



SOS-TORTURE/BURUNDI

"Celui qui sauve une vie sauve l'humanité toute entière"

Report on the human rights situation Second quarter 2023

BURUNDI

**"ELECTORAL MAPPING IN THE DEPRIVATION OF POLITICAL
AND PUBLIC FREEDOMS".**

April - June 2023



In the middle: the president of CENI announcing that electoral mapping is underway.

Above in the right: police officers blocking the entrance to the CNL headquarters in Mutanga-Nord on June 4, 2023. Bottom left, Floriane Irangabiye, journalist in prison in Muyinga.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SOCIO-POLITICAL CONTEXT	3
1. VIOLATIONS OF THE RIGHT TO LIFE.....	7
1.1 THE PERSISTENT PHENOMENON OF UNIDENTIFIED MURDERS.....	8
1.2 VIOLATIONS OF THE RIGHT TO LIFE WHOSE PERPETRATORS ARE IDENTIFIED.....	15
2. VIOLATIONS OF THE RIGHT TO PHYSICAL INTEGRITY.....	18
3. VIOLATIONS OF THE RIGHT TO LIBERTY: ARBITRARY ARRESTS AND DETENTIONS.....	20
4. KIDNAPPINGS OR ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCES.....	23
5. RAPE OR GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE.....	24
CONCLUSION.....	25
RECOMMENDATIONS	26
TO THE GOVERNMENT OF BURUNDI:.....	26
TO THE COUNTRIES OF THE EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY:.....	26
TO THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY.....	27

SOCIO-POLITICAL CONTEXT

While the report on the first quarter of 2023 highlighted the tendency to stifle the critical voices of human rights defenders through the instrumentalisation of the Judiciary,¹ the second quarter continued the same trend of the closure of democratic space, extending to the deprivation of political rights, in the run-up to the launch of the 2025-2027 electoral process.

The emblematic case of this democratic drift occurred on 2 June 2023, when the Minister of the Interior, Martin Ninteretse, took the decision to suspend the activities of the main opposition party, CNL (Congrès National pour la Liberté), throughout the country, following an internal crisis, even though "*political parties organise themselves freely and the Minister of the Interior has no business interfering in their internal affairs*", regrets Agathon Rwasa, President of CNL.²

Clearly, the CNDD-FDD presidential party is completing its journey to become a single party at a time when "*electoral mapping work has already begun*", for the electoral process (2025-2027), according to the chairman of the Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI), Pierre Claver Kazihise³. Opposition political parties have gradually disappeared from the political scene since the 2015 crisis, as some of their leaders, most of whom have been sentenced to life imprisonment,⁴ are still in exile, while those still in the country are adopting a low profile or pledging allegiance to the CNDD-FDD government.

It is in this context that CNL members continue to be subjected to political, administrative and judicial harassment, sometimes being wrongfully accused by the authorities of holding illegal meetings. For example, on 4 June 2023, the entrance to the CNL headquarters, based at Mutanga-Nord in Bujumbura town hall, was blocked by police officers to prevent meetings from being held.⁵

Then, on 2 May 2023, on the eve of International Press Freedom Day on 3 May 2023, a symbolic gesture of hostility towards the press was made with the confirmation of the 10-year prison sentence handed down to journalist Floriane Irangabiye by the Mukaza Court

¹ *There have also been high-profile cases such as the unjust conviction of journalist Floriane Irangabiye at first instance and the arbitrary detention of five human rights defenders.* (See the SOS-TORTURE report for the first quarter of 2023 (https://sostortureburundi.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/SOS_Torture_Rapport_trim_01_2023_VF.pdf))

² IWACU, 07/06/2023 **Suspension of CNL activities: "This is arbitrary", says Agathon Rwasa** "<https://www.iwacu-burundi.org/suspension-des-activites-du-cnl-cest-de-larbitraire-dixit-agathon-rwasa/>

³ ABP, 19 June 2023, Preparation of CENI's contribution to the development of the legal framework for the 2025-2027 elections, Link: <https://abpinfo.bi/2023/06/21/preparation-de-la-contribution-de-la-ceni-dans-lelaboration-du-cadre-legal-des-elections-de-2025-2027/>

⁴ It will be recalled that one week after the inauguration of President Evariste Ndayishimiye on 18 June 2020, 34 opposition and civil society leaders, including journalists, were sentenced on 23 June 2020, without legal summons from the authorities, as part of the so-called special criminal roll (RPS) 100 case.

⁵ On its tweet, the CNL published images of police officers blocking the entry of members to their premises in Mutanga-Nord on 4/6/ 2023 (<https://twitter.com/CnlBurundi/status/1665283833577472000>)

of Appeal in Bujumbura for "*undermining the integrity of national territory*". In January 2023, Irangabiye was sentenced to the same penalty in a trial held behind closed doors, which was made public on 2 January 2023, by the Tribunal de Grande Instance of Mukaza, while she was in transit at Muyinga prison.

This iniquitous verdict has dashed hopes of a return to the exercise of civil liberties in Burundi, following the release of the five human rights defenders on 28 April 2023 by the Ntahangwa High Court, after more than two months of arbitrary detention since 14 February 2023. They had been charged with "*undermining the internal security of the State, rebellion and undermining the proper functioning of the national economy*".⁶

There is no doubt that the judicial sector is being exploited through mock trials, even though the authorities continue to deplore the shortcomings of the judiciary without guaranteeing its independence. This is illustrated by the meeting of 02 June 2023 between the President of the Republic and the Governors of the provinces in Ngozi, during which criticism was levelled at "*certain corrupt magistrates who do not render justice to the population*".

To remedy this, President Evariste Ndayishimiye, at the risk of violating the principle of the separation of powers, plans to organise a meeting so that all magistrates and representatives of the judicial authorities can answer to "*the Head of State and Supreme Magistrate why they have not been able to render justice to the people who demand justice*".⁷

On the economic front, the situation is characterised by a shortage of foreign currency and petroleum products against a backdrop of endemic corruption, which is exacerbating the poverty of the population faced with spiralling prices for basic necessities.

