



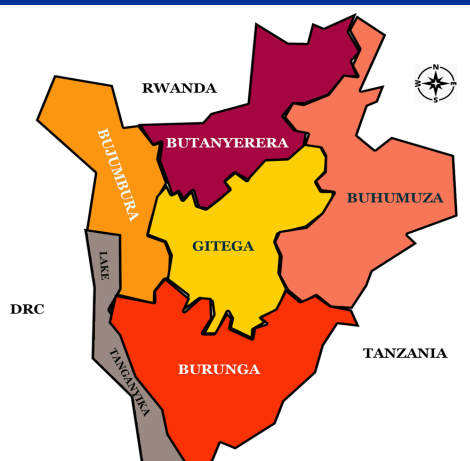
BURUNDIAN LEAGUE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS "ITEKA"

WEEKLY REPORT

"Iteka n' Ijambo"

N°544 from 14 to 20 September 2026

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



In memory of Madame Marie Claudette KWIZERA, treasurer of the Iteka League, missing since December 10, 2015. From December 2015 to September 20, 2026, at least 881 victims of forced disappearance have been documented by the Iteka League, at least 87 victims have reappeared, and 794 victims are still missing. The UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances (WGEID) has already communicated at least 269 victims to the Government of Burundi.

The ITEKA League:

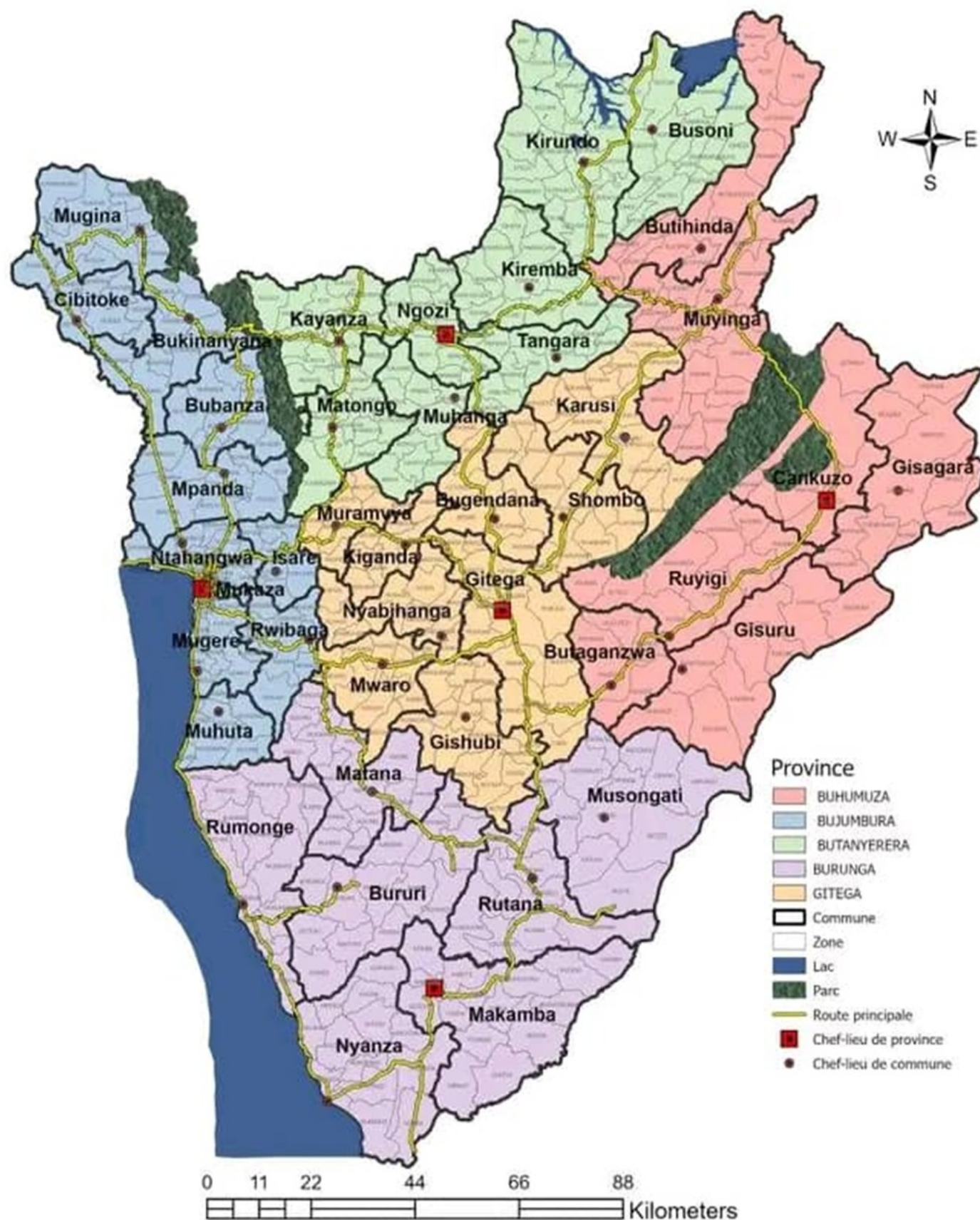
- ♦ 'It is a member of the Inter-African Union for Human and Peoples' Rights (UIDH), is an affiliated member of the International Federation of Human Rights Leagues (FIDH),
- ♦ has observer status with the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights under reference number OBS.236, and is a member 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



ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CNL: National Congress for Liberty

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

FDNB: National Defense Force of Burundi

FOMI: Industrial Organo-Mineral Fertilizers

FRAD: Reserve and Self-Defense Forces

GBV: Gender-Based Violence

M23: March 23 Movement

DRC: Democratic Republic of the Congo

REGIDESO: Water and Electricity Production and Distribution Authority

RN3: National Road No. 3

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0. INTRODUCTION

The week of September from **14 to 20, 2026**, unfolded against a national backdrop of persistent, significant concerns regarding human rights, security, political pluralism, and social cohesion, with the presidential election scheduled for May 2027 less than eight months away.

