



President Ndayishimiye participated in the 5th extraordinary session of the Conference of the Heads of State and Government of ECCAS



On Friday 15/12/2023, His Excellency Evariste Ndayishimiye, President of the Republic of Burundi went to participate in Djibloho in the Equato-Guinean Republic, in the 5th extraordinary session of the conference of the Heads of State and Government of the Community Economic Affairs of Central African States (CEEAC) of which Burundi is a member.

That Summit was convened by the Guinean President, His Excellency Teodoro Obiang Nguema, who also chairs the community in order to analyze the mid-term report on the state of the political and security situation in

Gabon, presented by His Excellency Faustin Archange Touadera, President of the Central African Republic and facilitator of the transition process in the Gabonese Republic.

Following the positive developments in the situation in Gabon, and having noted that Gabon is stable and peaceful and that the population goes about its daily activities in a complete peace, the Conference reviewed the decision to relocate the Headquarters of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) from Libreville to Malabo by renouncing it, since no security threat presents itself. They

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urged the President of the Gabonese transition to respect the 24-month timetable for the implementation of the transition road map until the return to the constitutional order. The Burundian Head of State joined his

Counterparts in welcoming the efforts of the Gabonese Transitional Government in maintaining peace and security in Gabon, and successfully leading the transition process until free and transparent elections (**Presidency**)

President NDAYISHIMIYE opens the work of the continental youth dialogue



On December 14, 2023, the Head of State His Excellency Evariste Ndayishimiye, Champion of the African Union for the Youth, Peace and Security Agenda, launched the work of the Continental Dialogue on Youth, Peace and Security, coupled at the Youth Forum of ICGLR Countries and Parties to the Framework Agreement for Peace, Security and Cooperation for the DRC and the region.

Those meetings, which saw the participation of several young African Ambassadors representing their countries, are being organized in Bujumbura for the 2nd time.

In their introductory speeches, the Resident Representative of UNDP in Burundi, the Representative of the African Union and the Minister responsible for Youth, all praised the leadership and personal involvement of the Burundian President His Excellency Evariste NDAYISHIMIYE in the promotion of the African youth and in their participation in development, peace building and continental dialogue.

Delivering the solemn opening speech, the President of the Republic His Excellency Evariste NDAYISHIMIYE focused his message on the meaning of patriotism, the

values of Ubuntu, the love of work in synergy, the promotion of the African products, the implementation value of their potential and the safeguard of peace and security was delivered to them.

He reminded that the young people are not only victims, but also manipulated and involved in conflicts and tensions in which they have nothing to do. It is therefore essential to take into account the voices of the young people and their contribution in the stabilization process of their respective regions and must be associated with the programs and intervention in the social protection, peace building and their economic empowerment because there is no peace without bread just as there is no bread without peace, he insisted.

As “Science without conscience is only ruin of the soul”, the Head of State urged the young Africans to improve their living environments, to develop a sense of patriotism. “The potential that you overflow with must be catalyzed by wisdom, the spirit of Ubuntu, the development of self-esteem by drawing inspiration from the know-how of your ancestors before the colonial period,” advised them Burundian Number One, while congratulating the

young people who have distinguished themselves by their talents. He also called on the young Africans to promoting "Made in Africa" products through their production and consumption, reminded at the same time that the development of Africa will come through Africans themselves.

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His Excellency Evariste Ndayishimiye is delighted that young Burundians are starting to get involved in development actions by creating jobs for other young people, especially from within the country, which is slowing down the rural exodus. Africa will bounce back thanks to the knowledge of young people contributing to the development of Africa, indicated President NDAYISHIMIYE, before encouraging young Africans to connect to exchange experiences, pool their capital and no longer go searching a better life elsewhere by leaving her at home. **(Presidency)**

Burundi hosts the 2nd Edition of the continental dialogue on youth, peace and security



On Thursday December 14, 2023, the Head of State, Evariste Ndayishimiye enhanced with his presence the activities of the continental dialogue on youth, peace and security 2nd Edition under the theme: "African youth at the heart of the integration of the continent and of the effective implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area".

The President of the Republic welcomed the participants who devoted their time to come and support the youth in the building of Africa.

The Head of State Evariste Ndayishimiye, champion of the African Union for the youth, peace and security agenda, indicated that the African youth must stay, engage and get involved in the consolidation of peace and of security.