In order to mitigate the effects of this difficult situation, Burundi is strengthening its cooperation with technical and financial partners. To this end, the government has signed an ad-referendum agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) on a 40-month programme under the Extended Credit Facility (ECF) "*with a view to supporting economic recovery after a series of shocks, restoring external viability and strengthening debt sustainability, while creating fiscal space to ensure accelerated and inclusive growth*".⁸

As part of the same drive to effectively resume cooperation with traditional partners, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Albert Shingiro, and the Head of Delegation, Chargé d'Affaires of the European Union (EU), Ms Martina Borovac Pecarevic, held a 5th session

⁶ See more details in the 1^{er} quarter 2023 report by SOS-TORTURE BURUNDI - https://sostortureburundi.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/SOS_Torture_Rapport_trim_01_2023_VF.pdf

⁷ RTNB, 02/06/2023, The President of the Republic meets the Governors of the provinces, Link <https://www.rtnb.bi/fr/art.php?idapi=7/1/15>

⁸ IMF, 10 April 2023, **IMF staff and Burundi reach an ad-referendum agreement on a 40-month programme under the Extended Credit Facility (ECF)**, <https://www.imf.org/fr/News/Articles/2023/04/10/pr23113-imf-reaches-staff-level-agreement-on-a-40-monthextended-credit-facility-with-burundi>

of political dialogue on 22 June 2023, with a view to further consolidating their relations of friendship and cooperation. This session was held in accordance with Article 8 of the Cotonou Agreement linking the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries, on the one hand, and the EU and its Member States, on the other.⁹

Among the European Union's expectations of the political dialogue with the Burundian government, the issue of human rights remains at the top of the agenda, and in particular the implementation of the recommendations made during the universal periodic review in Geneva.¹⁰

The same concern for respect for human rights was expressed by the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Burundi, Fortuné Gaetan Zongo, in Brussels last May following meetings with the Burundian diaspora and other stakeholders based in Belgium. According to him, *"It is difficult to aspire to normalisation and lasting peace if the judiciary lacks independence and impartiality, if thousands of Burundians continue to live in exile, if the civic space does not allow civil society organisations, the media and political parties to work independently, and if journalists are imprisoned for doing their job"*.¹¹

The Special Rapporteur also noted that Burundi is the only African country where a woman journalist, Floriane Irangabiye, remains in prison for hosting an online programme and has been sentenced to ten years' imprisonment for undermining the integrity of the national territory. He stressed that attention must go beyond political rhetoric and be refocused on the people of Burundi, because the social, economic and political situation remains worrying.

In terms of the human rights situation, human rights violations persisted as in the previous quarter, with a slight decrease in attacks on the right to life. In fact, 47 cases of violations of the right to life were recorded, compared with 58 cases in the previous quarter. Then, 64% of the victims were killed by criminals who were not identified. The provinces most affected were Bururi, Gitega and Cibitoke.

With regard to arbitrary arrests, CNL members were the worst affected, especially after the CNL's activities were banned. Allegations of holding illegal meetings were at the root of the arbitrary detention of the victims.

As for violations of the right to physical integrity, the province of Bururi has been marked by an upsurge in crime, which led the entire Government of Burundi to visit this province

⁹ ABP, 22 June 2023, **Holding of the 5th session of the political dialogue between Burundi and the EU**, Link: <https://abpinfo.bi/2023/06/22/tenue-de-la-5eme-session-du-dialogue-politique-entre-le-burundi-et-lue/>

¹⁰ IWACU, 19/06/2023, **Gitega/UE-Martina Borovac Pecarevic: "We absolutely must be intransigent with corruption"**, <https://www.iwacu-burundi.org/pecarevic-il-faut-absolument-etre-intransigeant-avec-la-corruption/>

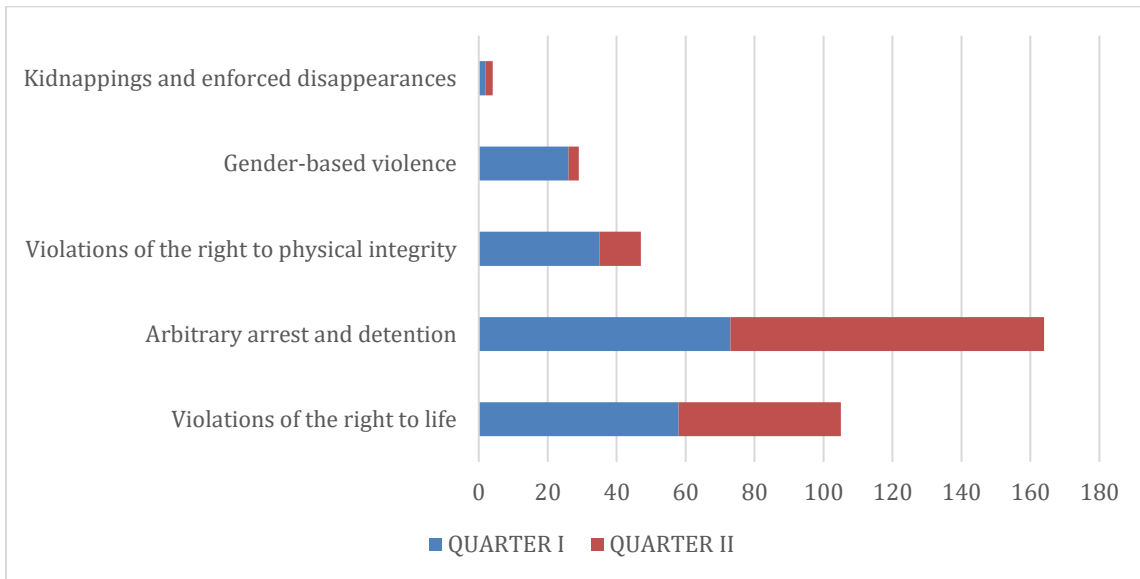
¹¹ United Nations: Burundi: **UN expert calls for national reconciliation and rehabilitation of the Arusha Agreement**, link: <https://www.ohchr.org/fr/press-releases/2023/05/burundi-un-expert-calls-national-reconciliation-and-revival-arusha-agreement>

on 26 May 2023 to hold security meetings in the communes of Bururi, Songa and Mugamba.¹²

Table I: Violations observed during the first two quarters of 2023

Rights violated	QUARTER I	QUARTER II
Violations of the right to life	58	47
Arbitrary arrest and detention	73	91
Violations of the right to physical integrity	35	12
Gender-based violence	26	3
Kidnappings and enforced disappearances	2	2

Graph I: Graphical representation



¹²ABP, **Government** visit to **Bururi province**, Link: <https://abpinfo.bi/2023/05/29/descente-des-membres-du-gouvernement-en-province-de-bururi/>

1. VIOLATIONS OF THE RIGHT TO LIFE

Violations of the right to life persist, although there has been a slight decrease in the number of cases. The victims include men, women and children, i.e. 30 people killed by unidentified criminals out of a total of 47 victims recorded by SOS-TORTURE BURUNDI. As for the seventeen (17) other victims, their executioners have been clearly identified, including young Imbonerakure and police officers (4 victims) and other people as a result of settling personal or family scores.

In cases of score-settling, the alleged culprits are usually arrested and prosecuted. But when the perpetrators are police officers or their accomplices among the young Imbonerakure, they often go unpunished.

