



Commemoration of the 29th anniversary of the Assassination of late President Cyprien Ntaryamira



The President of the Republic of Burundi, His Excellency Evariste Ndayishimiye enhanced with his presence the ceremonies marking the 29th anniversary of the Assassination of the late President Cyprien NTARYAMIRA.

After a prayer organized at the monument of the martyrs of democracy where the bodies of the illustrious disappeared and of his assassinated Ministers at the Kanombe International Airport in Kigali rest, the master of ceremonies later presented his biography, which reflected a hardworking

spirit.

The Presidential Couple, followed by the diplomatic corps, then the family of the deceased, and the Representatives of political parties laid wreaths on their graves.

The other senior authorities of the country were present in these ceremonies, including the President of the Senate the Right Honorable Emmanuel Sinzohagera, the Vice-President of the Republic Ir Prosper Bazombanza, the Ombudsman Ms Aimé Laurentine Kanyana, the Prime Minister Lieutenant General of Police Gervais Ndirakobuca, the former Presidents of the Republic, His Excellency Domitien Ndayizeye and His Excellency Sylvestre Ntibantunganya and the late others.

The ceremonies ended with listening to the speech of the late President Cyprien NTARYAMIRA on the day of his inauguration, where he called on Burundians to discipline in all sectors.

The Eucharistic celebration which since then began the ceremonies did not take place because the day coincided with the Easter triduum.

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Official mission of the First Lady H.E Angeline NDAYISHIMIYE in Italy: A very satisfactory assessment



The First Lady carried out an official mission to Italy from March 29 to April 5, 2023. First, the objective of this trip was to meet the office of the World Food Program (WFP) at the global level and other development partners. As Sponsor of the School Feeding Program, the First Lady first met at the WFP World Headquarters in Rome, Ms. Valérie Guarnieri, Deputy Executive Director of this United Nations agency. Ms. Valérie said she was impressed by the initiatives of H.E the First Lady in promoting the school feeding program in Burundi. WFP has once again reiterated its commitment to always support the school feeding program while appreciating the commitment of the Government of Burundi to support school canteens through the Ministry of National Education and Scientific Research. As for her, Her Excellency the First Lady warmly thanked the WFP for its support in promoting school feeding.

Still at the Headquarters of WFP, the First Lady H.E Angeline NDAYISHIMIYE met the Representatives of the International Coalition for School Feeding, of which she has already been appointed a Focal Representative in Burundi since the year 2021. Speaking on behalf of the Coalition, Ambassador Céline Jurgensen indicated that Burundi has become emblematic in this program because of the efforts of H.E the First Lady. She therefore asked Her Excellency the First Lady to agree to participate in the high-level meetings of this coalition which are held in different countries in order to help the coalition raise its voice in favor of this program.

After Rome, H.E the First Lady visited the City of Parma. She was warmly welcomed by Mr Michèle Guèrra, Mayor of this city which is located in the region of Emilia Romagna. The Mayor of the city of Parma welcomes the cooperation between our two countries, and partic-

ularly between Bujumbura and Parma. Through this cooperation, the City of Parma finances the tomato processing project in Carama, in the Province of Bujumbura, a project that came to contribute to the improvement of nutrition in Burundi.

During this experience exchange visit to Parma, H.E the First Lady visited two renowned agro-food processing companies. These are the Azienda Agricola Biologica Ciaolate cheese dairy and the "monte delle vigne" winery. Ciaolate is part of the real Parmesan Permigiano Reggiano, which produces cheeses according to centuries-old craftsmanship. Raw cow's milk, natural salt, rennet, no additives or preservatives, which is a good model for a healthy diet.

Also in Parma, the First Lady participated in the most special Sunday Mass celebrated on Palm Sunday in the Cathedral of Parma. It is a very old Cathedral that dates back a thousand years.

In Parma, the First Lady also visited the Pediatric Hospital Ospedale del Bambino "Pietro Barilla" for an exchange of experience. She had met on March 30, 2023 in Italy, the officials of the Bambino Gesù Ospedale Pediatrico hospital in Rome. Their discussions focused on the partnership between this hospital and the Clinic "Bonne Action UMUGIRANEZA", of which she is the Founder.