The President of the Republic of Burundi, His Excellency Evariste Ndayishimiye specified that the youth is the lever for the creation of the wealth hence Africa in general will make its youth an asset which will determine the future of the African continent and countries. . It is therefore up to the public authorities to support this opportunity to stimulate

production and facilitate inclusive growth across the continent, by putting in place adequate measures to prepare our young people," said the Burundian Head of State.

The Burundian President recommended investment in projects that offer young people real opportunities to engage in activities that allow them to realize their dreams and become the architects of their own prosperity. "There is no bread without peace, just as there is no peace without bread," he said.

The Young people, in their capacity as vectors of peace and actors of development, are at the same time the most exposed in times of conflict and the most vulnerable in times of peace.

The Minister in charge of youth, Mr. Gervais Abayeho, said that for many young people, rights and freedoms are poorly experienced in times of peace so that economic and social progress instead of being an enjoyment or bringing the hope for a better tomorrow instead reveals a challenge that stands in their way

Two panels took place during the opening sessions of the continental dialogue on the youth, peace and security agenda in Africa as well as the Youth Forum of the mechanism of the Addis Ababa Framework Agreement for Peace, Security and cooperation for the DRC and the region.

The theme of the first panel was "African youth at the heart of the continent's integration and effective implementation of Zlecaf".

For the second panel, the theme focused on the contribution of the young people to the regional efforts in the implementation of the Framework Agreement on Peace and Security and Cooperation in the DRC and the region.

The panelists highlighted the importance of the youth participation in consolidating peace and promoting se-

curity in the region. (RTNB)

The Vice-President of the Republic enhanced the National Arbor Day



On Saturday December 16, 2023, His Excellency the Vice-President of the Republic of Burundi, Ir. Prosper Bazombanza, enhanced with his presence the ceremonies marking the National Tree Day, 2023 Edition, under the theme: "The Forest

and Health" during the ceremonies held in the Mubone district, Buterere Zone in Bujumbura Town Hall.

In his speech for the occasion, the Vice-President of the Republic pointed out that the forests are of capital importance in Burundi in general and abroad in particular because without the forests, there is no life.

He explained that the trees play an important role on hills by increasing the water sources and protecting the soil from erosion and that on roads, the trees protect the vehicles from the accidents that can harm the humans.

His Excellency Prosper Bazombanza also indicated that the State project "Ewe Burundi Urumbaye" encourages all Burundian citizens to actively contribute to the protection of the environment through the planting of the trees where the possible but also in public places. (Presidency)

The Prime Minister closes the work of the continental dialogue on youth, peace and security



On Saturday December 16, 2023, the Prime Minister Lieutenant General of Police Gervais Ndirakobuca closed the work of the continental dialogue on youth, peace and security in Africa, the Youth Forum of the member countries of the ICGLR and parties to the framework agreement for peace, security and cooperation for the DRC and the week dedicated to innovation.

"We ask you, dear young people, to be the actors and fervent advocates of the essential contribution of African youth to the success of the consolidation of peace

and security as well as the entrepreneurship and innovation at the level of the entire continent" indicated the Prime Minister.

"We must ensure the effective participation of African youth in the efforts deployed in consolidating peace and security, if we want an Africa built on the aspirations included in the 2063 agenda. It is a duty and an imperative from which no African country in general and Burundi in particular can escape", underlined Prime Minister Gervais Ndirakobuca.

During the closing ceremonies of the week dedicated to innovation, the prizes were awarded to 10 young entrepreneurs selected from 600 young people who presented their projects during that week. Each received an envelope of 10 million bu francs. The Prime Minister thanked Aziz Agossou, a young Beninese entrepreneur and innovator, who agreed to train around a hundred Burundian women in rabbit farming.

The young people, in their recommendations, made it known that they always need being supported in their projects. They also want the training and capacity building sessions in terms of the project development to be organized for them. (RTNB)

The President of the Senate participates in the 80th Session of the Executive Committee and the 45th Conference of the UPA in Abidjan



On Monday December 11, 2023, the President of the Senate, Right Honorable Emmanuel Sinzohagera, took the plane to Abidjan, in the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire, where he would participate in the 80th Session of the Execu-

tive Committee, and to the 45th Conference of Presidents of the National Parliamentary Assembly of the African Union.

During those meetings, the participants will discuss the ways and means of combating the insecurity and terrorism, a factor of political instability and recession, on the one hand, and on the development of intra-African trade, with a view to of the effective implementation of the African regional integration agenda, on the other hand.