What is even more worrying is that the administrative and police authorities usually bury the bodies without carrying out investigations to identify the criminals. This deplorable practice violates article 109 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, which states that *"in the event of the discovery of a corpse, whether a violent death or not, but if the cause is unknown or suspicious, the Judicial Police Officer who is notified shall, if possible, inform the Public Prosecutor before going to the scene and making initial observations. The Judicial Police Officer must go to the scene and make the initial observations if he/she is unable to contact the Public Prosecutor. The report must be sent to the Public Prosecutor without delay.*

The article also states that *"the Public Prosecutor will go to the scene if he or she deems it necessary and will be assisted by any doctor, expert or technician capable of assessing the nature, cause and circumstances of the death. However, he may delegate a Judicial Police Officer of his choice for the same purpose. When the circumstances of the death remain unknown, whether or not an offence has been committed, the Public Prosecutor must open an investigation to establish the causes of death.*

1.1 THE PERSISTENT PHENOMENON OF MURDERS WHOSE PERPETRATORS ARE NOT IDENTIFIED

In the majority of murder cases, the criminals were not identified - 30 out of the 47 people killed. These criminals sometimes feign suicide to throw off the investigation by hanging their victims from a tree with a rope. Sentries are also victims of armed robbery attacks. For example:

- *Six (6) bodies of the victims have not been identified and were found in the wild in the provinces of Cibitoke (4), Bururi (1) and Bujumbura (1).*
- *Twenty-four (24) other bodies of victims were identified in the vicinity without their executioners being known in the provinces of Bururi (5), Gitega (5), Cibitoke (3), Makamba (3), Cankuzo (2), Karusi (2), Mwaro (1), Rutana (1), Ngozi (1) and Bujumbura (1).*

As already mentioned, the administrative and police authorities generally bury victims without conducting investigations, in violation of Article 109 of the Code of Criminal Procedure.

As for the other seventeen (17) murder victims whose perpetrators have been identified, the alleged perpetrators are generally arrested and prosecuted in cases of settling of scores or family disputes. On the other hand, if the alleged perpetrators are police officers or their accomplices, such as the Imbonerakure, the investigations stall or are not initiated.

The following examples illustrate this worrying situation:

A. Unidentified bodies found abandoned in the wild.

- *The decomposing body of an unidentified man in Cibitoke.*

13 April 2023: On the afternoon of Thursday 13 April 2023, the decomposing body of an unidentified man was discovered by soldiers on patrol on the banks of the Rusizi river (the border between Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo) at the foot of the Mparambo 1 hill in the commune of Rugombo, in the province of Cibitoke (north-west Burundi). According to local sources, the body of the 60-year-old father of 8, who had lived in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) for several years, had been decapitated by as yet unidentified individuals. The same sources revealed that the victim's body was buried on the same day on the orders of the local administrator of Rugombo, Gilbert Manirakiza.

- *Three decomposing lifeless bodies of unidentified men tied together in Cibitoke*

18 April 2023: On the afternoon of Tuesday 18 April 2023, at around 4pm, three lifeless, decomposing bodies of unidentified men were discovered by soldiers in a mass grave; bound together and riddled with bullets in the Kibira nature reserve on the Myave hill, Ndora zone, Bukinanyana commune, in the province of Cibitoke (north-west Burundi). According to local sources, the bodies, bathed in a pool of blood, were bound together and riddled with bullets. The same sources said that the bodies, suspected to be those of Rwandan rebels from the National Liberation Forces (FLN), were buried on the spot the same day on the orders of the Bukinanyana communal administrator.

- *Lifeless decomposing body of an unidentified man in Bururi*

18 April 2023: On Tuesday 18 April 2023, the decomposing body of an unidentified man was discovered on the Rubanga sub-hill of the Muzima hill, in the commune and province of Bururi (southern Burundi).

- *The lifeless body of an unidentified young man was discovered in an aubergine field in Bujumbura*

20 June 2023: On the morning of Tuesday 20 June 2023, the lifeless body of an unidentified young man was discovered in an aubergine field on 15th Avenue in the Maramvya area of the commune of Mutimbuzi, in the province of Bujumbura (western Burundi). According to witnesses to the gruesome discovery, the young man's throat was slit by unidentified individuals in circumstances that have yet to be explained.

B. Victims of targeted killings identified in the neighbourhood

- *Immaculée Mwaluke Muheme, Congolese student murdered in Bujumbura province*

3 April 2023: On the night of Monday 3 April 2023, at around 9pm, Immaculée Mwaluke Muhemedi, a Congolese student studying for her Bac II at the Université Espoir d'Afrique, was stabbed to death in the ribs by an unidentified man not far from her residence on the Gahahe hill in the Rubirizi area, in the commune of Mutimbuzi in the province of Bujumbura (western Burundi). The victim died on arrival at a health facility in the economic capital.

- *Gilbert Ndacayisaba, a member of the CNL party murdered and his body wrapped in a bag in Ngozi*

6 April 2023: *On the* afternoon of Thursday 6 April 2023, the lifeless body of Gilbert Ndacayisaba, an activist of the Congrès National pour la Liberté (CNL), was found wrapped in a sack in a eucalyptus grove on the Karungura hill in the commune of Mwumba, in the province of Ngozi (northern Burundi). According to witnesses to the gruesome discovery, Gilbert Ndacayisaba was murdered because of his political affiliation and had been threatened by Imbonerakure members of the youth league of the National Council for the Defence of Democracy-Forces for the Defence of Democracy (CNDD-FDD) to join their party.

- *The body of Anitha Ndaharindiriye found in a eucalyptus field in Karusi*

6 April 2023: *On* the morning of Thursday 6 April 2023, at around 10am, the lifeless body of a woman known as Anitha Ndaharindiye, aged 32, was found in a eucalyptus grove, 200 metres from her home on the Mutara hill in the commune of Mutumba, in the province of Karusi (east-central Burundi). According to witnesses to the macabre discovery, the body of this mother of five children had been decapitated by as yet unidentified individuals. The motive for the crime remains unclear.

- *Night watchman bludgeoned to death by robbers in Karusi*

7 April 2023: *On* the night of Friday 7 April 2023, a night watchman at the Lycée Communal de Buhiga in the province of Karusi (east-central Burundi) was bludgeoned to death by unidentified persons who then seized a computer, a printer and a photocopier from the headmaster's office. According to local sources, the criminals broke into the headmaster's office through a hole in the wall.

- *Egide Nkuriyingoma, cook at Bururi high school killed and beheaded*

18 April 2023: *On* Tuesday 18 April 2023, the lifeless body of Egide Nkuriyingoma, a cook at Bururi high school, was found on the Nanira sub-hill on Nyavyamo hill, in the commune and province of Bururi. According to local sources, Egide Nkuriyingoma was killed and then decapitated with machetes by unidentified individuals.