The partnership between these two hospitals will be specially established in the field of capacity building of the staff of the UMUGIRANEZA Polyclinic in what is especially pediatric surgery.

The managers of these hospitals have promised to continue the partnership dialogue with the "Fondation Bonne Action UMUGIRANEZA".

Speaking to the National Press on her return, Her Excellency the First Lady said she was satisfied with the results of this trip. "The mission went well and we just have to concretize the conclusions of the dialogue that we conducted with our partners," she added.

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National Assembly: Opening of the ordinary parliamentary session of april



The National Assembly of Burundi proceeded on Monday, April 03, 2023 to the Opening of the Ordinary Parliamentary Session for the month of April

2023. The ceremonies were led by the First Vice-President of the National Assembly Honorable Sabine Ntakarutimana on behalf of the President on a work mission abroad.

In his speech, the First Vice-President of the National Assembly Honorable Sabine Ntakarutimana indicated that the parliamentary vacation period is a time of rest but also an opportunity of joining their fellow citizens in their electoral constituencies in community development.

Since the parliamentary recess in March coincided with the month dedicated to women, women parliamentarians visited the women detained in the central prison of Mpimba and offered them goods and advice so that they would not fall back into the

same errors when released.

The members of the office of the National Assembly met officials and different communities of certain provinces to discuss subjects of national life, including justice, leadership, galloping demography, management of income-generating projects, etc.

At the level of parliamentary diplomacy, the Burundian Parliament participated in various conferences and granted audiences to Resident Representatives of international organizations and to Ambassadors accredited to Burundi as well as the organization of sub-regional conferences.

During the April Session opened on Monday, April 03, 2023, the Deputies will analyze twelve bills sent to them by the Government of Burundi, including that relating to the 2023-2024 budget law in accordance with article 182 of the Constitution of Burundi. Burundi.

In the future, the National Assembly intends to organize raids to support grassroots administrators in raising public awareness of the benefits of family planning and the demographic dividend following the galloping demography which is currently a concern. (www.rtnb.bi)

The President of the Senate participates in community development work



The President of the Senate the Right Honorable Emmanuel Sinzohagera carried out on Saturday, April 1, 2023, community development work in Ngozi province. This concerned the construction of bleachers in the Agasaka Stadium in Ngozi.

The Minister in charge of agriculture Dr. Sanctus Niragira, the Parliamentarians elected in the Ngozi province constituency, the provincial administra-

tors, the military and police as well as the natives took part in this work.

The President of the Senate the Right Honorable Emmanuel Sinzohagera in his speech of greetings to the population after the work, asked them to work in competitiveness to achieve effective development. He called on the natives to participate in the development work of their province. He also invited them to banish ethnic divisions which hinder development.

The Right Honorable Emmanuel Sinzohagera asked the population of Ngozi province to preserve the Burundian culture and customs that have always characterized our ancestors. Regarding the rise in food prices, the Senate Speaker urged the population to get down to agricultural and livestock work to increase production and to exploit the land well. He also invited the Burundian population to limit births because, for him, overpopulation is among the causes of malnutrition in the country. (www.rtnb.bi)

The Burundian Ombudsman joins the population in community work



The Burundian Ombudsman Ms Aimée Laurentine Kanyana joined the population of Matana commune in Bururi province on Saturday April 01, 2023 in community development work for the construction of a communal conference hall. In his welcoming address, the Governor of the province of Bururi colonel Léonidas Bandenzamaso said that the province is in peace and security but that with the beginning of the cropping season B, a disease is observed which attacks the bean crops in the communes of Mugamba and Matana. In this state of affairs, the Governor of Bururi alerts plant disease

specialists to intervene quickly without delaying when cropping season A went badly because of the late influx of the rains. Speaking, the Burundian Ombudsman, Mrs. Aimée Laurentine Kananyana, called on the population of Bururi to unite around community works in building infrastructures of public interest and developing together without leaving anyone behind because "unity makes strength".

Mrs. Aimée Laurentine Kananyana also sensitized the population to developing their households and consequently the country, to adhere to family planning and avoiding polygamy, a source of land disputes.