This context was sharply highlighted on **September 18, 2026**, in Geneva, with the presentation to the UN Human Rights Council of the 2026 report by the **Special Reporter on the situation of human rights in Burundi, Fortuné Gaetan Zongo**, titled "Act Before It Is Too Late." In his address, the Special Rapporteur drew attention to several risk factors ahead of the 2027 presidential election, notably restrictions on political pluralism, obstacles to genuine electoral competition, the persistence of a coercive environment characterized by summary or extrajudicial executions, enforced disappearances, torture, and arbitrary detention and the recurrence of patterns observed during previous electoral cycles.

The incidents documented by the Ligue ITEKA during the week of **September from 14 to 20, 2026**, must be viewed within this broader context. At the local level, they demonstrate the persistence of several issues identified nationally, although they do not, in isolation, allow for broad conclusions regarding the entire country.

During the period under review, **one person was killed** in an ambush set by unidentified individuals on **Gisitwe Hill, in Kirundo Commune**. Several cases of violations of physical integrity were also documented. In **Bubanza**, several residents reported being victims of nighttime assaults in the provincial capital and surrounding localities. In **Kabezi, Didace Nitunga** was violently attacked amidst a domestic dispute and was hospitalized following the assault.

Another particularly concerning incident documented during this period is **the alleged disappearance of Juste Ngarukiye in Gitega following his reported arrest on the night of September 9, 2026**; his place of detention and fate remained unknown at the time the information was gathered.

Two cases of **gender-based violence** were documented: an instance of physical violence within a domestic context and an **alleged rape committed against a 16-year-old minor, R.I.**, a student at the Kabezi Communal High School. The latter case also represents a particularly concerning violation of children's rights.

The situation of persons **deprived of liberty** also remains a cause for concern. **Jean Mperabansi**, aged 79, died on the night of **September 13, 2026** prior to the period covered by this bulletin after several years of detention and while suffering from multiple medical conditions. Furthermore, prison and medical sources report **more than fifteen deaths at Muramvya prison since the second half of June 2026**, as well as **over thirty inmates undergoing medical treatment**. These cumulative figures are presented as contextual information and are not included in the count of deaths documented during the week.

On the **political** side, several mobilization activities were organized in the **Gisagara zone, Buhumuza province**, during the week of **September 14–20, 2026**. Local administrative officials and CNDD-FDD representatives held meetings across various hills, while party-affiliated youth took part in mobilization and voter registration activities ahead of the 2027 presidential election. Calls for the ruling party to secure **100%** of the vote were characterized by some opposition parties as **premature campaigning**. These activities represent a significant aspect of the local political landscape as the next election approaches.

0. INTRODUCTION (the following of page 5)

The period was also marked by events with security and political implications. In Cibitoke, on September 17, approximately **600 Imbonerakure** participated in a parade wearing combat gear, near the Democratic Republic of the Congo and relatively close to the Rwandan border. In Gitega, searches were conducted at the homes and shops of two individuals suspected of having ties to the CNL.

In the **humanitarian** sphere, Burundian nationals expelled from Kenya and arriving at the **Kobero border post in Muyinga Province** reported undergoing interrogations, facing travel difficulties, and being asked for money during their return journey.

The right to education continues to face structural challenges. In **Buhumuza** Province, the arrival of children from families repatriated from Tanzania is placing further strain on a school system already grappling with a shortage of classrooms and a deficit of **over 48,000 school desks**, according to data provided by provincial authorities. Compounding these material difficulties is a shortage of teachers, as some have left their jobs to seek professional opportunities abroad. In other localities, notably Burunga, parents have complained about the accumulation of financial contribution requests and demands for material supplies at certain schools.

In **Rumonge**, prolonged power outages continue to disrupt economic activities and financial services, as well as the study conditions for boarding students. Finally, on **September 20, 2026**, a new fire was reported in the **Bururi Nature Reserve**. This is reportedly the third fire recorded in the reserve since August 23, 2026. According to available information, **more than ten hectares have already been destroyed**.

Thus, the events documented during this week reveal diverse realities that nonetheless converge on one essential point: **the effective protection of human rights remains closely linked to personal security, access to justice, the opening of civic and political space, and the capacity of public institutions to meet the population's social needs**.

This bulletin reports on events recorded between **September 14 and 20, 2026**, based on testimonies, local sources, and information obtained from the individuals concerned. The events are presented by distinguishing, as far as possible, between directly reported details, statements by authorities, and information that could not be independently corroborated. Events predating the period under review or relating to ongoing situations are explicitly noted to avoid confusing them with the violations documented during the week.