- *Egide Ntaconzoba, found murdered in a valley in Gitega*

23 April 2023: *On the* morning of Sunday 23 April 2023, the lifeless body of a young man known as Egide Ntaconzoba, aged 35, was found in the valley separating the hills of Rukoba and Mahonda in the commune and province of Gitega (central Burundi). According to witnesses to the gruesome discovery, the body was bound and showed no signs of injury. Unidentified residents of the Mahonda hill believed that Egide Ntaconzoba had been murdered elsewhere and his body dumped there by his executioners.

- *The body of Sandrine Nkunuzimana found decomposing in a tree plantation in Cibitoke*

30 April 2023: On the afternoon of Sunday 30 April 2023 at around 4pm, women looking for firewood discovered the decomposing lifeless body of a young girl known as Sandrine Nkuzimana in a pine tree plantation on the Ruyenzi sub-hill of the Muhungu hill, Butahana zone, Mabayi commune, in Cibitoke province (north-west Burundi). According to local sources, the 25-year-old girl from the Kirehe sub-hill on the same Muhungu hill had been missing for a week after she was last seen with a married man named Jean Claude Mfitimana, who often went out with her as his girlfriend. The body of the young girl was buried the same day at the site of the macabre discovery on the orders of the local administration.

- *Seraphine found dead under an avocado tree in Rutana*

3 May 2023: On the morning of Wednesday 3 May 2023, the lifeless body of a woman named Seraphine was found under an avocado tree in the capital of Rutana province (south-east Burundi). According to local sources, the young mother of 4 had been missing since the night of 1 May 2023, and was wearing only a T-shirt at the time of her grisly discovery.

- *Alain Keisy Irutingabo, a child killed then tied up and thrown into a river in Gitega*

5 May 2023: On the morning of Friday 5 May 2023, at around 11am, the lifeless body of Alain Keisy Irutingabo, a boy aged 3 and a half, was found in the river Kiriba, separating the hills of Nyarubenga and Kigara, in the commune of Gitega de Nyarusange in the province of Gitega (central Burundi). According to local sources, Alain Keisy Irutingabo was killed and tied up by unidentified assailants before being thrown into the Kiriba river. The same sources said that the little boy had left the family home on the Nyarubenga hill the day before the macabre discovery at around 6.30 pm to go to his grandmother's house in the same locality. The young boy's body was buried in the afternoon of Friday 5 May, without waiting for an investigation to be launched to identify the perpetrator.

- *Félix Ndikumana, a teacher murdered with machetes in Bururi*

6 May 2023 On the night of Saturday 6 May 2023 at around 8pm, Félix Ndikumana alias Vingt, a 55-year-old teacher at Bururi secondary school, was murdered by unidentified men with machete blows to the head, a few metres from his home in the capital of the commune and province of Bururi (central Burundi). According to local sources, Félix Ndikumana was ambushed by unidentified men armed with machetes who had hidden in a wooded area near the school as he was returning home after seeing off guests who had visited his family. His body, lying in a pool of blood, was taken to the Bururi hospital morgue. This was the 5th victim and second teacher to be murdered in the same circumstances in the capital of Bururi province in less than a month during the period April-May 2023.

- *Abel Ngendakumana, sentry, hacked to death by bandits in Cankuzo*

18 May 2023 At around 1am on Wednesday night, 18 May 2023, Abel Ngendakumana, a 47-year-old father of 7, was hacked to death by unidentified bandits. They had surprised him at his post as sentry at a shop on the Kimanama hill in the Mubuga area, in the commune and province of Gitega (central Burundi). According to local sources, after fatally wounding the sentry, the bandits robbed the shop before fleeing, while the victim succumbed to his injuries a few moments later while being evacuated to the Mubuga health centre. No suspects have been apprehended as part of an investigation into this heinous murder.

- ***Joseph Niyonkuru, an evangelist whose lifeless body was found in a stream in Bururi***

19 May 2023 *On the* morning of Friday 19 May 2023, the lifeless body of a man subsequently identified as evangelist Joseph Niyonkuru was discovered in a stream on the Buranga hill in the Gasanda area, in the commune and province of Bururi (southern Burundi). According to local sources, the circumstances and perpetrators of the evangelist's death have not yet been clarified. Witnesses to the macabre discovery said that a large stone had been placed on the victim's body by his killers. The same sources said that Joseph Niyonkuru had been missing since Wednesday 18 May, when he had left his home for his routine evangelistic mission in the Gasanda area, on the border with the commune of Buyengero, and had never returned.

- ***Elysée Arakaza, killed and buried in a pit beside a river in Makamba***

19 May 2023 *On* Saturday 19 May 2023, the lifeless body of Elysée Arakaza, a young man aged 26 from the commune of Vyanda in Bururi province, was found in a ditch on the banks of the Rwaba river on the Bukeye hill, in the capital of the commune of Nyanza-Lac in Makamba province (south). According to local sources, it has not been possible to identify the perpetrator or the circumstances of his death.

- ***Pierre Nyandwi, a septuagenarian murdered and his body thrown into a river in Makamba***

21 May 2023: On the evening of Sunday 21 May 2023, the lifeless body of a septuagenarian known as Pierre Nyandwi was discovered in the valley of the Mugombwa stream on the Mivo hill in the commune of Makamba Mabanda, in the province of Makamba (southern Burundi). According to witnesses to the gruesome discovery, the victim's body showed signs of violence, proving that she had been murdered by unidentified individuals. The same sources said that Pierre Nyandwi's body was fished out of the water by Red Cross volunteers working in the locality before being buried the following morning on the orders of the Mabanda local administrator, Jean Berry Hatungimana.

- ***RUKATA, a CNDD-FDD activist killed by criminals who amputated his genitals in Makamba***

28 May 2023 On the morning of Sunday 28 May 2023, the decomposing body of a man known as Rukata was discovered in a tree plantation on the Makamba de Sampeke hill in the commune of Kayogoro, in the province of Makamba (southern Burundi), some 4 km from his home on the same hill. According to witnesses to the macabre discovery, the body of Rukata, a CNDD-FDD (National Council for the Defence of Democracy-Forces for the Defence of Democracy) party activist, had been amputated of its genitals by unidentified individuals. He had been missing since the evening of Wednesday 24 May, when he left with customers who had intended to buy eucalyptus wood from him at his plantation on the same hill. According to the same sources, the victim's body was buried on the spot by Red Cross volunteers on the orders of the local administration.

