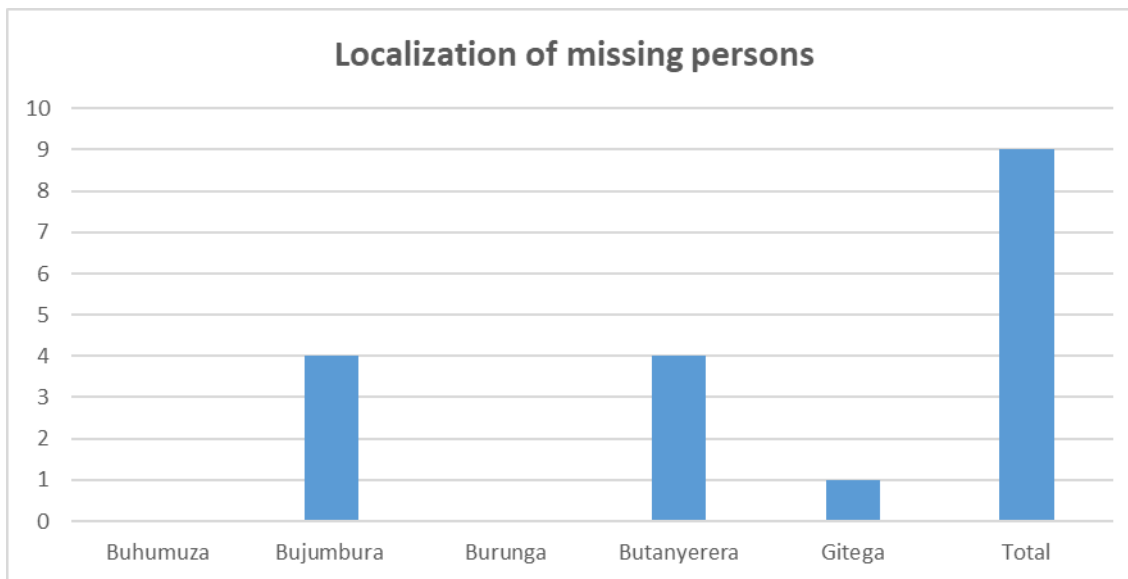
On May 27, 2025, on Cewe hill in Kirundo commune and province, the body of Jean Ncamihigo, married and father of five children, residing on this hill, a former member of CNDD FDD, was found submerged in the waters of Lake Cohoha. According to witnesses on the scene, he had been arrested on May 25, 2025, by the Imbonerakure along with their leader Macumi, accused of raping a mentally disabled girl from Runyonza hill.

According to the same witnesses, they took him to the hill court, represented by Béatrice, who decided to take him to the correctional place called Mw'ikosorero, where CNDD FDD party opponents are taken to be tortured. He did not return, and neighbors say the victim did not commit rape. These Imbonerakure warned the victim's wife and her five children to be killed if they reported the perpetrators.

II.1.3. ABDUCTED AND/OR MISSING PERSONS

The Constitution of Burundi guarantees all individuals a fair trial, as well as a hearing and judgment within a reasonable time, as stipulated in Article 38.

Ligue Iteka recorded nine abductions during the reporting period, with the affected provinces being Bujumbura and Butanyerera, with four cases each, including a CNL member abducted in Bujumbura province city.



Illustrative examples:

Example 1: On May 6, 2025, at around 7 p.m., in the locality known as ku kasoko (small market), located in Buterere zone, Ntahangwa commune, Bujumbura province, Jean Marie Nizigiyimana, 60 years old and father of six children, a member of CNL party, pro-Agathon RWASA, was taken boarded by police officers without an arrest warrant. According to eyewitnesses, the victim was a resident of quarter 1, Buterere, Ntahangwa commune, Bujumbura province, and was trading at Kamenge zone market. According to the same witnesses, many police officers arrived around 7 p.m. accompanied by an Imbonerakure named Claude, who also lives in Buterere. They pointed at the victim, then the police officers rushed to him before beginning to beat him. A motorcycle then arrived, aboard which this citizen was taken to an unknown destination. Local sources confirmed that the victim had just spent some time in hiding, after escaping an arrest attempt in 2023 by Joseph Mathias Niyonzima, known as Kazungu.

