



Burundi celebrates International Women's Day



Burundi celebrated the International Women's Day in Gitega, the political capital, on Monday, March 09, 2020, which is normally celebrated on March 08, 2020. This year's theme was "Stand Up for Women's Rights." In Burundi, the day was celebrated under the theme: "Let us all stand up for the achievement of women's rights ».

The ceremonies took place at the Ingoma Stadium in Gitega and were enhanced by the presence of the presidential couple, the President of the Senate and his wife, the country's top dignitaries, the high command in the Defence and Security forces corps as well as International Organizations working to defend women's rights.

The Executive Secretary of the National Women's Forum (FNF), Dr Janvier Ndirahisha thanked the President of the Republic for the step taken in promoting women's rights and asked him that in the top 3 positions, a woman should be included because women have the capacity to fill these positions.

The Resident Representative of the United Nations System in Burundi Mr. Garry Conille said that this year's celebration comes with a special stamp of so much more the Secretary General of the United Nations Mr. Antonio Guterres has indicated that the inequality between is the most egregious injustice of our time, the greatest hu-

Sommaire

page

Burundi celebrates International Women's Day

1

Gihanga :The President of the National Assembly calls on the population to develop their self

2

Development of the National Development Communication Strategy in support of the 2018-2027 PND

4

Gitega: CNDD-FDD activists show their support for their Presidential Candidate

5

Lake Tanganyika: the buffer zone must be respected

7

Media release consecutive to the Cabinet meeting held on Wednesday 11 march 2020

10

man rights challenge and a question of power.

He deplored that women are still "very often deprived of voices, their opinions ignored and their experience sidelined," including in peace processes or health planning.

The Minister for Human Rights, Social Affairs and Gender, Mr Martin Nivyabandi, said that the commemoration comes at a time when the world is celebrating the 25th anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration and Beijing Action Programme of 1995, the 20th anniversary of the adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security; the 5th anniversary of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and also as Burundi enters an electoral period.

He later said that as part of the promotion of women's rights, the Government of Burundi has already put in place mechanisms to protect and promote women's rights as policies and strategies for promoting women's rights. According to the Minister, Burundi has also put in place a legal framework for the promotion of women's rights through the adoption of new laws and revisions of those containing discriminatory provisions.

Speaking, the President of the Republic His Excellency Pierre Nkurunziza first responded to the request that women be included in the 3 senior posi-

tions. In this regard, the Head of State said that women must assert themselves and campaign in political parties to show what they are capable of. "Women should not wait for cake on a gold platter," insisted His Excellency Pierre Nkurunziza.

The President of the Republic subsequently gave 16 advice to Burundian women for the country to develop with the values of the ancestors. He asked women to be the epicenter of the home, to work and to look for decision-making positions while respecting morals and to truly show that they are up to their duties. He also asked them to join development cooperatives that would provide a space for women's development and empowerment. The Head of State also asked the spouses to support their wives in their development projects.

The President of the Republic, His Excellency Pierre Nkurunziza nevertheless deplored the behaviour of some women who misunderstand the risk of one day seeing their households disintegrate.

Finally, the Head of State awarded certificates of honour to women, men and girls who have distinguished themselves in promoting gender in various fields. The Women's Forum awarded the President of the Republic a cup and a medal and to his wife, a diamond gift on which was inscribed the good works of the First Lady.

(source: www.rtnb.bi)

Gihanga :The President of the National Assembly calls on the population to develop their self



The President of the National Assembly, the Right Honourable Pascal Nyabenda, visited the commune of Gihanga in Bubanza province on Tuesday, 10 March 2020. The aim of this visit was to exchange with the population on the development of the commune, the well-being in particular the construction of decent houses.

The Administrator of Gihanga and the Governor of Bubanza indicated that security is good in the province and that political parties are working in serenity. They pointed out that if a dispute arises between members of the various political parties, it is quickly settled by the representatives of those parties.

The Right Honourable Pascal Nyabenda asked the quadrilogy to be vigilant because the distance on the border with the Democratic Republic of Congo is long and constitutes entry points for the criminals. He also

asked the public to report any suspects to the security forces.