There will also be a meeting of the committee of women parliamentarians of the African Parliamentary Union (UPA), on promoting the role of African women in stimulating intra-African trade.

The President of the Senate also plans to discuss with the various delegations on issues of common interest. **(Senate)**

Holding of the 2nd Political Consultation between Burundi and India



On Tuesday December 12, 2023, at the Best Outlook Hotel, in the economic capital of Bujumbura, the Director General of Bilateral Relations at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Development Cooperation, Ambassador Ernest Niyokindi in collaboration with Mr. Puneet R. Kundal, Deputy Secretary, Eastern and Southern Africa Division, at the Ministry of External Affairs of the Republic of India moderated the 2nd Political Consultation between Burundi and India.

In his opening speech, Ambassador Ernest Niyokindi warmly welcomed the Indian delegation to



Burundi and expressed his deep satisfaction with the cordial and mutually beneficial cooperation existing between the two countries. He said that the meeting would serve as a platform to comprehensively review the implementation of the Agreements and Memorandums of Understanding signed between the two countries.

In his speech, Mr. Puneet R. Kundal thanked the Government of Burundi for the warm welcome and generous hospitality extended to him and his delegation since his arrival in Burundi. He also appreciates the existing friendly and cordial relations between the two countries. He indicated that India will continue supporting Burundi in its development needs in the spirit of South-South cooperation.

The two Parties examined and discussed many topics of the common interest: the United Nations Security Council; Development Cooperation; economic, commercial and investment cooperation; Agricultural Cooperation; renewable energy; social and humanitarian cooperation (health and education); Defense and Security Cooperation; Consular and visa issues; the Memorandum of Understanding on the Exchange of Tax Information; New areas of cooperation; Conduct of deliberations; and the place and date of the next session of consultations.



It was noted that the meeting provided an opportunity for both countries to continue collaborating at the multi-



lateral levels, particularly at the United Nations and other multilateral organizations, particularly on issues such as climate change, sustainable development and fight against terrorism, and to support each other in their candidacies within international organizations. The projects were reported which have been submitted and accepted but which require monitoring, including construction project a 20 MW to 30 MW hydroelectric power station on the Kaburantwa River which has reached more than 95% completion. but these were suspended following the non-payment of the invoice of the executing company by Exim Bank. That was proven by a visit that was carried out by both Parties to Kabu 16 after their consultations. Ambassador Ernest Niyokindi hoped that the work would be completed as soon as possible and handed over to the Government of Burundi.

Both Parties expected that the 2nd Session of the consultations will take place in the Republic of India in 2024, on a date to be determined by both Parties and communicated through the diplomatic channels.

Returning after visiting the Kabu 16 Dam, they closed the day's activities by signing the Minutes of their convenience. **(MFADC)**

Official launch of the 3rd Edition innovation week competition



On Monday December 11, 2023, the Permanent Secretary at the Ministry in charge of East African Community Affairs Mr. Severin Mbarubukeye, launched the innovation week 3rd Edition competition in Bujumbura under the theme: "Youth innovation, pillar of acceleration of development economy for an emerging

Burundi".

The Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of the East African Community (EAC) said that this week of innovation aims to share experiences and good practices, to motivate each other, a framework which will allow young active entrepreneurs to listen practical advice on their projects. We agreed that if innovation is carried out by young Burundian entrepreneurs on Burundian soil, it will contribute to the influence of the country on a regional scale, indicated the Permanent Secretary at the Ministry in charge of the EAC.

As for the UNDP Representative in Burundi, he reiterated the commitment of this UN agency to supporting Burundian youth.

(RTNB)

REPUBLIC OF BURUNDI

PRESIDENCY OF THE REPUBLIC
Secretariat-General of the State

**MEDIA RELEASE N°15 CONSECUTIVE TO THE EXTRAORDINARY
CABINET MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 13 DECEMBER 2023**

An Extraordinary Cabinet meeting was held in Bujumbura on Wednesday 13th of December 2023, under the chairmanship of His Excellency Major General Evariste NDAYISHIMIYE, President of the Republic of Burundi.

Before addressing the items on the agenda, His Excellency the President of the Republic first welcomed the new Secretary General of the State and then congratulated him for the confidence bestowed on him by the Head of the State who appointed him to his office.