The Burundian Ombudsman asked the local administrators to properly serve the population while reminding that the institution of the Ombudsman is responsible for establishing the agreement between the population and the administration. Returning to the bean disease, the Ombudsman sensitizes the administrative staff at the base to closely following its evolution in order to alert the ministry in charge of agriculture to grant them phytosanitary products for spraying. (www.rtnb.bi)

Official launch of the 2023 humanitarian response plan



On Monday April 3, 2023, the Director General in charge of multilateral relations at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Development Cooperation Ambassador Gaudence SINDAYIGAYA, officially launched the 2023 humanitarian response plan. The ceremonies took place at the Hotel Club of Lake Tanganyika. In his speech, the Director General in charge of multilateral relations Ambassador Gaudence SINDAYIGAYA indicated that since 2016, Burundi with



the support and in concentration with its partners conducts an analysis of humanitarian needs and develops the annual response plan for the priority needs of the populations affected by disasters and exposures. On behalf of the Government of Burundi, he commended the good, close and perfect collaboration throughout the process, a reinforced collaboration and the dynamic relations between the Government and its partners advocated by His Excellency the President of the Republic.

According to Ambassador Gaudence SINDAYIGAYA, the "Responsible and Laborious" Government of Burundi is working diligently and tirelessly to improve the everyday survives of Burundians, particularly in terms of economic development, health, education and security for strengthening the resilience of the populations most vulnerable to climatic and economic shocks, as well as natural disasters. He thanked the donors and invited them to renew their support in 2023 so that Burundi can consolidate the progress already made and continue to reduce humanitarian needs in the country. He pointed out that the Government of Burundi will continue to work in close collaboration with humanitarian partners in order to meet the most urgent needs of the populations affected by shock situations and repatriation in conditions worthy of Burundian compatriots and their effective integration by granting the suitable durable solutions and continue to ensure the response to epidemics.

As for the Representative of OCHA Office in Burundi Mrs Noroarisoa RAKOTOMALALA, the Ambassador of the United States of America to Burundi Mrs Mélanie H.Higgins, the Belgian Ambassador to Burundi Mr Alain Van-Gucht and the Acting Resident Coordinator of the United Nations in Burundi Mr John Agbor all

thanked the Government of Burundi for the important role it plays in providing life-saving assistance to those in need and building community resilience. They also thank all the humanitarian, women and men, Burundians and non-Burundians who work daily for people who are in shock. They all indicated that the humanitarian response in 2023 in Burundi is a unique opportunity for partners to implement a multi-sectoral response that takes into account the root causes of shocks affecting local populations and that the 2023 Humanitarian Response Plan is a tool for strengthening coordination between all actors, the Government, international and national partners, for better results.

It should be noted that the 2023 humanitarian response plan for Burundi was developed to complement existing plans, and in particular the one recently signed between the Government and the United Nations: the framework plan for cooperation for sustainable development 2023-2027 which includes three strategic priorities on which the strategic objectives of the humanitarian response plan are linked, to generate collective results in the areas of convergence. (MFADC)

Launch of the measles response campaign



The official launch on wednesday april 5, 2023 of the response campaign against the measles epidemic by the Ministry of Public Health and the Fight against AIDS via its Expanded Vaccination Program (EPI) in collaboration with the World Organization of Health (WHO), UNICEF and other partners took place at the Buyenzi "Reference" health center in Mukaza commune in Bujumbura Town Hall.

This campaign, which began on monday and ends on friday, will concern 400,000 children from five sanitary districts whose age is between six months and nine years old.

The Director of the Expanded Vaccination Program (EPI), Dr. Jean Claude Bizimana indicated that the organization of this measles response campaign concerns only five health districts because it is the new strategy to track down the disease where it is present is manifested to controlling its spread.

Dr. Jean Claude Bizimana said that they scrutinize and analyze the data from day to day so that the response is triggered in the slightest district that displays an outbreak.

The Resident Representative of the WHO in Burundi Dr Xavier Crespin, on behalf of the Partners, was delighted that the campaign was responded to massively and appealed to parents who are still dragging their feet to bring their children to be vaccinated.

