



**The First Lady encourages the youth initiatives**



**O**n monday august 07, 2023, the First Lady Her Excellency Angeline Ndayishimiye visited the Shifaa medical center health located in Buyenzi and a clothing and cosmetics house at Farnas located in kabondo in order to encourage and support the youth initiatives. At the Shifaa Medical center, Her Excellency Angeline Ndayishimiye, the President of Umugiraneza good action foundation, officially handed over the hospital beds to her managers in order to support and encourage the works of that health center initiated by the young natives of Buyenzi. , who studied the medicine abroad.

The First Lady also granted aid con-

sisting of loincloths, juice and flour for porridge to children and the elderly in order to join them in the framework of the month dedicated to national solidarity, as indicated by the First Lady Her Excellency Angeline Ndayishimiye.

In Kabondo, Her Excellency Angeline Ndayishimiye visited a clothing and cosmetics house run by a young girl born in Burundi to foreign parents. She encouraged and thanked her for her good initiatives in the field of trade, wishing her to always go forward. **(RTNB)**

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## Maintaining or not the content of the article 289 of the Constitution: reactions of the inhabitants of Bubanza province



On Thursday August 10, 2023, the populations of the Bubanza province (North-west of Burundi) uttered their opinions about the maintaining or not of the content of the article 289 of the Constitution of Burundi, which speaks of taking into account the ethnic quotas in the Government, in the two chambers of Parliament and in the judiciary. It was during a meeting which was organized by the Senate for collecting the opinions of each other.

Out of 39 people who uttered their opinions, 30 are for the deleting of that article. Some of the arguments put forward including that taking ethnic quotas into account the risks ignoring merit and appointing someone who is not up to the job. They also spoke that there is a step already taken because all the ethnic groups meet in various development projects, in churches, within the

political parties and others. Others argue that not only does the consideration of the ethnic quotas persist in ethnicism and promote the different speculations, but also, even the quotas in place do not take into account the numbers of each other. They ask to privilege the patriotism and the development of their country. They invite the High authorities to study the case of the sites and refugees, because, according to them, they perpetuate the ethnic divisions.

As for the 9 others who say that it is still early, they indicate that the wounds linked to the crisis that the Burundians have endured have not yet been healed. They explain that the reconciliation between the Burundians is not yet effective and that even the Constitution recognizes the existence of these ethnic groups. One of the Batwa argues that their representativeness is still low and he worries about the risk of losing even the co-optations. Instead, he asks for the Batwa quota to be revised upwards.

Five of those who spoke called for the removal of blocked lists in the establishment of certain institutions. The President of the Burundian Senate, the Right Honorable Emmanuel SINZOHAGERA, indicated that all these different opinions, on the content of the article 289 of the Constitution, will be collected and put in a report, with the aim of taking a constructive and reconciling decision. He calls on the administrative staff at the base to continue this collection of reactions, on the locality, so that everyone can express themselves. It should be noted that the collection of opinions from each other will continue in all the provinces of the country. **(ABP)**

## CERDOTOLA opens its regional office in Burundi



On Thursday August 10, 2023, the Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Development Cooperation Mr. Ferdinand Bashikako accompanied by the Executive Secretary of the International Center for Research and Documentation on African Traditions and Languages (CERDOTOLA) Pr Charles Binam Bikoi proceeded to the official opening of a regional office of CERDOTOLA in charge of Eastern and Southern Africa. This new

office is located in the Gasekebuye district, Muha-Commune, in Bujumbura Town. The ceremonies began with the cutting of the ribbon, a sign of the solemn opening of the regional office. Afterwards, the participants in the ceremonies took a guided visit of the entire building which will hold the regional office of CERDOTOLA.

In her welcome address, the Country Representative and Acting Regional Director of CERDOTOLA Ms. Rose Ndayiragije thanked the Government of Burundi for agreeing to host the regional office. She also thanked the CERDOTOLA secretariat which equipped the office. She invited the students, the researchers and the academics to regularly visit that office to conduct their research.



As for the Executive Secretary of CERDOTOLA Pr Charles Binam Bikoi, he indicated that the field offices are indeed offered as instances of mobilization, proximity and pooling of the vice forces of culture and African intelligence in order to put it definitively at the service of the global African community, relegated to the ban of history, held in regulated cut, since the double shock of the transatlantic slave trade and colonization consecrated and then sealed by the Berlin Conference. The bet being to "Berlinize" Africa to build the desired Africa according to the African Union's Agenda 2063. It became clear that nothing lasting can be envisaged without the massive recourse to the valorization of the heritages, arts and cultures of Africa bequeathed by our ancestors, conveyed by our centuries-old languages, which is the key to any liberation, to any Development of Africa, he said. According to him, this opening of the regional office of CERDOTOLA is a new dawn that rises on the institution, bringing new hope for Burundi but more for all the peoples of Africa.