Example 2: On May 30, 2025, in Bujumbura province, Alain Jules Bizimana, a CNL party member, aged approximately 31, went missing. He was abducted around 9:00 a.m. in Bujumbura downtown, in front of the place called "BATA." From rural Kanyosha and residing in Kajiji quarter, Kanyosha zone, Mugere commune, Bujumbura province, Alain Jules Bizimana had left for town for work to support his family who remained in Kiyenzi. His abduction was carried out by armed men traveling in a double-cabin pickup truck with tinted windows. One of the abductors was in civilian clothes, the other wore a Burundian police uniform.

Example 3: On 22 May 2025, at 11:30 a.m., four people who were being jailed in Kirundo P.J. cell were taken into a double-cabin pickup truck (with tinted windows) by the provincial head of the National Intelligence Service (SNR) to a location not yet known.

Of the four, only one person has been identified by Kirundo population. He is Emmanuel Nsabiyeza, 32 years old; son of Joseph Nkuranga, IDP since 1993 at Kagege hill site, Busoni commune. The victim had been living in Rwanda since 2003 looking for work; of course, after passing the national

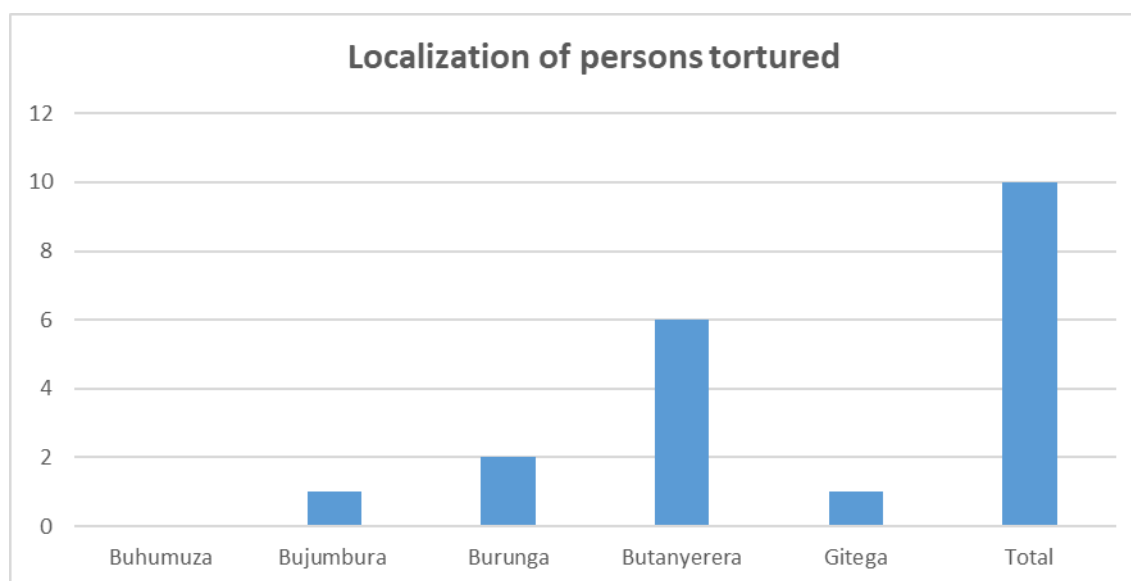
exam. And his family had lacked the means to pay school fees. The other three have not been identified.

According to reliable sources, they were returned by Rwandan police on 20 May 2025 and crossed Gasenyi border.

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

Article 21 of the Burundian Constitution stipulates that "No one may be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment." In addition, Law No. 1/04 of June 27, 2016, on the protection of victims, defines the rights of victims and provides measures to protect their physical and mental integrity. This clearly demonstrates the country's commitment to protecting the physical integrity of its citizens.