(www.rtnb.bi)

The Minister in charge of Agriculture visits various achievements within the purview of his Ministry



The Minister in charge of Agriculture, Dr Sanctus Niragira accompanied by the executives of his ministry made a field visit to the province of Kirundo on Saturday April 1, 2023, to inquire about the inventory of the various achievements which fall under of his ministry.

They visited the Support Project for Agricultural Transformation in the Natural Region of Bugesera (PATAREB), a project financed by the African Development Bank (AFDB) to carry out activities related to agriculture in the province of Kirundo.

After field visits to the Nyavyamo marshes in Kirundo commune, the observation is that the development activities of these marshes are at a standstill due to

an accident of a machine which was in the process of tracing a track which crosses the swamp. At the moment, a pumping center is being built to evacuate the water and start the development.

Dr. Sanctus Niragira said that for the PATAREB project, there are challenges, including a delay in the completion of all project activities and a problem of internal organization of workers. A commission responsible for proposing appropriate solutions that will allow this project to move forward has been set up.

Dr. Sanctus Niragira ended his visit on the property of an Agro-breeder named Joseph Bigirimana, who is in the process of developing a modern breeding center in the province of Kirundo as well as the multiplication of pigs and hens.

This agro-pastoralist raised two major challenges encountered in carrying out this project, including water supply and electricity connection.

The Minister in charge of agriculture promised to talk about it with the ministry in charge of energy to see how to support this agro-pastoralist. (www.rtnb.bi)

WHO organizes a media workshop on the eve of World Health Day



As part of the celebration of World Health Day coupled with the 75th anniversary of the existence of WHO and the 60th anniversary of its presence in Burundi, WHO in collaboration with the ministry in charge of Health organized on Wednesday April 05, 2023, an information workshop for the Media to discuss and share WHO's commitment and achievements in Burundi alongside the Government of Burundi.

In his speech, the Resident Representative of WHO in Burundi Dr Xavier Crespin indicated that on the eve of the celebration of World Health Day, 2023 edition which coincides with the double anniversary of the 75th anniversary of the creation of the WHO and 60 years of its presence in Burundi, It is possible to meet others and the media to discuss the path taken by this organization with Burundi.

This is with the aim of strengthening the country's health system and gradually moving towards Universal Health Coverage in particular and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in general in Burundi. Dr. Xavier Crespin congratulated the Government of Burundi through the ministry of Public Health and the Fight against AIDS for the initiatives taken, the efforts made to gradually restore the reputation of the health sector by opening up for the well-being of populations of the country.

A country that should be proud of the level achieved through the convincing results obtained in recent years, in particular the therapeutic success for tuberculosis (95%) and the very good performance against HIV with the achievement of targets, to name only these two main ones.

Dr Xavier Crespin asked the Media professionals to always be Spokespersons for the populations so that they can understand and adhere to the efforts of the Government and development partners in favor of their health.

According to the Assistant to the Minister of Public Health and the Fight against AIDS who represented the Minister in this workshop, he said that for 75 years, extraordinary progress has been made in the protection of people against diseases, in particular eradication of smallpox, reduction in the incidence of poliomyelitis, saving millions of lives through the vaccination of children, reduction of maternal mortality and improvement of the health and well-being of the population.

The Government of Burundi welcomes the good cooperative relations that have existed between Burun-

di and WHO since 1963 and congratulates the WHO Country Representative in Burundi and his staff on their role in the implementation of the mutually agreed objectives, in order to allow better accomplishment of the mission of promoting the good health of the Burundian population.

The WHO Office in Burundi has got down to this task and has already accomplished visible and commendable actions relating mainly to support for the sanitary system, the intensification of the fight against various diseases and the promotion of the health of the mother and child. (www.rtnb.bi)

Solemn opening of Radio Isôko FM – RBDC



The Assistant to the Minister of Communication, Information Technologies and the

Media, Mr. Thierry Kitamoya solemnly opened on tuesday april 4, 2023 in Bujumbura, Radio Isôko FM – RBDC (Radio Burundi Discovery Channel) which broadcasts on 100.4 MHz.

