



**The Banyamulenge welcome Burundi's efforts to promote peace in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo**



**O**n Tuesday, March 17, 2026, the Burundian Head of State and current Chairperson of the African Union, His Excellency Evariste Ndayishimiye, granted an audience in Ntare Rushatsi, to a delegation from the Banyamulenge Global Advocacy Association (BGA). That delegation commended Burundi's sustained efforts for peace in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo.

Members of the delegation also expressed their appreciation for the support and attention given to Congolese refugees living in Burundi, particularly the Banyamulenge communities.

Furthermore, Banyamulenge Global Advocacy firmly rejected the allegations of genocide attributed to the Government of Burundi. On the contrary, the Association commended the Burundian authorities' commitment to the protection, security, and well-being of the Banyamulenge, both within Burundi and in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The discussions focused primarily on the evolving security situation in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, as well as regional initiatives aimed at restoring lasting peace and stability. **(Presidency)**

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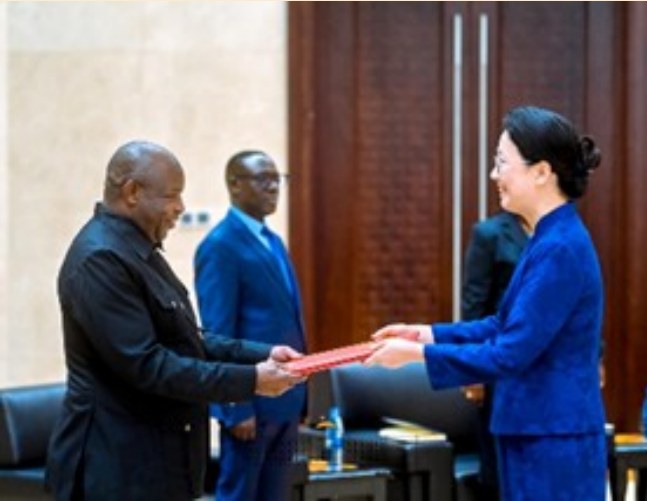
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## President Ndayishimiye received letters of credence of two new Ambassadors



The President of the Republic of Burundi, His Excellency Evariste Ndayishimiye, granted ; on Tuesday, March 17, 2026, an audience to two newly appointed Ambassadors Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, who came to represent the Hungary and the People's Republic of China to Burundi.

First, the Burundian Head of State received the letters of credence of Ms. Katalin Nyurati, the Ambassador of Hungary to Burundi, with residence in Nairobi. On this occasion, the discussions reaffirmed shared commitment to strengthening friendly relations and boosting bilateral cooperation in areas of common interest. The

President of the Republic of Burundi encouraged Hungarian investors to take advantage of the various opportunities offered by Burundi and contribute to the development of the peoples of both countries.

President Ndayishimiye welcomed as well Ms. ZHU Ke-wei , the newly appointed Ambassador of the People's Republic of China, who came to present her letters of credence as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, with residence in Bujumbura.

The discussions between the Head of State and the Chinese diplomat focused on strengthening existing Sino-Burundian relations. Both sides also expressed their desire to further enhance the strategic partnership between Burundi and China by exploring new opportunities for cooperation in key sectors, including infrastructure, sustainable development, and the economy, all within the framework of Burundi's vision of becoming an "emerging country by 2040 and a developed country by 2060."

Ambassador Zhu Kewei reaffirmed his country's commitment to supporting Burundi in its development efforts, emphasizing his determination, in collaboration with his team on the ground, to work towards strengthening China's support and assistance to Burundi, with a view to contributing to economic growth and improving the living conditions of the Burundian people. **(Presidency)**

## Bogotá: Between bilateral diplomacy and African issues, two major meetings of President Evariste Ndayishimiye



The President of the Republic of Burundi, His Excellency Evariste Ndayishimiye, met with his Colombian counterpart, His Excellency Gustavo Petro, at the presidential palace with a view to strengthening relations between Africa and Colombia; on Friday, March 20, 2026.

