

# **BURUNDI: DEMOCRATIC SPACE REMAINS TIGHTLY CLOSED**

**MAINLY SYMBOLIC, INADEQUATE MEASURES TAKEN SINCE JUNE 2020**

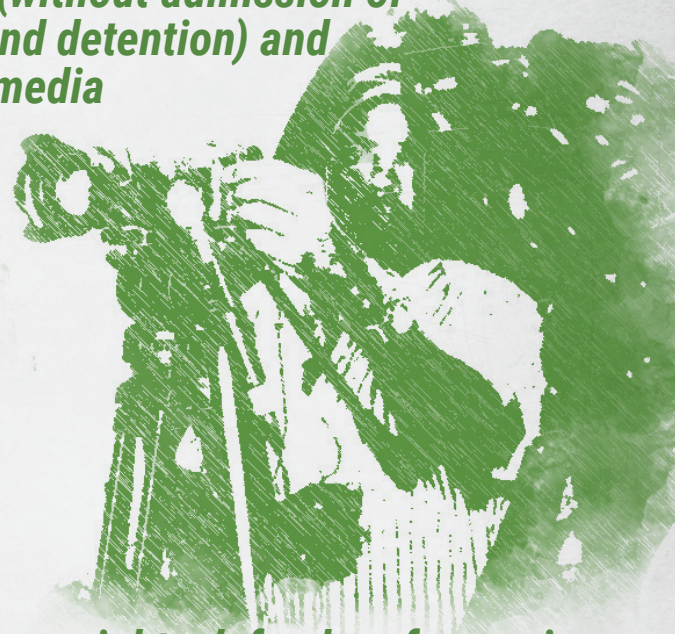
**MEDIA** *The welcome release of journalists (without admission of the arbitrary nature of their arrest and detention) and lifting of sanctions against certain media*

## **HOWEVER**

Conviction of media representatives and journalists in exile

Persisting harassment, threats and intimidation against journalists

Self-censorship by journalists, intolerance for all criticism, especially of government actions, and for reporting on sensitive subjects such as security incidents or human rights violations



**CIVIL SOCIETY** *Long awaited release of human rights defenders from prison*

## **HOWEVER**

Independent human rights NGOs still suspended or revoked

Persistent mistrust and hostility against independent civil society

Increased monitoring of civil society by limiting their operating costs and monitoring the ethnic composition of the staff of foreign NGOs

## **OPPOSITION POLITICAL PARTIES**

Persistence of abusive restrictions on the freedom of association and freedom of assembly, though to a lesser extent than during the election period

Persistence of extra-judicial killings, enforced disappearances, arbitrary arrests and detentions, torture and ill-treatment of opposition members, mainly from the CNL

Persistence of political intolerance and hate speech towards opponents, though political violence has generally declined

**“**  
*Whoever is dissatisfied with his achievements [of late President Nkurunziza] for Burundi and Burundians is simply possessed by the devil and is only thinking of doing evil*

*(Excerpt from President Ndayishimiye's speech delivered during the ceremony ending the mourning period for President Nkurunziza and commemorating the 'National Day of Patriotism' on 8 June 2021)*

