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# BURUNDIAN LEAGUE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS "ITEKA"

## WEEKLY REPORT

*"Iteka n' Ijambo"*

**N°516 from 2 to 8 March 2026**

Approved by Ministerial Statutory Instrument N°. 530/0273 of November 10<sup>th</sup>, 1994  
revising Order N°. 550/029 of February 6<sup>th</sup>, 1991



*In memory of Madam Marie Claudette KWIZERA, treasurer of the Iteka League, missing since December 10, 2015. From December 2015 to March 8, 2026, at least 860 cases of forced disappearances have been reported to the Iteka League, at least 86 victims have reappeared, and 776 victims are still missing. The UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances (WGEID) has already communicated with the government of Burundi regarding at least 252 victims.*

The ITEKA League:

- 'Is a member of the Inter-African Union for Human and Peoples' Rights (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.

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# ADMINISTRATIVE MAP OF BURUNDI

NEW ADMINISTRATIVE REDIVISION OF MARCH 16, 2023



## ACCRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

*BRARUDI: Brewery and Soft Drink Company of Burundi*

*CNDD-FDD: CNDD-FDD: National Council for the Defense of Democracy-Forces for the Defense of Democracy*

*CNIDH: National Independent Human Rights Commission*

*FOMI: Organo-Mineral Fertilizers Industries*

*FRODEBU: Front for Democracy in Burundi*

*DRC: Democratic Republic of Congo*

*OPJ: Judicial Police Officer*

*SNR: National Enquiry Service*

*TGI: High Court*

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## 0. INTRODUCTION

This bulletin presents the situation of human rights in Burundi during the week of March 2 to 8, 2026. In this report, the Iteka League also examines the security, humanitarian, judicial, social, and human rights 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 are as follows for this period: at least 9 people killed, including 6 found corpses and 1 case of infanticide, 1 case of abduction and/or people reported missing, as well as 2 cases of GBV, including a minor girl who was raped. Among the victims are 4 women, a minor girl, and a child.

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

## 1. CONTEXT

### 1.1. POLITICAL CONTEXT

On March 7, 2026, Arusha, Tanzania, hosted the 25th summit of the East African Community (EAC). The leaders of the region's states met to discuss topics of great importance, such as economic integration, regional security, and the implementation of infrastructure projects. Among the notable decisions of this meeting was the launch of the EAC Customs Bond, a customs guarantee mechanism aimed at encouraging trade between member countries. A new Secretary-General has also been appointed: Stephen Patrick Mbundi, originally from Tanzania, has received a five-year mandate. Furthermore, Yoweri Museveni, the President of Uganda, has been elected to the rotating presidency of the EAC. In addition, a new development strategy has been adopted: the 7th EAC Development Strategy (for the period 2026/27 to 2030/31), which aims to accelerate regional integration and promote socio-economic transformation.

This summit was not only a space for dialogue on opportunities, but also a point of reflection on the tensions prevailing in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), where government forces are facing the M23 rebellion, supported by Rwanda. This situation raises concerns about the East African Community's (EAC) capacity for regional integration, which must confront

various challenges, including arrears in contributions from several members that jeopardize its financial stability and integration objectives. As of January 31, 2026, the EAC was enduring a significant financing deficit, with arrears amounting to over 89 million U.S. dollars, of which 22.7 million were owed by Burundi.

On March 5, 2026, another significant event took place when Burundi's President, Evariste Ndayishimiye, received Dr. Mohamed Yakub Janabi, the WHO Regional Director for Africa, at the Kiriri Palace. The purpose of the meeting was to congratulate the Burundian president on his new position as chair of the African Union and to discuss opportunities for collaboration between Burundi and the WHO. Dr. Janabi commended Burundi for its efforts in fighting against diseases such as malaria and addressed regional health challenges, particularly those related to hosting refugees from the DRC. He also visited refugee camps to assess health needs and identify priority interventions. Sébastien Ntahongendera, the president's deputy spokesperson, noted that this visit was part of a broader tour by the WHO Regional Director across several countries, with the aim of better understanding the specific characteristics and needs of each nation and assessing how the

## ***1.1. POLITICAL CONTEXT (the following of page 5)***

WHO could provide appropriate support. On March 6, 2026, Dr. Janabi was also received by Angeline Ndayishimiye, the First Lady, whose efforts to promote health and improve the well-being of Burundians were commended. This visit took place at a time when Burundi was facing significant health challenges, such as a high prevalence of malaria, the fight against HIV/AIDS, the reduction of maternal and infant mortality,

and the management of malnutrition. Improvements to the healthcare system, the response to emergencies (mpox), and insufficient funding for mental health are also major issues.

## ***1.2. SECURITY CONTEXT***

### ***The population threatened by stray dogs in Muyinga commune, Buhumuza province***

Information received by the Iteka League on March 5, 2026, indicates that stray dogs have been rampant in recent days in various neighborhoods of the Muyinga area. Children who go to school very early in the morning are having a lot of difficulty getting there calmly due to these dogs that frighten them and who have already bitten a child who ended up

dying. Furthermore, rabies vaccines, as well as other medications, no longer exist in Muyinga. It is requested that dog owners keep them at home and have them vaccinated, failing which they should be killed for the safety of the population.

