



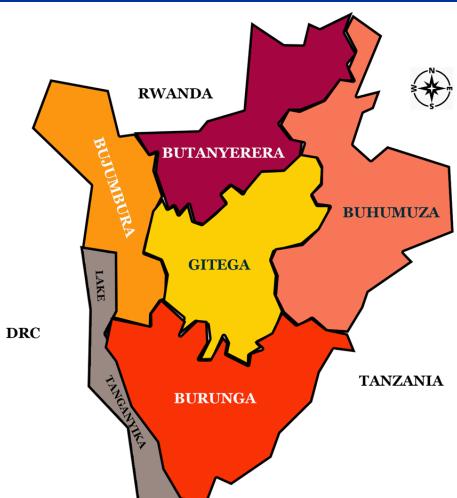
BURUNDIAN LEAGUE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS "ITEKA"

## WEEKLY BULLETIN

"Iteka n'ljambo"

**N°509 from 12 to 18 January 2026**

Approved by Ministerial Statutory Instrument No. 530/0273 of November 10<sup>th</sup>, 1994  
revising Order Nr. 550/029 of February 6<sup>th</sup>, 1991



*In memory of Mrs. Marie Claudette Kwigera, treasurer of the Iteka League, missing since December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2015. From December 2015 to January 18, 2026, at least 852 cases of enforced disappearances have been reported to the Iteka League*

### The ITEKA League:

- ◆ Is a member of the Inter-African Union for Human Rights and Peoples (UIDH), is an affiliated member of the International Federation for Human Rights Leagues (FIDH),
- ◆ Has observer status with the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights under reference number OBS.236 and is a member of Ecosoc
- ◆ The Iteka League is decentralized into 17 federations and 32 sections.

### SUMMARY

<b>0. INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>P.5</b>
<b>I. CONTEXT.....</b>	<b>P.5</b>
<b>II. CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS .....</b>	<b>P.11</b>
<b>III. SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL RIGHTS.....</b>	<b>P.14</b>
<b>IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....</b>	<b>P.18</b>

# *ADMINISTRATIVE MAP OF BURUNDI*

## ***NEW ADMINISTRATIVE REDIVISION OF MARCH 16, 2023***



## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

<b>AIDS</b>	: <i>Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome</i>
<b>ANAGESSA</b>	: <i>National Agency for Food Security Stock Management</i>
<b>CNDD</b>	: <i>National Council for the Defense of Democracy</i>
<b>CNDD-FDD</b>	: <i>National Council for the Defense of Democracy-Forces for the Defense of Democracy</i>
<b>CNL</b>	: <i>National Congress for Liberty</i>
<b>DCE</b>	: <i>Municipal Education Department</i>
<b>DG</b>	: <i>Director General</i>
<b>DPE</b>	: <i>Provincial Education Department</i>
<b>DRC</b>	: <i>Democratic Republic of Congo</i>
<b>ECOFO</b>	: <i>Elementary school</i>
<b>EU</b>	: <i>European Union</i>
<b>FOMI</b>	: <i>Organo-Mineral Fertilizers Industries</i>
<b>HIV</b>	: <i>Human Immunodeficiency Virus</i>
<b>M23</b>	: <i>March 23 Movement</i>
<b>OTB</b>	: <i>Burundi Tea Office</i>
<b>SNR</b>	: <i>National Enquiry Service</i>
<b>UN</b>	: <i>United Nations</i>
<b>WGFPI</b>	: <i>Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances</i>

## TABLE OF CONTENT

<b>0. INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>I. CONTEXT.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>I.1. POLITICAL CONTEXT.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>I.2. SECURITY CONTEXT.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>I.3. HUMANITARIAN CONTEXT.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>I.4. JUDICIAL CONTEXT.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>I.5. ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>I.6. GOVERNANCE CONTEXT.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>II. CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>II.1. RIGHT TO LIFE.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>II.1.1. INTENTIONAL HOMICIDES.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>II.1.1.1. KILLINGS BY STATE AGENTS.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>II.1.1.2. LIFELESS BODIES FOUND.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>II.1.1.3. KIDNAPPINGS AND/OR FORCED DISAPPEARANCES.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>II.2. PHYSICAL AND/OR MENTAL INTEGRITY.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>II.2.1. RAPE.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>II.2.2. OTHER GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE.....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>III. ECONOMIC, SOCIAL, AND CULTURAL RIGHTS.....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>III.1. DISRUPTION OF ECONOMIC LIFE.....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>III.2. RIGHT TO EDUCATION.....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>III.3. RIGHT TO HEALTH.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>IV. CATEGORICAL RIGHTS.....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>IV.1. CASES OF INFANTICIDE.....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....</b>	<b>18</b>

## 0. INTRODUCTION

This bulletin presents the human rights situation in Burundi during the week of January 12 to 18, 2026. In this report, the Iteka League also examines the political, security, humanitarian, judicial, environmental, and governance context. It also analyzes illustrative cases of violations of civil and political rights, economic, social and cultural rights, as well as category-specific rights.