On the eve of the 2020 elections, the President of the National Assembly is asking members of the various political parties to prepare for the elections in peace despite their differing opinions. He pointed out that between leaders of political parties, there are no problems but that incidents occur at the level of subordinates.

The Right Honourable Pascal Nyabenda asks the people of Gihanga to specialize in rice cultivation and cattle farming because the environment is very favourable for both activities. He recommended that they use the income from the harvest to build decent houses, saying he was very surprised to see a rice farmer who spends more than 20 years in a paltry house.

As the law on permanent stable farming will be effective with the year 2021, the President of the National Assembly is nodding to the people of Gihanga to prepare accordingly to build the stables and produce fodder of their Herds. He warned Managers of Sangwe Cooperatives that the 10 million is a credit they must repay.

Participants in the meeting raised the problem of the deficiency of industrial products such as BUCECO Cement, FOMI organo-mineral fertilizer and SO-

SUMO sugar. The Right Honourable Pascal Nyabenda has indicated that all this is linked to the speculation of some traders who want to get rich very quickly. The President of the National Assembly deplores the fact that the local administration is complicit in the sale of prohibited beverages.

He called on anyone who was enticed with peace and patriotism to denounce these speculators so that trade would be done in strict compliance with the law. He promised the public to discuss this with the Minister who has Agriculture in its remit and with the Director General of FOMI to clarify this shortage of fertilizers.

The population has also raised the lack of clean water, poor roads and accidents on the Bujumbura Cibitoke road and are calling for speed bump to be erected.

The President of the National Assembly the Right Honourable Pascal Nyabenda has promised to contact the Insurance Companies for the construction of donkeys. On the issue of drinking water, the district will be served by water from the Kibira.

(Source: www.rtnb.bi)

Minister in charge of trade speaks on soaring sugar prices SOSUMO



The Minister of Trade, Industry and Tourism Jean Marie Niyokindi hosted a press briefing on Monday, March 9, 2020, to speak about the soaring price of SOSUMO sugar that has been taking place in recent days. Minister Jean Marie Niyokindi warned all speculative traders: "The stores affected by the speculation will be closed, heavy fines will be imposed and the seized quantities of hidden sugar will be sold at auction."

During this press briefing, the Minister in charge of Trade pointed out that some traders tend to not respect the prevailing sugar prices of 2400 fbu per kilogram. He lamented the fact that the kilogram of sugar currently varies between 2,600 and 3000 fbu. "However, the amount of SOSUMO sugar distributed monthly has not changed and is around 2,500 to 2,700 tonnes per month," the Minister said.

According to the Minister of Trade, Industry and Tour-

ism, a certain source indicates that a significant amount of sugar served by SOSUMO would be stored in the warehouses of certified wholesale traders and distributors for speculative purposes, others deliberately and irresponsibly raise the wholesale price. "In turn, high-priced retailers are putting their margins on and raising the price per kilo more," the Minister suggested.

Minister Jean Marie Niyokindi warned all speculators: "The stores affected by the speculation will be closed, heavy fines imposed and the seized quantities of hidden sugar will be sold at auction," warned Mr. J Marie Niyokindi.

He added that SOSUMO-approved wholesalers who are caught speculating will be removed from the list and that monetary penalties will be imposed on them. "Fines will also be imposed on speculator retailers," the Minister said.

Minister Jean Marie Niyokindi took the opportunity to ask the public, in particular consumers of SOSUMO

sugar, to denounce any fraud or cache of sugar in order to definitively eradicate this bad behaviour of some traders.

The Minister in charge of Trade also took the opportunity to call on the provincial administration to ensure that SOSUMO sugar wholesalers licensed in their provinces send the sugar to their destination and that it is sold at an official price .

This warning was also addressed to traders of consumer products such as BRARUDI products and BUCECO cement.

Finally, Mr Jean Marie Niyokindi said that the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Tourism will now rigorously and regularly monitor the prices of certain strategic and basic products in order to ensure the consumer protection and the availability of these products on the market

(source: www.rtnb.bi)

Development of the National Development Communication Strategy in support of the 2018-2027 NDP



The Minister of Communication and Media, Mr Frédéric Nahimana, opened a workshop on the development of the National Communication Strategy for Development at the Rehoboth Hotel in the Province of Gitega, on Tuesday, 10 March 2020 in support of the National Development Plan (NDP) 2018-2027 under the "Stakeholder Capacity Building" component.