II.2.1 TORTURE, PUNISHMENT, AND OTHER CRUEL, INHUMAN, OR DEGRADING TREATMENT



A total of ten (10) cases of torture were recorded by Ligue Iteka across the country during this reporting period. Of these cases, five (5) were attributed to members of the Imbonerakure, three (3) to national police officers, and two to administrative officials. The most affected province is Butanyerera, Ngozi commune alone recording six cases.

Illustrative examples:

Example 1: On the night of May 2, 2025, around 9:00 p.m., on Kabo hill, Mukubano zone, Nyanza commune in Burunga province, Jonas Niyomwungere, a member of Sahwanya-FRODEBU party of the Burundi Bwa Bose coalition, was attacked with a machete by a group of Imbonerakure affiliated with CNDD-FDD, led by Benjamin Niyoyankunze. According to local witnesses, they arrested him as he was returning home and started interrogating him, asking where he was from, and then beating him. According to the same witnesses, he was injured in the left arm with a machete. He was taken to a local health facility for treatment. Residents of Nyanza commune, especially members of opposition parties, strongly condemn this unworthy behavior of the Imbonerakure, which they describe as intimidation during this election period.

Example 2: On May 16, 2025, at around 7:00 a.m., on Kibimba hill, Butezi zone, Musongati commune, Burunga province, Paul Ntiragomba, a member of UPRONA party, was tortured by hill

head Zacharie Batungwanayo and CNDD-FDD party representative for that hill. They were told they would kill him if he refused to give his cow to Leonard Ruhoranyi, even though the cow belonged to the cow breeders' association Ntiragomba is member to.

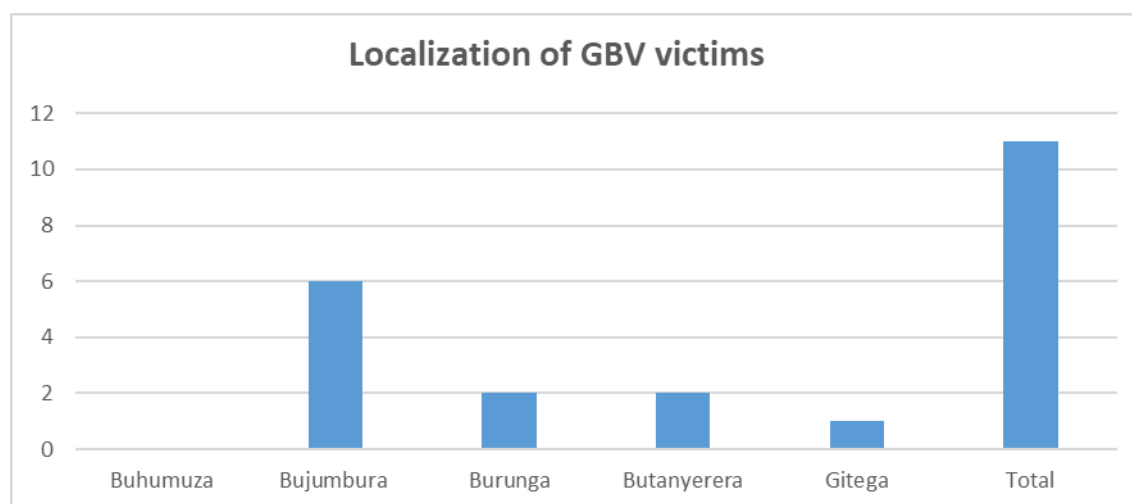
According to local sources, Leonard Ruhoranyi and Zacharie Batungwanayo did not belong to this association, except that one was CNDD-FDD representative for that hill and the other was the hill head. These two people, Zacharie and Leonard, were accompanied by Imbonerakure armed with batons. Paul Ntiragomba resisted that day because they were unable to take 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.