The human rights violations observed and documented by the Iteka League during this period are as follows: at least 2 people killed, including 1 found dead, 1 person missing, 1 case of infanticide, and 5 GBV victims, including 3 rapes of girls, all minors.

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

## I. CONTEXT

### I.1. POLITICAL CONTEXT

Delivered on January 14, 2026, at the Lake Tanganyika Club Hotel in Bujumbura Province, Burundian President Évariste Ndayishimiye's speech on the continuity of the state is broadly supported by facts. He pointed out that political rivalries, frequent changes in leadership, and discontinuity in public policy have historically hampered Burundi's development. Since independence, the country has experienced prolonged periods of transition, recurring disruptions in the implementation of public policy, and significant delays in the execution of development programs. The President emphasized that the five-year term allows for only three effective years of development, due to post-election management and preparation for the next elections. This observation is partially accurate, as the first years of a term are often marked by institutional adjustments and administrative reorganizations, while the last years are dominated by electoral issues.

The achievements highlighted, such as the

construction of the national stadium, are real, but their economic and social impact remains limited and difficult to measure on a national scale. The absence of robust mechanisms for communication, monitoring, and evaluation contributes to the discontinuity of public action, which cannot be attributed solely to successive leaders, but also to structural weaknesses.

For the "Nation on the Move" to translate into tangible improvements, political continuity must be accompanied by solid institutional reforms, verifiable economic results, and increased accountability for public action.

It should be noted that this presidential speech was delivered at the official launch of a collective work written by Benjamin Ndagijimana, Janvière Ndirahisha, Désiré Manirakiza, Gabriel Rufyiri, Alain Ndikumana, and Pacifique Manirakiza, defending the idea that Burundi has broken with stagnation to embark on a path of long-term development in line linked to Vision 2040-2060.

## **I.2. SECURITY CONTEXT**

### ***Disorder caused by refugees in Ruyigi commune, Buhumuza province***

As of January 14, 2026, Congolese refugees in the new Busuma camp, in Ruyigi commune, Buhumuza province, created a disturbance while Caritas agents were distributing cash to them. These refugees caused the chaos in an attempt to see how they could steal the money, but the police quickly intervened to maintain order and even fired shots into the air to disperse the

refugees. It should be noted that this is not the first time these refugees have caused such disturbances; similar behavior occurred earlier this year as well. According to some analysts, among these refugees are also Wazalendo who fought on the side of the Congolese government, which continues to cause unrest in this camp.

### ***Insecurity and threat of famine following the ban on access to the banks of the Rusizi River in Bujumbura province***

On January 9, 2026, Major General Aloys Ndayikengurukiye, Governor of Bujumbura Province, in a meeting he organized for various administrators, including police commissioners and army chiefs operating in that province, ordered that anyone attempting to approach the banks of the Rusizi River or cross the river to go to the DRC be tracked down and even shot. This order was given at a time when the borders between Burundi and the DRC have remained closed since December 12, 2025, two days after the takeover of Uvira by the AFC/M23 armed group. Twenty-four hours later, on January 10, 2026, this order resulted in the death of the first victim.

According to sources close to the situation, the incident took place in Mparambo, in the Rugombo area, where soldiers responsible for border surveillance were on patrol. Jean Ndikumana was killed by security forces and shot five times in the back.

Following the ban on approaching the banks of the Rusizi River and in the wake of this incident, fear is compounded by the economic consequences. Along the Rusizi River, from the Rukana area to the Gihanga area, the land is largely occupied by fields of food crops, including rice, corn, beans, cassava, and sweet potatoes, which constitute the main food source for the population in this area, which lives mainly from agriculture. The fact that civilians are unable to visit and tend to their fields raises fears of famine if this ban is not lifted. Another consequence of this ban is an increase in thefts from households and fields, as day laborers, most of whom were employed in these fields, no longer have other sources of income and resort to theft to ensure their survival.