I. CONTEXT

I.1. POLITICAL CONTEXT

Military statements in a tense political context

On **August 25, 2026**, during a speech in Makamba, CNDD-FDD Secretary General **Révérien Ndikuriyo** issued a challenge to potential rebel groups, inviting them to gather up to **200,000 armed fighters**, while claiming that such a force could be neutralized or eliminated in less than three weeks. Although this statement predates the period covered by this report, it remains relevant for understanding the political and security context in which several events reported over the week occurred.

On September 3, 2026, publicly released images also showed the President of the Republic, Évariste Ndayishimiye, and the FDNB Chief of General Staff, General Prime Niyongabo, in military attire alongside people presented as members of the FRAD. These developments come in a regional context marked by ongoing armed clashes in eastern DRC.

Mobilization activities of the CNDD-FDD in the hills of the Gisagara area ahead of the 2027 elections

During the period under review, several awareness-raising and political mobilization activities were organized on the hills of the Gisagara zone, Buhumuza province. These activities, attended by local administrative officials and CNDD-FDD party representatives, focused on security, hygiene, and environmental protection, as well as mobilizing the population in preparation for the 2027 presidential elections.

On September 16, 2026, the head of the Gisagara zone, accompanied by the CNDD-FDD zonal deputy secretary, held a meeting on Gerero Hill. Several issues were addressed during the gathering, notably the need to maintain peace and security on the hills, with particular attention paid to the presence of strangers in the local areas. Participants were also educated on composting, laying out contour lines, creating firebreaks to prevent bushfires, and maintaining environmental hygiene.

The meeting also included an explicitly political component. Participants were urged to support the CNDD-FDD in the 2027 presidential election, with the stated goal of securing 100% of the vote for the party. On September 17, 2026, a similar activity took place on Ramba Hill with a comparable agenda, combining security awareness, environmental concerns, and political mobilization.

On September 18, 2026, on Muganza Hill in Gisagara Commune, youths affiliated with the CNDD-FDD organized an exercise session starting at 5:00 a.m., wearing party attire. The T-shirts worn for the occasion bore the slogan: "Inkona ntiyaruzwa, Intsinzi ni 100 % muri 2027" (**The eagle cannot be defeated; 100% victory in 2027**). Following the sporting activity, participants gathered at the Muganza hill-level party office.

The meeting aimed to raise awareness among young people about preserving peace and security, and to urge the youth and the population at large to vote for the CNDD-FDD candidate in the 2027 presidential election. Furthermore, young people who had reached voting age, including recent returnees, were encouraged to register on the electoral rolls, with the stated goal of enabling the ruling party's candidate to secure 100% of the vote.

On **September 19, 2026**, the CNDD-FDD continued its mobilization activities across the different hills of the Gisagara area, particularly encouraging young people of voting age to

1.1. POLITICAL CONTEXT (the following of page 7)

register for the upcoming presidential elections. The increase in these political mobilization activities several months before the vote is a key factor in the local political context. Political parties, especially those in the opposition, describe these activities as an **early election campaign**. However, this characterization falls under their political judgment and should be distinguished from the facts directly documented by the sources of this investigation.

The involvement during these meetings of local administrative officials, party structures, youth activities, and messages explicitly aimed at the 2027 election is worth noting in monitoring the electoral context. It reflects political mobilization that is already active at the local level, particularly around voter registration and seeking strong support for the ruling party.

A warning from the UN Special Reporter on the risks related to the human rights situation as 2027 approaches

On September 18, 2026, in Geneva, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Burundi, **Fortuné Gaetan Zongo**, presented his 2026 report titled **"Acting Before It Is Too Late"** to the Human Rights Council. This presentation took place less than eight months before the presidential election scheduled for May 2027 and placed the human rights situation in Burundi at the forefront of international concern.

In his intervention, the Special Reporter highlighted concerns regarding the persistence of **summary executions, enforced disappearances, torture, and arbitrary arrests**, as well as risks associated with the deteriorating security situation in certain parts of the country. He also drew attention to dynamics observed in the border areas between Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, particularly concerning the flow of weapons and the presence of fighters belonging to various armed groups.

Drawing notably on data from the **Burundian human rights league ITEKA**, the Special Rapporteur noted that **402 people were killed in 2025 and 182 during the first half of 2026**. He also cited figures indicating that **55 people went missing in 2025, with another 25 disappearing during the first half of 2026**. Furthermore, he highlighted the ongoing discovery of unidentified bodies sometimes found bound or mutilated and reports of mass graves, calling for the establishment of an independent mechanism to facilitate the exhumation and identification of victims and the preservation of evidence.

The issue of **arbitrary arrests and detentions** also featured prominently in his address. The Special Reporter reported the alleged existence of unofficial places of detention linked to the National Intelligence Service (SNR) and cited data from the ITEKA League regarding arbitrary arrests recorded in 2025 and the first quarter of 2026. He also highlighted the concerning situation in penitentiary facilities, particularly due to prison overcrowding and conditions of detention.

The Special Reporter further expressed concern regarding the independence of certain national institutions responsible for the protection and promotion of human rights, notably the **Independent National Commission on Human Rights (CNIDH) and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (CVR)**. He called for a reform of the mechanisms for appointing their members and for a specific review of the situation of the CNIDH.

