



**BDEAC, of which Burundi is now a shareholder, wishes to concretize its partnership by participating in the financing of priority development projects**



porting the development of States, it is our duty to inquire about the priority projects established by them and to assess their compatibility because we have the firm will to concretize our part-

nership. After fruitful working sessions with the technicians of the Ministry of Finance and Planning, we want to get to hit up on the matter and the Highest Authority of the country is better placed to provide us with formal guidelines,” said Mr. Fortunato-Ofa Mbo Nchama.

The Head of State His Excellency Evariste NDAYISHIMIYE welcomed the dynamism and commitment of the BDEAC leaders who made the partnership with Burundi to have a concrete impact on improving the living conditions of the population. He assured them of the full cooperation of the Government and the people of Burundi who aspire only to the devel-

**O**n wednesday, may 04, 2022, the President of the Republic of Burundi His Excellency Evariste NDAYISHIMIYE received in audience Mr. Fortunato-Ofa Mbo Nchama, President of the Development Bank of Central African States - BDEAC - who was accompanied by the Director of Operations within this regional body.

As Burundi is now a shareholder of BDEAC, the management team indicated that it is making this trip to Gitega to receive formal guidelines from the Government of Burundi regarding development projects requiring priority support and funding:

“To accomplish our mission of sup-

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opment of their country: "Burundians are trying to make up for the time lost in decades of conflict. We are delighted to be able to count on partners in good faith to support Burundi's economic recovery efforts. Now is the time to rebuild."

President Evariste NDAYISHIMIYE indicated that the Government wishes to concentrate its efforts on the development and industrialization of the agro-food sector, the mining sector and road and rail infrastructure which would accelerate the opening-up of Burun-

di.

At the end of this audience, it was agreed that the work will continue as soon as possible under the auspices of the Minister in charge of Finance and Planning who had also taken part in these exchanges.

His Excellency Evariste NDAYISHIMIYE closed the audience by inviting Mr. Fortunato-Ofa Mbo Nchama, in his capacity as a reliable friend and partner of Burundi, to take part in the celebration of the 60th anniversary of the Independence of Burundi which will take place on July 1 of this year. (Presidency)

### The Presidential Couple enhances the celebration of the International Day of Labor and Workers in Muyinga



welcomed the efforts of the President of the Republic His Excellency Evariste NDAYISHIMIYE and his Government to strengthen social dialogue in the various socio-professional circles of the country. However, they raised certain concerns related in particular to the non-respect of employment contracts and agreements resulting from social dialogue, questions relating to the high cost of living, fuel shortages, wage policy, social injustice, etc.

Delivering the speech for the occasion, the Head of State wanted to

**B**urundi celebrated on Monday, May 02, 2022 the World Day dedicated to Labor and Workers. The related ceremonies, in Muyinga Province, were enhanced by the Head of State His Excellency Evariste NDAYISHIMIYE who was accompanied by the First Lady of the country, Her Excellency Angeline Ndayishimiye.

The colorful festivities for this day celebrated under the theme "May any activity produce a concrete result that contributes to the well-being of Burundians", were marked by a long parade in which 87 groups of workers representing different sectors of the national life.

The representatives of employees and employers who in turn spoke on this occasion, among other things,

address some of these concerns.

Indeed, he stressed that the development and well-being of Burundians are conditioned by the level of production in the country. He thus urged his compatriots to redouble their efforts to increase revenue and thus be able to enjoy their dividends.

"Issues related to the high cost of living, salary increases, annals, bonuses and other allowances will be resolved in relation to the fruit of your work," said the Burundian Number One.

The President of the Republic believes that it is the employees themselves who hold the solutions to the problems that haunt their work sectors. He invited them to submit these solutions to the competent authorities for

the proper functioning of the services in order to contribute to the development of the country.

"The socio-economic reconstruction of Burundi will imperatively pass through its sons and daughters", insisted the Head of State after explaining that any Burundian working in the public or private sector is an integral part of the State and that he has results requirement.

Reacting to the question relating to the non-respect of the agreements resulting from the social dialogues, the Head of State advises employees and employers to agree on the commitments which benefit both parties in order to avoid their violation

by one or other part.

Regarding cases of social injustice that relate to certain professional circles, His Excellency President NDAYISHIMIYE pleads for respect for the law and asks that the culprits be prosecuted and punished.

He closed by thanking the employees and employers who spare no effort to improve the quality of services in their sectors. He took this opportunity to reward those who stood out, especially the cooperatives which contribute enormously to the development of the country and the young people who invest themselves admirably in development projects. (Presidency)

### President NDAYISHIMIYE urges Burundi's Muslim community to get more involved in development work



work of the Muslim community in Muyinga in maintaining peace and security.

Burundian Number One congratulated Muslims for having succeeded in practicing the 30-day fast to the end by praying for themselves, but also for the country. Thus, he wished them a happy party.