Ex. 3: On May 16, 2025, on Caga hill, Busiga zone, Ngozi commune, Butanyerera province, four members of Burundi BWABOSE coalition, including Dismas Minani, president of the coalition in the new Butanyerera province, were tortured by Imbonerakure members, including Gilbert, the Imbonerakure leader 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 campaigns, where they were untied and stripped of all their belongings, including money and symbols of this coalition. According to the same witnesses, the victims came from Nyange hill, Busiga zone, Ngozi commune, Butanyerera province for these party activities. Dismas Minani, along with other members of the coalition, filed complaints with the prosecutor's office but have yet to receive justice. The authorities did nothing despite their requests 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.

II.2.2. RAPE/GBV



Of the eleven (11) cases of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) recorded nationwide, two were committed by members of the Imbonerakure, while the other nine cases involved different perpetrators, including traders, house workers, neighbors of the victims, as well as their own children and husbands. Bujumbura province comes first with six victims.

Illustrative examples:

Example 1: On May 29, 2025, on Gihwanya hill, Rumonge zone and commune, Burunga province, Q. M. N, aged 6, was the victim of sexual violence committed by Venant Niyikigongwe, aged 23, an

Imbonerakure, a neighboring trader who often called her to offer her candy and ultimately raped her. According to the victim's parents, the act was witnessed by her parents while the child was washing her private parts, who was in great pain, and they asked for the perpetrator. The perpetrator was arrested and taken to Rumonge police station cell. The victim was taken to Humura center for holistic care.

Example 2: Information received by Ligue Iteka dated May 15, 2025, indicates that on May 7, 2025, on Mutambara hill, Gatete zone, Gatete commune, and Burunga province, Mr. N, aged 6, was the victim of sexual violence.

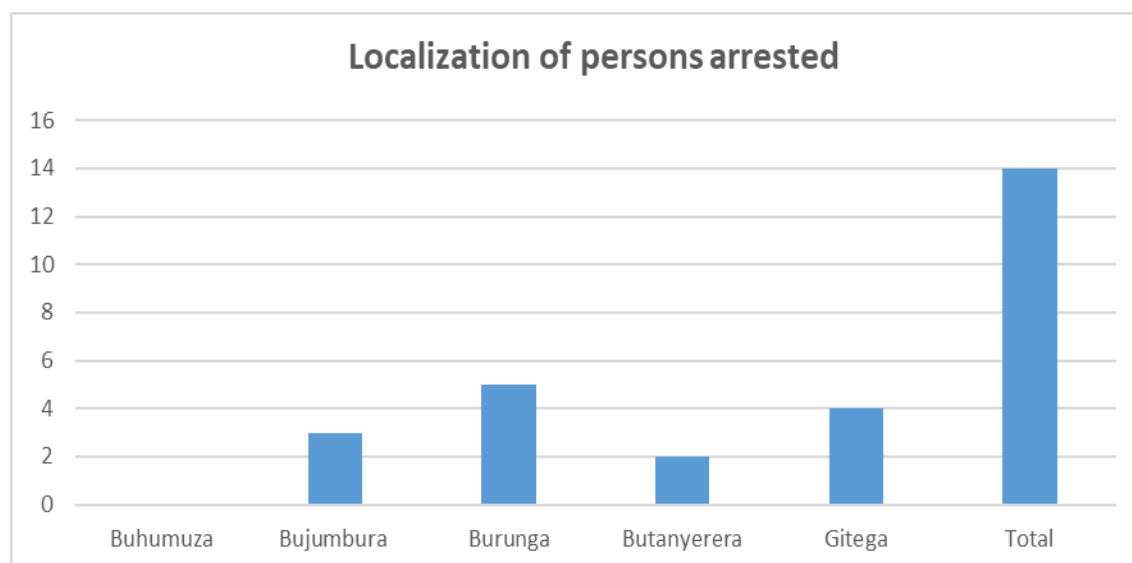
According to witnesses, the alleged perpetrator's name is Didace Ndayimirije, married and a member of CNDD-FDD party, president of the youth forum on Kanyenkoko hill. He owned a house at Mutambara IDP site and had visited it. He took the opportunity to call the victim, who was with other children, giving the team money to buy candy, and then called her into the house to commit the incident. The parents noticed this 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 was taken to Humura center for holistic care.