On the electoral front, his report highlighted several factors that could impact the political environment ahead of the 2027 elections, including the **100 million Burundian franc deposit required for presidential candidates** and some restrictions for people who have

1.1. POLITICAL CONTEXT (the following of page 8)

left a political party and want to run as independent candidates. The report also noted that representatives from five political parties withdrew from some meetings of the Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI) on **May 8, 2026**.

Finally, particular attention was paid to the role of the **Imbonerakure**. The Special Reporter described their organization and some of their activities as paramilitary in nature and recommended that they be excluded from security-related functions. He called for strengthened protection of schools against the recruitment of children.

In light of these concerns, the Special Reporter recommended that the Human Rights Council maintain **specific monitoring of the situation in Burundi as the 2027 elections approach**, facilitate the re-establishment of a presence by the **Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights** in the country, and promote high-level dialogue involving the authorities, political actors, and civil society.

These international concerns are of particular interest given the events documented by the Ligue ITEKA during the week of September **from 14 to 20, 2026**. The political mobilization activities observed in the Gisagara zone, the parade of approximately **600 Imbonerakure in Cibitoke**, the reported searches in Gitega, and several cases of violations of physical integrity demonstrate that issues regarding security, political space, and the protection of fundamental rights remain closely intertwined in the current context. While these events do not, on their own, allow for general conclusions regarding the entire country, they constitute elements that warrant continued monitoring and documentation as the 2027 elections approach.

1.2. SECURITY CONTEXT

Mobilization of about 600 Imbonerakure in Cibitoke

On **September 17, 2026**, a large parade of youths identified as ***Imbonerakure*** took place in the center of Cibitoke commune, in Bujumbura province, near the Rusizi River. According to information gathered from local sources, approximately 600 ***Imbonerakure*** participated in this mobilization, wearing combat gear.

The event took place less than **7 kilometers from the DRC** and about **24 kilometers from the Rwandan border at Ruhwa**. It was reportedly led by Élysée Ngayempore, the provincial secretary of the ***Imbonerakure*** in Bujumbura province. Local sources described this mobilization as a **"show of force."**

The choice of Cibitoke was not accidental: the area is home to a Tutsi community, is close to localities affected by fighting in the eastern DRC, and is situated on the Rwandan border. According to several local sources, certain remarks made during the mobilization were perceived as warnings directed at "enemies" specifically citing the Tutsi, Rwanda, and the M23. Local residents expressed concern regarding this display. Some fear, in particular, the formation or strengthening of a force parallel to the FDNB, comprising ***Imbonerakure***, FDLR members, and former CNDD-FDD combatants.

Members and sympathizers of various political affiliations in Bujumbura province including those from **FRODEBU**, the **MSD**, and **UPRONA**, as well as supporters of **Agathon Rwas**a also voiced their concern. Some individuals drew comparisons to earlier periods of high tension in the region.

1.2. SECURITY CONTEXT (the following of page9)

Raids targeting two people suspected of collaborating with the CNL in GITEGA

On **September 15, 2026**, police officers from the **Mubuga** zone station, accompanied by local administrative officials, conducted searches in the shops and homes of **Manirambona Jean Marie** and **Nsengiyumva Bosco** on Mubuga hill. The two men were suspected of having ties with the CNL. According to the information gathered, the police and administrative officials did not find any incriminating items during these operations. This operation raises concerns about how individuals suspected of having connections with an opposition political group are being monitored.

Wave of nighttime attacks in the main town of Bubanza and the surrounding sub-hills

During the week of **September from 14 to 20, 2026**, several people were subjected to mistreatment and physical assaults in the provincial capital of **Bubanza** and the surrounding sub-hills. Identified victims include **Jean de Dieu Ntakarutimana** who remains under medical care at Bubanza Hospital due to the severity of his injuries **Inge Kersy Ndayizeye**, a man named **Kabera**, and a retiree and a young man whose full identities have yet to be confirmed.

According to eyewitness accounts, these attacks are carried out at night by a group led by **Moïse**, the leader of the Imbonerakure in the Bubanza neighborhood. The victims are described as ordinary citizens, some of whom are actually members of the **CNDD-FDD**. Witnesses report that these incidents take place in public areas of the town center and within sight of police officers.

A particularly notable incident occurred on **September 17, 2026**, at the central parking area in **Bubanza**. There, the aforementioned **Moïse** violently assaulted a resident from the Ruvumu sub-hill. The victim was rushed to the local hospital due to the severity of his injuries. According to witnesses, law enforcement officers were present at the scene during the incident, yet the alleged perpetrator was not arrested.

In response to the deteriorating security situation, the head of the Bubanza quarter convened a public meeting on **Friday, September 18, 2026**. During the meeting, residents strongly condemned the nighttime assaults and their impact on personal safety. Some young Imbonerakure members also distanced themselves from these actions and called for an immediate end to the violence. The local CNDD-FDD representative stated that the perpetrators of the unrest should be sanctioned in accordance with the law, publicly declaring: "They are not our members; I do not recognize them as part of our Imbonerakure." At the time the information was gathered, no legal proceedings against the individuals involved had been reported.



1.3. GOVERNANCE CONTEXT

Household census and identification of chemical fertilizer needs at the hill level

On **September 17, 2026**, in Gitega, the President of the Republic, **Évariste Ndayishimiye**, held a meeting with provincial governors and communal administrators. During the meeting, he directed that, within one week, a register be prepared for each census hill listing the residents and the quantity of fertilizer required by each household.

