

On Friday, President Paul Kagame, who was recently sworn in for another five-year term, announced a new cabinet, signaling a fresh start and renewed focus on addressing key challenges in the country. The new cabinet, which includes 21 ministers and nine ministers of state, largely retains the previous team, with only three ministers being replaced. The Prime Minister, already sworn in this week, remains in his position, underscoring Kagame's confidence in his leadership.

### **Sports Minister Aurore Mimosa Munyangaju Replaced**

Aurore Mimosa Munyangaju, who has served as the Minister of Sports since November 2019, was replaced by Richard Nyirishema, the former vice president of the National Federation of Basketball (Ferwaba). Nyirishema, who previously led the Water Supply and Isoko y'Ubuzima project at Water For People, brings a strong background in civil engineering and environmental technologies, having earned his degree from the former Kigali Institute of Technology (KIST) in 2003.

Munyangaju's tenure as Sports Minister was marred by various controversies, including allegations of witchcraft in football and corruption, which were highlighted by President Kagame. The President expressed concern about poor decisions that have hindered Rwanda's sports performance, fueling speculation that Munyangaju's dismissal was inevitable.

### **Trade and Industry Minister Ngabitsinze Chrysostom Dismissed**

Dr. Ngabitsinze Chrysostom, the outgoing Minister of Trade and Industry, was replaced by Prudence Sebahizi. Ngabitsinze's departure comes amid unresolved issues, notably the plight of rice farmers in the Western Province who have struggled to find a market for their harvests. President Kagame, during the swearing-in ceremony for new members of parliament on August 14, criticized the relevant ministries for failing to address this issue, which he learned about through social media.

The President's frustration with the lack of coordination among government agencies, including the Ministry of Trade and Industry, the Ministry of Agriculture, and the Ministry of Local Government, was evident. He also expressed disappointment that the intelligence services had not reported the issue, highlighting a broader concern about inefficiencies in government operations.

## **Change in Leadership at Rwanda Governance Board**

Another significant change occurred at the Rwanda Governance Board (RGB), where CEO Usta Kaitesi was replaced by Dr. Doris Uwicyeza Picard. Kaitesi's tenure at RGB was marked by the controversial closure of thousands of churches that failed to meet the board's requirements for infrastructure, safety, and leadership. President Kagame recently criticized church leaders for exploiting vulnerable Rwandans and vowed to prevent any group from causing disorder in the country. The debate over RGB's strict regulations on churches remains heated, with some religious leaders calling for more leniency.

## **Appointment of New Minister of Public Service and Labor**

Ambassador Christine Nkurikiyinka has been appointed as the new Minister of Public Service and Labor (MIFOTRA), filling a position that had been vacant since July 25 following the suspension of Dr. Jeanne d'Arc Mujawamariya. Mujawamariya, who was previously the Minister of Environment, was suspended amid an ongoing investigation. Nkurikiyinka's appointment is expected to bring stability to the ministry as it continues to navigate its challenges.

## **A Cabinet Primed for Action**

With these changes, President Kagame has sent a clear message that underperformance will not be tolerated. The new cabinet, while largely retaining familiar faces, is now poised to tackle the pressing issues facing Rwanda, from sports governance to economic development and public service efficiency. As the new ministers settle into their roles, the Rwandan public will be watching closely to see how these leaders deliver on the expectations set by the President.