In his speech, the Permanent Secretary at the Min-

istry of Foreign Affairs and Development Cooperation Mr. Ferdinand Bashikako pointed out that the choice of Burundi as the seat of the CERDOTOLA Regional Office testifies to the dynamism of the cooperation between that institution and Burundi. It concerns the multiple and varied areas such as training, research, capacity building of executives in the culture sector, support in the launch of the innovative projects such as the digitization of the theses at the University of Burundi. He reiterated the commitment of the Government of Burundi after some times of reluctance in the activities of that international center following the moments of the crisis experienced by the country. He insisted that the Government of Burundi, in collaboration with all its partners, will spare no effort to further strengthen the cooperation and achieve the objectives they have set themselves for the success and effective influence of CERDOTOLA in Burundi, Africa and anywhere else in the world with a view to contributing to the sustainable development of the respective peoples.

The ceremonies were embellished by the drums and the traditional Burundian dances. **(MAECD)**

### Gitega: launch of a judicial retreat



**O**n Monday August 7, 2023, the President of the Supreme Court Mr. Emmanuel Gateretse launched in Gitega, the activities of a judgment writing retreat for cases that have been taken under advisement. Mr. Emmanuel Gateretse recommends these cases to be closed and pronounced at the end of August 2023 so that the litigants can know the outcome of their cases. That retreat took place during the judicial holidays which began with the current month of August. According to the President of the Supreme Court, 352 cases are taken under advisement.

Mr. Emmanuel Gateretse invited the judges of

the Supreme Court to get to work so that at the end of this month, all the files are closed and pronounced. He also invited the judges of the other courts to work hard and soul so that the files remained under the advisement and the judgments not yet pronounced can be delivered at the end of these judicial vacations.

Mr. Emmanuel Gateretse warmly thanked the President of the Republic and the Supreme Judge-Magistrate who appointed 8 additional judges to the Supreme Court after noting that the number of judges of the court is reduced in relation to the files that are recorded every day in that court. The President of the Supreme Court also made it clear that these magistrates are about to take an oath before starting to carry out their activities.

The President of the Supreme Court in turn believes that the appointment of those judges will give a sigh of relief to the court and to the litigants even if the number remains insufficient. **(RTNB)**

## Ngozi: The Minister in charge of social affairs flies to the aid of the vulnerable



**T**he Minister of Social Affairs and National Solidarity Mrs. Imelde Sabushimike handed over on Tuesday August 08, 2023, an assistance

to the Umusamariya w'imbabazi orphanage located in Buye in Mwumba commune, to support the activities of that orphanage. The assistance consisted of two tons of rice, two hundred and fifty kg of beans, sugar, milk, biscuits, juice, oil, etc.

For Minister Imelde Sabushimike, the care of orphans is a commendable work, which requires a spirit of responsibility, because these orphans are the responsibility of the Umusamariya w'imbabazi orphanage. The head of this orphanage, the former First Lady Reverend Denise Bucumi Nkurunziza, thanks the Minister in charge of national solidarity Mrs. Imelde Sabushimike for the assistance and the visit because it is an eloquent testimony of the support of the Government. She said that at the time of the visit, the orphanage has 52 children, 41 others have been picked up by their fathers, because most of them are motherless.

After the orphanage, the Minister in charge of national

solidarity Mrs. Imelde Sabushimike went to the Provincial Directorate of the Family and Social Development (DPDFS) where she granted an assistance consisting of 200kg of rice and an envelope to 8 Batwa students who study at the University of Ngozi. She encouraged those Batwa students to studies hard and set the specific goals to be achieved.

In the same province of Ngozi, the Minister in charge of national solidarity Mrs. Imelde Sabushimike distributed an assistance consisting of 3 tons of rice to 600 Batwa households and 400 sheets to 22 Batwa households in Ruhororo commune. Mrs. Imelde Sabushimike urged the Batwa of Ruhororo commune to work in association to the fight against poverty at family and the country level.

Minister Imelde Sabushimike has promised a sheet metal to those who have been able to raise the walls, because the objective is to eradicate the straw houses. She urged the Batwa to show solidarity in the construction of the houses by helping the widows and the elderly in particular in the manufacture of bricks, the elevation of walls and the laying of frames. Mrs. Imelde Sabushimike also challenged the Batwa of Ruhororo to get down to work, fight poverty, and send children to school in order to prepare them for a better future. **(RTNB)**

## Mwaro: Youth called to respect the human rights



**A**s part of the popularization of the national policy of the human rights, social affairs and national solidarity, Mrs. Imelde Sabushimike organized on Wednesday August 9, 2023, a day of exchange for the young affiliated and non-affiliated to the political parties of the mwaro province and its surroundings.