These meetings that lasted two days, brought together the senior officials of the Ministry of Communication and Media as well as the Communication Officers of the various Ministries and State Institutions.

The 2018-2027 NDP is a reference document for all development actors in Burundi, Minister Nahimana

said in his address, noting that the many development actions that will be undertaken to improve the quality of life of people deserve to be accompanied by appropriate communication.

"Aware that communication is an essential factor in the development process," he said, "the NDP2018-2027 specifies the importance of media and communication in these terms": "The role of the press and the media in general is for effective support for such a dynamic of change.

While some cultural environments are more development-friendly than others, it is necessary for information, education and training to be used to achieve this."

According to Minister Nahimana, information, education and training are not enough to change the behaviour of the individual and society, which is the purpose of communication development.

More than just a strategy, communication for development is a social process based on promoting dialogue between communities and decision-makers at the local, national and regional level, he said, adding that it is aimed at promote, develop and implement policies and programs that improve the quality of life for all. Moreover, he added, the workshop aims, if

necessary, to strengthen the dialogue between partners and the Government to promote the sharing of knowledge and information with all other stakeholders in the success of the NDP. 2018-2027.

Speaking about the added value of the bases, Mr Nahimana said that it lies not only in increasing the capacity and skills of stakeholders in the field of communication for development, but also in the creation of a interactive forum where practical lessons learned and communication issues raised will

be shared and analyzed to be integrated into the strategy.

Earlier, the UNICEF Representative in Burundi expressed her congratulations to the Government of Burundi for her continued commitment to the promotion of children's rights. She also commended Burundi for its investment during the development and validation of the NDP (2018-2027) (source: abpinfos)

Gitega: CNDD-FDD activists show their support for their Presidential Candidate



The CNDD-FDD party in Gitega province held ceremonies on Friday, March 6, 2020, to congratulate and support its 2020 presidential candidate, General Major Evariste Ndayishimiye, who is also a native of the province.

The ceremonies began with a march that began in the old car park and by passed the Nyamugari and Shatanya neighborhoods to arrive at the very site of the festivities. They were honoured by the presence of elected Members of Parliament in the riding of that province.

After the march, occasional speeches were given in the square where the tree marking the centre of the country is located. The Provincial Secretary of the CNDD-FDD of Gitega Honorable Georges Nshimirimana congratulated on behalf of the activists, General Major Evariste Ndayishimiye for being chosen as the candidate representing the ruling party in the presidential elections in May 2020. The Honourable Georges Nshimirimana said this is an opportunity to show the joy they have in their hearts and to thank the Lord who honoured Gitega

Province. He then invited the entire population of Gitega in particular the members of the CNDD-FDD to vote overwhelmingly General Major Evariste Ndayishimiye.

The Provincial Secretary of the CNDD-FDD welcomes the peace and security that characterizes Gitega province. He congratulated the members of various political parties working in Gitega province for their good cohabitation. He encouraged them to continue to maintain this spirit of fraternity by consolidating the social coalition.

Honourable Georges Nshimirimana invited the population to continue their development work. He also welcomes the development work that has been carried out. He urged the population to remain calm in this early election.

The Honourable Georges Nshimirimana thanked the Bagumyabanga of Gitega who responded to the ceremonies. He pointed out that such ceremonies were held in all municipalities in Gitega province.

(Source: www.rtnb.bi)

OBR educates taxpayers to report rental income taxes on time



The Burundi Revenue Office (OBR) hosted a press conference on Tuesday, March 10, 2020, at which the Head of The Management of Rental Tax Department, Mr. Joseph Ndayizeye, appealed to taxpayers who have not yet declared the rental tax. He reminded them that the work continues until March 30 of this year, the deadline for paying tax.

To make this easier, the OBR has planned five sites, namely the Ngagara School of Excellence, the St. Michael's Circle, the capital of the Kinama area, the capital of the commune Mukaza and the Little Seminary of Kanyosha. According to Mr. Ndayizeye, taxpayers are responding to the call, but are not coming at the expected pace. The press releases continue, as does the voice-throwing vehicle that continues to criss-cross the capital. Taxpayers should not wait until the last few days to avoid the hustle and turns, he said.

