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10 August 2004

ZZZ42873.E

Uganda/Rwanda: Status of Rwandans people and whether they are entitled to have permanent status or citizenship and if so, information on the required procedures (August 2004)
Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board, Ottawa

As one of the ethnic groups of Uganda (*The East African* 15 July 2002; United States Dec. 2003; Campus Program n.d.; see also UGA39536.E of 8 July 2002), Banyarwanda (people from Rwanda or of Rwandan origin) constitute about six per cent of the population (Campus Program n.d.; United States Dec. 2003) and are recognized in the constitution (*The East African* 15 July 2002). In his 1983 article, Roger Winter explained that "many Banyarwanda have always lived in what is now Uganda since shortly after it became a British Protectorate at the turn of the century [and] they and their children are Ugandan citizens under that nation's constitution" (*Cultural Survival* 30 June 1983).

However, a May 2004 US Committee for Refugees report refers to a group of Rwandan refugees and asylum seekers who now live in Uganda. According to the same report, the estimated 20, 000 Rwandan refugees are from the Hutu ethnic group and live in the Nakivale, Oruchinga and Kyaka II refugee camps (US Committee for Refugees May 2004). Some received assistance from relief agencies while others who arrived before 1996, "received only partial assistance and relied on farming or other jobs to support themselves" (ibid.).

Country Reports 2003 noted that the Ugandan government continues to provide temporary protection and "land for temporarily resettlement to citizens from neighbouring countries, including Rwanda, who did not qualify for refugee or asylum status (25 Feb. 2004, sec. 2.d).

Information on the Uganda Refugees Bill 2003 that describes conditions and procedures for obtaining refugee status, including rights and obligations associated with such status can be found on the UNHCR Website (UNHCR n.d.)

Information on the required procedures for Rwandans to obtain Ugandan citizenship or permanent residence status could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate. However, describing the conditions for acquiring a certificate of residence, the Uganda Department of Immigration Website states that this document is a

meritorious award to individuals who have lived legally in Uganda over a long period of time (minimum of 15 years) and have contributed in a notable manner to the development of Uganda in whatever field of their calling. Certificates of Residence can also be issued to foreigners who are married to Ugandans and have to reside in Uganda (Uganda n.d.)

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 additional sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

References

Campus Program. N.d. "Demographics of Uganda." <http://www.campusprogram.com/reference/en/wikipedia/d/de/demographics_of_uganda.html> [Accessed 6 Aug. 2004]

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UNHCR. n.d. "Uganda: The Refugees Bill 2003." <<http://www.unhcr.ch>> [Accessed 6 Aug. 2004]

United States. December 2003. Bureau of African Affairs. "Background Note: Uganda." <<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2963.htm>> [Accessed 6 Aug. 2004]

US Committee for Refugees. May 2004. "Uganda: Refugee from Rwanda. *World Refugee Survey 2004*." <<http://www.unhcr.ch>> [Accessed 6 Aug. 2004]

Additional Sources Consulted

The High Commission for Republic of Uganda did not provide information within time constraints.

Internet sites, including : The Constitution of Uganda, Ecoi.net, Government of Uganda, *The Monitor*, *The New Vision*, Visa Reciprocity and Country Documents Finder, UNHCR.

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