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Alert No. 5

Explosions in Burundi's Economic Capital: A Thorough Assessment of Damage and Repairs is Imperative for the Government

As part of the **UMUSEKE** program, human rights organizations, the Burundian Human Rights League (Iteka) and King Umurundi Freedom continue to document the security and human rights situation in the country.

On the evening of March 31, 2026, our organizations, the Burundian community, and the international community watched helplessly as disaster struck Burundi's economic capital, "Bujumbura," causing severe human and material losses in most of its neighborhoods, with the Kinanira and Mpimba neighborhoods being the hardest hit. At least a dozen people lost their lives at the scene, the majority of whom were prisoners and several others were injured at the Mpimba Central Prison, not to mention other military casualties at the armed forces base and ISCAM, the number of which remains a military secret.

Indeed, according to initial reports from our sources, the toll of human and material losses could prove to be very heavy at the Armed Forces base, where the explosives warehouse is located, as well as at ISCAM, the neighboring camp. In the neighborhoods of the economic capital, in addition to the loss of life reported at the Mpimba Central Prison, other deaths and injuries have been reported. Families continue to search for their loved ones, most of whom are children who fled in panic and have not yet reunited with their families.

Furthermore, in addition to the human toll, material damage such as the destruction of homes, vehicles, household appliances, and other property has been recorded in these neighborhoods of the economic capital, and various explosives are scattered across different locations. Our organizations express their condolences to the affected families, wish a speedy recovery to the injured, and call for restraint toward all those affected, whether directly or indirectly, by this disaster.

The Iteka League and King Umurundi Freedom commend the Burundian army's communications during and after the disaster, and the preliminary report presented by the spokesperson is consistent with the findings of its initial investigations, which indicate approximately fifteen people killed, about a hundred injured, and some sixty homes partially or completely destroyed.

In light of the foregoing, the organizations Ligue Iteka and King Umurundi Freedom recommend:

To the Government of Burundi:

1. To provide clear information about this disaster and issue a statement of reassurance to the Burundian and international communities;
2. To locate and remove all explosives scattered by this disaster for the protection of the population;
3. To establish a team of experts to produce an assessment report on the damage caused by this disaster and its origin;
4. To develop a plan for reparations and compensation for the victims of the March 31, 2026, disaster;
5. To develop a plan to secure other cities or neighborhoods housing weapons depots to prevent similar incidents from occurring;

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

1. To provide humanitarian support to the Government of Burundi so that it can address the damage caused by this disaster and prevent future occurrences;
2. To urge the government to produce an expert report on the cause and damage of the disaster.

To the residents of the neighborhoods affected by the disaster:

1. To report to security services any discovery of explosives or other military objects in their area.

For the UMUSEKE program

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