"Let this holiday remind us to stay with God and I would like it to be celebrated by all Burundians because it strengthens love and solidarity," he continued.

On this occasion, His Excellency

**W**hile he joined the Muslims of Muyinga Province on Monday, May 02 for the prayer marking the breaking of the Ramadan fast, the Head of State His Excellency Evariste NDAYISHIMIYE urged them to get more involved in the work of development with a view to contributing to the increase in State revenue.

"The time of hatred and ethnic discrimination in Burundi is over. It is time to get down to development work to increase State revenue", indicated the President of the Republic after appreciating the

President Ndayishimiye granted an envelope to show his support for the poorest Muslims for the celebration of Eid al-Fitr for this year 2022.

It should be noted that the Muslim community of the Province of Muyinga which had gathered at the Mukoni Stadium also gave the Head of State a gift of a Friesian cow to express their high appreciation for the presence of Father of the Nation to this prayer. (Presidency)

## Burundian Ombudsman assists Kaburantwa health center



The Burundian Ombudsman Honorable Edouard Nduwimana then held a meeting at Cibitoke Province with the heads of various socio-professional services of the Province. The objective of this meeting was to support the

**T**he Burundian Ombudsman Honorable Edouard Nduwimana granted on tuesday, may 3, 2022, aid to the Kaburantwa Health Center in Buganda commune of Cibitoke Province consisting of medical equipment: an incubator machine, anesthesia monitoring and a microscope.

Honorable Edouard Nduwimana has made it known that he is making this charitable gesture in order to encourage and support the sisters of the congregation of Saint Bernadette responsible for this health center as well as the staff of this health center.

Mrs. Vivine Nizigiyimana Director of the Kaburantwa Health Center warmly thanked the Burundian Ombudsman for this charitable act and said that it is a sigh of relief for the mothers who give birth to premature babies in this Health Center and who, previously traveled to other hospitals to gain access to incubators.

She took this opportunity to ask for other material support including mattresses, beds, not to mention an anesthesia machine since this health center receives a lot of patients, said Mrs. Nizigiyimana Vivine.

inhabitants of this province in their work and to strengthen social cohesion. Honorable Edouard Nduwimana also introduced the coordinator of the western region of Burundi Mr Tharcisse Havyarimana.

This meeting was also an opportunity for the Burundian Ombudsman to explain to the participants the mission of the institution of the Ombudsman that of analyzing complaints, mediating between citizens and conducting investigations into violations of rights of citizens by the authorities, said Honorable Edouard Nduwimana, Burundian ombudsman.

The representative of the institution of the Ombudsman in the West region Mr. Tharcisse Havyarimana will represent the ombudsman in the provinces of Bujumbura, Bubanza, Cibitoke and Bujumbura Town Hall. (rtnb)

## A new strategy for the implementation of the National Diaspora Policy is validated



On Wednesday, May 4, 2022, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Development Cooperation through its Directorate General for the Diaspora, Promotion of the Employment of Migrants and Foreign ENGOs and ASBLs organized a workshop to validate the new implementation strategy of the National Diaspora Policy, at the Royal Palace Hotel.

In his speech, the Acting Head of Mission of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Burundi Mr. Michael ASIMA, as a representative of the organization which financed this project, warmly thanked the Government of Burundi and the African Bank of Development for the collaboration that binds them. He indicated that together, within the framework of this project, they aim not only to contribute to reducing youth unemployment but also to associate the Diaspora in this process because it constitutes an immense wealth if it is correctly guided and supported.

The Assistant to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Development Cooperation Mr. Syl die MANIREREKANA who enhanced these activities with his presence warmly thanked the International Organization for Migration (IOM), a valiant partner of the Government which financed the activities of the development of the draft sectoral strategy of the National Diaspora Policy from the beginning to this stage of validation. He said that this is an eloquent testimony of good collaboration between this Organization and the Government of Burundi in general and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Development Cooperation in parti-

cular.

Mr. Syl die MANIREREKANA recalled that the document to be validated results from a series of other activities carried out since 2015 during the adoption of the National Diaspora Policy by the Council of Ministers of January 21 and 25, 2015 and the establishment of the Strategic Plan for the implementation of this Policy in June 2016. This Plan had a temporary horizon which was spread over a period of five years, covering the period from 2017 to 2021, added the Minister's Assistant.

He indicated that the implementation of this strategic plan should end in 2022. But the observation is that since 2017 until today, several activities planned in this Plan have not been implemented for various reasons, hence the need to put in place a new Strategy to continue the implementation of the National Diaspora Policy.

After this opening speech, the President of the commission which developed this strategy for the implementation of the National Policy of the Diaspora Ambassador Serge KARONKANO presented the work carried out. The participants then analyzed the document and inserted any corrections.