The population affected by this ban, mainly farmers, is calling on the administrative authorities to lift it and is urging them to consider the consequences of the measures they are taking.



### **I.3. HUMANITY CONTEXT**

#### ***Reception of Burundian refugees from Tanzania in the Gisuru commune, Buhumuza province***

During the week of January 12 to 18, 2026, in the commune of Gisuru, Buhumuza province, there was a repatriation of 1,062 Burundian refugees from Tanzania who passed through the Nyabitare transit center in the said commune. All these returnees came from the Nduta refugee camp in Tanzania. According to some returnees, they were forced to return because the government of the United

Republic of Tanzania stated that it no longer wants to see Burundian refugees on its territory before the end of 2026. Upon leaving the camp, the police, in collaboration with the Basungusungu, demolish their homes. In Tanzania, the Basungusungu are equated with the Imbonerakure youth here in Burundi.

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### **I.4. JUDICIAL CONTEXT**

#### ***Life imprisonment sought against three men accused of murdering a seventy-year-old in Kivyibusha, Mpanda commune, Bujumbura province***

On January 12, 2026, during the preliminary hearing, the Bubanza prosecutor's office requested life imprisonment for three men from Kivyibusha hill, in the Mpanda commune, Bujumbura province, prosecuted for the murder of Lazare Bakunduwuhiriwe, a 68-year-old man who was beheaded about a week ago.

Among the defendants is the victim's son, Omer Ntunzwenima, who is being prosecuted alongside two other individuals. During the preliminary hearing, the main defendant admitted to the crime, stating that he had killed his father, whom he accused of witchcraft. He said that the victim had been receiving threats for several days.

The Bubanza High Court announced that the verdict will be handed down within ten days.

#### ***Prisoners released to ease crowding at Ngozi prison, in Butanyerera province***

As of January 16, 2026, a total of 217 prisoners were released from Ngozi prison in Butanyerera province as part of a government policy to reduce overcrowding in detention centers.

However, citizens who attended the hearing denounced what they described as ambiguities in the proceedings.

In particular, they point out that, unlike the victim's son, who admitted his guilt, the two other co-defendants denied any involvement in the crime.

These observers are calling on the court to deliver a swift and impartial decision, believing that the preliminary hearing revealed the possible existence of concealed evidence. They also express concerns about possible influence linked to the defendants' alleged membership in the Imbonerakure militia, which, in their view, could undermine the independence of the judiciary.

The beneficiaries included 195 men, 19 women, and 3 young girls. The release ceremonies took place at the central men's prison and the women's prison in Ngozi, in the presence of the Attorney General of the Republic, Rose Nkorerimana.

### ***I.3. JUDICIAL CONTEXT (the following of page 7)***

According to her, this measure mainly concerns prisoners who have already served their sentences, those prosecuted for minor offenses, as well as the elderly and women. The public prosecutor called on the released prisoners to engage in community development activities and to behave responsibly in order to avoid reoffending.

While this initiative has been welcomed by the public and human rights defenders, the

#### ***Concerns after the sentencing of journalist Sandra Muhoza in Ngozi commune, Butanyerera province***

On January 14, the Ngozi High Court in Ngozi commune, Butanyerera province, sentenced journalist Sandra Muhoza to four years in prison and a fine of 200,000 Burundian francs. A correspondent for the media outlet La Nova, she was arrested on April 18, 2024, and initially detained at Mpimba prison in Bujumbura before her case was transferred.

The conviction is based on charges of undermining the internal security of the state and inciting ethnic division, following exchanges on social media with colleagues and

latter believe that it remains insufficient in the face of persistent prison overcrowding.

For example, the central prison for men in Ngozi currently houses 1,856 prisoners for a capacity of only 400 places, a situation that continues to pose serious challenges, particularly in terms of food and living conditions.

citizens. Although the verdict is less severe than the prosecution had requested, the defense continues to denounce the proceedings as lacking a solid legal basis and the detention as arbitrary.

Today, this decision has provoked strong reactions among human rights defenders. They point out that the protection of journalism is a pillar of democracy and urge the Burundian authorities to respect their international commitments in order to guarantee a safe environment for the press.