The President instructed administrative authorities from the provincial down to the hill level to promptly carry out this inventory so that the ministry responsible for agriculture would have accurate data on fertilizer needs. He also criticized instances where state-purchased fertilizer is distributed through independent organizations, noting that this mechanism facilitates illicit sales or resale to the public at inflated prices.

According to reports, the lack of an accurate inventory of needs for each hill is one of the challenges hindering the planning and distribution of these inputs.

Development project for communal spaces intended for ceremonies and community activities

During the same meeting, the participants watched films showing a development project in each town for spaces meant for official ceremonies as well as various community and commercial activities. These areas, presented as venues for ceremonies and fairs, would be organized into two parts.

The first part would be dedicated to the history of Burundi, including memories related to the kings and national heroes. The second part would be aimed at the new generation, featuring a library and spaces for sports activities. The President also urged authorities to continue the fight against excessive alcohol consumption, which he described as a concern for citizens' health, families, and the country's development.

1.4. HUMANITARIAN CONTEXT

Difficulties faced by Burundian nationals turned away from Kenya

Burundian nationals expelled from Kenya who arrived at the Kobero border crossing in Muyinga Province faced several difficulties upon their return. According to accounts gathered, police officers and *Imbonerakure* members present at the border post questioned the returnees about their identities, family situations, and any potential ties to armed groups. Some individuals were specifically questioned regarding possible links to **Red Tabara**.

Individuals lacking a national identity card were subjected to particular scrutiny, even when they possessed a passport or a travel document issued by a diplomatic mission. People with visible scars on their bodies were also questioned about their origins, as officials sought to determine whether the scars might be linked to participation in rebel activities.

Some travelers reported being asked for bribes to continue their journey. Fuel shortages also complicated travel; some individuals released late had to rely on motorcycles to proceed. Other accounts mention property lost or abandoned during the return journey, as well as further demands for money at the Muyinga bus station.

These accounts highlight the specific challenges faced by the expelled individuals, particularly regarding security screening, mobility, and the recovery of their belongings.

I.5. ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT

New fire in the Bururi nature reserve

On September 20, 2026, around 10 a.m., a new fire broke out in the Bururi Nature Reserve, in its southeast part. Local residents, forest protection officers, and police intervened to put out the fire. At the time of gathering information, the identities of those responsible for the fire had not yet been established.

This is the third fire reported in this reserve since August 23, 2026. According to Jérôme Nishishikare, over 10 hectares have already been destroyed by these reported fires. The recurrence of these fires poses a threat to the biodiversity and natural resources of the reserve. The administrator of the Bururi commune, Godelieve Ntakirutimana, called on the public to stay vigilant and to collaborate with the authorities in order to identify those responsible and ensure they face justice.

II. CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS

II.1. RIGHT TO LIFE

II.1.1. A MAN KILLED IN KIRUNDO BY UNIDENTIFIED PEOPLE

On **September 18, 2026**, on Gisitwe hill, **Mugendo** area, **Kirundo** commune, **Butanyerera** province, **Nkeraguhiga Pierre, 54 years old**, a farmer, was killed while returning home after spending the day at the Gisitwe center. He was accompanied by Nibigira, the leader of the Imbonerakure on Gisitwe hill. The two men fell into an ambush set up by unidentified individuals.

Nkeraguhiga Pierre was killed with a machete. After the incident, **Nibigira was arrested by the police for investigation.** At the time of gathering the information, the identity of the people who set up the ambush and the motive for the murder were not yet established.

II.1.2. KIDNAPPING AND/OR FORCED DISAPPEARANCE

Alleged Enforced Disappearance of Juste Ngarukiye in Gitega

During the night of **September 9, 2026 between 1:00 a.m. and 2:00 a.m.** Juste Ngarukiye was reportedly apprehended at his place of business in **Rubuye (Musave quarter, Magarama zone, Gitega)** after returning from work. He was a teacher at the Mbuye communal high school and managed the bar at the Saint-Pierre-Claver parish in Kivoga, while also running a business in Rubuye.

According to information obtained from his wife, Diane, **two men in police uniforms accompanied by an individual named Désiré (identified as an *Imbonerakure* from Independence Square) and an official from the intelligence service (*Documentation*) in Magarama** intervened to arrest him and take him to an unknown location. The Mbuye zone chief reportedly later informed the family that authorities were aware of the reasons for the arrest, which were allegedly linked to Juste Ngarukiye's frequent travel between Gitega, Mbuye, and Muramvya. However, the chief reportedly reassured his relatives, noting that Ngarukiye was a well-known figure, particularly due to his responsibilities at the Saint-Pierre-Claver parish in Kivoga.

Despite subsequent efforts, it has not been possible to establish with certainty **Juste Ngarukiye's whereabouts or which agency is holding him in custody.** On **September 11, 2026**, his relatives were reportedly informed that he was being held at the ***Documentation*** (enquiry service) facility in Gitega; however, inquiries made with that service failed to confirm this information.

II.1.2. ABDUCTION AND/OR FORCED DISAPPEARANCE (the following of page 12)

Subsequently, other sources reportedly mentioned a possible transfer to Bujumbura, while inquiries made with various individuals suggested though without confirmation that he might be held in a **CNR detention cell in Gitega**. The responses received remained contradictory; some contacts stated they had no information and referred the family to other sources.