After the analysis, the new strategy for implementing the National Diaspora Policy was validated.

It should be noted that according to the implementation plan for this new strategy, the activities are spread over the period from 2022 to 2027. (MFADC)

## The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Development Cooperation strengthens the culture of good governance, the fight against corruption and economic embezzlement



**O**n tuesday, april 3, 2022, during the presentation of the achievements of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Development Cooperation, on the case of strengthening good governance, the Minister indicated that several actions have been carried out as part of the implementation of axis 13 of the National Development Plan of Burundi 2018-2027 on governance as well as those related to axis 2 of the same plan relating to the Development of Public Infrastructure.

On the chapter of good governance, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Development Cooperation informed that meetings for Ministry staff at all levels were held with the aim of intensifying inclusive social dialogue and the promotion of a zero tolerance policy for corruption and other economic malfeasance, the love of work as well as the feeling of belonging within the Ministry.

His Excellency Ambassador Albert Shingiro informed that field visits were also made by the Cabinet to the decentralized services of the Ministry to assess the quality of work and services provided to the public.

Since "learning is the only thing the mind never exhausts, never fears and never regrets", three training workshops in the key areas of admin-

istration, management and inspection for the staff concerned have been organized. Other Ministry officials are in capacity building training in several partner countries.

Four inspection missions in the Diplomatic and Consular Missions of Burundi abroad were carried out at the Embassies of Burundi in Addis Ababa, Kinshasa, Paris and Brussels.

His Excellency Albert Shingiro pointed out that, in order to

strengthen good governance, the fight against corruption and economic malfeasance, the Ministry has developed a Strategy for Good Governance, the Fight against Corruption and Economic Malfeasance. The booklet is available. He said that this strategy and its action plan will serve as a dashboard, even a compass to make good governance a reality in the Ministry. A verification manual will soon be put in place. The terms of reference for the feasibility study of this internal audit manual have been drawn up. As well as the internal monitoring of the execution of the budget was done with care and sanctioned by a related quarterly report.

The draft statistical yearbook, 2020 edition of the Ministry has been produced and is available. It will be released in the fourth quarter.

The Minister informed that the Ministry has recently and for the first time in the history of the country, a clear and concise document of Foreign Policy of Burundi. His Excellency Albert Shingiro stressed that the popularization of this essential document for any Burundian diplomat within the Diplomatic and Consular Missions of Burundi abroad is in progress. He informed that the booklets of this foreign policy document are available for consultation. (MFADC)

## Japan and China, partners committed to strengthening and extending development cooperation as part of the implementation of axis 16 of the PND Burundi 2018-2027



**T**o strengthen and extend development cooperation within the framework of the implementation of axis 16 of the PND Burundi 2018-2027, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Development Cooperation has signed cooperation with Japan and China.

On february 26, 2022, the signing of the exchange of letters took place as part of the monitoring of the financing of the project for the rehabilitation, modernization and extension of Melchior NDADAYE International Airport. The Minister indicated that Chinese experts are expected to begin the realization of this extremely important and strategic project for Burundi.

The Minister also informed the public that the follow-up of the activities of the deviation of the National Road no 1 next to the presidential palace Ntare House was ensured with the Chinese partner who finances the said project. Activities have not started yet due to the covid-19 pandemic.

With regard to the monitoring of the construction project of the Hydroelectric Power Plant on the Ruzibazi River, the completion and provisional acceptance of the works of this Power Plant are scheduled for the first half of 2023 if the schedule is respected.

The monitoring of the Bujumbura Port Rehabilitation and Modernization Project financed by Japan has been ensured and the works are in progress.

Still within the framework of cooperation with the Japanese partner, His Excellency Albert Shingiro reported that negotiations have been initiated for the counterpart funds generated by the sale of Fuel and Japanese Don Rice to be used for the construction of infrastructure in Burundi and proceed normally in a spirit of compromise and mutual trust. He added that the exchange of cooperation notes between Burundi and Japan in the context of granting Burundi a fuel donation took place on march 24, 2022. (MFADC)

## Bilateral and multilateral cooperation revitalized



Mutual visits at several levels, technical, ministerial and at the highest level were also made to working missions in Turkey, Algeria and Israel where the Minister signed respectively with his colleagues an agreement on double taxation and fraud tax, a cooperation agreement on the abolition of visas for the

**W**ithin the framework of bilateral cooperation, the Ministry has negotiated 9 Technical and Economic Cooperation Agreements with various bilateral partners. This was announced by His Excellency Albert Shingiro during the presentation of the achievements for the period from January to March 2022. The Ministry signed with Uganda 4 agreements in the field of sports, Diplomatic and Political Consultations, Hydrocarbons and in the energy sector. Other cooperation agreements were signed with Gambia on 5/02/2022, Turkey on March 13, Algeria on March 17 and Israel on April 6, 2022. As for the Visa Waiver Agreement for Holders of Diplomatic, Special and Service Passports between Burundi and Egypt, His Excellency Albert Shingiro said that it is already in force after the closure of the ratification procedures in the two countries. With regard to cooperation with the United States of America, the Ministry signed on February 11, 2022 with the American side an agreement to assist the Government of Burundi in its efforts for sustainable development in the various sectors.

benefit of Burundians and Algerians holding diplomatic and service passports and a general cooperation agreement with the State of Israel.

