

Protests continued for a fourth day in five communes of Bujumbura, capital of Burundi, namely Mutakura, Cibitoke, Kanyosha, Bwiza and Musaga. Elsewhere, the situation was reported to have been relatively calm, with no deaths or injuries reported, although many shops and schools remained closed. To date, seven deaths, including two police officers, have been reported.

The Special Envoy of the UN Secretary-General for the Great Lakes region, Said Djinnit, is currently in Burundi, meeting with Government representatives to urge them to ensure security and guarantee freedom of expression, and to create room for dialogue. In one positive development, human rights activist Pierre Claver Mbonimpa was released from detention on Tuesday.

Clampdown on communications, however, continued, with platforms including Twitter, Facebook, Viber and WhatsApp having been blocked by authorities, and Radio Publique Africaine shut down. Humanitarian actors are concerned that a media and communications blackout could serve to fuel rumours and further fan an already high level of anxiety among the population.

In the provinces of Gitega and Muramvya (central Burundi) and Rumonge (southern Burundi), students were reported to be leaving secondary schools because of security concerns, although no incidents have been reported. Education Minister Rose Gahiro on Tuesday tried to reassure students, and appealed for them to remain in school.

The interagency humanitarian contingency plan for elections in Burundi (available at <http://reliefweb.int/report/burundi/interagency-contingency-plan-burundi>) was presented to donors and partners in Nairobi today. While no urgent humanitarian needs have yet emerged in Burundi, the newly re-established Humanitarian Country Team is urgently requesting US\$11.6 million for priority preparedness and response to the needs of up to 50,000 people most likely to be affected within the first eight weeks after elections. In a worst-case scenario, 350,000 people could be in need of humanitarian assistance within six months.

UNHCR reports that Rwanda continues to receive the majority of refugees, with nearly 21,000 Burundians, mostly women and children, having arrived this month, citing intimidation and threats of violence linked to the upcoming elections. The Government is recognizing the refugees *prima facie*. Meanwhile in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Tanzania, no significant change in numbers was noted from the 4,000 and 100 refugees reported on 27 April. UNHCR has begun issuing regular updates, available at <http://unhcr-regional.or.ke/news/burundi-situation-update-no-0001>.

Background:

Civil unrest erupted on Sunday 26 April in Bujumbura, capital of Burundi, after the ruling CNDD-FDD party elected President Pierre Nkurunziza on Saturday 25 April as its candidate for the 26 June presidential election. Nkurunziza has been in office for two terms since 2005, and a broad array of actors (including the UN) has warned that an attempt to seek a third term is unconstitutional and contrary to the spirit of the 2000 [Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement for Burundi](#) that ended a decade of civil war in the country. The Burundian Senate has seized the Constitution Court on the interpretation of the Constitution regarding the eligibility of President Nkurunziza's candidature for re-election.

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The next Flash Update will be issued according to developments in the situation. In the meantime, for further information, contact Matthew Conway, Public Information Officer, OCHA Eastern Africa, at conwaym@un.org.