The Director General at the Ministry in charge of human rights said that the human rights must always be

respected so that every citizen lives in dignity and freedom from which he called on the young people to avoid to be manipulated by certain leaders. During the lessons provided for those young people, it was a question of explaining to them what the Universal Declaration of the Human Rights is and its content. That declaration had been signed 75 years ago.

The Director General Mr. Désiré Harimeshi said that it is a good opportunity for those young people to know where peace and security came from because the youth constitute the future of the country.

Mr. Désiré Harimeshi also indicated that on the basis of these teachings, young people will understand their rights and duties, the behavior to adopt in respect of human rights, the way of expressing their needs and the ways through which to obtain solutions, always with respect for human dignity. The Director General at the Ministry in charge of human rights specified that these lessons will continue in other provinces of the country. **(RTNB)**

## The BIJE educates the young people to work with this ban



The Investment Bank for Young People (BIJE) in collaboration with the Guarantee Fund ( FIGA) organized on August 08, 2023 a training and awareness raising sessions for young people in six provinces of the country. The works of those descents were opened in Ngozi province in Gashikanwa commune by the Managing Director of BIJE, Mr. Sixte Niyuhire.

According to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the BIJE in his opening speech, the objective of those visits to the six provinces of the country was to raise an awareness among the young people who have not yet taken out the loans from the BIJE and to provide them with a knowledge related to the developing and writing a good bankable business plan. In addition, the BIJE in collaboration with the

FIGA have already organized the descents in the various provinces with the aim of sensitizing the young people who have already had credits on how to manage their projects well so that they can repay the credits which granted to them, added the ADG of the BIJE. The ADG of the BIJE said he was satisfied with the repayment rates of the loans contracted by the young people. Nevertheless, the cases of unpaid debts are observed especially in the agro-pastoral sector where the young people find it difficult to repay their loans following the climatic hazards or diseases that attack crops and livestock.

However, it has been proven that some young people do not repay their loans due to the poor management linked to the misappropriation of the property either from the company or the cooperative. In this case, the BIJE collaborates with the grassroots administration and grassroots youth committees to be able to bring those defaulting young people to repay the Bank little by little.

The ADG called for people to seize the opportunity to work together in developing projects to increase the production and the employment for them and for the others. He also appealed to the grassroots administration, religious denominations and NGOs to always be at the side of young people to encourage them to work together for self-development. **(RTNB)**

## The anti-corruption law in force in Burundi needs to be improved



The Observatory for the Fight against Corruption and Economic Malpractices (OLUCOME) hosted a press briefing on Thursday August 10, 2023, to express its concerns about the new measures taken by the Government of Burundi in the fight against corruption.

In his speech, the President of OLUCOME Mr. Gabriel Rufyiri reminded that the Government of Burundi ratified the United Nations convention against corruption and the African Union convention against corruption in January 2005, via a law voted by the parliament of that time.

After that ratification, he added, the special anti-corruption court, the general anti-corruption prosecutor's office and the special anti-corruption brigade were set up. According to him, those institutions have not been effective, hence OLUCOME demanded that there be an improvement by giving them exclusive competences in the fight against corruption as the conventions ratified by Burundi require. He revealed that some of those institutions have been emptied of their staff by transfers without replacement, which would



constitute, according to him, a weakness in the fight against corruption. "Today the special anti-corruption squad is in the air, it does not even have supervision". Mr. Rufyiri indicated that that situation will impact Burundi's funding because the anti-corruption strategies put in place are not clear.

He recommended to the Government the establishment of the specialized institutions in the fight against the corruption, the improvement of the anti-corruption law in force in Burundi and the establishment of a national strategy for good governance and the fight against corruption. **(ABP)**

## Launch of the emergency agricultural production project in Burundi



On Thursday August 3, 2023, the Ministry of Environment, Agriculture and Livestock launched the Emergency Agricultural Production Project in Burundi (AEFPF-Burundi).

The activity took place in the Nyawisesera swamp straddling the Gatara and Matongo communes of Kayanza province (north).

Having started in September 2022 and ending in December 2024, this project has an estimated cost of 15 billion Burundian francs and will cover 48,000 households in the 17 provinces, i.e. approximately 255,000 direct beneficiaries, 60% of whom will be women from the said provinces.