Thus, **several days after his alleged arrest, no official, verifiable information has established his place of detention, his physical condition, or the existence of any legal proceedings against him**. This succession of uncorroborated reports, combined with the lack of official communication regarding his fate, has plunged his family into deep uncertainty and raised serious concerns about his physical integrity and safety. Based on the information gathered, **the circumstances of the arrest and the continued lack of verifiable information regarding Juste Ngarukiye's whereabouts raise concerns about a possible enforced disappearance**, pending independent verification and the determination of accountability.

The ITEKA League calls on the competent authorities **to clarify the circumstances of his arrest without delay, to disclose his place of detention if he is indeed being held, to allow his family to obtain verifiable information about his condition, and to guarantee his protection and the respect of his fundamental rights**.

II.1.3. DEATHS OF PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF LIBERTY UNDER CONCERNING SANITARY AND MEDICAL CONDITIONS

⇒ Death of Jean Mperabansi at Gitega Hospital

On the night of **September 13, 2026** the eve of the period covered by this report Jean Mperabansi, aged 79, died at Gitega Regional Hospital after being transferred there that afternoon. Originally from Nyarusange in Gishubi Commune, Gitega Province, he was identified by sources as a member of the CNL and had spent approximately **ten years in detention**.

He suffered from heart problems, kidney failure, and hepatitis. According to a member of the prison staff, Jean Mperabansi had repeatedly requested to be taken to a medical facility. A week before his death, after losing consciousness, he had been taken to Gitega Hospital but was subsequently ordered to return to prison.

The same source states that medical care for detainees was inadequate. Prison staff are reluctant to speak about these issues for fear of reprisals, particularly regarding detainees who are not members of the CNDD-FDD. Information gathered points to concerning conditions of detention and medical care. An investigation would make it possible to establish the precise circumstances surrounding the death and determine whether the detainee actually received the care to which he was entitled.

⇒ More than fifteen deaths reported at Muramvya Prison

The health situation at Muramvya Prison also remains a cause for concern. According to prison and medical sources, **more than fifteen detainees have died since the second half of June 2026, while over thirty others are undergoing treatment**. The sick individuals are exhibiting symptoms such as high fever and loss of appetite. The exact cause of these illnesses has not yet been identified.

Of the fifteen reported deaths, **eight individuals died after arriving at Muramvya Hospital**, while the others died inside the prison. Prison sources indicate that available

II.1.3. DEATHS OF PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF LIBERTY IN CONCERNING SANITARY AND MEDICAL CONDITIONS (the following of page 12)

treatment is essentially limited to paracetamol to lower fever. The nutritional situation is also concerning; according to the same sources, inmates have not received beans for over a month.

This nutritional deficiency contributes to the general weakening of certain inmates already affected by illness. Hospital services have alerted the Ministry of Health to the situation. Given the number of recorded deaths, the number of sick inmates, and the absence of a clearly established cause, a thorough health investigation is necessary to identify the origin of the illnesses and to assess the medical, nutritional, and sanitary conditions in which the inmates are living.

II.2. PHYSICAL AND/OR MENTAL INTEGRITY

II.2.1. PHYSICAL VIOLENCE

Assault of Didace Nitunga in a marital context

On **September 17, 2026**, around **10 p.m.**, **Didace Nitunga** a resident of the **Mugongo** sub-hill, **Kabezi** hill, **Mugere** commune, Bujumbura province was violently assaulted. According to his account, **Méthode Nkunzimana**, identified as a local leader of the Imbonerakure, arrived with several other people during a domestic dispute. Didace Nitunga suspected Méthode Nkunzimana of having an intimate relationship with his wife.

During the dispute, his wife called Méthode Nkunzimana, who arrived accompanied by several individuals. According to the victim, these individuals beat him without giving him a chance to explain the circumstances of the conflict. Didace Nitunga was taken to Kabezi Hospital, where he received treatment and remained hospitalized at the time the information was gathered. According to available information, **Méthode Nkunzimana has not been detained.**

II.2.2. GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Sexual violence: alleged rape of a minor

On **September 17, 2026**, in **Kabezi Hill**, **Kabezi Zone**, Bujumbura Province, a 16-year-old 12th-grade student at the Kabezi Communal High School was raped. According to information gathered, the girl had gone to the home of Théophile Ndikumana identified as a worker on the **RN3 Gitaza-Kabezi** construction site to visit him.

While there, she was raped. Following the incident, **R.I.** received medical care at **Kabezi Hospital**. The alleged perpetrator fled after learning that the incident had been reported and that a search for him was underway. This case constitutes an act of **sexual and gender-based violence**. It also involves a minor, necessitating specific protection and support measures.

The case of 16-year-old **R.I.** constitutes a violation of children's rights. Care for the victim must not be limited to medical treatment alone; it must also include psychosocial support, protection against potential reprisals or stigmatization, and effective access to justice. Her continued schooling and the preservation of her dignity must also be taken into account in the handling of her case.

II. ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS

III.1. RIGHT TO EDUCATION

Financial contributions and material requirements in Burunga's establishments

The 2026–2027 school year began on September 14, 2026. Four days later, several parents in **Burunga** Province reported various financial contributions and material requirements at certain schools, notably in Nyanza and Makamba.