He told him the main principles which guide the Government, namely uniqueness and complementarity in its action. He asked him to collaborate well with members of the Government and all other structures for the smooth running of state affairs.

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 08 December 2023, and which were devoted to the analysis of the same files on the agenda.

The following items were analyzed:

- 1. Budget execution report for the first quarter 2023-2024**, presented by the Minister of Finance, Budget and Economic Planning.

This budget execution report was presented as part of the implementation of the organic law relating to public finances.

The execution of the budget for the first quarter of 2023-2024 took place at a time when the Government of Burundi had concluded a Program with the IMF supported by the Extended Credit Facility established over 38 months from July 17, 2023.

As part of this program, the implementation of macroeconomic reforms with quantitative performance criteria is planned.

The execution of the budget for the 2023-2024 financial year is also marked by the impact of the exchange rate adjustment that occurred on May 4, 2023, which caused a large depreciation of the Burundian currency. The inflation rate increased sharply to 26.8% at the end of September 2023 compared to 18% at the end of September 2022.

During this first quarter of the 2023-2024 budget year, the amount of revenue showed a poor performance of 3.80% compared to forecasts. On the other hand, compared to the 1st quarter of the 2022-2023 budget year, the first quarter of this year reveals growth of 18.53%. At the end of September 2023, expenditure execution stood at 48.9% compared to the first quarter ceiling while expenditure commitment reached 94.2%.

After exchange and debate, the report was validated with the following observations and recommendations:

- Carry out the evaluation of OBUHA for works carried out under management and decide whether this system can continue or whether it is necessary to return to the old system and return the execution of works to the sectoral ministries;
- Introduce a provision in the revised budget law which leaves an opening for ministries to be able to carry out work relating to certain constructions themselves.
- Do not make grouped procurement a requirement because the public procurement code in Burundi gives the flexibility to use it or not.

2. Bill revising the general State budget for the 2023-2024 financial year, also presented by the Minister of Finance, Budget and Economic Planning.

The preparation of the amending finance law is intended to integrate the impact of the measure of depreciation of the national currency which had not been taken into account in the initial budget currently being executed. This consideration concerns expenses of an unavoidable and obligatory nature linked to the external debt, transfers from embassies as well as expenses linked to the lifting of the measure freezing records within institutions with special status.

The revised draft budget for 2023-2024 comes on the eve of the first evaluation of the Economic and Financial Program concluded with the International Monetary Fund.

On the economic front, economic growth is estimated at 3.0% in 2023 compared to 1.8% in 2022. It is projected at 4.3% in 2024.

To contain the budget deficit, many principles were taken into account during budgetary discussions, namely:

- The introduction of new activities is not permitted;
- The cancellation of activities for which credits dedicated to the construction or rehabilitation of infrastructure have not yet been committed and for which work has not yet started and consider reprogramming them for the 2024-2025 budget;
- The cancellation of third and fourth quarter activities planned for the operation of OBUHA and ARB except salaries, to first consume the amounts in their bank accounts;
- The cancellation of FONIC activities planned for the third and fourth quarter except salaries, so that FONIC first consumes the credit in its bank account;
- The cancellation of activities relating to public procurement for which payment is made in foreign currencies and consider rescheduling them for 2024-2025;
- Only make internal adjustments between the third and fourth quarters within a budgetary program;

In order to increase revenues, important measures are planned to ensure that the set objective is achieved. Thus, the OBR will undertake or continue the following actions:

- Continue digitalization;
- Strengthen the control and verification system;
- Strengthen the legal framework.

Following analysis of the bill presented, it was adopted with the following observations and recommendations:

- Suspend the purchase of rolling stock except for:
 - The army and the police;
 - The Ministry of Justice;
 - Eight (8) vehicles intended for boarding schools;

- Maintain the budget for the purchase of passport production software;
- As for the Supreme Court, the Constitutional Court and the General Prosecutor's Office of the Republic, enter the costs (of stewardship or information) in the name of the institution instead of personalizing them;
- Adjust the budget intended for State scholarship holders abroad to take into account the fluctuation of the Burundian currency;
- Provide a budget for the operation of the management unit of the Saudi Project for the construction of the Cibitoke Polytechnic Institute;
- Forecast a budget:
 - to increase operating costs within the country for the National Blood Transfusion Center “CNTS”;
 - to increase the State's participation in the share capital of STNB.
 - for advance payment to start the construction of the Kwala Dry Port;