The Minister did not fail to express his gratitude for the working visit to "Saint-Siège" on March 25, 2022 by the President of the Republic H.E. Mr. Evariste NDAYISHIMIYE. He said that this visit was a key event of the past quarter because it will have helped to rekindle the flame of bilateral relations between Burundi and the Vatican. The Minister also stressed that this visit also resulted in the promise of the Holy Father Francis to visit Burundi in 2023 on a date to be agreed through the usual diplomatic channel.

It is also appropriate to emphasize his gratitude towards the Head of State's visits to regional summits on peace, security, stability and development in the region in Kinshasa and Nairobi and the participation in the African Union-European Union Summit in Brussels where the Head of the State had fruitful talks with the high authorities of the European Union and the European Commission. In Kinshasa, on February 24, the Heads of State approved the holding of the next summit of Heads of State of the Regional Mechanism for Monitoring and Evaluation of the Framework Agreement for Peace, Security and Cooperation in



the DRC and in the region in Bujumbura in 2023. In the field of education, Ambassador Albert Shingiro said that the Ministry negotiated and obtained 129 scholarships and 46 training courses from various bilateral partners.

With regard to cooperation mechanisms, the Ministry organized in Bujumbura the 3rd session of the Mixed Commission for Cooperation between Burundi and Uganda which took place from March 22 to 24, 2022. He indicated that other mixed commission

sessions between Kenya, Equatorial Guinea, DRC, Sudan, Tanzania, Oman, etc. are still in preparation. As part of the strengthening of cooperation with African regional and international organizations, the Ministry indicated that it represented the Government at about fifteen technical and statutory meetings of African and International Regional Organizations of which Burundi is a Member. The Ministry also took part in nine regional and international conferences organized by organizations of which Burundi is a member. (MFADC)

### The Minister in charge of Foreign Affairs is determined to strengthen diplomatic communication



**O**n tuesday, april 3, 2022, during the presentation of the achievements of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Development Cooperation, as part of strengthening diplomatic communication, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and De-

velopment Cooperation His Excellency Albert Shingiro indicated that the Ministry continued advocacy to obtain the resumption of direct cooperation with all the countries and regional and international organizations that had unilaterally suspended cooperation with Burundi. This diplomatic offensive resulted

in the removal of the unjust sanctions that had been imposed against Burundi as well as the remarkable return of our country to the regional and international scene.

As part of the promotion of the image of the country, he informed that the Ministry has designed and transmitted a project for the production of a documentary film and the development of booklets on Burundi.

The partners have already approved the

project and a funding budget dedicated to it. As part of the promotion of good neighborly relations, Minister Albert Shingiro said that the Ministry has pursued with determination the process of normalizing our relations with our northern neighbor Rwanda and he affirmed that this process is coming to a satisfactory level. (MFADC)

**The consolidation of a strategic relationship between the Diaspora and the Government, as well as the Promotion of the *Employment of Migrants*, a reality in the Ministry in charge of Foreign Affairs and Development Cooperation**



**T**he Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Development Cooperation has carried out a number of activities relating to the strengthening of the relationship between the Government and the Diaspora, and the promotion of

migrant employment. This was announced by the Minister, His Excellency Albert Shingiro, during the presentation of the report on the achievements of the Ministry for the period from January to March 2022. These include participation in a meeting of the Consultation

Commission and Follow-up on the Prevention and Repression of Human Trafficking, two analysis sessions of the strategy document for the implementation of the National Labor Migration Policy in Burundi, and participation in two meetings, within the framework of promotion, labor mobility and regional integration mechanisms.

He added that the Ministry also monitored the process of establishing a joint order between the Ministers having foreign affairs and finance in their attributions on the exemption from taxes on the personal effects of members of the Burundian Diaspora who definitively return to their homeland. A retreat of the ad-hoc committee responsible for updating the implementation strategy of the National Diaspora Policy from February 21 to 25, 2022 was held in Gitega. The Ministry also participated in a technical meeting for the implementation of the tripartite project (Government of Burundi, OIM and AfDB). The AfDB Tripartite Project is based on "reducing youth unemployment and engaging the Diaspora".

With regard to the promotion of the employment of Burundian migrant workers, the instruments of ratification of two bilateral agreements on labor migration with Saudi Arabia have been drawn up and submitted to the Council of Ministers for approval and to Parliament for adoption.