- ***Vanessa Niroreho, a 15-year-old schoolgirl killed and beheaded in Cibitoke***

7 June 2023: On the afternoon of Wednesday 7 June 2023 at around 5pm, the lifeless, decapitated body of a young girl known as Vanessa Nihoreho, a 15-year-old sixth-grade pupil at Rubirizi primary school, was found on the Rubirizi hill in the Cibitoke area of Rugajo, in the commune of Mugina in the province of Cibitoke (north-west Burundi). According to family sources, the victim had left on the morning of the same day to draw water from the Bijombo river, but never returned home.

- ***Louis Ntandikiye, found dead and hanged under an avocado tree in Gitega***

9 June 2023 On the morning of Friday 9 June 2023, the lifeless body of Louis Ntandikiye, aged 42 and father of 6, was found hanged by rope under an avocado tree, not far from his home on the Mwurire hill in the commune of Bugendana, in the province of Gitega (central Burundi). According to local residents, the victim was killed elsewhere and then hanged to make it look like suicide. Local sources said that the body of Louis Ntandikiye, a modern farmer, was buried the same day on the orders of the local administration.

- ***Alvera Nkurunziza, found dead hanging from a rope in her home in Gitega***

20 June 2023: On Tuesday 20 June 2023, the lifeless body of a woman known as Alvera Nkurunziza, a 30-year-old mother of five, was found hanging from a rope inside her home on the Karemba hill in the commune of Itaba, in the province of Gitega (central Burundi). According to local sources, Alvera Nkurunziza was killed elsewhere and her body was tied up and placed inside her house in a suicide attempt. The victim's body was buried the same day on the orders of the local administration, without waiting for an investigation to identify the perpetrators and the circumstances in which the murder was committed.

1.2 VIOLATIONS OF THE RIGHT TO LIFE WHOSE PERPETRATORS ARE IDENTIFIED

Seventeen (17) of the 47 murder victims were killed by well-known individuals, including young Imbonerakure and police officers (4 victims) and others as a result of personal or family score-settling. In cases of settling of scores, the presumed culprits are generally arrested and prosecuted.

But when the alleged perpetrators are police officers or their accomplices in the administration and among young imbonerakure, they often go unpunished. However, it rarely happens that imbonerakure are arrested and prosecuted to the satisfaction of the victims' relatives. The same imbonerakure are sometimes victims of abuse by their comrades or of popular vindictiveness after their crimes.

The impunity enjoyed by state agents and their accomplices encourages them to perpetuate crime because they believe they can do anything, as illustrated by the following situations:

- ***Bernard Dusengimana, who died in a health centre after being severely beaten by young Imbonerakure in Kirundo***

4 May 2023 On 4 May 2023, Bernard Dusengimana, aged 43, died at the Kirundo health centre in Bishisha in the Gatare zone, in the Busoni commune of Kirundo province (northern Burundi), as a result of acts of torture inflicted on him in connection with accusations of mineral theft. According to local sources, Bernard Dusengimana was severely beaten by members of the presidential party's Imbonerakure youth league, police officers and mining workers in the Murehe nature reserve in the Gatare area. Medical sources have confirmed that he died as a result of the beatings a few hours after being evacuated to the Bishisha health centre.

- ***Etienne Ndariye, a member of the CNL party, killed with a machete by two Imbonerakure who were immediately arrested in Ruyigi***

5 May 2023 Information reaching SOS-Torture Burundi reveals that on the night of Friday 5 May 2023 at around 9pm, Etienne Ndariye, leader of the CNL (Congrès National pour la Liberté) party on the Buruhukiro hill in the Rusengo area, in the commune and province of Ruyigi (eastern Burundi), was savagely murdered with machetes. According to the same

source, Etienne Ndariye was murdered by these two members of the youth league affiliated to the CNDD-FDD party (Conseil National pour la Défense de la Démocratie-Forces pour la Défense de la Démocratie) because of his political affiliation, some 200 metres from his home on the same hill in Buruhukiro, as he was returning from a local market. SOS-Torture Burundi has learned that the two alleged criminals were arrested by the police the day after the crime, and that they were then taken to the dungeon of the provincial police station before being transferred to Ruyigi central prison, where they are being held.

- ***Jean-Claude Niyongabo dies after being beaten by unpunished Imbonerakure in Rutana***

On the night of 19 to 20 May 2023, a young man known as Jean Claude Niyongabo succumbed to the blows and wounds inflicted on him by a group of Imbonerakure, members of the youth league affiliated to the ruling CNDD-FDD party, on night patrol on the Rutana de Shembe hill in the Muzye zone, in the commune of Giharo in the province of Rutana (south-east Burundi).

According to local sources, Jean Claude Niyongabo was returning from fishing in a river in the locality when he was ambushed by this criminal gang. The gang was led by a certain Diduda, head of the Imbonerakure in the Muzye area, in the company of the Muzye area chief, Désiré, and other Imbonerakure, including Dismas Niyonzima, alias Muduri, Clément, Julias, Anicet and Dominique, who violently beat him up because he had refused to give them fish. According to the same sources, thanks to the intervention of his father and neighbours, Jean Claude Niyongabo was evacuated to Gihofi district hospital in the commune of Bukemba in the same province of Rutana, where he unfortunately succumbed to his injuries a few moments later that same night. SOS-Torture Burundi has learned that some of these Imbonerakure were arrested the following day, but that they were quickly released on the orders of Sylvain Nzikoruriho, provincial secretary of the CNDD-FDD.

- ***Sagamba", a member of the Imbonerakure youth league, killed by his comrades on night patrol***

28 May 2023 On the night of Saturday to Sunday 28 May 2023, a certain Sagamba, a member of the Imbonerakure youth league affiliated to the ruling CNDD-FDD party, was clubbed to death by other Imbonerakure on night patrol on the Muzye hill and area, in the commune of Giharo in the province of Rutana (south-east Burundi). According to local sources, Sagamba was caught stealing beans in a field and tried to flee before being clubbed to death on the Nyesasa football pitch by the enraged Imbonerakure who had set off in pursuit.

- ***Olivier Niyonsaba, a suspected thief killed by a lorry driver with impunity in Kayanza***

On the night of Sunday 2 April 2023, Olivier Niyonsaba, a young man aged 21, was killed with a machete by a lorry driver in the capital of the province of Kayanza (northern

Burundi) when he tried, in complicity with other men, to steal bags of flour loaded onto the lorry. According to local sources, Olivier Niyonsaba got into a lorry at a place called "Kwidepo" to steal bags of flour in collusion with other thieves. He was seen in the driver's rear-view mirror as he tried to cut the ropes tying the flour sacks to get some of them off. The driver then slammed on the brakes, got out with a machete, chopped off the young man's head and continued on his way. The same sources said that no action had been taken to find the criminal and bring him to justice.