It was also recommended to:

- Enrich the explanatory statement to clearly justify the increase or reduction in the budget compared to the budget initially planned at the start of this 2023-2024 financial year in this or that institution;
- Maintain the budget intended for the construction of the railway;
- Accelerate the process for starting the construction of the RN9 Bujumbura-Bubanza road;

- Develop a plan for the use by sectoral ministries of funds not yet consumed by OBUHA;
- Evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of the grouped market system to decide whether to continue on this path or return to traditional methods;
- Return the budgets dedicated to the Ministries having National Education and Public Health in their responsibilities which had been transferred to other structures for management so that these two ministries meet the criteria required by development partners for eligibility for funding.
- Work in progress continues its normal course;
- Establish and strengthen good governance, especially in the Ministries of sovereignty, notably the ministries having respectively Justice, National Defense, Public Security, Foreign Affairs and Finance under their supervision;
- Do not reduce the budget initially planned for the Ministry in charge of National Education;
- Specify at OBUHA level the line containing funds intended for the construction of NYABIKERE, BUSONI and NTEGA district hospitals;
- To continue the interconnection activities of Ministries and other Institutions, a project formerly supported by the World Bank, the budget will come from the Universal Service Fund for Information and Communication Technologies in Burundi;
- For Ministries which consider it necessary to make internal adjustments to their budgets, contact the Ministry in charge of Finance without however introducing new letters;
- For the distribution of revenues from the rental of stands or stalls in the markets between the OBR and the City of Bujumbura, grant the City of Bujumbura 20% of the revenue;
- For importation, differentiate ordinary products from luxury products (wines, champagne, liqueurs, imported mineral water, luxury vehicles, etc.) with a view to applying a considerable tax to these luxury products;
- Significantly reduce the tax applied on imported sugar in order to encourage importers of this product;
- Double the tax applied to luxury vehicles in the event of a second importation;

- Include in the budget law the sanctions provided for by the tax law for tax advisors complicit in tax fraud;
- Fight against capital flight;
- Review the Public Procurement Code to introduce a clause requiring bidders to show the projects they will carry out with the money earned;
- Continue to think about new strategies to increase revenue;
- Diversify exports and closely monitor their circuits so that the country benefits from the foreign exchange generated from them;
- Accelerate the digitalization program to know and control State assets;
- Ministers must guarantee good governance in the structures under their supervision.

3. Note on the rehabilitation work of the RN9, Gikoma-Centre Bubanza bridge section (34.3 km) and the 1km ramp towards the market in the center of Bubanza, presented by the Minister of Infrastructure, Equipment and Social Housing.

One of the indicators to be achieved as part of Vision 2040 is that 90% of the road network is passable in all seasons. Achieving this objective requires the implementation of innovative approaches for the rehabilitation and permanent maintenance of roads in poor condition, as well as the construction of new roads.

This project aims to provide modern, quality road infrastructure allowing rapid accessibility and which strengthens trade in the western part of the country, particularly along the Bujumbura-Bubanza axis.

In this context, the part of the Bujumbura-Bubanza road, from the Gikoma Bridge to the Bubanza Center, as well as the 1km ramp towards the Bubanza center market are proposed for rehabilitation and is the subject of this note.

Among the companies that were consulted, it was observed that the highest bidder had applied high exchange rates to convert their offer into Burundian Francs. He was asked to lower his offer. The Project Owner proposed that the costs of consumables to be

imported be calculated at the official rate, promising to be able to facilitate obtaining foreign currency.

The purpose of this Note was to seek approval from the Council of Ministers for the rehabilitation of the RN9: Gikoma-Centre Bubanza Bridge (34.3 km) and its market ramp (1.0 km).

In order to encourage this first experience of using own funds in the rehabilitation of roads, the Council of Ministers gave its approval for the continuation of the process with the following recommendations:

- Facilitate the business in obtaining foreign currency for materials not available on the local market;
- Instruct the company to erect speed bumps meeting required standards;
- Recruit a serious monitoring company to monitor the execution of the work at each stage;
- For the United Nations Roundabout-GIKOMA section, hold talks with partners who have accepted its funding so that they can begin activities, so that both parts of the road are rehabilitated at the same time.

Done at Bujumbura, 14 December 2023

Jérôme NIYONZIMA

Secretary-General and Spokesman.-

Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Development Coope- ration

Department of Communi- cation

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