Example 3: On May 31, 2025, at around 8 a.m., on Birimba hill, Rumonge zone and commune, and Burunga province, I.D.A., aged 1 year 6 months, residing on the same hill, was raped by Iteriteka Alfred, aged 15, a house worker who had been caught red-handed by the child's mother before leaving. Fortunately, he was caught by his employer, accompanied by the cell leader, and then taken to Rumonge police station cell. The victim was taken to Humura Center and then to Rumonge Hospital. It should be noted that the alleged perpetrator was also taken to Rumonge Hospital to be examined for types of infectious diseases in order to decide whether the victim could take preventive medication or not.

II.3. RIGHT TO LIBERTY

Article 21 of the Burundian Constitution guarantees the right to liberty and security of person. It stipulates that "No one may be arbitrarily arrested or detained." The Burundian Criminal Code governs the conditions of pretrial detention and provides safeguards to prevent arbitrary arrests and detentions.

II.3.1. ARBITRARY ARRESTS AND DETENTIONS



A total of fourteen (14) cases of arbitrary arrests and/or detentions were recorded across the country during this reporting period. Of these cases, eight (8) were attributed to members of the Imbonerakure, four (4) to national police officers, and two (2) to local administration officials. Burunga and Gitega provinces come first with five and four cases, respectively. Bujumbura follows with three cases and Butanyerera with two.

Illustrative examples:

Example 1: On Thursday, May 29, 2025, three young members of the National Congress for Liberty (CNL), Bucumi Jérôme, Nshimwenimana Amissi, and Nimbeshaho Richard, were arrested in Munanira, Kivyuka zone in Bubanza commune, while they were heading to a political meeting in Ruziba-Bukinga. Their offense is allegedly representing the CNL youth in their community and resisting pressure from the ruling party.

These young people are currently being jailed in Bubanza police cells following an operation, according to reliable local sources, carried out by an Imbonerakure group. This militia, linked to CNDD-FDD, reportedly acted on the orders of the local representative, a member of the ruling party, as well as the commune's project manager. The official accusation? "Illegal promotion of CNL ideology."

These arrests are not isolated cases. They are part of a broader context of political repression, in which opponents, particularly young people, are intimidated, excluded, and even criminalized. Administrative arbitrariness combines with security pressure to hinder opposition activities. In this climate, political participation becomes not only a ignored right, but a personal danger.

The CNL communal leader in Musigati rightly deplores the arrest motivated by a refusal to join CNDD-FDD. He maintains that these young people were targeted for resisting local directives seeking to force them to join the party. This situation constitutes a serious violation of the Constitution, which guarantees every citizen the freedom of political choice.

Example 2: On May 14, 2025, at around 10:00 p.m., an individual named Siméon, an member of Sahwanya-FRODEBU party and a member of the Burundi bwa Bose coalition, was arrested on his native hill and zone of Kazirabageni, located in Nyanza commune, Burunga province.

According to eyewitnesses, he was in a bar with a CNDD-FDD member, nicknamed Kametero. They were discussing on voter's cards while showing them. Kametero allegedly questioned Siméon's right to publicly display his FRODEBU card before calling two men, a local elected official of the hill and Emmanuel, the leader of the 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 police station, where he is currently jailed.

Example 3: On May 7, 2025, on Gasenga hill in Makamba commune, Burunga province, Vincent Nzoyihaya, representative of the BURUNDI BWA BOSE coalition on Gasange hill, was arrested and imprisoned in Makamba communal police station cell. On the same day, Gaspard Hatungimana, leader of the coalition in Kabuye zone of the same commune, was also arrested by police officers in collaboration with Imbonerakure. According to neighbors, he narrowly escaped imprisonment but has been in hiding ever since.

III. SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL RIGHTS

III.1. DISRUPTION OF ECONOMIC LIFE.