In his speech, the Representative of the African Development Bank (AfDB) Group in Burundi, Mr. Jean Claude Nsabimana, said that AEFPP-Burundi aims to reduce poverty in regional member countries by contributing to their sustainable economic development and social progress. To this end, Mr. Nsabimana mobilizes resources to promote investment in these countries and provides them with technical assistance as well as advice on the policies to be implemented.

He recalled that since February 2022, a war between Russia and Ukraine has broken out and that unheard-of consequences have manifested themselves in various countries without sparing Burundi. He spoke of the rise in the price of fuel and other basic necessities such as fertilizers, seeds, and phytosanitary products for agricultural production which supports the majority of rural and urban households.

The Representative of the African Development Bank Group in Burundi insisted that in order to support Afri-

can states to cope with the consequences of the Russian-Ukrainian crisis, the AfDB has set up the emergency agricultural facility and that it is within this framework of the AEFPP-B project that was set up. This project specifically aims to intensify the production of cereals (maize and rice) using varieties that are resilient to climate change, promote gender-sensitive policies by facilitating accessibility to agricultural inputs as well as the promotion of digitalization to provide support to farmers to ensure transparency and inclusiveness.

In turn, the assistant to the Minister in charge of agriculture, Mr. Emmanuel Ndorimana, welcomed the support of the AfDB in various areas such as agriculture, livestock, road layout, electrification, and many other sectors.

Speaking of the project that had just been launched, Mr. Ndorimana said that the AEFPP-B project's mission is to support so that the population has something to eat and that each pocket has money.

In addition, he appreciated the fact that this project has highlighted the promotion of gender and that 60% of the beneficiaries will be women, especially since they are the first to take care of agricultural work. For him, the promotion of gender undoubtedly results in boosting the country's economy without putting aside that of women.

The Assistant to the Minister in charge of agriculture added that, thanks to this project, rice production will increase from 200 to 28,000 tons while corn production, which is 571 tons, will increase to 9,000 tons.

At the same time, Mr. Ndorimana invited agronomists and agricultural instructors to work closely with the administration in order to achieve the success of the aforesaid project. **(ABP)**

### Only wholesale traders will sell the sugar



**N**o trader in Kayanza is authorized to sell sug-

ar unless he is a wholesaler who gets his supplies from SOSUMO. That recommendation was issued on Wednesday August 9, 2023, during a meeting held by the Governor of Kayanza province for wholesale traders who source sugar from SOSUMO to transport it to the municipalities of Kayanza province. During the meeting, the wholesale traders who obtain their sugar supply from the Société Sucrière du Moso (SOSUMO), underlined that the upward review of the price of the kilogram of sugar will lead

them into bankruptcy because. The sale price for a bag of 50 kilos is 159,500 Fbu while the purchase price was set at 162,000 Fbu. For those wholesale traders, there must be a deep analysis so that they do not record huge losses, especially since the costs of transporting, loading and unloading this sugar from the depot installed in Ngozi province are very students. After the exchanges, the participants in the meeting agreed that it is now the wholesalers who will detail the sugar by bag and that the semi-wholesalers and the retailers will no longer have the right to sell the sugar. The Governor of Kayanza, Colonel Rémy Cishahayo has warned that traders in rural areas who are caught selling sugar will be severely punished. With a view to the application of this new measure, the same provincial authority has asked the administration to draw up the lists of applicants for sugar from the base cells, each time it is already sent from Ngozi warehouse.

### Meeting of the members of the provincial committee for the fight against AIDS



**T**he provincial committee for the fight against AIDS (CPLS) in Mwaro province, organized on Wednesday August 9, 2023, an

exchange meeting on the inventory of achievements in the fight against AIDS during the past semester. The provincial doctor, Dr. Ezéchiél Nzuwonsaba, indicated that that meeting is an opportune moment to exchange on the activities in progress, what has succeeded and the challenges encountered, in order to find a solution. Regarding health workers whose mandate has expired, Mr. Nzuwonsaba pointed out that the fight against AIDS is a concern

for everyone in their field. In his opening remarks, the Sociocultural Advisor to the Governor, Claver Ngurube, indicated that it is necessary to discuss how to improve the health of the population of Mwaro, focusing on the fight against HIV/AIDS. The Ministry of Public Health and the Fight against AIDS is concerned with the strengthening activities in the fight against HIV/AIDS by supporting the committees in charge of fighting this disease from top to bottom, he explained. The measures will be taken according to the data collected in connection with the fight against HIV/AIDS. He indicated that the CPLS coordination meeting is a good opportunity to discuss HIV/AIDS coordination needs at the provincial level. **(ABP)**

### Coffee farmers demand the higher coffee prices



**T**he coffee growers are asking for an

increase in the price of the kilo, because its maintenance is expensive for them and also requires a larger land holdings. The Adviser to the Cabinet of the Governor in the province of Bururi in charge of development, Mr. Rémy Ndayubaha, rather asked this population to invest in extending the areas of coffee and sensitizing the youth to practice this culture which generates currencies of which the country has need.