#### ***Arrest of a student for possession of the body of a newborn in Mukaza commune, Bujumbura province***

On the morning of January 9, 2026, in the Nyakabiga area, Mukaza commune, Bujumbura province, Adeline Irankunda, a first-year student at the University of the Great Lakes and resident of 12th Avenue in the Nyakabiga neighborhood, was arrested.

The arrest took place after the discovery, in her possession, of the lifeless body of a newborn baby that she had hidden in a bag. According to initial observations by witnesses at the scene, the body was already in

an advanced state of decomposition. The same witnesses indicate that the body is that of the young woman's child, whom she had recently given birth to.

Adeline Irankunda is currently being held in custody at the Nyakabiga police station for the purposes of the investigation. The authorities will have to determine the exact circumstances of the infant's death and the reasons that led to the body being concealed.

## **I.5. ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT**

### **Torrential rains in Butanyerera province**

From January 7 to 10, 2026, more than 300 hectares of rice, beans, bananas, tobacco, and other crop plantations were destroyed by rainfall in the communes of Busoni, Kirundo, Kiremba, and Ngozi in the Butanyerera province. Incident reports from local authorities also highlight the destruction of

around sixty latrines, damage to roads and small bridges, as well as loss of human lives.

Communication officers contacted in various communes stated that investigations are ongoing as the toll may increase.

## **I.6. GOVERNANCE CONTEXT**

### ***The reimbursement of fertilizers, a first step towards compensation for farmers in Cibitoke commune, Bujumbura province***

Information received by the Iteka League on January 14, 2026 indicates that in the municipalities of Cibitoke and Bujumbura, Bujumbura province, the government has begun a reimbursement operation for farmers who paid for agricultural inputs that were never delivered. Although this gesture is welcomed as a necessary remedy, it only partially relieves an agricultural population that has been plunged into uncertainty for several seasons.

The problem stems from chronic dysfunctions in the supply chain. Many producers, having taken out loans from banks and microfinance institutions to finance their crops, found themselves heavily indebted due to insufficient harvests. While the current repayment allows

them to pay off part of their debts, a feeling of mistrust persists: arrears dating back to 2022 have still not been settled, fueling discouragement in the field.

Faced with this situation, farmers are no longer satisfied with palliative measures. They are now demanding far-reaching structural reform, including the establishment of permanent stocks of fertilizer that are accessible when needed. For those involved in the sector, only a sustainable distribution system can restore producer confidence and guarantee national food security, thereby preventing growing seasons from being compromised again by administrative delays.

### ***Evaluation visit by the Minister of Finance in the context of registering beneficiaries of subsidized fertilizers***

The Minister of Finance, Dr. Alain Ndikumana, visited Kabezi, in the municipality of Mugere, on January 15, 2026, to assess the registration of beneficiaries of subsidized fertilizer. He called on agricultural officials and administrative authorities to ensure rigorous monitoring and to report fraudsters who divert fertilizer by transporting it to the DRC, Tanzania, and elsewhere. The minister also announced that wealthy households will no longer benefit from the same facilities as smallholders.

During his visit, he noted that 148 farmers were already registered, totaling 308 vouchers. The minister stressed the importance of the agricultural sector for Burundi, representing 85% of the population, and recalled the government's efforts to support farmers.

It should be noted that this authority had denounced irregularities related to the purchase of FOMI fertilizers on December 27, 2025, before senators during the presentation of the revised 2025-2026.

## **I.6. GOVERNANCE CONTEXT (the following of page 9)**

budget. He revealed that FOMI was claiming more than 50 billion Burundian francs from the state and an additional 24 billion from farmers for quantities exceeding those specified in the initial contracts. The minister also

criticized the opaque management of vital resources by ANAGESSA and FOMI, and called for serious investigations and exemplary sanctions.

### ***The new area chiefs are demanding their salaries in Bururi commune, Burunga province***

These district chiefs in the municipality of Bururi in Burunga province took office five months ago but have not yet been paid.

*"We zone chiefs have been serving the population for five months, but we have not yet been paid. We are now leading a difficult life with our families,"* said Benoît Nahimana, chief of the Muzenga zone in Bururi commune, during a security meeting organized by the governor of Burunga province for representatives of the population of Bururi commune.

This administrator added that some of the zone chiefs are unable to pay for transportation tickets, which can cost up to 35,000 Burundian

francs, to attend various meetings held far from their workplaces.

Added to this is communication with various departments and services or with the colline chiefs, who are also not being paid. It is becoming virtually impossible without incurring related expenses.