He took this opportunity to recall how this tax is calculated. In fact, the return is made on the total amount of income collected. The taxable limit is 1,800,000 BIF per year.

The total amount of income is deducted from 40% representing the maintenance of the building or the rented land. The amount of bank interest is also deducted for properties built or purchased on credit.

For widows and widowers, orphans under the age of 18, people living with disabilities and pensioners, they are given a deduction of 3,000,000 BIF. For annual incomes of less than 1,800,000 BIF, the tax rate is 0%, but those concerned must declare. The rate 20% for income equal to 1,800,000 BIF and 30% for income above 1,800,000 BIF.

Reporting the income collected is very important, Ndayizeye noted. First of all, because the taxpayer in order with the law remains quiet. Second, if the return contains errors, the OBR has sufficient time to correct them and the taxpayer has sufficient time to claim, if necessary.

The Head of Management of The Tax on Rental Income welcomes the step taken and asks taxpayers to respect the deadlines in the declaration of the tax on rental income, i.e. before March 31. According to the Head of Rental Tax Management, late taxpayers will be subject to a statutory fine. (Source: rtnb and abpinfos, edited by the Editorial of the MFA)

Lake Tanganyika: the buffer zone must be respected



The Director General of Land Development Mr. Omer Niyonkuru carried out a work raid in Rumonge province on Tuesday, 10 March 2020. The purpose of the raid was to verify the reality of the information circulating on social media that the Lake Tanganyika coastline was sold to third parties in violation of the law.

The Director General of Land Development, along with the Governor of Rumonge Province Mr. Juvénal Bigirimana and a team made up of members of the local administration, a Senator elected in the district of Rumonge and some land-use officials in Rumonge walked from Gitaza, the shoreline of Lake Tanganyika, to Kizuka on Kagongo Hill.

There, they found that SAVONOR bought land from the public, but in accordance with the law governing the buffer zone.

The descent along the shoreline of Lake Tanganyika continued until the entrance to the town of Rumonge on Mwange Hill. There, the delegation found that the law governing the buffer zone had been completely violated: a private hotel was being erected there. To this end, the Governor of Rumonge and the Director General of Planning of the Territory have taken a step to stop these anarchic constructions in the buffer zone of the Lake Tanganyika coastline.

Regarding the population that had already built in the buffer zone prior to the implementation of the

law governing the Lake Tanganyika buffer zone, Governor Juvénal Bigirimana said that the skilled authorities would take appropriate measures.

For unded land, as well as land being built across the shoreline of Lake Tanganyika, a measure has been taken prohibiting all activities until further notice.

Regarding the lamentations of the population of Kizuka who were forced to sell their land at paltry prices, a list of concerned and a provincial commission will be set up to study the fate of these conflicts between the population and society. SAVONOR to find a lasting solution. Managing Director Omer Niyonkuru also proposes an amicable resolution between the buyer and the seller.

Regarding the non-compliance with the 150 m buffer zone from Lake Tanganyika, the Director General of Land Development does not go there by four paths. "The law is clear, whoever built at this perimeter must empty the premises," warned the Director General.

At times when the skilled authorities will assist them in the demolition of these anarchic buildings, the culprits will be punished by the payment of the demolition costs. According to him, no one is supposed to ignore the law and no one is above the law, the law must be applied to the rigor, he concluded. (Source: www.rtnb.bi)

Mobilisation of administrative and judicial authorities around the activities of the CNTB

The mobilization of the population, administrative, judicial and police authorities is a part of the activities of the National Commission for Lands and Other Goods (CNTB), as one of its strategies to carry out its mission well, said the spokesman for this commission, Mr Dieudonné Mbonimpa.

The involvement of all these stakeholders will enable the victims to return to their property rights on the one hand, and will facilitate the continuity of the work of the CNTB on the ground, on the other hand, said Mr. Dieudonné Mbonimpa. Moreover, he said, all land dispute resolution sessions must begin with an education session on peace and peaceful cohabitation. Efforts will be made in Makamba (south) and Rumonge (southwest) provinces, which have the highest number of cases awaiting processing.