These exchanges took place on Wednesday August 9, 2023, during a visit by administrative officials and technicians from the Provincial Office for the Environment,

Agriculture and Livestock to Musenyi locality, precisely in Horezo, Muheka commune Songa zone, during the coffee mulching and cutting campaign. **(ABP)**

### Coffee culture is booming in Mwaro province



The delegate of the Office for the Development of Coffee in the region of Kirimiro, Mr. Alexandre Minani urged the farmers of Mwaro to avoid coffee fraud, but to sell their production officially, at the local factory.

It was during the official launch of the coffee pruning and mulching campaign which took place on Tuesday August 8, 2023 at Bwakira hill, Gatwe zone, Kayokwe commune. The Provincial Director of the Environment, Agriculture and Livestock mulches the coffee.

Mr. Minani pointed out that a well-maintained coffee field increases yield. He thus called on coffee growers to revalorize this culture which brings the foreign currencies allowing the country to carry out sustainable development projects.

In his opening remarks, the Advisor to the Governor in charge of development, Mr. Jérôme Ndayishimiye said that the coffee cultivation in Mwaro province is doing well thanks to the technicians and agronomists who are fighting for its improvement. He asked the zonal

and hillside administrators to sensitize the farmers to continue that campaign in their administrative entities. He called on the technicians and agronomists to follow farmers closely in the implementation of that campaign. Speaking, the Provincial Director of Environment, Agriculture and Livestock, Mr. Libert Nzokirantevye indicated that the Gatwe area where the coffee pruning and mulching campaign took place ranks among the first for this culture. He said that to the four out of six communes that grow coffee, the Rusaka commune has just been added. There remains the Gisozi commune. **(ABP)**



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## REPUBLIC OF BURUNDI

PRESIDENCY OF THE REPUBLIC  
Secretariat-General of the State**MEDIA RELEASE N°09 CONSECUTIVE TO THE CABINET MEETING  
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 09 AUGUST 2023**

A Cabinet meeting was held in Gitega on Wednesday 09<sup>th</sup> of August 2023, under the chairmanship of His Excellency Major General Evariste NDAYISHIMIYE, President of the Republic of Burundi.

After the presentation and adoption of the agenda, His Excellency the President of the Republic invited the Prime Minister to present the summary of the observations resulting from the preparatory meeting of the Council of Ministers which the Prime Minister chaired on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> of August 2023, and Thursday 04 August 2023, and which was devoted to the analysis of the same files on the agenda.

After restitution by the Prime Minister to the President of the Republic, the following issues were analyzed:

- 1. Bill amending Decree-Law No. 1/024 of July 13, 1989 on the organic framework of personalized State administrations.**
- 2. Bill amending Decree-Law No. 1/023 of July 26, 1989 on the organic framework of Burundian public establishments.**

These two projects were presented by the Minister of Finance, Budget and Economic Planning.

Until today, there are laws that date back a long time and no longer respond to the realities of the moment.

The legislator at the time did not consider the governance of certain institutions in terms of effectiveness and efficiency, which means that at present there are boards of directors that have been put in place and which require a lot of funds to be spent, while these structures do not generate income.

This is the case of Decree-Law No. 1/024 of July 13, 1989 on the organic framework of personalized State administrations and Decree-Law No. 1/023 of July 26, 1989 on the organic framework of Burundian public establishments.

In order to comply with the Constitution in force, it was decided to review the legal framework governing Burundian public establishments and personalized State administrations to adapt it to the current environment, by eliminating the councils of administration because these structures do not generate revenue.

With this abolition of the Board of Directors, the missions that fell to them will be entrusted to the general inspectorates of the ministries.

After analysis, the Council of Ministers made the following observations:

- If the boards of directors are abolished for certain institutions, it will be difficult for some of them to take relevant decisions. It would be better to think of setting up another body that can replace the Board of Directors;
- For personalized administrations governed by specific laws, it is proposed to insert a provision providing that the name of the governing bodies refers to these laws which put them in place;
- The concepts of "Personalized Administration" and "Public Establishment" must be well defined to avoid confusion and facilitate understanding. The following elements are therefore taken into account:
  - A personalized administration is a decentralized entity of the State while a public establishment is a decentralized entity;
  - A personalized administration is placed under the direct authority of a minister while a public establishment is placed under the supervision of a minister;



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- A personalized administration is endowed with an operating budget each and the revenue collected is paid directly to the public treasury. It has a Board of Directors. A public institution, on the other hand, receives a starting fund allowing it to produce and make profits, and in this case a Board of Directors is necessary.
  - Personalized administrations, by nature, provide public services. These services may or may not be paid. These two situations must be handled differently.
- These structures must be directed by Directors General assisted by Directors.