According to His Excellency Albert Shingiro, similar agreements are going on with Qatar, Oman and the United Arab Emirates. After the signing of these agreements, the Ministry will also take diplomatic steps with Kuwait and Bahrain in order to expand the market

for Burundian labor abroad.

Regarding the promotion of the presence of Burundians in regional and international organizations, HE Albert Shingiro said that the Ministry has led an all-out campaign to have Burundi elected as a Member of the Peace and Security Council of the Union for a term of two (2) years, followed by the election of Burundi as a member of the United Nations Commission for Social Development. He pointed out that Mr. Domitien NDAYIZEYE and Sylvestre NTIBANTUNGANYA both former Presidents of Burundi were respectively elected first as members, then to chair the Council of Elders of the African Union and the Council of Elders of the Standby Force of the East African Community (EAC Stand-by Force), followed by the election of the Honorable Vital Bambaze as a member of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues for a 3-year term.

His Excellency Albert Shingiro did not fail to awaken souls to note that the return of Burundi to the regional and international scene is now a reality. (MFADC)

## The Minister of Foreign Affairs and Development Cooperation determined to find public infrastructure specific to the Government



**F**or the improvement of the quality of work for all staff as well as the promotion of digital culture, H.E Albert Shingiro brought to the attention of the opinion that the Ministry has interconnected its two buildings housing its services in computer and telephone network unified and secure to share the internet with the same gateway.

The Minister indicated that the Ministry has ensured the follow-up of the construction works of the embassies, residences and fences of the lands obtained recently from the host countries. He informed that all the works related to the construction of the residence at the Embassy of Burundi in Addis Ababa are completed while those of the Chancellery are at 75% of the execution rate. In Paris, the rehabilitation works of the Residence are at 85%. In Kinshasa in the DRC, the rehabilitation work of the Residence is almost complete. Still in Kinshasa, the diplomatic steps for the restitution of the plot of Burundi plundered in the Gombe district of Kinshasa are

going on normally. The principle of reciprocity will only be applied after having exhausted all the options and the tools that diplomacy offers us, given the quality of our relations with this country at this time. In Brussels, Belgium, the rehabilita-

tion of the roof of the chancellery has been completed. For Dodoma in Tanzania, the construction work of the plot fence offered by the host country is valued at 95%. In Kigoma, the new construction plan of the Consulate has been validated. The new budgeting is being analyzed for approval. As for Mogadishu in Somalia, the work had been suspended by the Somali Government for reasons of location of the plot, but after diplomatic steps taken with the Somali Government, the plot was reallocated to the State of Burundi.

By quoting the proverb in Kirundi which says "Gira iwawe wubahwe", the Minister reassured the public that this policy of acquisition of state-owned buildings will continue until the State of Burundi is transformed in the short and medium term into the owner State and definitely break with the tenant State both in Burundi and abroad. He informed that it is within this framework that the Ministry is monitoring the construction of the building of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Development Cooperation in Gitega, the political capital, with funding from the People's Republic of China. (MFADC)

## The Ministry in charge of Health popularizes the Vaccination Accountability document



**T**he Ministry of Public Health and the Fight against AIDS organized on Tuesday, May 03, 2022 in Gitega, a high-level meeting for senior officials of the Ministry of Health, doctors in charge of health provinces and chief medical officers of health districts throughout the country.

According to the Minister of Public Health and the Fight against AIDS, Dr Sylvie Nzeyimana, this meeting was organized at a time when Burundi was celebrating African Vaccination Week, a week usually celebrated the last week of April every year.

On the sidelines of this meeting, a document entitled "Accountability for vaccination at the community level" was distributed. As indicated by the Minister of Public Health, this document was developed by the Ministry of Public Health in collaboration with its development partners.

The content of this document outlines everyone's responsibilities with regard to increasing vaccination

coverage, while avoiding that there are children who are not vaccinated or who drop out of vaccination along the way.

During this meeting, participants were able to discuss each person's role in mobilizing and raising awareness so that there is no longer a child who is not vaccinated throughout the national territory according to the vaccination schedule.

The participants also reviewed the various factors that could hinder the success of the vaccination policy for all children and the solutions to be provided. Also taking part in this meeting were the governors of all the provinces of the country as well as the development partners in the health sector, especially in the field of vaccination. (rtnb)

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REPUBLIC OF BURUNDI

PRESIDENCY OF THE REPUBLIC  
Secretariat-General of the State**MEDIA RELEASE N°08 CONSECUTIVE TO THE CABINET MEETING  
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 04 MAY 2022**

A Cabinet meeting was held in Gitega on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> of May 2022, under the chairmanship of His Excellency Major General Evariste NDAYISHIMIYE, President of the Republic of Burundi.