## ***1.3. HUMANITARIAN CONTEXT***

More than 66,000 refugees are living in extremely precarious conditions in the commune of Ruyigi, in the province of Buhumuza.

Information received by the Iteka League on March 6, 2026, reveals that the majority of refugees in the Busuma camp come from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, having fled the persistent insecurity prevailing in the eastern part of the country. In search of protection and safety, these individuals have taken refuge in the Busuma camp, located in Ruyigi, within Buhumuza province. Despite the welcome they have received, living conditions in this camp remain extremely difficult.

As humanitarian infrastructure there is limited, essential resources—including drinking water and health services—remain largely insufficient to meet the needs of such a large population. To improve access to water, a collection and distribution system was implemented using a spring located about five kilometers from the camp. This initiative has led to a partial improvement in

the drinking water supply. However, the amount of water currently available remains very insufficient, with each refugee having an average of only about 5.5 liters of water per person per day.

This level remains well below the minimum threshold generally recommended in humanitarian emergencies—estimated at between 15 and 20 liters per person per day—to meet basic needs related to drinking, hygiene, and domestic use. In terms of health care, a primary care clinic has been established within the camp to address the medical needs of the refugee population, recording approximately 1,000 consultations per week. The most frequently diagnosed conditions are primarily respiratory infections, diarrheal diseases, and other ailments linked to deplorable hygiene conditions and a lack of drinking water.

These diseases, often referred to as “dirty-hand diseases,” are particularly common in contexts of overcrowding and limited access to sanitation services. Given this delicate situation, additional measures are needed,

### ***1.3. HUMANITARIAN CONTEXT (the following of page 6)***

particularly to strengthen the water supply, improve sanitation infrastructure, and ensure adequate access to health services for all refugees. Furthermore, the refugees have expressed a desire for voluntary repatriation, preferring to return to the Congo rather than endure the deplorable living conditions in the refugee camp, fearing for their survival.

Update from the meeting with UNHCR regarding voluntary return to the Congo: UNHCR stated that it did not deem it appropriate to return people to the Congo, but since the refugees continue to call for return, the two governments (DRC and Burundi) have agreed to facilitate voluntary return under the following conditions:

1. Receive training and be issued a registration form by UNHCR here in the camp: this process can begin on Wednesday, March 11, following the training of UNHCR staff,
2. Departure according to the schedule to be issued by the government to the Uvira transit camp, From the Uvira transit camp after receiving the following services from UNHCR in the DRC:

1. Transportation to the transit camp: \$100 per person

### ***1.4. JUDICIAL CONTEXT***

#### ***Arrest of a teacher in Bubanza commune, Bujumbura province***

On March 2, 2026, in the village of Mitakataka in the commune of Bubanza, located in Bujumbura Province, a teacher and principal of an elementary school was arrested by law enforcement. According to information received on the area, this individual, who is married, is facing legal proceedings on charges of raping a student at his school.

According to statements from the local administration of the Mitakataka area, this teacher is considered the main suspect, as he is alleged to have sexually abused this student

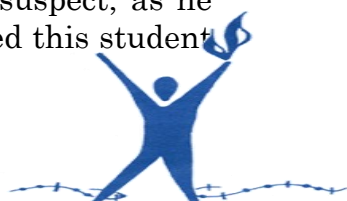
2. \$150 per adult and \$75 per child for self-reliance support
3. Home renovation: \$100 per adult
4. School tuition assistance: \$81 per school-age child
5. Food for two months
6. Dignity kit for each woman

Notes:

1. This plan does not include those who fled to the Congo or those who do not have a token.
2. Woe to those who are sent back to the Congo through this program and later return to Burundi to seek asylum if they become victims of the war again.
3. Within a family, one person aged 18 or older is permitted to leave or stay without their family.
4. The UNHCR in Congo will not assist those who do not have the UNHCR form for Burundi.
5. You are asked to refrain from any violence so that this program can succeed; if you do not understand, ask them instead of creating chaos that will lead to the suspension of this program.

May the one who has ears to hear may hear.  
Tell someone else

on multiple occasions, and the incidents are said to have taken place in the teacher's office, as indicated by internal investigations. Furthermore, his arrest is part of an effort to ensure justice and facilitate a thorough investigation to shed full light on this case. Finally, it should be noted that the victim is a 16-year-old girl.



***Anyone should be respected***

### ***1.3. JUDICIAL CONTEXT (the following of page7)***

#### ***Ten people arrested in Rumonge commune, Burunga province***

On the afternoon of March 7, 2026, around 3:00 p.m., the Rumonge District Court held a summary trial for ten individuals who had been apprehended following rumors of sexual thefts. These individuals are from the hills of the Rumonge commune, six of whom are from the Kigwena hill, three from Mugomere, and one from the urban center. All are being prosecuted by the public prosecutor's office for spreading rumors that disrupt public order, primarily involving three offenses: undermining state security - malicious accusations - rebellion for those who attempted to resist law enforcement. The six individuals from Kigwena Hill—namely Willy, Augustin, Bahati, Yvan, Justin, and Édouard—were sentenced to six months'

imprisonment, along with a fine of 100,000 FBU. As for Justin, Yvan, and Édouard, they were sentenced to three months' imprisonment and fined 100,000 FBU. Among the three individuals from Mugomere, one of whom was a minor, two received a sentence of six months' imprisonment and a fine of 100,000 FBU. As for the individual from the urban center, in the presence of the Mugomere members—all minors—he was sentenced to one year in prison, with a six-month suspended sentence. The hearing concluded around 7:00 p.m., and all those convicted were transferred to the Rumonge Central Prison at the same time.