The Honorable Parfait Mboninyibuka, Governor of Burunga, asked them to be patient, reassuring them that their rights would be restored because, according to him, the government is working to ensure that they receive their salaries. It should be noted that this case of non-payment of zone chiefs concerns the entire country.

### ***Distribution of FOMI fertilizers, fraud continues in the Muramvya area and commune***

Since November 26, 2025, there has been a disputed distribution of fertilizers for the 2026A agricultural season, and this time this fraud has reached its peak.

Indeed, on January 9, 2026, the Muramvya zone chief, Remy Habonimana, had invited the population via WhatsApp messages to come and obtain these fertilizers. All those who had their prepaid ticket showed up in large numbers. Under the supervision of the zone chief, he invited those present to participate in

a prearranged lottery. There were small pieces of paper marked "ego" (yes) or "oya" (no). Only those who drew "ego" could receive the fertilizer. The observation was that the "ego" papers were very few.

According to reliable sources, "ego" tickets had been distributed in advance the day before to certain Imbonerakure members. The population is wondering where this fraud will end.



### II.1. RIGHT TO LIFE

#### II.1.1. INTENTIONAL HOMICIDES

##### II.1.1.1. PERSONS KILLED BY STATE AGENTS OR IMBONERAKURE MILITIA.

*One person killed on Gakungwe hill, in the commune of Mugere, Bujumbura province*

On January 17, 2026, at around 11 p.m., a law enforcement officer shot and killed a civilian on Gakungwe Hill in the Ramba area of Mugere commune, Bujumbura province. The officer in question was assigned to guard the DIFO microfinance institution located on this hill, along National Route RN3. At that time, a resident of Ramba Hill named Eric was walking home after having a drink in Ruziba. When he reached the officer's location, the officer stopped

him. A confrontation ensued, as both individuals were intoxicated. The officer then opened fire on Eric, who died from his injuries. The victim's funeral is scheduled for January 19, 2026. The victim's family is demanding that the officer responsible for the shooting be identified, brought to justice, and punished in accordance with the law.

##### II.1.1.2. OF BODIES FOUND DEAD

###### *A lifeless body found in Gisagara commune, Buhumuza province*

On the morning of January 14, 2026, in a bush on Bumba Hill, Gisagara commune, Buhumuza province, the lifeless body of a man aged around 50 was found by passersby, close to the road linking the center of Muka on the Burundi side and Bukiriro on the Tanzania side. The body was discovered around 500 meters from the police station. The center of Muka is a newly populated center for returnees from Tanzania, most of whom are from the northern provinces of Ngozi, Kirundo, Kayanza, Muyinga, and Gitega.

According to local sources, the identity of the deceased is unknown, and the person was not known in the area. The body had marks on the

neck, as if the person had been strangled with a rope. This person is believed to have been killed elsewhere and the body dumped at this location, where he was killed by bandits on his way back from Tanzania, especially since many people who go to Tanzania in search of work and those who return always pass through this same route. The body of the deceased was buried on January 15, 2026, by the administration in collaboration with the Red Cross because the body was already damaged.

According to administrative sources, investigations are already underway to determine the identity of this person, the motives, and the perpetrators of the crime.

### **II.1.1. 3. ABDUCTIONS AND/OR FORCED DISAPPEARANCES**

#### ***A person was kidnapped in the Musaga area, Mugere commune, Bujumbura province***

A citizen known as GAHUNGU Thadée has been missing since 01/16/2026. This citizen is a former soldier of the former army (EX-FAB). He lived in the Musaga area, Mugere commune, and worked for Garda World Security, responsible for the safety of people and property, located near the Public Garden

in Mukaza commune, Bujumbura province. That day, he finished work around 5 p.m. and took the way home, but he never arrived at his residence. His family as well as his coworkers are very worried about his safety.

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

#### **II.2.1. RAPES**

##### ***A girl raped in Rumonge commune, Burunga province***

Information received by the Iteka League on January 13, 2026, indicates that on January 3, 2026, on the hill of Birimba, Rumonge commune, Burunga province, a 7-year-old girl named K.U. was a victim of rape whose alleged perpetrator is called Bizimana Jean Claude, 13 years old, residing on the same hill. According to sources on the spot, the

latter had taken the girl to an unfinished house to commit the incident. The victim screamed and was rescued by neighbors who grabbed the alleged perpetrator and took him to the police. As for the victim, she was brought to the Humura Center for holistic care.