- ***Léonidas Ngendanzi, a prisoner at Gitega prison, killed by other prisoners and who remain unpunished with the complicity of the prison and judicial authorities***

On the night of Sunday 14 May 2023, Léonidas Ngendanzi, a prisoner at Gitega central prison, succumbed to the blows and wounds inflicted on him inside the prison by other prisoners on the security committee, including a certain Kinani, Bimenyimana and Jonas, under the orders of Japhet Hatibu, the man in charge of the prisoners, commonly known as "Captain General".

According to witnesses, Léonidas Ngendanzi, a native of Karusi province who has been held in Gitega central prison since 2018, was atrociously tortured to punish him for failing to comply with hygiene measures simply because he had just urinated outside the toilet. After being severely beaten, he was taken to a correctional cell where he succumbed to his injuries a few hours later.

The same sources revealed that the perpetrators of the murder of Léonidas Ngendanzi, instead of being arrested in order to be punished in accordance with the law, were transferred to other prisons on the decision of prison officials.

- ***Jean Murokozi, a young Imbonerakure caught in the act of attempted rape, lynched by an angry crowd***

17 May 2023 *On the* afternoon of Wednesday 17 May 2023, Jean Murokozi, an Imbonerakure in his thirties, was violently beaten with sticks and clubs by angry residents after being caught in the act of attempting to rape a 15-year-old girl on the Kinazi hill in the Rugari area, in the commune and province of Muyinga (north-east Burundi). According to witnesses, Jean Murokozi, nicknamed Masita, succumbed to his injuries on the morning of Thursday 18 May in Muyinga hospital, where he had been evacuated following police intervention. The same sources said that when the victim tried to scream for help, local residents were alerted by the girl's cries and attacked the assailant, after disarming him of his machete, which he had tried to use to attack the crowd.

- ***Hagabimana, a young Imbonerakure killed by soldiers on patrol in the Kibira natural forest in Bubanza***

29 June 2023 On the night of Thursday 29 June 2023, a member of the Imbonerakure youth league affiliated to the CNDD-FDD party, known as Hagabimana, was shot dead by soldiers on night patrol on the Kayange hill in the commune of Musigati in the province of Bubanza, a few metres from the edge of the Kibira natural forest. According to local sources, soldiers on patrol came across two Imbonerakure near the Kibira natural forest and told them to stop. However, they refused to comply, prompting the soldiers to open fire on them. Hagabimana died on the spot, while his companion managed to escape.

2. VIOLATIONS OF THE RIGHT TO PHYSICAL INTEGRITY

During the quarter under review, the urban centre of Bururi province and the surrounding area witnessed an upsurge in crime, a situation that prompted the entire Government of Burundi to visit the province on 26 May 2023 to hold security meetings in the communes of Bururi, Songa and Mugamba.

The Minister of the Interior, Community Development and Public Security, Martin Ninteretse, regretted the deterioration in security in the commune of Bururi. He promised the people of Bururi that all criminal groups would be definitively eliminated in a few days' time.

Elsewhere, the perpetrators of physical attacks are mainly from the National Intelligence Service and the Imbonerakure.

The following cases illustrate this worrying situation:

- ***Edouard Hatungimana, retired member of the Burundian Army, injured by unknown assailants on his way home in Bururi***

14 April 2023 On the night of Friday 14 April 2023, Edouard Hatungimana, a security guard at the Hotel Nircade in the capital of Bururi province (southern Burundi), was seriously injured with machetes by unidentified men who ambushed him as he was returning to his home on the Kabuye hill in the centre of Bururi province. According to local sources, Edouard Hatungimana, a retired member of the Burundian army, lost three fingers in the attack as he tried to defend himself. The same sources said that the victim was evacuated to Bururi hospital for medical treatment.

- ***Jean Bosco Misago severely tortured by Imbonerakure who suspected him of stealing cassiterite in Kirundo***

On 2 May 2023, a man known as Jean Bosco Misago was severely tortured by Imbonerakure in the Murehe nature reserve on the Bishisha hill in the Gatare zone, in the Busoni commune of Kirundo province. According to local sources, the victim was beaten so severely that he was urinating blood and could neither sit nor stand. Jean-Bosco Misago was admitted to the Bishiha health centre in a very critical condition. The same sources said that Jean Bosco Misago was tortured on suspicion of stealing cassiterite, which is abundant in the Kirehe nature reserve.

- ***Three CNL party activists severely tortured by the National Intelligence Service in Bubanza***

4 May 2023: Three CNL party activists were arbitrarily arrested and tortured by the head of the National Intelligence Service (SNR) in Bubanza province (north-west Burundi). According to local sources, Jean Marie Ndayishimiye, the CNL youth representative on the Gicuba hill in the commune of Mpanda, was arrested on 4 May 2023 by police colonel Germain Tangishaka (OPN 0856), head of the SNR in this province, and taken to a cell in the provincial police station.

The other members of the CNL, Samson Ntuyahaga from Gifurwe hill in Mpanda commune and Vianney Hakizimana from village 6 in Gihanga commune, were arrested on 8 and 9 May respectively by the same SNR official. The former was held in the SNR's detention centre in Bubanza province, while the latter was taken to the detention centre at the provincial police station.

Sources close to the police revealed that the three CNL activists were detained in poor conditions and severely tortured. Their legs and arms were tied together and they were subjected to atrocious torture sessions. They were also denied visits from members of their families.

- ***Dismas Ndayiragije, seriously injured in the arm by three assailants whom he recognised and who were arrested by the police in Bururi***

14 May 2023: On the night of Sunday 14 May 2023 at around 8pm, a retired policeman known as Dismas Ndayiragije was seriously injured in the arm with a machete by three young men as he returned to his home on the hill of Mugozi, in the commune and province of Bururi, some 6km from the capital of this southern province of Burundi. According to local sources, Dismas Ndayiragije was able to identify his assailants, Yves Nihorimbere and James Niyobushobozi, who live on the Mudahandwa hill in the same commune of Bururi. He was seriously injured in the arm as he tried to defend himself and was evacuated to Bururi hospital for treatment. The same sources said that the two criminals were arrested by the police and taken to the Bururi judicial police lock-up for investigation.

- ***Languide Kamikazi seriously injured in her home by unidentified men with machetes to the head and arm in Bururi***

19 May 2023 On the night of Thursday 19 May 2023, at around 11.30pm, a woman known as Languide Kamikazi, aged 38, who worked at the Ecole Technique Monseigneur Bernard Bududira, was seriously injured by machete blows to the head and arm by unidentified, undressed men who found her at her home in the Gatanga sub-hill on the Mugozi hill, in the commune and province of Bururi. According to local sources, the criminals found the victim in her bedroom after breaking a window in her house. She was evacuated in a critical condition to Bururi hospital for intensive care.