The Minister of Justice, in collaboration with the team of Ministers who had previously worked on these two texts, was appointed to rework these texts according to these guidelines. They will be brought back to the Council of Ministers for adoption.

**3. Note relating to the purchase of shares and the legal compliance of SOCABU, presented by the Minister of Finance, Budget and Economic Planning.**

Regarding the purchase of shares, two shareholders have announced the desire to sell all of their shares held in the company SOCABU. These are the Belgian shareholder BOELS and BEGAULT and the shareholder Inter Bank-Burundi.

With the purchase of these shares, the State of Burundi will increase its investment in SOCABU by 10.54% to have a total of 46.65% in the share capital of SOCABU, which will result in an increase in dividends received per year.

It is proposed to the Government to accept the purchase of these shares. This acceptance would also cover other cases of sale similar to SOCABU that may be of interest to the State of Burundi.

Regarding the legal compliance of SOCABU, it is the application of Law No. 1/02 of January 7, 2014 on the insurance code in Burundi which, in its article 327, stipulates that "no company can carry out transactions in the life and capitalization branches and those in the property and casualty branches at the same time". SOCABU is legally obliged to manage its activities in two separate branches.

Given the imperative nature of the provisions of the law cited above, SOCABU wants to comply with this law by splitting the company into two entities, administratively and financially distinct and independent, as required by the law cited above.

The Council of Ministers accepted the proposals of the note with the recommendation that all the capital contributions of public companies in the various companies be registered in the name of the State of Burundi.

#### **4. National strategy for the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area**, presented by the Minister of Commerce, Transport, Industry and Tourism.

The agreement establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) aims to concretize the integration of Africa, by serving as an engine of economic growth, industrialization and sustainable development of Africa. Burundi ratified the Agreement establishing the AfCFTA on June 17, 2021.

The implementation strategy of the African Continental Free Trade Area is part of Burundi's efforts in the search for trade performance and trade facilitation between Burundi and its African partners.

To be able to benefit from the privileges and advantages of the ZLECAf, Burundian investors must ensure that their production involves processing or sufficient added value. Burundi should seek to revitalize the productive sector, increase its export potential and create an environment conducive to domestic and foreign investment.



This strategy is based on four (4) interventions, namely: (i) national ownership of the Agreement on the African Continental Free Trade Area, (ii) diversification of exportable supply and goods markets, and improvement of the competitiveness of national enterprises (iii) development of supply and improvement of the quality of infrastructure, of the service sector (iv) strengthening of the production/entrepreneurial capacities of women and young people.

Regarding funding, the overall budget necessary for the implementation of this Strategy is estimated at Ten million Eighty two thousand dollars (10,992,000 USD).

After discussion and debate, the Strategy was adopted with the following main observations and recommendations:

- The strategy does not clearly define the concrete actions to be carried out in order to enable Burundi to have products, in sufficient quantity and quality to sell to member countries of ZLECAF;
- Burundi must prepare to manage the effects of this continental free trade and each ministry must determine and take ownership of the actions that concern it;
- The Ministry in charge of Trade must collaborate with the other Ministries to benefit from their contributions on the actions to be carried out, especially since the strategy is crosscutting;
- We must reflect deeply on the industrialization plan of Burundi so that the country can have finished and diversified products for export to member countries of the ZLECAF;
- The State should provide more support to small and medium-sized enterprises so that they increase production;
- It is necessary to determine the products for which Burundi can request protection against competition;
- The strategy must be aligned with the Vision Burundi Emerging Country in 2040 and Burundi Developed Country in 2060;

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- As this is a National Strategy, you must be sure that the images and logos proposed in the document reflect the objectives of this strategy;
- This Strategy must show positive and significant impacts for the country, through measurable results in terms of increased exports and reduced imports;
- The strategy should show how to mitigate such a shock due to the loss of revenue on certain products with the implementation of ZLECAF;
- Burundi should participate in the various ongoing and future negotiations on the products to be protected and involve members of the private sector in the technical team responsible for conducting the negotiations;

The Minister of Infrastructure, Equipment and Social Housing will support the integration of these observations and others that may be sent by various ministries.