In his speech, the Legal Representative of Radio Isôko FM -RBDC, Mr. Jean Patrick Nduwimana said that this radio is one of the projects of Festival Burundi Discovery Foundation (FBDF), which wants to contribute to the socio-economic development of the country through tourism sectors, environment, entrepreneurship, social cohesion, economy, patriotism, human rights, promotion of women's rights and others.

According to Mr. Nduwimana, the Radio has come to help find solutions to certain challenges that are particularly evident in the tourism sector and in entrepreneurship, also creating a lot of jobs.

The President of the National Communication Council (CNC) Ambassador Vestine Nahimana congratulated those who initiated the Radio Isôko FM project. She also pointed out that this Radio will help the Burundian population to have useful information in their daily life including agriculture, livestock, culture, environment and others.

According to her, the Government, from the sensitization of that Radio, will have an opportunity to collect taxes and duties for the development of the country. Despite this, Mrs. Nahimana asked the managers of this Medium to follow the editorial line that

they have set themselves and to carry out their activities in accordance with the law governing the Burundian press and other laws, which the country has elaborated.

The managers of Radio Isôko FM-RBDC and journalists are also asked not to disseminate false information or messages of hatred, but rather to disseminate constructive and balanced information. The journalists of that Radio must also all have contracts to avoid certain problems, advised the President of the CNC.

According to Mr Kitamoya, he asked those responsible for this newborn in the media world to promote the mother tongue in their broadcasts. They are also asked to work while targeting the interests of Burundian citizens, especially by sensitizing them to get down to development work. Mr. Kitamoya also invited the journalists of this Radio to use it constructively, explaining that a badly used media can destabilize the peace and security of the country.

On the side of the ministry having the Media in its attributions, he promised through the Media Support Fund, to build the capacities of the journalists of Radio Isôko FM-RBDC as is the case for the other Media. That Radio will also receive certain materials from the ministry in charge of the Media.

It should be noted that the Radio Isôko FM-RBDC broadcasts in the provinces of the Town Hall of Bujumbura, Bujumbura, Bubanza, Cibitoke, Kayanza (Kabarore, Butaganzwa), Ngozi (Tangara), Muramvya (Mbuye), Mwaro (Rusaka, Nyabihanga), Bururi (Rutovu), Rumonge (Rumonge) and Karusi (Gitaramuka). The Radio also plans to broadcast, in three years, throughout the national territory and have provincial correspondents. (**ABP**)

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REPUBLIC OF BURUNDI

PRESIDENCY OF THE REPUBLIC
Secretariat-General of the State**MEDIA RELEASE N°03 CONSECUTIVE TO THE CABINET MEETING
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 05 APRIL 2023**

A Cabinet meeting was held in Bujumbura on Wednesday 5th of April 2023, under the chairmanship of His Excellency Major General Evariste NDAYISHIMIYE, President of the Republic of Burundi.

After the presentation 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 22 March 2023 and Monday 03 April 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 fixing the general budget of the Republic of Burundi, Fiscal Year 2023-2024, presented by the Minister of Finance, Budget and Economic Planning.

The preparation of the 2023/2024 draft budget is part of the continued implementation of public finance management reforms aimed at switching from the average budget to the program budget.

The 2023/2024 draft budget was also prepared at a time when the draft document "Vision Burundi Emerging Country in 2040 and Developed in 2060" is in the process of validation.

This document will serve as a reference in the development of policies and strategies for sustainable development.

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To achieve the vision of His Excellency the President of the Republic summarized in the slogan "Umunwa wose uronke ico ufungura, umufuko wose uronke amafaranga", literally translated "Let every mouth have food and pocket have money", the 2023/2024 draft budget places particular emphasis on the continued financing of the organo-mineral fertilizer subsidy policy and the production of selected seeds.

Among the main priority allocations retained in the draft budget 2023-2024 are also:

- The implementation of the salary policy;
- Compensation for the property of people who will be affected by the railway construction project;
- Rehabilitation of the Melchior NDADAYE Airport runway;
- Construction of the KAJEKE irrigation dam;
- The development of the RUGO FARM agro pole;
- The Youth Economic Empowerment and Employment Program (PAEEJ)
- The construction of the cancer center;
- The construction of a rabbit breeding center.