In **Nyanza**, parents reported contributions being requested at some public primary schools. At **ITABU Gifuruzi**, documents regarding the 2026–2027 school year specify amounts of **62,000 FBu** and **362,000 FBu** for certain categories or plans, as well as a **46,000 FBu** contribution earmarked for construction. At Mukungu I, a contribution of **8,500 FBu** per child is requested for construction, bench repairs, and the purchase of equipment. At **Mukungu II**, the reported amount is **5,000 FBu**.

Some parents indicate that the contributions requested at Mukungu I began as early as the third term of the **2024–2025** school year and apply to various categories of students. Parents wish to know the basis for these contributions, whether they are mandatory or voluntary, how the funds are to be used, and the procedures for managing the collected money.

Dress and discipline requirements in Makamba

In the **Makamba** area, **Emmanuel Nkunzimana** also known as **Nyokoman** the head of the technical department responsible for education, sports, and socio-cultural affairs, issued a directive regarding student appearance. The mandate requires, among other things, that students wear **closed-toe shoes with white socks** and keep their **hair cut** short starting from the beginning of the school year; haircuts must be maintained regularly between the **5th and 10th of each month**. Sanctions have been announced for school officials who fail to comply with these guidelines.

Supplies required at ITABU Gifuruzi

The list of supplies required for ITABU Gifuruzi includes, notably: a hoe for new students, a 10-liter bucket, a 5-liter jerrycan, plates, spoons, a cup, uniforms, closed-toe shoes, white socks, a belt, a tie, bedsheets, a curtain, a watch, hygiene products, a communication notebook, toothpaste, and medical insurance documents.

At certain private schools in Burunga, fees ranging from **10,000 to 20,000 FBu** are also being charged, specifically for registration or construction contributions. Burunga authorities have reiterated that enrollment in public schools must not be conditional upon the payment of a contribution and that parents must be involved in decisions regarding school management. The organization **Bafashebige** is calling for greater clarity and transparency in the setting and management of contributions, specifically urging a distinction between the schools' actual needs and the payments imposed on families. Start of school year in Buhumuza Province marked by shortages of infrastructure, desks, and teachers

One week after the start of the 2026–2027 school year on **September 14, 2026**, Buhumuza Province is facing significant constraints likely to impact learning conditions. Compounding the persistent lack of school infrastructure and furniture is the arrival of a large number of children from Burundian families repatriated from Tanzania, placing further strain on an education system already grappling with major shortages.

The communes of **Gisagara** and **Butihinda** are among the areas most affected by this situation, according to information gathered from the provincial administration. The newly

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arrived children come primarily from the former Nduta and Nyarugusu camps in Tanzania; the closure of these camps led to the return of many Burundian families. As Buhumuza Province hosts a significant number of these returnees, their reintegration poses specific challenges for the education sector.

During a meeting held on **September 3, 2026**, with provincial administrative officials, Buhumuza Governor **Denise Ndaruhekere** acknowledged that the authorities had not adequately prepared for the arrival of these new students. Nevertheless, she affirmed the children's right to education and assured that no student would be forced to attend classes while sitting on the bare floor. This assurance comes against a backdrop of a severe shortage of desks; during the previous school year, the province reported a deficit of over **48,000 desks**. Consequently, the arrival of new students threatens to further increase the strain on schools already facing a shortage of furniture and classrooms.

A desk-bench manufacturing program facing delays

To address this shortfall, a government program to manufacture school desks is underway in the province. However, according to Governor Denise Ndaruhekere, the program is running behind schedule, largely due to difficulties in accessing the electricity and fuel needed to operate the manufacturing equipment. The Governor indicated that the work must nonetheless be completed before the start of the 2026–2027 school year. She also instructed those responsible for manufacturing to adhere to the designs and standards set by the authorities, noting that any non-compliant desks would need to be modified.

Beyond the issue of furniture, the influx of new students also raises concerns regarding school capacity. Rising student numbers in schools already struggling with shortages of classrooms, equipment, and human resources present an additional challenge for education authorities. Compounding these material difficulties is a shortage of teaching staff. During the official opening of the 2026–2027 school year at the Bisinde Vocational Training Center (CFP) in Butaganzwa, the Minister of National Education, **François Havyarimana**, addressed...

The teacher shortage, another big challenge

Compounding these material challenges is a shortage of teaching staff. During the official opening of the **2026–2027** school year at the **Bisinde Vocational Training Center (CFP)** in **Butaganzwa**, the Minister of National Education, **François Havyarimana**, addressed the difficulties facing the education system particularly as Buhumuza province receives returnees from Tanzania and Congolese refugees.

Governor **Denise Ndaruhekere** highlighted a teacher shortage, attributing it largely to some educators leaving for other countries in search of better employment opportunities. This situation places a new strain on schools, which must simultaneously accommodate an influx of new students and cope with an insufficient supply of teachers. The human resource deficit is therefore not merely a matter of recruitment; it also raises questions about the education system's ability to retain staff amidst the growing trend of teachers moving abroad.