During the discussions, the Colombian President, His Excellency Gustavo Petro, unequivocally acknowledged that relations with the African continent have long lacked dynamism. He explained that this situation stems in particular from tensions inherited from the past, as well as from internal demands concerning descendants of Africans in Colombia.

The Colombian President, His Excellency Gustavo Petro, stressed that today the country is engaged in a process of reconciliation of its people deeply marked by conflicts.

Furthermore, Colombia has demonstrated a clear desire to strengthen its ties with Africa and the continent. Among the options being considered is the organization of a summit with the African Union, aimed at creating a concrete partnership based on shared interests and joint projects.

The Colombian President also praised the leadership of his counterpart, His Excellency Evariste Ndayishimiye, Head of State of Burundi, highlighting the key role he could play in driving this new dynamic.

The two Heads of State stressed the need to move beyond the legacies of the past in order to transform them into concrete opportunities, particularly through mutually beneficial agreements in the socio-economic and cultural fields.

President Ndayishimiye extended an invitation to his Colombian counterpart to make a state visit to Bu-

rundi with a view to sustainably strengthening bilateral relations and opening a new chapter in Africa-Colombia cooperation.

Still on the sidelines of the CELAC-Africa high-level forum held in Bogotá, Mr. Patrice Emery Trovoada, Special Envoy of the African Union for Guinea-Bissau, met with the Burundian Head of State, His Excellency Evariste Ndayishimiye.

The discussions focused on the conduct of the transition process in Guinea-Bissau, with a shared desire to consolidate it and make it more inclusive, in view of the elections scheduled for December 2026. **(Presidency)**

### Visit of the President of the Senate to the banks of the Mpanda River



A delegation led by the President of the Senate, the Right Honourable Gervais Ndirakobuca, visited the banks of the Mpanda River located in the Mpanda commune and Bujumbura Province on Tuesday; March 17, 2026. The purpose of the visit was the assessment of the damage caused by the change in the course of this river.

The delegation included members of parliament elected in the Bujumbura constituency, the Governor, and various administrative authorities of the province. On site, these authorities observed that the river, having deviated from its original course, is progressively eroding its banks and threatening several social infrastructures, including a section of National Road (RN5), the neighborhoods of Rukaramu and Kajaga, some schools, riverside farms, and many others.

Residents took advantage of the visit to show the original course of the river and express their desire to see it restored. Faced with these concerns, political leaders sought to reassure the population, pledging to address the situation, especially since that locality is a State property. For their part, the parliamentarians pledged to actively contribute to the technical studies necessary to channel the Mpanda River and prevent further damage. **(Senate of Burundi)**

### His Excellency the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and Development Cooperation is participating in the CELAC High-Level Forum



from Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean was held in Bogotá, Colombia. Burundi participated at

From March 18 to 21, 2026, a high-level forum bringing together countries

the highest level, thereby strengthening ties of friendship with CELAC countries, notably through numerous bilateral meetings with Brazil, Uruguay, Colombia, Ghana, Peru, Guatemala, Antigua, Venezuela, and others.

Three main themes were on the agenda: South-South cooperation; trade and investment and compensations for the damages resulting from slavery and colonization, both of which participants described as acts of genocide. The compensation for these acts is a historical requirement, a demand for truth and dignity for the vic-

tims. This outstanding meeting was seen as a new beginning in relations between the two continents, bound by history. All participants agreed on the need to institu-

tionalize this meeting and to implement joint development projects, strengthening economic, political, cultural, and diplomatic ties between the two continents. (MFARIDC)

## Holding of the Joint Technical Meeting of the Framework Plan for Cooperation in Sustainable Development



**O**n March 18 and 19, 2026, at the Matergo Hotel in Gitega, the political capital, the first meeting of the Joint Technical Committee of the Framework Plan for Cooperation in Sustainable Development between the Burundian Government and the United Nations was held. This was the 2026 first meeting. This meeting is organized quarterly to prepare for the Ministerial Steering Committee meeting. On the eve of the first day of the meeting, during the screening of a video summarizing some major achievements in 2024, to provide context for the work that would characterize the meeting, the Permanent Secretary in charge of Foreign Affairs and Development Cooperation, Mr. Nitunga Sophonie, asked the attendees to take the opportunity to prepare questions that would be asked throughout the session.