##### ***A girl raped in Matongo commune, Butanyerera province***

On January 16, 2026, around 4 p.m., on Ndaro Hill, in the Matongo commune, Butanyerera province, a 3-year-old girl named L., daughter of J. and P., originally from the said hill, was raped by Dismas Ndayisaba, aged 50, who was the communal veterinarian of Matongo and is currently serving in the Kabuye area of the same commune. According to information provided by the victim's parents, Ndayisaba raped the girl in his house, and they said that after the act, the child ran home and told her mother that she had just been raped by this fifty-year-old man.

The author was arrested on the same day, January 16, 2026, at his home while trying to pack his belongings to flee, and he was taken to the holding cell of the Kayanza police station where he is being held for judicial investigations. The victim was taken to Kayanza Hospital for comprehensive care. The victim's parents are demanding that justice be served and that the perpetrator be punished according to the law, given that in the Dismas Ndayisaba community, the alleged rapist is suspected of being HIV positive.



## **II.2. PHYSICAL AND/OR MENTAL INTEGRITY (the following of page 12)**

### ***A minor girl was raped in the Commune and Province of Gitega***

On January 15, 2026, at around 8 a.m., on Gisuru hill, Giheta zone, Gitega commune and Gitega Province, a minor girl named I.G, aged 9, daughter of B. V and N. S C, was a victim of rape.

According to our source, the alleged perpetrator of this act is Mvuyekure Dieudonné, 45 years old, unmarried.

According to the same source, on the day of the facts, was in a film screening room (cinema). The alleged perpetrator approached her from behind and committed the act. The people in the room were alerted by the child's crying and arrested him. The child was immediately taken to the Giheta Health

Center for urgent care. This alleged perpetrator is currently detained in the Giheta zone dungeon.

The individual named Bidida is said to have been intimidated for reporting the case and would have done everything to ensure that the file was not closed without action. Our source also adds that a judicial police officer handling the case allegedly demanded the sum of 20,000 Fbu from the victim's parents, conditioning the transfer of the file to Gitega on this payment, under the threat of releasing the alleged perpetrator.

### ***II.2.2. OTHER GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE***

#### ***A woman beaten and injured by her husband in Rutana commune, Burunga province***

On January 15, 2026, on Kayove Hill, in the Rutana area and commune, Burunga province, a woman named Juliette Manirakiza was beaten and injured on her left leg with a stick by her husband, Eric Musafiri. According to sources on site, Musafiri accused her of coming

home drunk multiple times and having illicit relationships with other men.

According to witnesses, the victim was taken to Rutana Hospital to receive medical care. Musafiri was then held in the detention cell of the Rutana communal police station.

#### ***A woman burned in Karuzi commune, Gitega province***

On January 13, 2026, at around 9 p.m., on Ruyaga Hill, Mayenzi area of Karusi commune, Gitega province, a 30-year-old woman named Ndikumana, a member of the CNDD-FDD party, was burned by her husband Ndihokubwayo Gérard, a member of the CNDD-FDD, over 35 years old, with

boiling water when she wanted to prepare the dough for the night meal. Although the victim refused to say the cause of this act, she was burned on her face, chest and back before being evacuated by her neighbors to Buhiga hospital where she is hospitalized while her husband has taken off, according to the woman.



*Anyone should be respected*

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

##### ***Fraudulent maneuvers marked the ordering of fertilizer for tea plantations in Burundi***

Information received by the Iteka League on January 16, 2026, indicates that on December 23, 2025, Gilles Mukundwa, CEO of OTB, officially launched a tea plantation fertilization campaign on Kaserege hill, in the Muruta area, Kayanza commune, Butanyerera province. It was after more than three years that fertilizers had been unavailable in the tea fields.

