

# Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada

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## Responses to Information Requests

Responses to Information Requests (RIR) respond to focused Requests for Information that are submitted to the Research Directorate in the course of the refugee protection determination process. The database contains a seven-year archive of English and French RIRs. Earlier RIRs may be found on the UNHCR's [Refworld](#) website. Please note that some RIRs have attachments which are not electronically accessible. To obtain a PDF copy of an RIR attachment please email [Basededonnees.DatabaseUnit@irb-cisr.gc.ca](mailto:Basededonnees.DatabaseUnit@irb-cisr.gc.ca).

26 July 2013

### BDI104498.FE

Burundi: Movement for Solidarity and Democracy (Mouvement pour la solidarité et la démocratie, MSD) in the commune of Ngagara, including its structure; the names of its mobilizers and treasurer; treatment of members by the authorities (2010-July 2013)

Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa

For further information on the Movement for Solidarity and Democracy (Mouvement pour la solidarité et la démocratie, MSD), consult Response BDI104286.

#### 1. Structure of the MSD

In correspondence sent to the Research Directorate on 19 July 2013, a representative of a provincial committee of the MSD stated that the party is made up of the political office, provincial committees, communal committees and neighbourhood or zone committees. More specifically, she elaborated on the MSD staff as follows:

- 1 president
- 1 secretary general
- 1 national coordinator
- 17 provincial representatives
- 129 communal representatives (including that of the commune of Ngagara)
- more than 1,200 representatives of neighbourhoods or zones
- more than 10,000 street representatives (MSD 19 July 2013).

With respect to the committee of the commune of Ngagara, she pointed out that it is made up of:

- 1 communal president
- 1 vice-president
- 1 secretary
- 1 treasurer
- 1 marketing-ideology representative
- 1 youth president
- 1 women's president
- 1 representative for art and culture
- 1 representative for the fight against poverty
- 1 security representative
- 1st advisor
- 2nd advisor
- 3rd advisor (ibid.)

During a telephone interview with the Research Directorate on 17 July 2013, the president of the MSD stated that the party structure is the same across the country. However, there are places where the structure is the process of being established (MSD 17 July 2013). He stated that each commune is run by a leader who is assisted by a committee, which is made up of 12 people (ibid.). Within that committee, there are three key sectors represented and grouped into committees, that is, the women and girls committee, the youth committee and the mobilization committee (ibid.). He added that, since approximately March 2013, some changes have been made to the party structure because it wanted to broaden its presence and have a better idea of how many members it has (ibid.). He stated that each of the three committees mentioned above is also made up of 12 people, and among them, there are respondents from each of the nine neighbourhoods in the commune (ibid.). These respondents represent the street representatives in the neighbourhood (ibid.). The president of the MSD pointed out that there are about 10 streets, on average, per neighbourhood (ibid.).

According to the representative of a provincial committee of the MSD, the members of the committees or the political office change frequently (19 July 2013). She stated that these frequent changes occur for various reasons, including:

- a move to another commune, province or country
- unavailability because of work or a restrictive job
- leaving politics or fleeing to foreign countries after threats made by adversaries
- imprisonment (MSD 19 July 2013).

## 2. Treatment of Members of the MSD by the Authorities

In correspondence sent to the Research Directorate on 16 July 2013, a representative of the Iteka Burundian Human Rights League (Ligue burundaise des droits de l'homme, Ligue Iteka) stated that [translation] "the urban commune of Ngagara is one of the 13 communes that make up the mayoralty of Bujumbura." The representative stated that, to his knowledge, the commune of Ngagara is not known for [translation] "anything in particular with respect to treatment of members of the MSD" (Ligue Iteka 16 July 2013). He stated that, during the 2010 elections, the MSD was the majority party in the commune of Ngagara and in other communes of the mayoralty of Bujumbura (ibid.). According to him, members of the MSD [translation] "were not overly concerned and there are many of them in the capital. The majority appear when it is time to go and vote" (ibid.). However, the representative stated that, during the 2010 electoral campaign, a [translation] "very influential" activist was killed in the commune of Bwiza (ibid.). He also stated that the police cracked down on a large protest organized by the youth wing of the MSD (ibid.). Further information on this protest could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate.

The information in the following two paragraphs was provided by the president of the MSD during a telephone interview with the Research Directorate on 17 July 2013. The President stated that, in Burundi, the situation is [translation] "tense" between the government and the people in the commune of Ngagara, and between the government and the members of the MSD. He explained that this was because the commune of Ngagara is one of the opposition communes. He added that this situation has been the same for a few years. He explained that the MSD gathers together many young people and that the ruling party is [translation] "nervous" and "is trying to silence the youth." With respect to the situation of the members of the MSD, more specifically in the commune of Ngagara, he pointed out that the situation is [translation] "a little different." He explained that, although it is [translation] "tense," the party's violence is "more limited" because it is "visible to the international community" in Bujumbura, the country's capital. Corroborating information could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints.

The president of the MSD pointed out that the members of the MSD, in the commune of Ngagara, are victims of [translation] "constant intimidation." He stated that they are receiving threats and being interrogated for a few hours by the police before being released. He added that they can also get themselves killed. He explained that the pretexts used against members of the MSD are that they have held an illegal meeting or that the protest in which they participated was not authorized, which would be unfounded. Corroborating information could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints.

Further information on the treatment of members of the MSD in the commune of Ngagara or information indicating the names of the party mobilizers and treasurer could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate.

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

## References

Ligue burundaise des droits de l'homme (Ligue Iteka). 16 July 2013. Correspondence sent to the Research Directorate by an official.

Mouvement pour la solidarité et la démocratie (MSD). 19 July 2013. Correspondence sent to the Research Directorate by a representative of a provincial committee.

\_\_\_\_\_. 17 July 2013. Telephone interview with the President.

## Additional Sources Consulted

**Oral sources:** Attempts to contact representatives of the following organizations were unsuccessful: Coalition de la société civile pour le monitoring électoral, Commission électorale nationale indépendante, Institut de recherche pour le développement, Institut d'études de sécurité. A representative of Global Rights in Burundi was unable to provide information within the time constraints. A representative of Security Governance Group Ltd was unable to provide information for this Response.

**Internet sites, including:** Afrique-express.com; Agence de presse africaine; Agence France-Presse; AllAfrica; Amnesty International; Association de réflexion et d'information sur le Burundi; Banque mondiale; Bujumbura.net; Burundi – Bureau de l'Obudsman, République du Burundi; *Burundi Bwacu*; *Burundi Réalités*; ecoi.net; Factiva; Fédération

internationale des ligues des droits de l'homme; Freedom House; Human Rights Watch; Institut de recherche pour le développement; International Crisis Group; *Iwacu*; News 24; Radio France internationale; Radio Isanganiro; Radio publique africaine; Radio sans frontières Bonesha; Radio Télévision nationale du Burundi; Think Africa Press; United Nations – Integrated Regional Information Networks, Refworld; United States – Department of State; Voices of America.

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