The official opening of the first meeting of the Joint Technical Committee of the Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework was presided over by Mr. Sophonie Nitunga, Permanent Secretary in charge of Foreign Affairs and Development Cooperation at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and Development Cooperation, on Wednesday, March 18, 2026. In his address, Mr. Nitunga thanked the United Nations system for its commitment to Burundi's sustainable development and stated that this meeting provided an opportune moment to identify successes and challenges in order to achieve improvements for sustainable development. He also reiterated the commitment of the Government of Burundi to continuing the partnership already established with the United Nations

system regarding sustainable development cooperation.

The first meeting of the Joint Technical Committee of the Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework provided an opportunity to present the evaluation of the follow-up to the recommendations of the December 2024 Steering Committee whose annual report was presented to stakeholders in video format during the celebration of the 80th anniversary of the United Nations. The year 2024 was marked by challenges, including the cancellation of the Joint Technical Committee and the Steering Committee meetings. This had affected the 2025 Joint Work Plan, which, despite being submitted to the Director General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, was neither presented nor signed. It was requested that activities be planned in advance and implemented to ensure the successful progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals.

The achievements during 2025 were presented as support provided across various sectors, namely organizing associations and cooperatives, giving access to human rights, supporting human rights protection, strengthening schools and training programs, protecting children's rights, protecting women's rights, organizing government dialogue meetings, promoting employment and resilience, inclusion and social cohesion, political and economic support for self-employment, digitalization, the use of new technologies, and more. The priorities for 2026 can be summarized as continuing and improving existing decentralization initiatives, supporting strengthened governance, and providing

support for other ongoing and new projects that contribute to sustainable development.

The area of empowerment was also a key point during the meeting, crucial for accelerating positive and rapid transformation. Openness to other partners is

desirable to expand opportunities for young people who need capacity building, given their fundamental role in Sustainable Development. They must have access to proper nutrition to develop the capacity to assimilate information relevant to development. Good health is a priority for all human achievements. (MFARIDC)

### The Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs met with the Ambassador of Turkey to Burundi



ment Cooperation, Mr. Sophonie NITUNGA, granted an audience to Mr. Alp Işıkılı , the Ambassador of Türkiye to Burundi.

After appreciating the bilateral relations that exist between Burundi and Turkey, Mr. Alp Işıkılı conveyed his congratulations to His Excellency the President of the Republic of Burundi, His Excellency Evariste NDAYISHIMIYE, for his chairmanship of the African Union.

They exchanged views on matters of common interest, with a focus on Burundi's invitation to the Antalya Diplomatic Forum scheduled for April 17-19, 2026.

Other ways and means of further strengthening diplomatic relations between the two countries were discussed. (MFARIDC)

**O**n Thursday, March 19, 2026, the Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and Development

### IRRI evaluation missions by a team from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and Development Cooperation



**A** team from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and Development Cooperation carried out a series of meetings and visits in several provinces of Burundi to see the activities carried out by the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) and to assess their impact on the beneficiaries of the evaluation of achievements.

On March 17 and 18, 2026, Mr. Anicet Mahoro, Director of International Organizations accompanied by his team, visited the Mutanga Campus for a briefing session with Mr. Joseph Bigirimana, Country Representative of the Institute for International Relations (IRRI), and his team. The objective of this meeting was to provide a summary of the Institute's activities before commencing evaluation



visits.