**5. Draft contract for the operation and maintenance of the Digital Terrestrial Television network between the State of Burundi and the Digital Television Broadcasting Company of Burundi**, presented by the Minister of Communication, Information Technologies and the Media.

The purpose of this draft contract is to set the conditions under which the contracting authority, in this case the State of Burundi, grants the private partner, i.e. the Société de Télédiffusion Numérique du Burundi (STNB), the right to operate, manage, maintain and monitor the multiplexing and distribution network of digital terrestrial television signals and the reimbursement of the credit contracted with EXIMBANK of China within the framework of this Project.

Progress has already been made as part of this project, including:

- The availability throughout the national territory of network infrastructures to broadcast the images;
- The State of Burundi has already contracted a loan of 32.6 million US dollars from a Chinese bank repayable over 25 years;



- A Chinese donation of 190,000 decoders worth 14 million US dollars has already been available since 2020;
- The company STNB has already been created, with 60% of the shares for the company StarTimes Network Technology Co. Ltd and 40% of the shares for the Burundian part;
- The STNB has six shopping centers including its head office in Rohero and the centers in Buyenzi, Gitega, Ngozi, Muyinga and Makamba;
- Of the 11 sites hosting the installed equipment, approximately 4 to 5 sites will be able to function properly once the operating contract has been signed;
- Keys and access codes to STNB infrastructure are available;
- The StarTimes company bears all the charges of the STNB, including the payment of the rental costs of the office and the call center of the Company, the charges for water and electricity, the supply of the generators and maintenance of broadcast networks.

The implementation of this contract will allow the effective start of the STNB.

Given the fact that the contribution to industry was overvalued, the renegotiation resulted in a shareholding of 45% instead of 40% for the Burundian part and 55% for the Chinese part instead of 60%.

At the end of the analysis, the Council of Ministers made the following observations and recommendations:

- Operationalizing the STNB as soon as possible;
- The operating period of 25 years should be shortened because it seems too long;
- After signing the contract, it is proposed to rigorously monitor its execution:
  - By ensuring that the fees collected finance the repayment of the loan;
  - Ensuring that knowledge transfer takes place as agreed;
  - By constantly adapting to the evolution of technology;
- There should be an evaluation of the contract every five (5) years and consider its readjustment if necessary;

- It is necessary to know the real value of the decoders in order to take it into account as a capital contribution from the State;
- The decree authorizing the State of Burundi to participate in the share capital of the STNB is to be reviewed to take into account the new distribution of the shareholding.

The Ministers having Justice and Finance in their attributions will support in the finalization of this project taking into account these observations and other aspects of form noted.

#### **6. Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of Burundi and SEACOM LIMITED**, presented by the Minister of Communication, Information Technology and Media.

The Government of Burundi is committed to connecting the entire population to the communication network, and this is possible thanks to the deployment of adequate information and communication technology infrastructure accessible to everyone. The optical fiber has been deployed to the capital of the Provinces with a vision of its extension to the capital of the municipalities or even the capitals of the zones.

The implementation of this Memorandum of Understanding will allow the Government to achieve this objective, because the deployment of optical fiber will arrive everywhere in the country and the price of the Internet will be reduced and affordable.

SEACOM LIMITED aims to:

- Implement a secure fiber optic network linking Burundi to SEACOM Limited's Point of Presence in Tanzania;
- Improve access to broadband internet at an affordable and accessible cost throughout the territory of Burundi;
- Create a partnership with ONATEL;



- Promote competition in the environment of electronic communications services in Burundi.

After analysis and debate, the Council of Ministers adopted this Memorandum with the following observations and recommendations:

- The optical fiber offered by SEACOM will arrive directly in Burundi without an intermediary; will be secure and cheap;
- The company LACELL occupies a central place in this file while it is not in order with the OBR. We must take the necessary measures to ensure that it pays what it owes to the State.
- SEACOM will create a partnership with ONATEL by providing equipment not available to ONATEL, and everyone will be paid according to their contribution;
- An audit of the BBS Company is necessary to know the contribution of the State as capital, to identify the causes of its non-performance, its financial health, the reasons for its high prices, etc...

**7. Technical note on the need to enhance old state woodlots including that of Gakara-Gahuni**, presented by the Minister of the Environment, Agriculture and Livestock.

The Gakara forest massif currently covers an area of 1150 ha. It was installed during the period from 1980 to 1983.

This note has been prepared to enlighten the Government of Burundi so that it can appreciate the need for the recovery of these old woodlots, especially since non-recovery leads to enormous losses due to overturning or breaking of trees by the wind as well as the actions to be considered in the context of the replanting of these spaces.