Before presenting the agenda, His Excellency the President of the Republic expressed his condolences to the Burundian people and to the families of the Burundian soldiers on a peacekeeping mission in Somalia, victims of a terrorist attack by the Al Shabaab group. He asked to pray for their souls

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 Friday 29 April 2022, 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 on the ratification by the Republic of Burundi of the agreement on the mutual abolition of visa procedures for holders of diplomatic or service passports between the Government of the Republic of Burundi and the Government of the Russian Federation**, presented by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Development Cooperation.

With the aim of intensifying bilateral ties of friendship and cooperation, further strengthening their bilateral relations, developing and expanding their cooperation framework, the Government of the Republic of Burundi and the Government of the Russian Federation have signed in Bujumbura, on February 06, 2018, the agreement on the mutual abolition of Visa Procedures for Holders of Diplomatic or Service Passports.

This agreement is guided by the desire to promote the development of friendly relations between the two countries and to create the most favorable conditions possible for the travel of citizens of the two countries holding valid diplomatic and service passports.

By ratifying this Agreement, Burundi will have contributed to its implementation, particularly in relation to the promotion of free movement and the right of establishment for nationals of the two countries.

After discussion and debate, the project was adopted.

**2. Draft Protocol of Member States of the Economic Community of Central African States relating to Elections**, presented by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Development Cooperation.

Elections in the world in general and in Africa in particular, play an important role in peace processes and democratic transitions. Their aim is to enable citizens to freely choose their political representatives and to allocate power peacefully. However, when a society is already experiencing tensions and the stakes of electoral competition are high, violence and fraud can affect elections.

According to a 2015 study, 20% of elections over the past two decades are considered violent. This violence is not the result of the elections, but rather the reflection of the

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dysfunctions of the political processes. When well organized, elections can pave the way for freedom of expression and initiate peaceful alternations or transitions.

On the basis of these observations, the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa has risen to take matters into its own hands, in order to establish peace, security and stability in the sub-region.

Thus, during the 50th Meeting of this Committee, held in Malabo in the Republic of Equatorial Guinea from December 2 to 4, 2020, the Committee made a statement from Malabo on democratic and peaceful elections as a means of strengthening stability and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in Central Africa.

Proposed by the Republic of Burundi, the theme of the management of electoral processes in the ECCAS area was developed during the 51<sup>st</sup> meeting of this Committee, held in Bujumbura from May 24 to 28, 2021.

By proposing this theme, the Republic of Burundi referred to its 2018 and 2020 elections which were marked by a success on a larger scale, characterized by a democratic, transparent aspect and above all with funding totally devoid of foreign subsidies.

During this meeting, one of the recommendations made by member states was to “develop a sub-regional protocol on the management of elections in Central Africa”.

This is how the Republic of Burundi, which chaired the said Committee in this period from May 2021 to November 2021, proposed to initiate a draft protocol and to present it to the other States of the Economic Community of Central Africa States.

This draft protocol, once accepted by the Member States, will help the entire sub-regional community to master certain politico-security problems which haunt the sub-region.

At the end of the discussions, the project was adopted.



**3. Bill on the ratification by the Republic of Burundi of the general bilateral cooperation agreement between the Government of the Republic of Serbia and the Government of the Republic of Burundi**, presented by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Development Cooperation .

The Republic of Burundi and the Republic of Serbia, based on the bilateral ties of friendship, cooperation and solidarity that exist between the two countries and their peoples, wish to strengthen the existing mutual ties, develop and further extend their cooperation framework. To this end, a general cooperation agreement was signed between the two countries on February 20, 2019 in Belgrade. It is an instrument that will serve as a basis for the negotiations and the conclusion of other sectoral agreements in various relevant areas.

By ratifying this Agreement, Burundi would have contributed to the consolidation and improvement of mutual cooperation relations based on the principle of respect for national sovereignty. It would also have contributed to economic diplomacy, which is one of the priorities of his Government.

After discussions, the project was adopted.

**4. Bill amending Law No. 1/35 of December 31, 2014 on the organic framework of religious denominations**, presented by the Minister of the Interior, Community Development and Public Security.

Since the promulgation of Law No. 1/35 of December 31, 2014 on the organic framework of religious denominations, the observation is that certain Churches, instead of being benchmarks of morality which teach good and avoid evil, rather become areas of conflict and confrontation between the faithful. Some go so far as to fight against each other during worship.

The reasons for these quarrels are various, in particular the disagreement relating to the management of the property of the Church or between the governing bodies. Some governing bodies within the churches do not want to handover office at the end of their terms, hinting suggests to the intention of these bodies not being good management but rather management that tends towards embezzlement and pure and simple appropriation of Church property.

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The conflict situation in some churches has led the National Police of Burundi to be often called out to ensure order in places of worship to avoid physical confrontations.