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The challenge of school integration for repatriated children

The integration of children from repatriated families represents a distinct aspect of the new school year. Some of these children spent several years in Tanzania, with some having been born or raised in refugee camps. Their return to Burundi entails adapting to a new school, administrative, linguistic, and social environment. For education authorities, the challenge lies in ensuring these children have effective access to education without exacerbating the difficulties already faced by students regularly enrolled in Buhumuza schools. The situation in this province highlights a dual requirement: **accommodating and reintegrating repatriated children into the school system while simultaneously improving learning conditions for all students**. The success of this reintegration will depend, in particular, on the availability of classrooms, desks, teaching materials, and the teachers needed to support the increased student population.

Against this backdrop, the provincial authorities' call to accelerate the production of school desks and strengthen school capacity is a crucial step toward ensuring that the children in question enjoy learning conditions consistent with their right to education.

III.2. RIGHT TO AN ADEQUATE STANDARD OF LIVING

Power outages are disrupting economic and social activities in Rumonge

In **Rumonge**, in Burunga province, power outages have been ongoing for over a month, severely disrupting economic and social activities. Residents report that the town center receives electricity from **REGIDESO** for only **one to two hours a day**. Affected sectors include welding workshops, grain mills, cafeterias, soap manufacturing, hair and beauty salons, public secretarial services, banks, and microfinance institutions.

Some business owners state that their operations have been virtually paralyzed for about **a month and a half**. They are struggling to support their families, pay their employees, and cover rent. Low-income households are particularly hard hit. Banks and microfinance institutions are using generators to maintain services; however, fuel shortages make this solution extremely costly. Some operators are purchasing fuel on the black market, where **1.5 liters costs between 18,000 and 25,000 FBu**. No response from REGIDESO had been reported at the time the information was gathered.

Impact on schools

Power cuts are also affecting **Rumonge High School** and **Al Maktoum High School**. The lack of lighting disrupts night supervision and study time for boarding students. Some students have to go back to their dorms earlier. School officials worry that less study time could hurt learning and grades.

IV. CONCLUSION

The week of **September from 14 to 20, 2026**, highlights a situation where human rights concerns extend beyond isolated incidents. Documented cases during this period including one death, multiple physical assaults, two instances of gender-based violence (one involving the alleged rape of a minor), and ongoing concerns regarding detention conditions underscore the need to strengthen prevention, victim protection, and effective access to justice.

The week was also marked by the **alleged disappearance of Juste Ngarukiye in Gitega**; his whereabouts and condition remained unknown several days after his alleged arrest. This situation illustrates the risks associated with a lack of official, verifiable information regarding the fate of individuals deprived of their liberty, and highlights the authorities' obligation to ensure the traceability of arrests, access to judicial safeguards, and the notification of families.

These violations are compounded by political and institutional concerns. Electoral mobilization activities already observed across several hills in the Gisagara zone, a parade of approximately 600 *Imbonerakure* members in Cibitoke, and reports of surveillance or searches in Gitega indicate that the political and security climate warrants close attention well ahead of the 2027 presidential election.

These local findings echo the concerns voiced on **September 18, 2026**, before the Human Rights Council by the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Burundi. His call for **preventive action before tensions become harder to contain** underscores the vital importance of the regular and rigorous documentation of events on the ground.

The social sector also reveals vulnerabilities that cannot be separated from the general human rights situation. In Buhumuza province, the arrival of new students from families repatriated from Tanzania coincides with persistent, significant shortages of classrooms, desks, and teaching staff. In Rumonge, prolonged power outages are affecting both economic activities and study conditions. These situations serve as a reminder that the protection of economic and social rights is also an essential dimension of stability and social cohesion.

Finally, the increasing number of fires in the Bururi Nature Reserve underscores that human rights protection must also encompass the preservation of the environment and the resources upon which communities depend.

Against this backdrop, the ITEKA League believes that the current period calls for **heightened vigilance, continuous documentation, and concrete preventive measures**, particularly with the 2027 elections in mind. However, prevention cannot be limited to the electoral period; it must be part of a sustained effort to strengthen the rule of law, the independence of human rights institutions, the justice system, victim protection, and universal access to fundamental rights.

The recommendations set out at the end of this bulletin reflect this approach: **preventing rather than merely reacting after the fact, protecting rather than leaving victims without recourse, and ensuring accountability for perpetrators when violations are established.**



Anyone should be respected

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

The ITEKA League recommends:

1. **To competent authorities**, ensure that field operations including inspections, searches, arrests, and interventions are conducted in strict compliance with the law and fundamental rights, and that allegations of assaults committed in Bubanza and other affected localities are subject to impartial investigations.
2. **To judicial and health authorities**, launch investigations into the deaths that occurred in the Gitega and Muramvya penitentiary facilities, establish their causes, and guarantee detainees effective access to medical care, sufficient food, and appropriate sanitary conditions.
3. **To services responsible for the protection of women and children**, ensure that victims of gender-based violence particularly victims of sexual and domestic violence receive appropriate medical, psychosocial, and legal support, with enhanced protection for minor victims.
4. **To educational and administrative authorities**, increase transparency regarding the setting, collection, and management of school contributions, and ensure that financial and material demands placed on families are clearly justified and comply with applicable regulations.
5. **To authorities responsible for energy and the environment**, take the necessary measures to improve electricity supply in Rumonge and throughout the country, and strengthen fire prevention, monitoring, and firefighting efforts in the Bururi Nature Reserve and elsewhere.



Anyone should be respected