



RESPONSES TO INFORMATION REQUESTS (RIRs)

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The Board		23 March 2007
About the Board	COD102455.FE	
Biographies		
Organization Chart	Democratic Republic of Congo: The Union for Democracy and Social Progress (Union pour la démocratie et le progrès social), particularly its current status, its relationship with the government and the treatment of its members by the government	
Employment	authorities and security forces (2006 - March 2007)	
Legal and Policy	Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa	
References		
Publications		
Tribunal		
Refugee Protection Division	The list of political parties recognized under Law No. 04/002/ of 15 March 2004 and authorized to operate as of 3 March 2006, as published on the Web site of the Independent Electoral Commission (Commission électorale indépendante, CEI) of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), indicates that two political parties bear the name Union for Democracy and Social Progress (Union pour la démocratie et le progrès social, UDPS) (DRC n.d.). They are the UDPS/Tshesekedi and the UDPS/Kibassa (ibid.). The former is headed by Étienne Tshesekedi (also Tshisekedi), and its headquarters are located at "10è Rue, Av. Cannas, C/Limete" (ibid.). The latter is headed by Edmond Moukendy, and its headquarters are located at "99 bis, Av. Maduda C/Bandal" (ibid.). No other recent information on the UDPS/Kibassa could be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate. The following information relates to the UDPS led by Étienne Tshesekedi.	
Immigration Division		
Immigration Appeal Division		
Decisions		
Forms		
Statistics		
Research		
Research Program	Status	
National Documentation Packages	The UDPS led by Étienne Tshesekedi is a recognized political party that is authorized to operate in the DRC pursuant to Law No. 04/002 of 15 March 2004 (DRC n.d.), which regulates the organization and operations of political parties in the country (GRIP 3 Mar. 2006, 12). The UDPS participated in the Inter-Congolese Dialogue in South Africa (IFES 19 July 2006) and is a signatory to the Global and All-Inclusive Agreement of December 2002 (CEAN 13 Oct. 2005; <i>Le Potentiel</i> 10 Jan. 2006). However, the UDPS did not participate in transitional institutions set up under the agreement (AFP 4 Feb. 2006; CEAN 13 Oct. 2005; IFES 17 July 2006). The party also boycotted the last elections (US 6 Mar. 2006, Sec. 3; BBC 30 June 2006). The UDPS boycott was a reaction to the CEI's refusal to give the party seats in the CEI and the High Authority for the Media (Haute Autorité des medias), and to reopen the electoral lists so that its members could register (GRIP 3 Mar. 2006, 6). Some time before that, the UDPS had also called for a boycott of the referendum [of 18 December 2005] on adopting a new constitution (BBC 3 Jan. 2006; GRIP Mar. 2006, 14).	
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Treatment of members by the government authorities

According to uncorroborated information found in a report from the United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (Mission des Nations Unies en République démocratique du Congo, MONUC),

[UN English version]

On 22 January, two UDPS militants were allegedly subjected to cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment while in the holding cell of the "Police d'Investigation Criminelle" [Criminal Investigations Police] in Goma, North Kivu. The men were arrested in connection with statements they had written on a blackboard concerning the possible consequences of the negotiations that were held between the FARDC [Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Forces armées de la République démocratique du Congo)] and renegade General Laurent Nkunda. The hands of one of the victims were swollen as a result of the beating he had allegedly received. The other victim had been severely flogged in the presence of a Colonel and then placed in a holding cell in his underwear only. The Prosecutor released both men on 23 January. (20 Feb. 2007)

A recent report from the United Kingdom Home Office indicates that, leading up to the 30 July 2006 elections, members of the UDPS and the Congolese Rally for Democracy (Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie, RCD) "were targeted for human rights violations because of their political affiliations" (UK 14 Feb. 2007, Sec. 3.11). *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2006* states that the National Intelligence Agency (Agence nationale de renseignements, ANR) [one of the country's security services] arrested a dozen UDPS party members on 27 June 2006 and arbitrarily detained them in a military camp in Mbuji Mayi (in the province of Kasai oriental) (US 6 Mar. 2007, Sec. 3). Although they were accused of arms possession, charges were never brought against them and all 12 were released by the end of July 2006 (ibid.).

The United Kingdom Home Office report also indicates that, on 12 June 2006, police used tear gas to break up a UDPS protest march organized to demand negotiations aimed at including the party in the election process (UK 14 Feb. 2007, Sec. 6.41). A report from Human Rights Watch (HRW) notes that, during the DRC election campaign, [HRW English version] "police officers used excessive force against members of the political opposition, including supporters of the Union for Democracy and Social Progress (UDPS)" (11 Jan. 2007). The same report indicates that the UDPS held a peaceful demonstration on 10 March 2006 in Kinshasa, which was broken up by the police, who beat demonstrators and detained some 15 of them (ibid.; see also UK 14 Feb. 2007, Sec. 3.07).

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

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Internet sites, including: AllAfrica.com, Amnesty International (AI), BBC News, *CIA World Factbook*, Elections Around the World, European Country of Origin Information Network (ecoi.net), Factiva, Freedom House, Human Rights Watch (HRW), International Crisis Group (ICG), Fédération internationale des ligues des droits de l'homme (FIDH), ReliefWeb, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations Security Council, United States Department of State.

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