#### ***A man sentenced in Matana commune, Burunga province***

On March 5, 2026, the Bururi High Court sentenced Emmanuel Niyonkuru to life imprisonment for killing his wife. This murder took place between February 27 and 28, 2026 at their home, on Rukere Hill, in Matana commune, Burunga province, where he used a machete and a hip. During the hearing, the prosecutor accused the man, who

confessed to his crime, of having done so in a premeditated manner. The accused explained that his anger, provoked by the words of the victim Gaudence Habonimana, who claimed that he was not the father of the six children living with them, was the reason for this murder.

#### ***Provisional release of journalist Sandra Muhoza after 23 months of detention***

Burundian journalist Sandra Muhoza, a contributor to the media outlet La Nova, was released on provisional bail on Wednesday, March 4, 2026, at around 4:00 p.m. Her release from the Ngozi Central Prison follows a decision by the Office of the Prosecutor General at the Ngozi Court of Appeals, after 23 months of incarceration. This measure, however, is subject to strict judicial restrictions, including a ban on leaving her province of residence without prior

authorization from the investigating judge. Charged with “undermining the internal security of the state” and “disseminating information to foreigners likely to disturb public order”—charges she firmly denies—the journalist remains at the disposal of the courts. Her release, warmly welcomed by her family and friends and by the media community, has reignited the debate on the exercise of press freedom in Burundi.

#### ***Cases of lifeless bodies of children found and rapes sometimes not investigated and punished, in the communes of Cibitoke, Mugina, and Bukinanyana, in Bujumbura province***

On March 5, 2026, the Iteka League received an alarming communication mentioning a worrying increase in violence against children in the communes of Cibitoke, Mugina, and Bukinanyana, all located in the province of

Bujumbura. Since the beginning of the year, the climate of fear seems to be intensifying, and local sources report tragic events. In less than three months, three children had tragically lost their lives.

#### ***1.4. JUDICIAL CONTEXT (the following of page8)***

In Mugina Commune, on February 3, 2026, the lifeless body of an 8-year-old boy named Jacques Kwizera was discovered alongside his father, Niyonkuru, and his mother, Jeanne Hakizimana, in the Butahana area on Rutorero Hill. A few days later, in the commune of Cibitoke, two other children were found dead near the Nyamagana River on Rusiga Hill. One of them was a 9-year-old girl named Irakoze Fabiola, discovered on February 3, 2026, with her father, Bihoyubusa Samuel, and her mother, Mpawenayo Claudine. The second, a 10-year-old boy known as Uwizeye Thomas, was found on February 12, 2026; his parents were Nkurunziza Didace and Muyanga Dafrose. The same source also reported four other cases of rape on the hills of Rukana, Rusororo, Ngoma, and Kagazi in the commune of Bukinanyana, as well as seven additional cases on the hills of Nyamitanga, Bihembe, Shimwe, Nyangwe, and Rangira.

Unfortunately, the perpetrators of these three murders remained unknown. In addition, sixteen cases of rape had been documented, with all victims being children under the age of 15.

Suspicion had fallen on various members of the community, such as gold panners, motorcycle taxi drivers, and merchants, but only two suspects had been apprehended, while the others continued to live without

fear, benefiting from protection allegedly linked to their affiliation with the ruling party, the CNDD-FDD.

Residents were also unaware of a troubling trend to sweep cases under the rug at the local level. According to some reports, administrative officials were seen attempting to resolve these cases out of court, sometimes in exchange for bribes, rather than going through the proper legal channels. Furthermore, some members of the judicial police were suspected of harboring suspects.

This climate of fear and injustice sparked outrage among parents and children's rights advocates, who called for a thorough investigation into these crimes. They demanded that those responsible be identified, arrested, and severely punished, in the hope of restoring safety and trust within their communities. When asked about the issue, local officials stated that they routinely referred all known cases of violence to the courts. They acknowledged, however, that some incidents occurring in remote areas might not be reported to them promptly.

#### ***1.5. SOCIAL CONTEXT***

##### ***A camp of people from the Batwa social class, Karusi commune, Gitega province***

On March 3, 2026, on Kigoma Hill, in the Buhinyuza area, Karusi commune, Gitega province, the residents of the hill noticed the presence of members of the Batwa ethnic group, who had come from various areas of the Karusi commune and had settled in a communal woodland located on the Murotso sub-hill. They had already built small shelters using tree leaves and had begun cooking. When asked why they had settled there, they explained that the president had promised them land, but that this promise had not been fulfilled, leaving them without arable land. Consequently, the administrator ordered the police commissioner to evict them and inform

them that the situation would be reviewed shortly. The following day, March 4, 2026, the administrator summoned all the hill chiefs of the commune and asked them to register all vulnerable individuals without land, regardless of ethnicity, on each of the hills, as well as to identify the communal properties of each hill for a comprehensive assessment of the situation. According to this administrator, it is not only the Batwa community that finds itself landless.