Economic law suffered a serious violation in Burundi in May 2025, illustrated by several relevant facts. The elections led to a quasi-total paralysis of socio-economic activities in Muramvya commune and Gitega province. On Friday, May 30, 2025, an unprecedented interruption of economic and social activities hit this region. Indeed, CNDD-FDD party had organized an election rally at Muramvya Royal Stadium. Residents of different quarters were awakened at dawn, around 4 a.m., by the Imbonerakure using megaphones, whistles, and drums, even entering private plots to demand everyone's presence at the stadium. As a result, all shops and boutiques were forced to close until the end of the campaign. The Muramvya central market was not spared and did not open that Friday. In education, schools located near the stadium have also stopped their classes, despite the intense period of preparation for the end of the school year.

This includes Muramvya High School, Ecofo Muramvya I, Ecofo Muramvya II, and the Muramvya Vocational Technical School. All students and teachers were forced to go to the stadium to welcome the President of the Republic and the Deputy Secretary General of CNDD-FDD, who were present at the event. The ceremony ended around 3:00 p.m., leaving behind an atmosphere of high desolation among the urban population, particularly those not affiliated with CNDD-FDD party.

Furthermore, female traders were punished for supporting an independent candidate in Rugombo zone, Cibitoke commune, Bujumbura province. According to information transmitted to Ligue Iteka on June 1, 2025, as the communal and legislative elections approached, several female fruit traders were imprisoned on May 28, 2025, at CNDD-FDD party office. This act, which lasted six hours, was perceived as political repression due to their participation in an independent candidate's rally. Among the criticisms raised was that this punishment was decided in retaliation for their high presence at the May 23, 2025 rally in the market parking, causing the discontent of CNDD-FDD officials who believed that these traders, having obtained their location thanks to the party, should have demonstrated loyalty. The economic impact of this measure was immediate and tragic. Fruits such as pineapples, ripe bananas, tangerines, and oranges, left abandoned without sellers or customers, ended up rotting on the spot. One trader, visibly outraged, expressed her distress: "This is a great loss. I have loans to repay, and now I'm losing my merchandise for political reasons." These women denounced the exploitation of their commercial activity, asserting their right to choose freely. Beyond imprisonment, they were forced to wear CNDD-FDD party uniforms, a symbol of forced loyalty. The administrator of Rugombo commune, Gilbert Manirakiza, when contacted for comment, claimed to be unaware of these events but asserted without evidence that "the political climate is calm" ahead of the June 5, 2025, elections. The women involved pleaded for the protection of their rights and respect for their political freedom in a commercial environment free from partisan interference.

Late that same day, political activity continued in Nyaburumba. This time, it was the head of Makamba central market, known as Fofana, who was criticized for ordering the closure of some stalls to force traders to participate in CNDD-FDD election campaign. This move was strongly condemned by several traders who complained: "We're closing our stalls when it's our only source of income, all for a meeting we don't even want to attend."

The closure of businesses in Cibitoke, after ten days of campaigning for the legislative and communal elections of June 5, 2025, has had a significant impact on the lives of residents. CNDD-FDD, the dominant party on the ground, continues to issue various threats, including targeted attacks

against the opposition and those who choose to support other candidates. Despite its extensive media coverage, the ruling party is seeing its popularity decline and is forced to force people to attend its meetings. Shops and other commercial establishments must remain closed during these meetings. Furthermore, the price of rice has risen significantly, reaching 5,500 Bif per kilo since May 15, 2025, following the supply of trucks from Kayanza and Ngozi to the market, worsening the financial situation of some groups of the population. A well-informed source suggested that rice is being used during campaigns to buy votes, particularly among the inhabitants of Muramvya, Kayanza, and Ngozi. The population is worried about a possible economic crisis that could worsen due to the stop of income-generating activities.

Furthermore, information gathered by Ligue ITEKA indicates that on May 23, 2025, CNDD-FDD representative, Hakizimana Rénovat, ordered Komezurugendo Cyriaque, head of Butezi zone, Musongati commune, Burunga province, to tax all vendors present at the market the sum of 1000 Bif, specifying that this contribution will be used to finance party meetings. This taxation, imposed coercively, is perceived as illegal and unacceptable by the local community. Threats of force have been made, promising that those who refuse to pay will be dumped into Maragarazi River, and residents are calling for urgent intervention from higher authorities to stop this abusive behavior which flagrantly violates human rights.