Other strategies identified by the CNTB to carry out its programme include identifying urgent files and executing files that have already been closed, scheduling field raids by members of provincial delegations and non-recourse certificates to prevent conflicting parties from appealing outside the statutory time frame.

The weekly and monthly assessment of the activities carried out, the surrender of Crown land to the Department with the land in its remit and the delivery of documents to the notification of decisions taken by the CNTB to the parties in conflict are also included CNTB's success strategies. (source : abpinfos)

Six presidential candidates were accepted by CENI



The President of the National Independent Electoral Commission (CENI), Dr Pierre Claver Kazihise, during a press briefing on Tuesday 10 March 2020, announced the results of the analysis of the candidacies for the 2020 presidential election.

"A total of ten candidates submitted their applications for the presidential election," Dr Kazihise said, adding that "these files have been subjected to a thorough analysis, mainly on the basis of the provisions of the Constitution and the Electoral Code."

Of the ten applications, six were accepted. These are the files of Mr Evariste Ndayishimiye of the CNDD-FDD party, the Honourable Agathon Rwasa of the

CNL party, Mr Gaston Sindimwo of the UPRONA party, the Honourable Léonce Ngendakumana of the Sahwanya-FRODEBU party and the independents Mr Francis Rohero and Mr Dieudonné Nahimana.

The other four applications not accepted by the CENI are those of Mr Jacques Bigirimana of the FNL party, Mr Anicet Niyonkuru of the CDP party, Mr Valentin Kavakure of the FPN-Imboneza party and President Domitien Ndayizeye of the Kira-Burundi coalition.

The President of the CENI stated that "if a file is not accepted at the CENI level, the code provides for the possibility of appealing to the Constitutional Court, within two days of the calendar."

However, the President of the CENI has informed candidates whose files have been accepted that the period of the election campaign has not yet come. "Even if it is known by the electoral calendar, the election campaign will be opened by a presidential decree," he recalled, stressing that no one has the right to override the law.

(source : abpinfos)

Organizing joint patrols to put the quadrilogy back to work

The provincial police station in Bujumbura, western Burundi, said it had organized a joint and liaison patrol last weekend involving police, military, administration and members of the joint security committees of the Nyabiraba, Kabezi and Kanyosha. The patrol, which started at 6:00 a.m., ended at 9:30 a.m.

According to the Provincial Commissioner of Police, Mr. Déo Bigirimana, each Community Commissioner has taken its route, and the drop-off point has been fixed to Nyankere Hill in Mutambu area and commune. This activity allowed the participants to get to know each other, Commissioner Bigirimana told the ABP on Tuesday, adding that the main objective was to show the population that the quadrilogy (administration-population-forces of

law and order and judicial security-body) is at work, as part of a local police force. It was also a question of inquiring about the security situation of the hills crossed, after the passage of the armed men in some municipalities of this province.

He also reported that during this operation, the responders stopped to talk to the local population, and those contacted indicated that security is calm and that the population lives in perfect harmony.

Following this event, the Provincial Commissioner provided advice to maintain peace and security, especially by sharing information whenever necessary.

(source : abpinfos)

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REPUBLIC OF BURUNDI**PRESIDENCY OF THE REPUBLIC
Secretariat-General of the Government****MEDIA RELEASE CONSECUTIVE TO THE CABINET MEETING
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 11 MARCH 2020**

A Cabinet Meeting was held on Wednesday 11 March 2020 under the chairmanship of His Excellency Pierre Nkurunziza, President of the Republic of Burundi. The following items have been analyzed:

1. Bill pertaining to the ratification by the Republic of Burundi of the agreement establishing the African Continental Free Trade Zone (ZLECAF), presented by the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

The idea of creating a free trade area in Africa dates from the 1960s. But it was at the Conference of African Heads of State and Government in January 2012 in Addis Ababa that the decision was made on to the framework and the roadmap to fast track the creation of the African Continental Free Trade Area.

Subsequently, negotiations continued to reach an agreement establishing the African Free Trade Area (ZLECAF). This African Free Trade Zone aims, among other things, to create a single market for goods and services, facilitated by the movement of people. It will also contribute to the circulation of capital and people and will facilitate investments.