In addition to this context of disturbing public order caused by certain Churches, there is the persistence of facts that are contrary to Law No. 1/35 of December 31, 2014 on the organic framework of religious denominations, in particular:

- Churches that operate without approval;
- Trafficking in photocopies of ministerial approval ordinances or falsification of approval ordinances to allow churches that have not yet been approved to organize worship services;
- The establishment of churches without respecting the distance required by law;
- Churches that worship in classrooms, cabarets;
- Churches that do not meet the minimum health and hygiene conditions;
- Churches that do not respect the statutory hours of worship or that make noise, thus disturbing the tranquility of the population;
- Leaders of religious denominations who abuse their followers.

The objective of the Government of Burundi is to establish public order, to enforce the law, good morals, while guaranteeing public freedoms.

Religious denominations, being privileged partners in the organization of society, must, in addition to the spiritual aspect, participate in the development of the country in the same way as other national and international organizations operating in Burundi. It is with a view to finding a lasting solution to the functioning of the Churches that this bill is proposed.

The main innovations made to the law in force concern:

- The abolition of the Body for the Regulation and Conciliation of Religious Confessions, which has proved ineffective;
- The regulation on the days, hours and places of worship while allowing the faithful to go about their daily activities with a view to their own development;
- The obligation for religious denominations seeking approval to have decent places of worship that meet hygienic conditions and are made of durable materials;
- The requirement of a certain level of high education up to the baccalaureate level for the leaders of religious denominations and religious movements, in order to guarantee better leadership likely to properly guide the faithful;

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- The requirement for religious denominations operating under the regulatory regime of foreign mother churches to conclude a framework agreement with the Government of Burundi;
- The requirement of traceability of funds from foreign countries intended for the financing of religious denominations;

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

- Delete the provision that speaks of the position of visionary;
- Insert a provision that provides for the establishment of a Doctrinal Council in religious denominations that so wish but which are not part of the governing bodies;
- Insert a provision specifying that governing bodies are elected democratically and are distinguished from spiritual titles;
- Provide for dismemberments of the Arbitration Committee to be able to settle disputes even in the branches if they exist;
- In the approval of religious denominations, provide for provisional approval and give final approval after ensuring that all requirements have been met;
- Dissociate the responsibilities of the Legal Representative and the head of worship;
- Specify that the mandate of the governing bodies is 5 years renewable;
- Instead of prohibiting a follower from belonging to several religious denominations, rather prohibit a follower from belonging to the governing bodies of more than one religious denomination;
- Insert a provision that prohibits a person from considering himself as God and also prohibits preaching atheism;
- Include a provision authorizing the public authorities to organize elections when the governing bodies of religious denominations refuse to organize elections at the end of their mandate;
- Sensitize religious denominations that carry out lucrative activities to declare and pay tax.

**5. National handicraft policy and its implementation strategy**, presented by the Minister of Trade, Transport, Trade and Industry.

Handicrafts in Burundi constitute an indispensable and unavoidable sector in the implementation of an ambitious development policy, thanks to its capacity and potential to generate jobs with a minimum of capital, to fight against household and population poverty.

Currently, the craft sector continues to develop without strategic orientation documents, because almost all craft activities are carried out in an unstructured framework.

To remedy this, the development of this sector will begin with the establishment of a national strategy for the implementation of the National Crafts Policy and its operational action plan.

The results expected from this strategy are of paramount importance in terms of the creation of stable and decent jobs, craft production with high added value, development of local resources, development of know-how, export of diversified nationalities and the anchoring of craft trades in the reality and in the heritage of the country.

This policy and its implementation strategy will provide a frame of reference for better synergy between stakeholders and a rational organization of activities for the development and promotion of the artisanal sector.

At the end of the debate, the policy and its implementation strategy were adopted with the following recommendations:

- In the Presentation Note, show the whole process of preparing this project;
- Show the inventory of Crafts and the objective to be achieved;
- Show how artisans will be protected and supported, in particular by the construction of a kind of Crafts Museum;
- Translate this policy into Kirundi and find appropriate terms that promote the profession, with the support of the National Legislation Service;
- Specify the period of life of this policy;
- Revitalize craft schools;
- Strengthen the capacities of craftsmen so that they produce quality objects;
- Express the necessary budget in Burundian francs;

**6. Draft decree on the missions, composition, organization and functioning of the Office of Geomatics Centralization, presented by the Services of the Prime Minister**

The Geomatics Centralization Office was created in 2013 and its main mission is to coordinate all activities aimed at creating a National Spatial Data Infrastructure in Burundi, to

consolidate and organize the exchange and dissemination of geographic information between all national, regional and international partners, producers and users.

This decree has been amended in order to comply with the new constitution of 2018, by placing the Office of Geomatics Centralization under the supervision of the Prime Minister, because before, it was under the supervision of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-Presidency of the Republic which no longer exists in accordance with the new Constitution.