3. VIOLATIONS OF THE RIGHT TO FREEDOM: ARBITRARY ARRESTS AND DETENTIONS

During the quarter under review, members of the main opposition party, CNL, were the most targeted by arbitrary arrests and detentions. Since April, this party has been going through an internal crisis that served as a pretext for Interior Minister Martin Ninteretse to suspend the party's activities at national level on 2 June 2023, in order to find a compromise with the rebels.

Another emblematic case is the arrest and detention of more than fifty members of a religious congregation in poor conditions with no valid justification for their arrest.

The following cases illustrate this worrying situation:

- ***61 members of a religious congregation arbitrarily arrested and imprisoned in particularly deplorable conditions in Ngozi***

4 April 2023 On the afternoon of Tuesday 4 April 2023, 61 members of a religious congregation called "World's Glory Church of Christ" were arrested in the capital of Ngozi province (northern Burundi) by the police and taken to the dungeon of the provincial police station. According to local sources, all the worshippers were arrested while praying in a house in the Kinyami 2 district of the capital of Ngozi province. The same sources revealed that all 61 worshippers, including 29 women, were incarcerated in particularly deplorable conditions, housed in small, overcrowded cells. These arbitrary arrests were made in violation of the Constitution, which guarantees freedom of religion as well as freedom of assembly and association (articles 31 and 32).

- ***Pacifique Mahoro, a disability rights activist arbitrarily arrested and held in an undisclosed location***

On 10 April 2023, Pacifique Mahoro, a disability rights activist and employee of the Brarudi company, was arrested by SNR officers in Ruziba in the Kabezi commune of Bujumbura province. He was on his way to the official opening of the centre for disabled

children. He was arrested without a permit, without being informed of the reasons for his arrest, and detained in a secret location without communication with his family, which is contrary to the provisions of articles 35 and 36 of the Burundian Criminal Procedure Code.

- ***Olivier Bugegene, a former journalist with a radio station in Burundi that has been struck off, arbitrarily arrested at his home by SNR agents in Bujumbura town hall.***

27 April 2023: *On the* morning of Thursday 27 April 2023, Olivier Bugegene, a former journalist with RPA (Radio Publique Africaine), which has been deregistered since 2015, was arbitrarily arrested at his home in the Kibenga district of Bujumbura town hall by agents of the National Intelligence Service (SNR). According to information from family members, SNR agents burst into Olivier Bugegene's home and asked him to produce his mobile phone before arresting him. He was first taken to the Kinindo zone detention centre before being transferred the same day to the SNR detention centre. He was arrested on the bizarre charge of using a stolen phone. The same sources revealed that the agents searched his house without finding anything incriminating.

- ***Jean Marie Ndayishimiye, CNL party youth leader, arbitrarily arrested by SNR agents in Bubanza***

On the morning of Thursday 4 May 2023, Jean Marie Ndayishimiye, the youth leader of the CNL (Congrès National pour la Liberté) party on the Musenyi hill in the commune of Mpanda in the province of Bubanza (north-east Burundi), was arbitrarily arrested in the same locality by the provincial head of the Service National de Renseignement (SNR). According to local sources, after being severely tortured, he was taken to the police lock-up at the Bubanza communal police station, where he was held alone in the women's cell. According to the same sources, the reasons for his arrest have not been communicated to him and he is not allowed any visits.

- ***Three CNL activists arbitrarily arrested and detained in a cell at the Makamba local police station***

7 June 2023: Serges Yamuremye, Jackson Ntakirutimana and Samuel Rudi, three activists of the CNL opposition party in the commune of Kayogoro, were arbitrarily detained in the dungeon of the communal police station in the commune of Makamba in the province of Makamba (southern Burundi).

According to witnesses, Serges Yamuremye, a member of the party's committee in the Makamba-Kayogoro sector, was arrested on 7 June 2023 by the police on a false charge of raping a girl-mother from the Sampeke hill (in the same commune of Kayogoro) at the instigation of Elysée Kadoyi, head of the CNDD-FDD1 party in the commune of Kayogoro, as a way of settling scores in the dispute between him and the victim.

A medical report was drawn up to this effect and refuted the facts, but the police released Serges Yamuremye. Then, two other CNL activists from the hill in the same commune of Kayogoro, Jackson Ntakirutimana, head of the CNL and his colleague Samuel Rudi, in charge of the party's ideology, had been arrested the previous week by the CNDD-FDD secretary and Imbonerakure leaders, who accused them of holding an illegal meeting in a local bistro.

- *Thirteen CNL party activists arbitrarily arrested at Butare trading centre*

11 June 2023 On Sunday 11 June 2023, thirteen (13) CNL party activists were arbitrarily arrested at the Butare trading centre in the commune of Itaba in the province of Gitega (central Burundi) by local administrative officials and the local police, who took them to the dungeon of the communal police station where they were arbitrarily detained on trumped-up charges of holding an illegal meeting. According to witnesses on the spot, these members were sharing a glass of beer in a bar in Butare's trading centre and were sorted out on the basis of their political affiliation, among the other customers who were quenching their thirst. Property was even confiscated from some of them, including a motorbike and mobile phones.¹³

¹³ SOS-TORTURE BURUNDI REPORT NO. 392 PUBLISHED ON 17 JUNE 2023,
<https://sostortureburundi.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Rapport-hebdomadaire-no-392.pdf>

4. KIDNAPPINGS AND ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCES

Three cases of forced abduction were recorded, in which the perpetrators were either unknown persons operating in broad daylight in unmarked vehicles, or agents of the National Intelligence Service.

The latter sometimes hold their victims in secret locations, in violation of articles 35 and 36 of the Code of Criminal Procedure relating to police custody and informing the families of defendants of the purpose and location of police custody.

The following examples are illustrative:

- ***Janvier Ngendakuriyo, former employee of the National Assembly abducted from his home by unknown assailants in Bujumbura***

11 April 2023: On 11 April 2023, at around 6.30pm, Janvier Ngendakuriyo, a former employee of the National Assembly, was abducted from his home in Gatunguru, in the Mutimbuzi commune of Bujumbura province. He was taken away in a Probox car by people who did not identify themselves or reveal the reason for his arrest, and was taken to a place that was not communicated to his family. This is a violation of the provisions of articles 35 and 36 of Burundi's Criminal Procedure Code.