## ***1.5. SOCIAL CONTEXT (the following of page 9)***

### ***In the province of Butanyerera, land registration reveals discrimination against women***

A report submitted to the Iteka League on March 5, 2026, highlights that in the municipality of Kayanza, Butanyerera Province, women's access to land ownership remains a major concern. Statistics from the last quarter of 2025 indicate a remarkably low participation of women in the land registration process, a situation that raises questions among local authorities. According to Olivier Bayubahe, head of the municipal department responsible for land registration and the issuance of land titles in Kayanza, the data speaks for itself: among 150 individuals who registered their land during this period, only one was a woman. This finding highlights the enduring challenges related to equal access to land ownership. Local authorities attribute this low representation of women largely to the persistent influence of traditions within Burundian society.

In many households, family assets are typically registered in the husband's name. Even when a plot of land is purchased by the wife, it is often registered in the husband's name. Although this practice is deeply ingrained in society, it can jeopardize women's land security, particularly in the event of

separation, widowhood, or family disputes. Land specialists, however, point out that registering property in the owner's name provides significant legal security, as holding a land title in one's own name not only strengthens the owner's legal protection but also contributes to the economic and social stability of families. It is therefore imperative that local authorities foster collective awareness to promote more equitable land management and increase women's participation in decisions regarding property and inheritance. In a context where land is a fundamental resource for Burundian households, equal access to land rights is proving to be more than ever a key issue for development and social justice.

## ***1.6. HUMAN RIGHTS CONTEXT***

### ***Panic within the CNIDH following the disappearance of its employee***

Concern is growing within the CNIDH over the disappearance of one of its employees. "You see, we're currently facing some difficulties. On Wednesday, the day after, a woman named Chadia Mukaremera didn't show up... not even the director general has said anything about it." This is the statement by Gérard Rugemintwaza, vice-president of the CNIDH, in response to a question posed by a journalist regarding the disappearance of a CNIDH staff member. He was speaking during an interview on March 6, 2026, in Bujumbura, as part of the group's presentation on the situation of women's rights in Burundi. On Thursday, March 5, 2026, employees began to wonder about the fate of the missing person. Gérard

Rugemintwaza explained that they had immediately launched a search and issued alerts.

He specified that they had begun by compiling a case file and contacting the judicial police, the Attorney General of the Republic, and the Nyakabiga police station, where the person in question resided. The vice-president of the CNIDH stated that the search was ongoing and urged anyone with information regarding the missing employee to come forward. "There are details we are missing, but we have no answers."

The only solution would be to find her, for her to return, and for those responsible to be brought to justice." Gérard Rugemintwaza expressed his deep sorrow over this

### ***I.5. HUMAN RIGHT CONTEXT (the following of page 10)***

disappearance: "We are very saddened." The CNIDH specified that the search was ongoing and that a team had been formed to monitor this case. It also indicated that it was in contact with the people who reported the issue and who are now responsible for the services in charge of searches and investigations. From the point of view of human rights defenders, this situation highlights that the CNIDH

(National Independent Human Rights Commission) in Burundi appears to lack the capacity to defend the rights of others in accordance with the country's constitution.

#### ***Reminder: "A woman reported missing in Nyakabiga, Mukaza commune, in Bujumbura province.***

*Since February 25, 2026, on Muyinga Avenue in the Rohero district of Mukaza commune, Bujumbura province, very close to the CNIDH offices, Chadia Mukaremera, a cleaner at the National Independent Commission (CNIDH), residing in the Nyakabiga I neighborhood on 13th Avenue, Mukaza commune, Bujumbura province, has been reported missing.*

*According to His Excellency Martin Blaise Nyaboho, President of the CNIDH, Chadia spoke with her colleague on the phone before going missing.*

*Her family and colleagues have searched several locations, but without success. They express grave concern for her safety and are calling for independent investigations into her disappearance.*

The president of the CNIDH also stated that they have not heard from this woman because her phone has been turned off since that day, and the police say that investigations are underway to locate this CNIDH employee. The Iteka League sought to determine who had called her that morning, whether it was the first time or not, and also continued to investigate whether the victim had any disputes with her colleagues. The information received indicates that she was a pleasant woman at work; her absence is highly noticeable, which is why her colleagues would contact her every morning to carpool. On that day, it was Ms. Chantal Bakamiriza, the secretary general, who had called her; she did so regularly, as did other colleagues in the

department. The last known location of the victim's phone was in the Nyabugete district, and what is strange is that the SNR had already decided to conduct a search there but later abandoned the effort. The Iteka League is concerned about the "why."

Additional information obtained by the Iteka League regarding the information contained in its February 2026 report.

1. Ms. Chadia had a drink with Chantal Batamuriza, the Secretary General of the CNIDH, along with three other women at the Officers' Mess in Bujumbura, located on the road known as 28 November, very close to the CNIDH office, on February 20, 2026, five days before her disappearance;
2. Ms. Chadia and Secretary General Chantal Batamuriza were dropped off at the Officers' Mess by a driver from the CNIDH; to return home, a relative of Chantal's came to pick them up and dropped Chadia off in her neighborhood of Nyakabiga;
3. Phone records revealed that Ms. Chantal, the Secretary General of the CNIDH, called Chadia on Monday, the day of her abduction; however, strangely, Chantal did not mention this contact on Wednesday when Chadia failed to report for duty.
4. The relocation of Chadia's phone by Burundi's security services showed that her phone was located in the area of the Nyabukete branch, and the search and inspection plan in this area was suddenly abandoned. The information

<sup>1</sup><https://ligue-iteka.bi/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/RAPPORT-MENSUEL-FEVRIER-2026.pdf>

## ***I.4. HUMAN RIGHT CONTEXT (the following of page 11)***

that the Iteka League received indicated that they were advised to abandon the search.