This development is preceded by the determination of the estimated volume of standing timber, and in the event of sale, the value is estimated at sixty-five billion

eight hundred thirty-four million two hundred fifty-seven thousand three hundred and twenty Burundian francs (65,834,257,320 BIF).

The replacement will take place over 12 years at a cost of One billion three hundred and sixty three million five hundred thousand Burundian francs (1,363,500,000 FBU).

After discussion and debate, the Council of Ministers issued the following observations and recommendations:

- The recovery of old forestation which is in the process of degrading is necessary;
- Support measures for this recovery must be taken in order to deal with the consequences that may arise such as erosion, flooding in the lowlands, drought, etc;
- A Commission responsible for studying in depth the economic and environmental aspect of the development of all the old woodlots in the country is necessary. Among other things, it will have the task of studying the entire value chain of these trees and making appropriate proposals so that the public treasury benefits from these forestations.

Its report will make it possible to decide on the valuation of the woodlots located in the other provinces.

The Minister in charge of the environment and the Minister in charge of Finance will identify the members who can constitute this Commission.

**8. Note on the status of implementation of the observations and recommendations made by the Council of Ministers of April 05, 2023 relating to the Development Project for the KABU 16 hydroelectric power plant (20 MW), presented by the Minister of Hydraulics, Energy and Mines.**

On April 5, 2023, the Council of Ministers analyzed a note on the status of the development works of the KABU 16 Hydroelectric Power Plant and made the following observations and recommendations:

- Request a grace period from Exim Bank of India which financed the Project;

- Negotiate additional funds from Exim Bank of India for the remaining works, as well as the release of the remaining credit amount;
- Look for an authorized monitoring house to analyze and study the basis of the complaints of the Company carrying out the work;
- Suspend work related to the asphaltting of the road leading to the dam in order to reduce the bill for the remaining work;
- Explore all possible avenues for delivery of all materials ordered from India for this Project;
- Use all possible means to ensure that the construction of the dam is completed as quickly as possible.

A commission was immediately set up to analyze in depth the complaints of the company Angelique International, which is carrying out the project, while considering the volume of civil engineering work carried out on the ground. After the work and negotiation session, all the parties agreed on an addition to the cost of the project of an amount of fifteen million American Dollars (15,000,000 USD) relating to the additional works and the asphaltting of the access roads to the various works of the Project. It should be noted that the company has stopped all work.

For the commissioning of the plant, urgent actions are proposed:

- As the first amendment to the contract allowed the addition to the initial cost of the project of an amount of 9,574,791.86 USD and that the new negotiation of an amount of 15,000,000 USD exceeds the 20% ceiling provided for by the public procurement code to conclude another amendment, it is requested that the Council of Ministers authorize the modification of the contract for the clause relating to the fixed and non-revisable cost of the project and the addition of 15 million USD to the cost of the project, in order to allow the completion of the Kabu 16 Project, the works of which are at 94.26%.
  
- The BRB should urgently release the portion of four million one hundred two thousand one hundred and ninety-nine US dollars and twelve cents (4,102,199.12 USD) of the amount due to EXIM Bank so that the Company's invoices execution



of works pending payment for more than six months are paid, which will allow the Company to resume activities.

□ The Government should proceed to the negotiation with Exim Bank of India the addition to the credit of this amount of fifteen million American dollars (15 Million USD).

After discussion on the note, the Council of Ministers accepted these proposals so that this dam is operational as soon as possible.

## 9. Any Other Business

- His Excellency the President of the Republic spoke about the general situation prevailing in the country. He said there is no unease in the country except that a small group of people who had grabbed all the economic power realizes that the State is now taking matters into their own hands. It is this small group which creates a psychosis in the population, but the Government follows the situation closely. It is about an economic war which the State carries out.

He spoke of another fight that is being waged within the justice sector. There is in this sector an inadmissible behavior that borders on insubordination. This situation must absolutely stop because measures are being taken.

Finally, he spoke about the political situation prevailing in West Africa, more particularly in Niger, as well as what is being done to find solutions.

- His Excellency the Vice-President of the Republic welcomed the step taken in the implementation of the salary policy at the level of the civil service.

He asked that the principles applied at the level of the civil service in terms of salaries be extended to all structures operating with the State budget.

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He also asked that the files of civil servants who are going to retire be processed quickly so that they receive their pension as soon as possible, and especially that equivalent to their last salary, in accordance with the announcement made by the Head of the state, almost three years ago.

**Done at Gitega, 10 August 2023  
Prosper NTAHORWAMIYE**

**Secretary-General and Spokesman.-**

# Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Development Cooperation

Department of Communication

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