In order to increase revenue, important measures are planned. Thus, the OBR will pursue or undertake the following actions:

- Strengthening the collection of taxes on mining sector activities;
- Taking steps to reduce the informal sector through local taxation;
- Strict application of the law concerning dividends to be paid to the State;
- The initiation of the revision of texts and the procedure for granting exemptions;
- Acceleration of the process of recovery of arrears by the Burundi Revenue Authority;
- Improving revenue collection tools, namely revised laws and IT infrastructure at the Commissariat des Douanes et Accises;
- Strengthening mechanisms to fight corruption, fraud and smuggling;
- Improving the mechanisms for broadening the tax base, in accordance with the new laws on tax procedures; income tax and VAT law;
- Rigorous monitoring of VAT refunds;
- The general implementation of the electronic invoicing system;
- The implementation of a remote declaration and remote payment system.

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After discussion and debate on this draft budget, the Council of Ministers reached the following conclusions:

- Defer the proposed budget and restructure it differently to take into account the notion of program budget;
- Dividends from entities in which the State has shares must be clearly budgeted as revenue;
- The budgets of state structures with autonomous management, that is to say, the expenditure and revenue must appear in the state budget.
- At the same time, the ministries are called upon to define the programs before requesting the related budgets;

A team of expert economists will be put in place to restructure this budget in accordance with these guidelines, and the project will be brought back and analyzed in an extraordinary meeting of the Council of Ministers as soon as possible.

2. Note on the Partial Portfolio Guarantee Fund (GPP FUND) to be created by the World Bank as part of the preparation of the new Project for Employment and Economic Transformation "PRETE", presented by the Minister of Finance, budget and economic planning.

On February 14, 2023, the World Bank organized a meeting for the Burundian Association of Financial Institutions, the Network of Microfinance Institutions and FIGA.

The purpose of the meeting was to present the model and operation of the Partial Portfolio Guarantee Fund that the World Bank will bring to support the private sector.

The portfolio guarantee model that the World Bank wants to implement in Burundi is similar, with a few differences, to the FIGA model. The World Bank offers two options.

The first option is to reform FIGA to manage the new fund with, among other conditions, reviewing the composition of the FIGA Board of Directors by involving members of the private sector, i.e. a representative of the Network of Institutions of Microfinance and another from the Association of Banks and Financial Institutions.

The second option is to create a structure that manages the guarantee fund with participation of the FIGA in the shareholding of this Fund up to the percentage that the Government would like.

After analysis, the Council of Ministers adopted the reform of FIGA to manage the new loan portfolio partial guarantee fund of the PRETE project.

3. Bill on the Electronic Communications and Postal Code, presented by the Minister of Communication, Information Technologies and the Media.

This bill is part of a perspective of giving effect to the orientations of the National Policy for the Development of Information and Communication Technologies, adopted by the Council of Ministers in its meeting of July 13, 2011.

This Policy envisages, within the framework of the improvement and adaptation of the political, legal, regulations and regulatory framework in the era of the convergence of technologies, to achieve the following objectives:

- Proceed with the revision of the telecommunications law, drawing inspiration from regional and international best practices;
- Put in place legislation on the postal sector that addresses the liberalization and regulation of the activities of this sector;
- Extend the missions of the Telecommunications Regulatory and Control Agency to the regulation of the Postal sector, and increase its management independence to make it a convergent and independent regulator;

Regarding the postal sector, it is currently undergoing changes linked in particular to technological development, the emergence of new postal services and the entry of new private operators in the absence of regulation.

It therefore appeared necessary to put in place a legal environment to ensure fair competition in this sector.

Decree-Law No. 1/11 of 4 September 1997 laying down organic provisions on telecommunications currently in force is no longer able to regulate the electronic communications sector and does not take the postal sector into account.

In particular, it is silent on the issues of unified licenses and renewal of licenses at the end of concession contracts.

In the postal sector, the law of October 10, 1962 on the Postal Administration enshrines the operating monopoly of the postal sector. Meanwhile, private operators have appeared in this sector.