5. According to the information, the occasional speeches given by the two secretaries of the commission, one being the Secretary General and the other the Secretary of the Executive Bureau of the commission on the occasion of International Women's Day at the bar La Détente, it was noticed that the two personalities were not on the same wavelength regarding this case. Chantal, the Secretary

General, is convinced that Chadia is somewhere and will reappear one day, while the other, the Secretary of the Executive Bureau, Mrs. Béatrice Nkurunziza, is despairing over the disappearance of the victim.

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

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

#### ***II.1.1. VOLUNTARY HOMICIDES***

##### ***II.1.1.1. PEOPLE KILLED FOLLOWING SETTLEMENT OF SCORES***

###### ***One person killed in Cankuzo commune, Buhumuza province***

On the evening of March 6, 2026, around 7:00 p.m., on the Nyamugari hillside, Rusagara Hill, Kigamba area, Cankuzo commune, Buhumuza province, a 43-year-old man named Melchior Nkengesere was killed.

According to local sources, Nkengesere was returning home from the Rusagara market around 7 p.m. when two men intercepted him along the way, a few meters from his home, and struck him on the head with a club, killing him instantly.

The alleged perpetrators were taken to the Kigamba district jail.

They are two men: one is the deceased's younger brother, and the other is a man who had a questionable relationship with the deceased's wife. The deceased was buried on March 8, 2026.

###### ***A person succumbs to their injuries at Mutaho Hospital, Gitega province***

As of March 3, 2026, Ndayizeye Laetitia, one of the victims who had been injured in the grenade attack in the main town of the Gikomero area, in

Muhanga commune, Butanyerera province, succumbed to her injuries at the place where she was hospitalized.

###### ***As a reminder, in its bulletin Iteka n'Ijambo No. 514, the Iteka League reported: "Two women killed and another injured in Muhanga commune, Butanyerera province"***

*On the night of February 18–19, 2026, in Muhanga commune, Butanyerera province, two women, including Béatrice Nijimbere, were killed in separate incidents. According to local sources, around 9:00 p.m., a grenade attack left a trail of blood in the administrative center of the Gikomero zone, in Muhanga commune, Butanyerera province. The explosion that claimed the life of Béatrice Nijimbere occurred in her bar, located directly across from the zone's administrative offices.*

*The victim, wife of the Gikomero zone chief, Gaspard Nsavyimana, died instantly. Béatrice Nijimbere was a teacher and former principal of ECOFO Gikomero, as well as a member of the Rango municipal council for the CNDD-FDD party. The attack also left one person injured, Laëtitia, a nurse, who was struck by shrapnel from the explosive device.*

*According to initial investigations, Béatrice Nijimbere may not have been the original target. The investigation is focusing on family*

## **II.1. RIGHT TO LIFE (the following of page 12)**

land disputes. At this stage, the police have arrested two suspects: Godefroi Mbazumutima and Joseph Igirukwishaka.

According to the information gathered, Joseph Girukwishaka was at the cabaret at the time of the incident and had previously made threats against the victim, claiming that she would be killed one day. It is reported that he had a child with the victim's daughter and had asked to marry her as a second wife, a request to which the mother reportedly objected. He is also said to have given a large sum of money to the young woman, which was allegedly used to facilitate her departure to Oman.

Our source added that the suspect was arrested while attempting to flee. He admits to being the perpetrator of this incident.

That same night, a second woman died in a fire at her home. According to local sources, an 83-year-old woman—the stepmother of Annonciate Nizigiyimana, the municipal administrator of Muhanga—was burned to death by unidentified individuals while she was inside her home. According to the same sources, internal conflicts between this administrative official and other members of her party are believed to be behind this murderous act. The municipal administrator, Annonciate Nizigiyimana, condemned these acts and called for calm, noting that vigilante justice has no place in a state governed by the rule of law.

### **II.1.1.2. PERSONS KILLED AS A RESULT OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

#### ***A woman killed in Matana commune, Burunga province***

Information received by the Iteka League on March 5, 2026, indicates that during the night of February 27–28, 2026, on Rukere Hill in Matana commune, Burunga province, Gaudence Habonimana was killed with a machete and an axe by her husband, Emmanuel Niyonkuru. According to witnesses, the man accused his wife of having children who were not theirs. The couple

had been living for some time in a climate of conflict, marked by suspicions of infidelity. Emmanuel was arrested and taken to the holding cell at the Matana municipal police station for questioning.

### **II.1.1.3. LIFELESS BODIES FOUND**

#### ***A lifeless body was found in Bururi commune, in Burunga province***

On March 2, 2026, at around 2:00 p.m., the decomposing body of Shabani Rivuzimana, aged 17, was discovered in the Ruvyironza River, between Mahwa Hill in Matana commune and Kajondi in Bururi commune, Burunga province.

According to local sources, the victim was originally from Karusi commune, Gitega province, and was currently residing on Gihanga Hill, in the Kajondi area of Bururi commune, at the home of Sabine Sindabahaga, where he worked as a cowherd.