The Council had analyzed this project and found that it required a much more in-depth study by experts in order to assess the benefits that Burundi could derive from the ratification of this project.

After discussions, the Council noted that the file still needed to be deepened and appointed a team which will assess what Burundi will gain or lose by ratifying or not ratifying this project. The project will be brought back to the Council of Ministers within one month.

The team was also tasked with proposing a permanent multisectoral committee of experts to study and negotiate all the agreements to which Burundi is called upon to enter into.

2. Draft ratification of the revised Treaty establishing the Economic Community of Central African States, presented by the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

The Economic Community of Central African States was created in October 1983 and its General Secretariat set up in January 1985. It currently has eleven member states including Burundi. The institutional reform of ECCAS in question today was ordered by the Conference of Heads of State and Government at its 16th ordinary session held on May 25, 2015 in N'Djamena, Chad.

On December 18, 2019, there was an Extraordinary Summit of the Conference of Heads of State and Government of ECCAS devoted to the institutional reform of ECCAS. The purpose of this summit was to examine, validate and sign all the revised basic texts relating to institutional reform produced by the General Secretariat of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS). These adopted and signed texts are:

- The revised Treaty establishing the Economic Community of Central African States
- The revised Protocol relating to the Peace and Security Council of Central Africa
- The organic framework of the Commission of the Economic Community of Central African States
- The Staff Regulations of the Economic Community of Central African States
- The revised Financial Regulations of the Economic Community of Central African States

The Heads of State have undertaken to ratify the revised Treaty within a maximum of six months from the date of signature. By revising this treaty, the aim is to provide the Community with a strong tool, adapted to the current environment and which takes into account the realities of the Central Africa Region to enhance the regional space with a relevant legal tool.

By ratifying this Treaty, Burundi will be able to be part of the organs of this Community, to apply for all political and technical posts in order to properly defend its interests within this community.

At the end of the analysis of this project, the Council adopted it.

3. Bill establishing the general framework for the operation of Professional Orders in Burundi, presented by the Minister of Public Service, Labor and Employment.

On December 21, 2018, the Council of Ministers analyzed the draft decree creating the national order of biomedical technologists in Burundi. During this meeting, the Council noted that there are many effective professional orders and others in the making and that there was a need to put in place a general legal framework of reference.

It is in this context that this bill is proposed. It intervenes to ensure legislative and regulatory consistency by subjecting all professional orders to common principles of organization except the Bar Association and the Order of Notaries provided for by the Constitution and which are each organized by law.

After discussions, the project was adopted with a few corrections and finalization by a team designated for this purpose.

4. Draft decree establishing, organizing and operating a personalized administration of the State called the Directorate of Land Titles, presented by the Minister of Justice, Civil Protection and Keeper of the Seals.

Since 2005, Burundi has embarked on a policy of decentralization of public administration and land reforms. As part of these land reforms, many projects aimed at securing land rights and modernizing the land administration and management systems have been undertaken.

However, all these efforts still come up against the problem of the scattering of services in charge of land issues. One of the consequences of this situation is the slowness of the registration system, the multiplicity of procedures, costs and delays which discourage the population wishing to register their properties and land transactions.

The implementation of the provisions of the Land Code comes up against the problem of coordination and separation of the Land Titles, National Cadastre and Municipal Land Services. This draft decree solves these problems by implementing reforms in the Land Titles Department so that the land registration sector is a real lever for economic and social development. The objective is to create a new administrative entity bringing together the Land Titles and National Cadastre Services.

At the end of the analysis, the Council noted that the question required an even deeper study and appointed a team which will analyze it with regard to the texts in force. The file will be brought back within two weeks.

5. Note relating to the commitment of the Government of Burundi for a public-private partnership between the Province of Gitega and a consortium of Dutch private sector companies for the implementation of the project "Implementing Measurable Productive Agri Cooperation Trade (IMPACT), presented by the Minister of the Interior, Patriotic Training and Local Development

In 2018, the Government of Burundi established Gitega as the Political Capital of Burundi. This province has just expressed its interest in working with Dutch industrialists in the private sector to contribute to the socio-economic development of rural areas, the development of infrastructure in rural areas, the creation of jobs and the generation of income.