The revision currently proposed will make it possible to put in this decree, in addition to the Steering Committee, the other complementary bodies in the implementation of the missions of the Geomatics Centralization Office, namely:

- The geomatics technical committee;
- The national Geographic Information System platform.

After discussion and debate, the project was adopted with recommendations to properly reformulate the title, specifying the decree it modifies.

#### **7. Note on the organization of the National Symposium on Education, 2022 edition,** presented by the Minister of National Education and Scientific Research

Since 2010, the Government of Burundi has undertaken a major reform of the education system, in particular through the establishment of the Fundamental School at the level of primary education and the BMD (Baccalaureate-Masters, Doctorate) reform at the level of higher education. These reforms were guided by the fact that the Government was aware of the considerable role that education must play for the development of human capital in national planning.

However, the development of this capital is dependent on education and training through a coherent education system adapted to the socio-economic realities of the country, to be able to influence the other pillars of development. Thus the National Development Plan 2018-2027 provides, in its axis 5, the strengthening of the education system and the improvement of the quality of education and the training offer to provide the country with qualified and competent human resources that it will need in the other sectors of national life.

Any educational system must be constantly redesigned to promote an education which enables the individual to acquire knowledge, skills and attitudes enabling him to understand his environment, to continue his education and training within society and to participate more actively to its economic, social and cultural development.

However, the Burundian education system is marked by the lack of motivation of the teaching staff and the poor quality of the services of certain teachers. Also, there is a fundamental problem which lies in the fact that the education and training system is segmented, without anchoring upstream and downstream with the economic and social sectors.

The National Symposium on Education envisaged during the current exercise are likely to find possible solutions to the challenges identified above. It therefore reflects the commitment of the Government of Burundi to fundamentally rethink its education system in order to establish a basis for achieving the medium and long term sustainable development of our country.

Its objective is to contribute to solving the identified problems that bog down the Burundian education system while proposing recovery strategies to establish the quality, effectiveness and efficiency of the education sector at all levels.

It should be noted that the last National Symposium on Education date from December 2014.

After analysis, the Council of Ministers recognized the need for this National Symposium on Education and recommended the following:

- Properly align the themes that will be addressed during this Symposium;
- Show the desired objective through the organization of this Symposium;
- Involve the unions in the preparation of this Symposium;
- That requests for explanation be addressed to the representatives of the ministries who had been designated to participate in the preparation of this Symposium and who refused or stopped the work along the way because of the lack of per diems.

**8.** Note on the changes made to the section Chanic Roundabout (Pk 0+000) - Roundabout Melchior Ndadaye International Airport in Bujumbura (Pk 5+300), presented by the Minister of Infrastructure, Equipment and Social housing.

The purpose of the note was to provide clarifications on the various recommendations made by the Council of Ministers of June 23, 2021 on a note relating the various changes made to the RN5 lot1 project, especially on the Chanic Roundabout section (PK0+000) – Roundabout Melchior NDADAYE international airport in Bujumbura (PK5+300) in relation to the contract.

After analyzing the explanations of the Note, the following emerged:

- The development plan for this road has certain shortcomings, but the execution of the project complied with the bidding documents;
- Those who prepared the tender documents must be held accountable and explain themselves because they called into question the interests of the State;
- There was a lack of information to the hierarchy on the conclusions of the various meetings held with the company executing the project;
- The State must seek funding for the development of the gutters and the construction of the Mutimbuzi Bridge which did not appear in the terms of reference to bring it up to the norms and standards of the roadway;
- The company executing the project must put visible beacons between the roadway and the cycle and pedestrian paths on both sides;
- The measure suspending the payment of invoices to the company that developed the road should be lifted;
- The road must be open for traffic because it is this traffic that will allow the detection of certain faults in this road;
- It is necessary to prohibit the exploitation of the fields alongside this road because the blocking of the gutters for the purpose of irrigating these fields will contribute to the deterioration of this road;
- Major projects should first be submitted to the Government for validation.

#### **9. Any Other Business**

His Excellency the President of the Republic reminded the members of the Government to always have projects to submit to partners who wish to support the development of the country.

He also asked to accelerate the finalization of the files analyzed in the Council of Ministers and returned, such as the land of the former FFB and that of the former Central Market of Bujumbura.

He also asked to continue the recovery of state lands which are often used for purposes other than those for which they were requested or which have been looted from the State.

His Excellency the President of the Republic has also asked the ministers in charge of finance and infrastructure to support the ongoing construction at Kigobe Palace.

Finally, he wished a speedy recovery to the Vice President of the Republic.

**Done at Bujumbura, 05 May 2022**

**Prosper NTAHORWAMIYE**

**Secretary-General and Spokesman.-**



**Ministry of Foreign Affairs and**

**Development Cooperation**

**Department of Communication**

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