According to the same sources, although the body was already decomposing, marks on the neck indicated that the young man had been strangled. However, the police investigator present at the scene claimed that the young man had been swept

away by the river's current, a claim the local population denied.

The same sources also indicate that the victim had been reported missing since the morning of February 19, 2026, at the time when the young boy was in conflict with the Imbonerakure in that locality.

The police investigator and administrative authorities ordered the burial on the banks of the same river without waiting for the arrival of the deceased's family.

It should be noted that prior to the new administrative reorganization of communes and provinces, the location where the body was found belonged to the commune of Ryansoro, Gitega Province.

## ***II.1. RIGHT TO LIFE (the following of page 13)***

### ***A lifeless body found in Bugendana commune, Gitega province***

On March 3, 2026, on Kivuvu Hill in the Bugendana commune, Gitega province, a 77-year-old man named Luc Nsambayiruka was found dead, lying in a ditch. According to local witnesses, the discovery of his body was confirmed by Jacques Mbayahaga, the head of Kivuvu Hill, who was unaware of the circumstances surrounding his death. The body showed signs of blood flowing from the nose, mouth, and ears.

Police Investigator Niyongabo Éric and Mbayahaga Jacques, the hill chief, told those present that the elderly man had likely died after being swept into the gutter by rainwater while intoxicated.

However, the deceased's family members disputed this account. According to them, the

### ***Two lifeless bodies of Imbonerakure found in Mugina commune, Bujumbura province***

On the morning of March 4, 2026, the bodies of two young members of the Imbonerakure militia were discovered on Ngoma Hill, in the Rubona area of Mugina commune, Bujumbura province. The victims were from that hill. The deceased were identified as Ndayishimiye Kondo, aged 30, son of Manyurane and Suzanne Nyabirori, and Kadogo Sabimana, aged 31, son of Thomas Nyirimana and Thérèse Uwimana. Their bodies were found near the Ruhwa River, on the border between Burundi and Rwanda, in the Bwayeye district. According to local administrative authorities, these two individuals were reportedly struck fatally on the head with sticks and clubs by their own comrades, who accused them of engaging in the clandestine trade of BRARUDI products and gold destined for Rwanda. This version of events is strongly contested by the relatives of the deceased as well as by some residents of the region. Describing the incident as a targeted killing, the victims' families are demanding a thorough judicial investigation.

According to their statements, they were reportedly forced to bury the bodies immediately without any investigation being conducted. The families are also demanding the immediate arrest of the alleged perpetrators, whom they claim to have identified. For his part, the municipal administrator of Mugina, Anicet Saidi, stated that investigations are underway to clarify the

presence of blood around the nose, mouth, and ears suggests that the victim was struck with a heavy object, as evidenced by visible injuries to the head, forehead, and cheek.

The family also claims that no investigation was conducted into certain individuals with whom the deceased had land disputes. The body was transported to the morgue at Mutoyi Hospital and buried the following day on the orders of the municipal administrator and the municipal police commissioner in Bugendana.

exact circumstances of this tragedy and to bring those responsible to justice.

The civil administration, as well as the police forces, are involved in smuggling activities within the provinces bordering Rwanda, particularly in Cibitoke, Kayanza, Ngozi, and Muyinga, according to the former administrative division. This phenomenon is also evident in the new administrative structure and within the commune of Mugina. Zone chiefs and local officials of the CNDD-FDD party in the areas of Nyamakarabo, Rubona, and Ruhororo, bordering Rwanda, are constantly involved in such activities. To attain this type of position, one must not only wield significant influence within the party but also pay substantial bribes, with the aim of quickly enriching oneself through smuggling. According to local sources, the primary concern of those who have invested to become zone chiefs lies in their personal interests rather than in the security or well-being of the population.

This conflict of interest explains the lack of serious investigations as well as the rushed burials in the event of incidents related to smuggling activities. The population continually calls on the Burundian government to establish constructive

## ***II.1. RIGHT TO LIFE (the following of page 14)***

relations with neighboring Rwanda, in order to ensure the legality and regulation of cross-border trade to prevent new tragedies. This conflict of interest explains the lack of serious investigations as well as the rushed burials in the event of incidents related to smuggling activities. The population

continually calls on the Burundian government to establish constructive relations with neighboring Rwanda, in order to ensure the legality and regulation of cross-border trade to prevent new tragedies.

### ***Two lifeless bodies found in Cibitoke commune, Bujumbura province***

On March 6, 2026, at approximately 3:00 p.m., the bodies of a woman and a 7-year-old child were discovered on the banks of the Rusizi River, near Mparambo Hill, in the Rugombo area, Cibitoke commune, Bujumbura province. The alert was raised by local fishermen operating near the border between Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

According to police findings, the victims, whose identities could not be established, are believed to be Congolese nationals. They are believed to have been swept away by the current while attempting to cross the river illegally to return to the DRC. This tragedy occurs against the backdrop of a massive but perilous return: many refugees settled in

Rugombo are attempting to reach the territory of Uvira, motivated by a perceived improvement in security back home, but also by growing food insecurity in Burundi. Eyewitness accounts gathered on the ground highlight the dangers of these nighttime crossings, exacerbated by rising water levels and the suspicious activities of certain smugglers. In light of this situation, administrative and security authorities are urging migrants to stop using these illegal routes and to wait for the official reopening of the borders. On the orders of local authorities and in the presence of the police, the two bodies were buried on site.

