



## **NOTORIOUS HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATOR FROM BURUNDI ATTENDS HIGH-LEVEL SUMMIT IN PARIS**

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Gervais Ndirakobuca, the Prime Minister of Burundi, is attending an [international finance summit](#) this week in Paris. This time last year, he was still under European Union (EU) sanctions for his role in the violent repression in his country in 2015.

Ndirakobuca is a notorious figure in Burundi, usually referred to by his nickname Ndakugarika (“I will kill you” in Kirundi). In successive senior positions in the police, the national intelligence service and the president’s office, he was among the officials who orchestrated a bloody crackdown against protestors in April 2015. Ndirakobuca is well known for his participation in serious human rights violations both before and during Burundi’s 2015 political and human rights crisis.

“Today, Ndirakobuca tries to present himself as a respectable politician, aligning himself with Burundian President Évariste Ndayishimiye and supporting his promised reforms to diplomats,” said Carina Tertsakian from the Burundi Human Rights Initiative (BHRI). “But no Burundian can forget this man’s cold-blooded brutality. It’s shameful that France has ignored his past and allowed him to attend this summit.”

In 2020, BHRI [published details](#) of Ndirakobuca’s personal involvement in killings and beatings of government opponents and his close collaboration with other perpetrators of extrajudicial executions and torture, spanning several years. In one incident in 2014, after transporting several handcuffed young men in the back of a truck to a remote part of the country, Ndirakobuca shot each one twice in the chest with a pistol, then ordered policemen to throw their bodies into a grave.

In October 2015, the EU imposed [a travel ban and asset freeze](#) on Ndirakobuca, among other individuals, stating that he was “responsible for obstructing the search for a political solution in Burundi by issuing instructions that led to disproportionate use of force, acts of violence, acts of repression and violations of international human rights law against protestors demonstrating from 26 April 2015 onwards.”

Seven years later, in October 2022, the EU lifted these sanctions after Ndirakobuca was appointed Prime Minister the month before; he had been promoted from the post of minister of interior, public security and community development. This was part of a rapprochement between the EU and Burundi, coming soon after the lifting of a suspension of direct EU support to the Burundian government. Yet human rights concerns have persisted in Burundi and none of the senior officials who committed or ordered serious crimes in 2015 have been brought to justice. The previous Prime Minister, Alain Guillaume Bunyoni, was

arrested in April 2023, but the current charges against him do not relate to his involvement in human rights violations.

“The EU has chosen to strengthen its ties with the Burundian government, regardless of its human rights record, rather than demand justice for the 2015 repression,” said Carina Tertsakian. “By welcoming one of the leading perpetrators, France has turned its back on victims of extrajudicial killings, torture and other serious crimes in Burundi.”