This bill regulates these sectors by providing for provisions relating to the operating conditions of the electronic communications and postal sectors.

Thus, the major reasons that militate in favor of the adoption of this new law establishing the Code of Electronic Communications and Posts are as follows:

- Adaptation of legislation, regulations and mode of regulation to the level of competition observed in the electronic communications and postal sectors;
- Liberalization and regulation of the postal sector;
- Supervision of the operation of the electronic communications and postal sectors:

After discussion and debate, the project was adopted with the following recommendations:

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- In the explanatory memorandum, clearly indicate the reasons that militate in favor of the implementation of this law;
- Redact from the project what is related to the Post-Bank and maintain the Post-Mail section;
- Transfer the offenses to the Penal Code;
- Instead of instituting a Universal Postal Service Financing Fund, indicate only that the State will grant facilities;
- Check whether this project covers all aspects such as the digitalization policy, confidentiality and the protection of personal data;
- Ensure that there is no overlap between this bill and the law on cyber-security;

4. Draft ratification of the East African Community Meteorological Services Cooperation Protocol, presented by the Minister of East African Community Affairs, Youth, Sports and Culture.

The implementation of this protocol was approved during the 16th ordinary session of the Heads of State of the countries of the East African Community held on February 20, 2015.

During the 17th summit held in March 2016, the Heads of State invited the member countries to accelerate the process of ratification of the protocols not yet ratified.

This protocol was signed by Burundi in 2016.

Its objective is to promote cooperation in strengthening systems for the observation, production and exchange of meteorological data and information.

The cooperation of the member countries will make it possible to establish climatological diagnoses at the sub-regional scale, to establish reference climatology for the sub-region and to establish a regional climatological watch.

After discussions, the project was adopted.

5. Note on the status of the development works of the KABU 16 Hydroelectric Power Plant (20 MW), presented by the Minister of Hydraulics, Energy and Mining.

This note indicates the problem of the execution of the works in the implementation of this KABU 16 project.

Indeed, the company Angelique International Limited, which is carrying out this work, refused to send the remaining equipment, justifying this refusal by the fact that its subcontractors are demanding a price review.

This refusal to send this equipment on time has an impact on the end of the Project's work, which was scheduled for March 31, 2023.

In addition, Exim Bank of India, which financed the works, suspended the payment of the Company, following the delay in repayment of the credit and interest by the Government of Burundi.

Through this note, it is requested that the Government of Burundi pay the arrears of the credit so that Exim Bank of India in turn pays the company carrying out the work.

The note also proposes that the basis of the claims of Angelique International Limited be analyzed so that a consequent decision can be taken.

An analysis of the clauses of the contract must also be made so that they are rigorously applied.

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

- Request a grace period from Exim Bank of India, with the following arguments:
 - o During the negotiation of the credit, it was agreed that the repayment would be made with the start of the operation of the dam;

- The Covid-19 pandemic constitutes a force majeure which has handicapped the normal progress of activities;
- Repayment should not start while disbursement of borrowed credit is not complete.
- 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 that accesses the dam in order to reduce the bill for the remaining works;
- 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.

6. Bill on the ratification by the Republic of Burundi of the agreement between the Lao People's Democratic Republic and the Government of the Republic of Burundi on visa exemption for holders of diplomatic or service passports, presented by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Development Cooperation.

As part of the strengthening of relations of cooperation and friendship, the Government of the Lao People's Democratic Republic and the Government of the Republic of Burundi signed, on November 28, 2022, the agreement on visa exemption for holders of diplomatic and service passports.

The conclusion of this agreement comes after less than a year of the official establishment of diplomatic relations between these two countries.

This agreement responds to the concern to see the two countries further develop their friendly relations and to facilitate the movement of their respective nationals in these two countries, in compliance with the principle of equality and reciprocity.

After discussion and debate, the Council of Ministers recommended that there first be a general cooperation agreement which would serve as the basis for other agreements.

Done at Bujumbura, 06 April 2023
Prosper NTAHORWAMIYE

Secretary-General and Spokesman.-

Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Development Cooperation

Department of Communication

www.mae.gov.bi

Twitter: @MAEBurundi