### ***II.1.2. ABDUCTIONS AND/OR FORCED DISAPPEARANCES***

#### ***A former refugee from Nakival kidnapped in Jabe, Mukaza commune, in Bujumbura province***

According to information received by the Iteka League on March 2, 2026, a former refugee from the Nakival camp in Uganda, recently repatriated under the name Njimbere Herménégilde, also known as Fanny, was abducted in Jabe, in the city of Bujumbura, within the Mukaza commune, Bujumbura province. According to local sources, Herménégilde Njimbere, nicknamed Fanny, aged 42, is originally from Jabe, in the city of Bujumbura. He was preparing to celebrate his wedding, scheduled for March 14, 2026. A member of the FRODEBU party, he had fled to Uganda in 2015 due to his opposition to Nkurunziza's third term. He returned to Burundi in 2023, convinced there would be no risk, having received assurances from the authorities. According to our witnesses, on February 27, 2026, Njimbere Herménégilde

was having a drink with a friend in Jabe, near a taxi stand.

Around 10 p.m., Fanny and his friend were getting ready to leave when a man named Jacques asked them to stay and order another drink. Suddenly, a double-cabin van, without a license plate, arrived, carrying individuals in police uniforms. They immediately apprehended another person, but someone present then shouted: "No, not this one, but that one!" while pointing at Fanny. These elements suggest that Fanny's arrest was carefully planned.

Realizing that he had been betrayed, Fanny tried to escape, unfortunately in vain, and was arrested and quickly taken into the van, which drove away. His family desperately searched for him, without success. According to some reports, Fanny is currently being held by the National Enquiry Service (SNR).

## ***II.1. RIGHT TO LIFE (the following of page 15)***

but no one has been able to locate him. Despite his family's intensive searches in various official detention places, Herménégilde remains untraceable.

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

### ***II.2.1. GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE/RAPE***

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

On March 4, 2026, on Kayove hill, Rutana zone and commune, Burunga province, Emelyne Kanyange was beaten and chased away by her husband Éric Minani, both farmers and members of the CNDD-FDD party; they have four children. She was

accused of having marital relations with other men. The couple is already separated, and this woman still lives at home with one of her children while the man lives with the remaining three.

#### ***A girl was raped in Mugeru area, Bugendana commune, Gitega province***

On March 5, 2026, on Nyamagana hill, Mugeru area, Bugendana commune, Gitega province, a little girl named N, aged 7, daughter of L. and D, was the victim of rape. According to information gathered from a local source, the incident occurred around 5 p.m., while the child was with Irankunda Rodrick, a 19-year-old neighbor, to graze cows. At nightfall, the girl returned home crying. Her mother, noticing bleeding in the genital area, immediately alerted the neighbors. The child was then

taken to Nyamagana Health Center, where the medical staff confirmed the sexual assault. The suspect was arrested and is currently held in the Bugendana commune jail while waiting to be transferred to the police station in Gitega for further judicial proceedings.

## ***II. 2.2. TORTURE, CRUEL, INHUMAN OR DEGRADING PUNISHMENTS OR TREATMENT***

#### ***A motorbike driver was mistreated by a police officer in Mwaro commune, Gitega province***

On March 4, 2026, around 10 a.m., in the town of Mwaro, Gitega Province, a motorcycle taxi driver named Hakizimana was standing at the entrance of a store that sells cement.

According to on-site sources, his motorcycle was parked next to him when a police officer from the Mwaro Provincial Police Station named Berchmans, carrying a Motorola radio on his belt, approached and forcibly grabbed the rider by the neck to force him to hand over the ignition key to his motorcycle. The motorcyclist initially cried out for help, but soon he was unable to make a sound because the police officer was choking him tightly around the neck.

Since Wednesday is the only market day of the week in Mwaro Township, a crowd of people standing near the store—those going to

or returning from the market—suddenly gathered to ask what the dispute was about. So the police officer left the scene, but looking very angry because the motorcyclist had refused to give him the key to his motorcycle, insisting instead that the officer check the motorcycle's documents.

Those present criticized the officer's behavior, arguing that even if the motorcyclist had committed an offense, he should not have been treated that way, as the motorcyclist could have died from strangulation.

Some information says that this policeman Berchmans is of the Twa ethnicity, and everywhere he went before being transferred to Mwaro, he had the habit of mistreating people.

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

##### *Damage caused by the lack of fuel in Muyinga commune, Buhumuza province*

On March 4, 2026, in the Ngundu neighborhood, Mukoni Hill, Muyinga district and municipality, Buhumuza province, a Probox car caught fire at Désiré Ciza's home while he was draining gasoline from the tank. Two houses also caught fire, but the civil protection police and the surrounding community helped extinguish the blaze; however, the houses were completely burned down. On March 3, 2026, the Muyinga Public Prosecutor's Office, led by Prosecutor Azarias Nduwimana, in the presence of the head of the intelligence service in the Muyinga commune and the police, conducted an auction of 6,020 liters of gasoline

belonging to Shabani Nimubona and 217 bags of FOMI manure seized for fraud. The public prosecutor in Muyinga reiterated that fraud is punishable upon being caught in the act and that anyone arrested will be severely punished. The fuel shortage has led many people to change their strategies for fuel fraud, and the resulting damage continues to be felt in Muyinga.