Following the briefing, the two teams traveled to Gihanga and Gifurwe in Bujumbura province to observe the IRRI's achievements. There, they met with the agronomist in charge of local activities, who explained the teaching methods used with the beneficiaries. The focus is on the efficient use of seeds and on farming practices that significantly increase yields.

The feedback from farmers is positive: thanks to the techniques learned and the varieties provided by IRRI, rice farmers are achieving better profits while reducing their expenses. The fields observed in Mpanda and Gifurwe are in good condition, and the producers are easily implementing the recommended techniques.

On March 19, 2026, the mission continued its visits to the Nyamuswaga marsh in Ngozi. Farmers reported trainings from IRRI, but the condition of crops in the marsh was deemed unsatisfactory. The local agronomist explained that some people were not yet applying the techniques taught. Furthermore, producers reported a significant shortage of chemical fertilizers, a situation affecting the maintenance and productivity of their

plots. According to the agronomist, almost 70% of beneficiaries are currently applying IRRI practices, an encouraging sign for wider adoption in the medium term.

Nevertheless, a visit to the Kabuyenge marshland in Kirundo revealed healthy crops and widespread adoption of techniques promoted by IRRI. Farmers reported an amazing improvement in harvests despite difficulties relating to fertilizers access. The president of the Kabuyenge farmers' association indicated that before IRRI's intervention, they obtained around 3 tons per 3 hectares; today, yields can exceed 17 tons, which is a tangible impact of the Institute's actions on the productivity and well-being of rice-growing communities.

It should be noted that the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) is the world's leading research organization dedicated to combating poverty, hunger, and malnutrition through rice science. Its mission is to improve the health and well-being of populations dependent on rice-based food systems, while promoting the environmental sustainability of rice farming for future generations.

This mission yielded conclusive results in several areas, notably Kabuyenge, where the adoption of IRRI innovations led to a significant increase in yields. Other areas, such as Nyamuswaga, are showing progress but still face challenges, particularly fertilizer shortages and incomplete adherence to the techniques taught. Overall, IRRI's work in Burundi appears beneficial and promising for food security and improving rice farmers' incomes. Sustained efforts, the continued dissemination of good practices, and the search for solutions to improve access to fertilizers remain essential to extending these benefits to all rice-growing areas. **(MFARIDC)**

## Bujumbura: Celebration of the International Civil Defence Day 2026

**O**n Tuesday, March 17, 2026, Burundi joined the rest of the world in celebrating the International Civil Defence Day, a day dedicated to raising awareness about risk prevention and disaster management, celebrated every March 1st.

The official ceremonies took place in Sororezo, in the Mukaza commune, in the province of Bujumbura. They brought together senior officials from the Ministry of the Interior, Community Development and Public Security, members of the national risk prevention platform, security forces as well as several national and international partners.

In his address, the Minister of Public Security, the Honorable Léonidas Ndaruzaniye, emphasized the importance of this day, established under the auspices of the International Civil Defence Organisation. He stressed the crucial role of civil protection in safeguarding human lives, property, and the environment. The Minister also highlighted the current context, marked by a resurgence of natural disasters, particularly floods, landslides, and violent winds, necessitating heightened vigilance and strengthened action.

The Burundian Government has reaffirmed its commitment to strengthening prevention mechanisms. Among its priorities are the establishment of a multihazard early warning



system and the development of a national disaster risk reduction policy. "Early warning saves lives," the Minister emphasized, calling for collective action to build a safer and more resilient Burundi.

For his part, the head of the civil protection program, Mr. Roger Ndikumana, highlighted the theme chosen for this edition: "Managing environmental risks for a resilient and sustainable future".

He mentioned the actions already undertaken, including ecosystem restoration, raising awareness of the community, and strengthening disaster response capacities.

Despite the progress made, several challenges remain. These include a lack of relevant equipment, insufficient qualified human resources, and the need to operationalize certain key structures, notably the national emergency operations center.