Since April 2019, some Dutch companies have started a feasibility study for this project. In May 2019, a delegation of these companies came to Burundi to discuss this partnership. In November and December 2019, these companies conducted field surveys on how to establish collection points for the storage and distribution of food, especially fruit and vegetables with appropriate technology.

This public-private partnership project plans to result in the installation of a food processing plant in Gitega called "Organic Burundi Food" where the Government would hold 49% of the shares. Processing is the only alternative to increase the value of these products in Burundi, mitigate the deterioration of excess production and increase the lifespan of these products.

The beneficiaries of this project will mainly be farmers in the Provinces of Gitega, Karusi, Kayanza, Mwaro, Muramvya, Ngozi and Rutana organized in agricultural cooperatives.

After analyzing the Note, the Council reiterated its support for the policy of processing Burundian agricultural products. It nevertheless indicated that everything must be done within the framework already outlined by the Government. To this end, the Council appointed a team that will closely monitor this issue to ensure that all stakeholders have been involved and that the procedures required for Public-Private Partnership contracts are being complied with.

6. Bill pertaining to the ratification by the Republic of Burundi of the Minamata Convention on mercury, presented by the Minister of the Environment, Agriculture and Livestock.

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Mercury is a highly toxic heavy metal that poses a threat to human health and the environment. Aware of the harmful impacts of this substance, the International Community decided, in February 2009, to establish a binding legal instrument.

The related negotiations started in 2010 and led to the adoption, by 140 States, of the Minamata Convention (named after the city where the convention was concluded) in January 2013, whose overall objective is to protect human health and the environment against emissions and releases of mercury and its components.

By ratifying this Convention, Burundi will have undertaken to take appropriate measures to phase out mercury-containing products, to develop and implement a national action plan to eliminate the use of mercury in artisanal mining and educate the public about the negative effects of using mercury.

The Council had analyzed this project and returned it to study first the implications of this ratification and to be sufficiently informed about the countries which have already ratified this Convention.

After analysis, the Council noted that the team which had been designated to re-analyze this project has not yet produced its report and has once again returned the project.

The team was asked to speed up their work so that the project could be brought back to the Council of Ministers within two weeks.

7. Draft sectoral strategy 2018-2027 of the Ministry of Finance, Budget and Economic Development Cooperation, presented by the Minister of Finance, Budget and Economic Development Cooperation.

Burundi has a National Development Plan 2018-2027 which is currently the national reference document for development planning. In order to involve all sectors in its implementation, the Government recommended the development of sector strategies with action plans for 2018-2027.

In this context, the Ministry of Finance, Budget and Economic Development Cooperation has drawn up a 2018-2027 sectoral strategy, not only to contribute to the achievement of certain specific objectives of the National Development Plan, but also to continue the operationalization of the public finance management strategy within the framework of the application of the organic law relating to public finances.

The objective of this sectoral strategy of the ministry is to provide Burundi with a transparent, efficient public finance management system, in line with international standards, respecting the distribution of prerogatives between the institutions and putting public finances serving the country's development and the well-being of its citizens.

At the end of the analysis of this project, the Council adopted it.

8. Any Other Business

- The Minister of Public Health and the Fight against AIDS informed the Council that following the decision to quarantine, for a period of 14 days, people who enter Burundi from countries where the he epidemic of Coronavirus is reported, 29 people among which 16 Burundians are currently at the Hotel Source du Nil, the venue which has been chosen for this purpose.
- The Minister of the Environment, Agriculture and Livestock informed the Council of the irregularities observed in the fertilizer distribution network due to certain speculators. He said there is enough fertilizer and that the situation is being brought under control as many of these speculators have been apprehended. He also said that everything is being done to ensure that the coffee campaign that has already started runs smoothly.
- The Minister of Finance, Budget and Economic Development Cooperation deplored the fact that certain owners of plots are building kiosks and shops beyond the boundaries of their plots, that is to say in the streets. He asked that the authorized services take the necessary measures to discourage this practice.

Done at Bujumbura, March 12, 2020

Prosper NTAHORWAMIYE
Secretary-General and Spokesman
of the Government.-

Ministère des Affaires Etrangères

Direction de la Communication

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