Regarding ANAGESSA's corn purchase in Buhumuza province, residents are expressing a loss of trust in the government due to inconsistencies between different ministries. Indeed, on May 1, 2025, during the International Labor Day celebrations in Mishiha, Governor Boniface Banyiyezako reported grievances related to corn purchases, noting that the unsold stock of approximately 8,000 tons is rotting. The fact that affected landowners have still not received payment is causing fears about the future inaccessibility of other products. Meanwhile, cooperatives and individuals who have taken out loans are worried about their ability to repay in the absence of a market for corn.

Finally, the central market was closed to force residents to collect their voter's cards in Rumonge. On May 14, 2025, faced with citizens' reluctance, the authorities decided to close the market while the Imbonerakure controlled the entrances. Many voters rushed to different polling stations in search of their cards, noting a chaotic organization, with many of them unable to find their names on the lists. In Kayanza commune and province, on May 14, 2025, the situation was equally worrying. CNDD-FDD organized a rally, forcing the closure of markets and businesses, which sparked discontent among traders. Many wonder how Burundi envisions development by 2040 or 2060 if such disruptions to commercial activities are commonplace. Others question the presence on the candidate list of individuals with very limited educational backgrounds, wondering how they could legislate and contribute to the smooth running of the country.

III.2. RIGHT TO EDUCATION.

The right to education is largely affected in Burundi in May 2025, as evidenced by a series of significant events observed by Ligue Iteka. At ÉCOFO Kobero, Nyagatovu zone, Butihinda commune in Butanyerera province, classes were suspended due to electoral activities. Since the beginning of the campaign, increased participation of students from various primary and fundamental schools has been observed. On Monday, May 27, 2025, a large number of students interrupted their studies to join CNDD-FDD party's campaigns. These young people are forced to wear party uniforms and then group into units known as "Battalions." They engage in demonstrations showing the party's

power while chanting slogans denigrating opponents. Concerned and outraged, parents are calling for these activities to be revised so as not to disrupt their education.

The suspension of classes in Makamba, still for CNDD-FDD campaign, has also been reported until May 27, 2025. In addition to messages perceived as intimidating, concrete violations of the right to education are occurring in this commune, where students from Musasa and Kinoso schools were unable to attend their classes. They were forced, according to several witnesses, to participate in a demonstration organized by CNDD-FDD on Nyabigina hill. Some students were asked to dance to entertain participants, while others were simply asked to fill the ranks to show popular support. One teacher laments: "These children should have been in school, but they are being sent to march for the party. This is not normal." »

In Gitega province and Nyabihanga commune, disruptions continue as some school officials convey political messages to students. For example, on May 28, 2025, Léonard Maniratunga, the DCE of Nyabihanga, visited several schools, urging students to vote for CNDD-FDD. Students are facing pressure, suggesting they will not return to class if they do not support the ruling party. This climate of pressure and intimidation raises serious questions about the integrity of the education system.

At the same time, an election campaign meeting was held on May 26, 2025, in Nyanza, Burunga province, where the CNDD-FDD secretary general organized a large rally. In the morning, a crowd gathered at the communal stadium, seeking concrete promises. However, the speaker arrived significantly late, after many participants waited for hours in the blazing sun. This interruption of school activities to allow students to participate in party events has raised concerns among teachers and parents, who see it as an excessive politicization of education.

Educational failings are also observed in Rumonge, Burunga province, where five students were expelled for being involved in the theft of exams. The principal of one of the schools is involved, suspected of complicity in this fraud, sparking outrage among parents and teachers. Despite the evidence, he appears to be protected due to his affiliation with CNDD-FDD, fueling public anger and frustration over a perceived unequal justice.

Furthermore, fundamental school students in Mwaro are in an uncertain situation, having to take exams without having received science and technology classes during the school year. The new school principal has not provided these classes, leaving the students without adequate preparation. Parents are desperate, wishing for the opportunity to redirect their children to other schools.