- ***Haruna Mustafa, a disgraced CNDD-FDD member abducted by SNR agents in Gitega***

10 May 2023 On the morning of 10 May 2023 at around 8 a.m., Haruna Mustafa, an influential member of the CNDD-FDD's Imbonerakure youth league who had fallen from grace in 2022, was abducted from the Villa Dubai hotel in Gitega province (central Burundi) by SNR agents and taken away in a white van with tinted windows, registration number EA0507. According to witnesses, two men in civilian clothes armed with pistols, accompanied by two others in police uniforms, got out of the van while three other people remained in the vehicle. They then asked to be shown to the room where Haruna Mustafa had been staying and dragged him out of bed while he was still asleep.

They then loaded him into the van and sat on him. Later, members of his family searched for him in the police and SNR dungeons in Gitega and Bujumbura, but to no avail.

- ***Phocas Niyubuntu, a CNL member abducted by SNR agents in Bururi***

23 May 2023: On Tuesday 23 May 2023, a CNL party activist known as Phocas Niyubuntu was abducted by SNR agents, some of whom were wearing riot police uniforms, on the Buhinga hill in the Munini zone in the commune and province of Bururi (southern Burundi).

According to witnesses, Phocas Niyubuntu was quenching his thirst with friends in a local bistro when two men in civilian clothes arrested him and ruthlessly loaded him into a Toyota double-cab pick-up truck with tinted windows for an unknown destination.

5. RAPE OR GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Two emblematic cases of sexual and gender-based violence were reported during the quarter under review. Fortunately, the alleged perpetrators, including Imbonerakure members, were arrested and brought to justice.

- ***A 5-year-old girl raped by a 46-year-old man who was immediately arrested in Bururi***

On 10 May 2023, a 5-year-old girl was allegedly raped by a man known as Cyriaque Hakizimana, aged 46, on the Gatwaro hill in the commune of Rutovu, in the province of Bururi. According to local sources, the victim's relatives alerted the local administrative and police authorities, who quickly intervened and arrested the alleged perpetrator. Cyriaque Hakizimana was immediately taken to the Bururi provincial police station.

- ***Two young girls raped by two Imbonerakure students for refusing to sleep with them in Gitega***

Information received by SOS-Torture Burundi reveals that on 22 May 2023, at around 9pm, two young girls, Médiatrice Irankunda, aged 18, and Sierra Iteriteka, aged 17, were severely beaten in the political capital of Burundi by two Imbonerakure known as Don Divin Nduwimana and Jean Pierre Nkurunziza for refusing to sleep with them.

According to local sources, Médiatrice Irankunda, a pupil at the Lycée Christ-Roi in Mushasha, and Sierra Iteriteka, a pupil at the Lycée de la COMIBU, were taken to a place of "correction", commonly known as "Kwidodero", in a small bush close to the Centre for the Deaf and Dumb in Mushasha by these two Imbonerakure, who severely tortured them with large sticks to punish them for refusing to sleep with them. The two victims suffered serious injuries to their backs and legs and were admitted to the Ubuzima medical polyclinic in the Yoba district of Gitega for intensive care.

According to the same sources, Don Divin Nduwimana, a grassroots administrative officer well known for his night-time blunders during Imbonerakure patrols, and Jean Pierre Nkurunziza, a driver with the Anti-Corruption Brigade, were arrested the day after the double crime by the police and are being held at the provincial police station in Gitega.

CONCLUSION

The trend that has emerged since the first quarter is the persistence of human rights violations on the eve of a new electoral process in 2025 and 2027, and the closure of democratic space, which is worsening with the unjustified suspension of the activities of the main opposition party, CNL, throughout the country and the unjust conviction on appeal of journalist Floriane Irangabiye.

Human rights violations generally go unpunished when the perpetrators are state agents such as police officers and administrative officials, or their accomplices among the young Imbonerakure, which highlights an ineffective justice system controlled by the caciques of the ruling CNDD-FDD party.

In the absence of an independent judiciary, which is the cornerstone of the rule of law and good governance, corruption and economic embezzlement are on the increase. This situation has a negative impact on socio-economic life, with shortages of foreign currency and basic necessities such as fuel and certain foodstuffs.

The Burundian authorities are therefore being called upon to put an end to impunity for all forms of violations and to promote a State governed by the rule of law that respects its national, regional and international obligations to protect human rights.

Burundi's partners also have an important role to play, through their influence in international cooperation, in encouraging the Burundian authorities to promote peace and political stability by consolidating good governance in all sectors of the country's socio-economic and political life.

RECOMMENDATIONS

TO THE GOVERNMENT OF BURUNDI :

- *Release all political prisoners, journalist Floriane Irangabiye of the online radio station Igicaniro*
- *To improve the socio-political climate for the forthcoming 2025-2027 electoral process by removing all obstacles to the exercise and enjoyment of the rights and freedoms recognised by the country's constitution and the instruments that Burundi has ratified, guaranteeing in particular the freedoms of opinion, association, the press, peaceful assembly, etc;*
- *Rigorously apply the relevant provisions of the Code of Criminal Procedure by initiating investigations to identify and punish the perpetrators of crimes linked to the worrying phenomenon of abandoned bodies;*
- *Put a definitive end to the abuses of the Imbonerakure militia by stepping up proceedings against those, timidly initiated against some of them, who are guilty of acts contrary to the law;*
- *Undertake concrete actions to increase the professionalism of State officials and the defence and security corps in the protection and promotion of human rights;*
- *Cancel all politically motivated arrest warrants unjustly issued against human rights activists, journalists and other civil rights activists;*
- *Resume effective cooperation with international bodies, and allow investigations into crimes committed since 2015 to continue, as well as visits to Burundi by the Special Rapporteur.*

TO THE COUNTRIES OF THE EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY:

- *Respect the rights of Burundian refugees in their own countries, in particular by refraining from turning them back or subjecting them to poor conditions in order to force them to repatriate, in violation of the relevant international conventions;*
- *To relaunch the inclusive dialogue initiatives on the rehabilitation of the Arusha Agreement following the EAC Court ruling of 25 November 2021 invalidating the third term of office of the late President Pierre Nkurunziza, which was at the root of the 2015 crisis, the harmful effects of which are still being felt.*

TO THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

- *Remain committed to the values and principles of human rights and good governance in the political dialogue with the Government of Burundi on the effective relaunch of cooperation;*
- *Keep the release of all political prisoners and respect for civil and political rights (association, expression, etc.) on the dialogue agenda, based on a timetable and verification indicators;*
- *To use its influence to persuade the Burundian authorities to suspend acts likely to reinforce ethnic stigmatisation and discrimination, such as ethnic mentions on official documents, employees and economic players in the public and private sectors, the selective work of the CVR, etc.*
- *Maintain support for the mandate and work of the International Criminal Court (ICC) in Burundi, so that investigations can continue and prosecutions can be initiated in order to put an end to impunity in Burundi.*