The celebration concluded with a call for everyone to act responsibly. Authorities urged every citizen to adopt preventive behaviour to actively contribute to the safety and resilience of their communities. This day served as a reminder that risk management is not solely the responsibility of the authorities, but a shared responsibility for the entire population. **(RTNB)**

### Heading towards 2027: Self-training seminar for CENI members



**A**s part of the preparations for the 2027 presidential election, the Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI) organised a self-training seminar for its members and staff on Wednesday, March 18, 2026 in Bujumbura.

This initiative is part of a capacity-building effort to ensure the organization of democratic, free, peaceful, inclusive and transparent elections.

According to the president of the CENI, Mr. Prosper Ntahorwamiye, the training will be delivered in a tiered system. CENI members will train members of the Independent Provincial Electoral Commissions (CEPIs), who, in turn, will train the Independent Communal Electoral Commissions (CECIs). These

latter commissions will then provide training to polling station staff, under the supervision of higher authorities.

Besides, this seminar aimed in particular to: Master the electoral cycle, strengthen knowledge on the distribution of seats according to electoral results, clarify the role of electoral partners, deepen the concepts related to electoral observation, master the tools of data collection during the registration of voters, raise awareness of the importance of voting and its modalities, become familiar with electoral material and its use, understand the legal and regulatory framework of elections, appropriate the procedures for awarding public contracts, guarantee the integrity, transparency and security of the electoral process, master the techniques of counting and transmitting the results.

At the end of this training, participants should be able to effectively apply the different stages of the electoral process, master the technical and legal tools of elections, transmit the knowledge acquired to decentralized structures, ensure rigorous and transparent management of electoral operations, and promote good practices, particularly in communication and adult education.

During three days of training, several key themes were presented, including: the electoral cycle, electoral systems, election security, election observation, the legal

framework, electoral disputes, voter registration, electoral logistics, non-violent communication and the management of public affairs.

Given the richness and diversity of the topics covered, this seminar will deepen the understanding of electoral issues and strengthen the involvement of all stakeholders in consolidating democratic governance in Burundi. **(RTNB)**

## End of Ramadan in Gitega: a strong surge of solidarity to build the future



coming more involved in promising sectors such as agropastoral activities, particularly avocado and coffee cultivation. He also stated that this community aims to contribute to the construc-

**M**uslim believers in Gitega province celebrated Eid al-Fitr, the festival marking the end of the holy month of Ramadan, on the morning of March 20, 2026. The ceremonies took place at the Ingoma Stadium in Gitega, in an atmosphere of religious fervor and conviviality.

Speaking on behalf of the Muslim community of Gitega, Mr. Ismaili Manirakiza stated that the month of Ramadan is a special time for reaching out to the most vulnerable, particularly orphans and widows. He emphasized that fasting is not only a religious obligation but also an opportunity to strengthen solidarity with those in need. He also expressed his satisfaction with the smooth progress of this month of fasting and that the Muslim community of Gitega is now fully engaged in the national development process.

According to Mr. Manirakiza, the Muslims of this province have responded to the Government's call by be-

coming more involved in promising sectors such as agropastoral activities, particularly avocado and coffee cultivation. He also stated that this community aims to contribute to the construction of socio-economic infrastructure, including modern hospitals, schools, and industrial units, in order to support the vision of Burundi as an emerging country by 2040 and a developed country by 2060. Explaining the significance of Eid al-Fitr, he indicated that it provides an opportunity to draw closer to God through acts of charity, notably by offering new clothes and generous meals to orphans and widows.

The Chief of Staff, representing the Governor of Gitega Province, Mr. Gérard Nibigira, praised the values of solidarity and social cohesion that characterize the Muslim community. He noted that Muslims advocate love, unity, and peaceful coexistence with other faiths. He called on them to continue promoting peace, in accordance with the values of their religion, while encouraging them to strengthen their contribution to the country's development. He thanked the Muslims for their determination and ability to work for the progress of the community. He emphasized the importance of maintaining this momentum. **(Le Renouveau)**

# Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and Development Cooperation

Department of Communication

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