Finally, teachers in Makamba, Burunga province, are forced to cover themselves the printing costs of the documents required for performance evaluations, a practice deemed abusive. They are calling on the authorities to end these requirements, which place a heavy burden on already struggling professionals.

In Bugenyuzi commune, Gitega province, a meeting also highlighted the growing politicization in the education sector. Teachers were forced to participate in political celebrations or be labeled as opposed to the ruling party's ideals, revealing unacceptable pressure to encourage explicit political loyalty at the expense of education.

III.3. RIGHT TO HEALTH.

The right to health was seriously disrupted in Burundi during the month of May, due to several worrying incidents documented by Ligue Iteka. In Muyinga commune, residents face a lack of electricity and clean water, two essential resources for daily life. Muyinga town center, the commune

city, endured a full week without access to drinking water or electricity. This shortage, caused by Régideso, is having dramatic consequences on various aspects of citizens' lives. In terms of health, the population lives in constant fear for diseases linked to the unsanitary environment. Furthermore, the neonatology services at Musinga hospital have become inoperable, exposing premature newborns to a mortal risk. The situation is worsened by a general shortage of fuel, which prevents the hospital from operating its generator. Faced with this crisis, residents are imploring Régideso to urgently resolve the problem, as the losses already incurred are considerable.

Meanwhile, in Bugendana commune, Mutaho zone, Gitega province, a worrying shortage of medication has affected all health centers in the health district for the past two weeks. Patients who visit these facilities are no longer receiving treatment, and drug stocks are completely empty at Mutaho district hospital and peripheral centers. According to several reports, medical staff are forced to limit their intervention to consultations, referring patients to private pharmacies to purchase prescribed medications. A patient met at Bugendana health center expressed disappointment at the administration's policy of encouraging the population to buy the Medical Assistance Cards, seen as a way to gain money. The Bugendana health center is particularly distressed because, in addition to the lack of medication, the laboratory technician recently left to seek better opportunities in Dubai. As a result, laboratory tests have not been done for three weeks. It should also be noted that since the beginning of the year, the Mutaho Health District has seen the departure of four nurses.

Finally, Matana Hospital, located in Burunga province, is facing a serious ambulance shortage. This vehicle, immobilized since March 30, 2025, due to an accident on RN7 near Migerere village, significantly complicates the referral and counter-referral system for patients throughout Matana Health District. Patients admitted in various healthcare facilities are expressing their dissatisfaction, stating that they must rent private vehicles to be transferred to other hospitals. Dr. Ange Larissa Nsabiyumva, the doctor in charge of Matana hospital, indicated that the ambulance engine was damaged, but is currently undergoing repairs.

IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

During this reporting period, the deterioration of the human rights situation continued to be observed in various parts of the country.

This report highlights cases of violations of the right to life; to physical integrity and liberty; and to economic, social, and cultural rights.

This report also lists issues related to security events and the prevailing context in the country.

In this report, Ligue Iteka also reviews major events that marked the political, judicial, economic, and security contexts, as well as the human rights context that marked this period. It also deals with the disruption of civil and political rights, as well as economic and sociocultural rights. Ligue Iteka protests against the impunity for the crimes observed.

Given the ongoing situation of human rights violations in Burundi, Ligue Iteka recommends the following:

To the Burundian authorities:

1. To guarantee respect for human rights, including the right to life, physical integrity, and liberty.

2. To promote and guarantee an inclusive electoral process and allow opposition parties to pursue their social project for their supporters and the Burundian people in general.
3. To take measures to end impunity for crimes and ensure that those responsible for human rights violations are held accountable.
4. To improve governance and promote the rule of law to ensure the protection of human rights.

To the international community:

1. To support the efforts of Ligue Iteka and other human rights organizations in monitoring human rights violations in Burundi.
2. To use their influence to compel the Burundian authorities to respect human rights and end impunity.

To human rights organizations:

1. To continue monitoring the human rights situation in Burundi and advocating for the protection of human rights.
2. To provide support to victims of human rights violations and work to ensure their access to justice.