This CEO of the OTB announced this time that within no more than nine days all the tea growers would have fertilizers. A glimmer of hope was noticeable among these tea growers, who also said that the tea plants were beginning to wither due to the lack of fertilizers. After the campaign launch, the Rwegura tea cultivation complex was supplied with an estimated two hundred tons of these fertilizers, but Richard Nahayo, manager of this Rwegura tea factory, did not distribute these fertilizers to the tea growers. The OTB manager of Rwegura indicates that these fertilizers were not given to the tea growers because they do not have the same chemical composition as those distributed to the tea

growers on the day of the campaign launch. According to him, these fertilizers will not be effective and they have a short shelf life. The first fertilizers distributed to tea growers will expire next August, according to the same source. He points out that it was not the general management of the OTB that placed the order, but rather the Minister of Agriculture when it was headed by Prosper Dodiko, and fears that fraudulent maneuvers may have tainted the order. Jérémie Rwigema, representative of the tea growers of Kayanza, requests that Studies should be conducted by the Institute of Agronomic Sciences of Burundi so that the true situation regarding these fertilizers comes to light and good quality fertilizers can be applied in the tea fields, because, he says, the tea growers they represent are grumbling and even threatening that if the situation continues like this, they might abandon proper maintenance of this industrial crop, which they now consider less profitable than other food crops like potatoes and maize, which yield a more abundant harvest than this industrial crop.

##### ***The closure of an irrigation dam threatens the rice sector in the Cibitoke commune, Bujumbura province***

As of January 15, 2026, in the commune of Cibitoke, Bujumbura province, the temporary closure of a strategic irrigation dam has caused significant concern among farmers in the Rugombo and Cibitoke areas. This decision was made by local authorities and provincial agricultural services, and the water cut is officially intended to allow for the dredging and maintenance of the irrigation channels.

However, this measure is considered harsh and untimely by rice producers. They point out that the halt in irrigation comes at a critical stage of the growing cycle, while rainfall is insufficient and usual practices generally sche-

dule this maintenance in August. The lack of water poses an immediate threat of plant drying, jeopardizing the harvests of families already weakened by delayed fertilizer deliveries.

The issue is also financial: many rice farmers have taken out loans from microfinance institutions to fund this campaign. A loss of production would lead to massive over-indebtedness and a major social crisis. Despite assurances from the authorities, who promise a restoration of water during the month, farmers are calling for an emergency intervention from provincial agricultural officials to save the season and prevent a local economic disaster .

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

#### ***Risks of student dropouts in Karusi commune, Gitega province***

Since the beginning of the 2nd term of the school year, following a decision by the president urging all students from 7th grade to the final year to wear closed shoes and white socks in addition to the uniform, most parents have lamented the cost of shoes given the already high level of poverty. In

addition, merchants have taken advantage of this decision by raising prices almost threefold—for example, a pair of shoes that previously cost 15,000 FBU now costs between 40,000 FBU and 45,000 FBU. Socks that used to cost 1,500 FBU now cost 3,000 FBU. We therefore risk seeing many dropouts this year, some principals lament.

#### ***Teachers denounce a controversial management of school grades in Burunga province***

Information received by the Iteka League on January 17, 2026, indicates that in Burunga province, the education sector is being shaken by a strong dispute. Teachers, particularly those of the 9th fundamental year, accuse the DPE, Elias Ndikumana, of imposing new evaluation rules that they consider illegal, arbitrary, and contrary to the regulations in force.

These teachers under the DPE in Burunga province express their profound dissatisfaction with the behavior of the DPE, Elias Ndikumana. They especially denounce the communications he sends within the DCE and even directly to school principals, which end up being used as new reference criteria for assigning grades to teachers, particularly those of the 9th fundamental year.

At the head of the DPE of Burunga, Elias Ndikumana announced that, from now on, for 9th-grade teachers whose students take the national exam called the national competition, a reassessment would be carried out. According to him, the evaluation would go back over a period of three years to verify whether the teacher has effectively taught their subject satisfactorily. Still according to Elias Ndikumana, after this analysis, the teacher concerned would be referred to their superiors so that they can be assigned tasks corresponding to their actual abilities, based on what they are deemed capable of accomplishing. He also

specified that the grade on the teacher's evaluation report would be equal to the average of the results obtained by their students in the subject they teach during the national exam. For him, these measures aim to establish fairness and avoid any form of injustice in the evaluation of teachers. However, these decisions are strongly contested by teachers as a whole, and more particularly by those in the 9th grade. They question the legitimacy of the provincial director to replace the Ministry of Education by establishing new criteria for teacher evaluation.

Some teachers go further and believe that these decisions are motivated by a lack of understanding of the teaching profession. They claim that Elias Ndikumana, although he received pedagogical training, never actually taught in a classroom. According to them, he spent most of his career in administrative roles, first as the principal of a secondary school, before overseeing education in the former commune of Kibago, his native commune. This commune was notable for having a high number of schools closed due to a lack of students. Subsequently, Elias Ndikumana reportedly worked at the Makamba DPE as an education inspector, a position he held for nearly two years, before being appointed DPE of Burunga at the beginning of the current school year, in September.