##### *Farmers denounce the delay in the distribution of fertilizers in Muramvya commune, Gitega province*

Information received by the Iteka League on March 6, 2026, indicates that several farmers in the Muramvya commune, Gitega province, are outraged at not always having received fertilizers for the agricultural season commonly called 'impeshi.' They claim it is incomprehensible to be required to pay for inputs that the state does not yet have in stock. Some farmers say that they have even incurred

debts to be able to pay for the cost of the fertilizers. According to sources close to the communal agricultural service, the quantities of fertilizers available remain insufficient, and they already foresee a famine on the horizon since the agricultural season is almost over.

##### *Lamentations of farmers faced with the lack of fertilizer in Muyinga Commune, Buhumuza Province*

On the morning of March 5, 2026, the neighborhood chief Kinyota, from the Muyinga area and commune, Buhumuza province, Audace Nzohabonimana, issued a statement inviting the residents of this neighborhood as well as all the farmers of the Muyinga area in general to present themselves at the Muyinga youth center, the usual place for distributing FOMI products, to collect the arrears of their Urea (Bagara) type fertilizer, generally used during weeding.

While this period of season B, commonly called Impeshi, it was expected to have FOMI IMBURA type manure used for planting beans and other crops, this type of fertilizer is not yet available. The farmers of the Muyinga commune spent the entire Thursday at the youth center waiting in line for the fertilizer, but the majority of them did not receive any kilograms of urea fertilizer that had already been paid for more than 3 years ago.

They are wondering how this season's harvest will turn out, given that they will be planting without

fertilizer. The distribution, which was supposed to take place in the presence of at least two officials—representatives from the local government (the head of the municipal agriculture department and the neighborhood chief) and the FOMI focal point—was boycotted by the local government in order to cover up the preplanned diversion of fertilizer.

They have escaped the wrath of the public, who are now wondering how we will achieve the Vision 2040, which is often touted as political propaganda. They are calling for fertilizer to be distributed to private merchants, arguing that, since these merchants operate in the commercial sector, they will do everything in their power to make the product available on the market, thereby reducing the incidence of theft.

### ***III.1. DISRUPTION OF ECONOMIC LIFE (the following of page 17)***

#### ***Nauseating odors disrupt commercial activities in the Ruyigi commune, in Buhumuza province***

As of February 23, 2026, in the commune of Ruyigi, in the Buhumuza province, the merchants who place their goods very close to the latrines lament that they have not received any customers for about two months. This is due to the bad smell coming from the overflowing septic tanks. These merchants

fear that diseases from dirty hands may appear. They ask the municipal services to empty these tanks. Hakizimana Salvator, manager of the Ruyigi market, indicates that he has informed the concerned parties and reassures them that the matter will be resolved within a month.

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

#### ***Student strike at Buhiga High School, Karuzi commune, Gitega province***

As of March 4, 2026, since the morning, all the students of Buhiga High School have refused to enter the classroom to attend classes and have gathered in the inner courtyard of the high school.

Indeed, on February 25, 2026, the supervisors took a phone from a girl in the 2nd language class named Nijimbere Nadine, and as specified by the internal regulations and following a previous parents' meeting, the student's parent was summoned, and the phone was broken in front of all the students by the girl herself using a hammer from the office. Then, on March 1, 2026, in the evening,

the dormitory director apprehended a boy from the 2nd language class again with an Android phone, and when trying to retrieve it, the boy resisted until the director gave in. He told them that his phone cannot be damaged but that he prefers to go home. The next day, we called his father who came, and his son still resisted, and the decision to go home was signed and he went home. On this, these students claim that this regulation does not respect their rights. As of March 5, 2026, the students resumed classes normally.

## ***IV. CATEGORY RIGHTS***

### ***IV. 1. INFANTICIDE***

#### ***A lifeless body found in Gishubi commune, Gitega province***

As of March 1, 2026, in an eucalyptus grove on Rukiga hill, in the Gishubi commune, Gitega province, the lifeless body of a newborn was found. According to sources on site, it was the children who were looking for firewood who saw it first and immediately alerted those around them.

Aurélie Banderembako, in charge of the said hill, speaks of a despicable crime committed by an unknown person. According to this

administrative authority, this newborn was slaughtered.

The head of the hill immediately gathered the people present nearby and the body was transported to the morgue of the Mugaruro Health Center.

The burial took place on March 2, 2026 and to date, the person who abandoned the newborn had not yet been identified.



***Anyone should be respected***

## V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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

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

1. Systematically conduct transparent judicial investigations when dead bodies are discovered;
2. Investigate the phenomenon of bodies found in different localities of the country without any action being taken by the government;
3. Take measures to end impunity for crimes and ensure that those responsible for human rights violations are held accountable for their actions.
4. Revitalize diplomatic and security relations with Rwanda and the DRC to secure the common borders.
5. Permanently lift the judicial restrictions weighing on journalists, as in the case of Sandra Muhoza, to guarantee a free and secure working environment.

### ***To the technical and financial partners of the government of Burundi, including the UN, EU, and diplomatic missions accredited to 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 compel the Burundian authorities to respect human rights and put an end to impunity.