### **III.2. RIGHT TO EDUCATION (the following of page 15)**

9th-grade teachers also question the criteria that will be applied to teachers at other school levels if students' grades now become the sole reference for professional evaluation. They finally advise the DPE to exercise restraint in the decisions he makes, in order to avoid any violation of the laws and regulations governing his role, recalling that he remains, above all, a teacher despite his administrative responsibilities. According to these teachers,

similar decisions have already been attempted by other officials in the past, but they were removed from their positions; however, lacking mastery of the rules they imposed on teachers, they refuse to return to teaching. According to them, it is precisely this fear of lacking control that would push certain officials to retreat to the offices of the DPE or DCE, rather than returning to teach in the classroom.

### **III.3. RIGHT TO HEALTH**

#### ***The population exposed to a high proliferation of mosquitoes in Burunga province***

Information received by the Iteka League on January 17, 2026, indicates that in the province of Burunga, several residents claim they have not yet received the treated mosquito nets intended to prevent malaria. This situation exposes the population to a high proliferation of mosquitoes, especially during this rainy season.

At the same time, a shortage of antimalarial drugs has been reported in several health centers and hospitals in the province, complicating the care of patients. Due to the lack of available treatments in public facilities, many patients are turning to private pharmacies, despite their limited financial means. Health professionals are warning about the risks of serious complications and preventable deaths, particularly among children and pregnant women.

Suspicions of mosquito nets being diverted to illegal sales channels, particularly to the

neighboring country of Tanzania, are also mentioned by some residents, heightening the anger and concern of underserved populations.

In response to this situation, the residents are making a urgent appeal to the government for fair and rapid distribution of mosquito nets as well as a regular supply of essential medicines. On their part, health service officials acknowledge that some areas have not yet been covered, citing difficulties related to the distribution mechanism, while assuring that measures are underway to restart the operation. This comes as health authorities confirm a continuing rise in malaria cases nationwide. Insecticide-treated mosquito nets had been distributed nationwide during the last quarter of 2025, but experts believe that without full coverage and sufficient medication, health risks remain high.

### IV.1. CASES OF INFANTICIDE

#### *A newborn killed in Karuzi commune, Gitega province*

Information received by the Iteka League on January 12, 2026, indicates that on January 10, 2026, on Karamba hill, Mayenzi area, Karusi commune, Gitega province, Claudine Niyonkuru, aged 20, voluntarily aborted a 7-month-old fetus and threw it into a toilet on the neighboring Radaraza hill. The alleged perpetrator was suspected by her friends, who reported her to the hill chief. On January 11, 2026, she was arrested by the Buhiga area police around 2 p.m. and showed them the

toilet in which she had thrown the fetus, after which she was forced to retrieve it herself before being taken to the Buhiga area jail. Her parents buried the newborn. On January 13, 2026, Claudine was taken to Buhiga hospital for examinations and underwent a curettage as she was at risk of uterine infections, then hospitalized under police supervision before returning to the jail on January 16, 2026.



## **V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Iteka League strongly denounces the ongoing deterioration of human rights in Burundi and condemns the impunity of those responsible for crimes. It calls on the Burundian authorities to take all possible measures and recommends the following :

### ***To the Government of Burundi:***

1. To ensure respect for human rights, including the right to life, physical integrity, and liberty;
2. To take measures to end impunity for crimes and ensure that those responsible for human rights violations are held accountable for their actions;
3. To guarantee access to basic services, including water, health, education, and justice, for all citizens;
4. Ensure the protection of journalists by making sure that media professionals, such as Sandra Muhoza, can practice their profession without fear of disproportionate legal action for opinions or private exchanges;
5. Set up, in collaboration with MFIs (Microfinance Institutions), mechanisms for debt rescheduling or insurance in the event of agricultural losses caused by administrative decisions or weather-related hazards;
6. Develop support programs for young people in distress (such as students in situations of poverty or personal crisis, like in Nyakabiga) to prevent isolated tragedies.

### ***To the technical and financial partners of the Government of Burundi, including the UN, EU, and accredited diplomatic missions in Burundi :***

1. To support the efforts of the Iteka League and other human rights organizations in monitoring human rights violations in Burundi;
2. To use their influence to pressure Burundian authorities to respect human rights and put an end to impunity.