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RESPONSES TO INFORMATION REQUESTS (RIRs)

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The Board		6 April 2011
About the Board	COD103712.FE	
Biographies		
Organization Chart	Democratic Republic of the Congo: Information on the Union for Democracy and Social Progress (Union pour la démocratie et le progrès social, UDPS), including the number of members, locations of its offices, its situation in relation to other political parties, and the treatment of its members and leaders by government authorities; whether there are factions within the UDPS	
Employment		
Legal and Policy		
References		
Publications	Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa	
Tribunal		
Refugee Protection Division	The Union for Democracy and Social Progress (Union pour la démocratie et le progrès social, UDPS) party was founded in 1982 (<i>Le Phare</i> 14 Feb. 2011; Congo'2000 13 Dec. 2010). The party is led by Étienne Tshisekedi (KongoTimes! 8 Dec. 2010; CODHO 27 Sept. 2010). Two sources cite Jacquemin or Jacquemain Shabani as secretary general of the UDPS (KongoTimes! 15 Feb. 2011; <i>Le Phare</i> 16 Feb. 2011). In a subsequent report, one of the sources identifies Shabani Lukoo B. as the secretary general (ibid. 24 Mar. 2011). A 30 September 2010 statement posted on the UDPS website is signed by Bernard Ali Risasi Kasongo, UDPS national secretary and spokesperson.	
Immigration Division		
Immigration Appeal Division		
Decisions		
Forms		
Statistics	Number of members and location of offices	
Research		
Research Program	In 18 March 2011 correspondence with the Research Directorate, a diplomatic adviser representing the UDPS in Canada provided the following information:	
National Documentation Packages	It is difficult to determine the total number of UDPS members right now because the party did not participate in the 2006 elections. The UDPS headquarters are located in Kinshasa. There is a federation office in each province, as well as offices for the branches and cells. There are also representative offices abroad. In Canada, the UDPS has a representative office in Ottawa as well as four branch offices-in Quebec, Ontario, the Maritimes and the West.	
Issue Papers and Country Fact Sheets		
Responses to Information Requests		
Recent Research	Situation of the UDPS in relation to other parties	
Media Centre		
News	According to the diplomatic adviser, the UDPS represents the opposition in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) since, currently, it is [translation] "the only alternative to the ruling party [and its] allies"; it serves as the centre around which the other opposition parties revolve (UDPS 18 Mar. 2011). An 8 December 2010 article published by Voice of America (VOA), an international multimedia service funded by the United States (VOA n.d.), notes that the UDPS is [translation] "the primary opposition party since the former Zaire" and that Étienne Tshisekedi has stood up to the regimes led by Mobutu, Laurent Désiré Kabila and Joseph Kabila, the current president.	
Information Sheets		
Media Relations		
Transparency		
Completed Access to Information Requests		

Proactive Disclosure

Sources indicate that the UDPS boycotted the 2006 elections (*Le Phare* 24 Mar. 2011; *La Dernière Heure* 18 Aug. 2010). According to an 18 August 2010 article published by the Belgium-based *La Dernière Heure* newspaper, the UDPS did not participate in the 2006 general elections for various reasons. Among other things, he said that the government had failed to honour [translation] "the peace and power-sharing agreements signed in South Africa in late 2002 to put an end to the civil war" by organizing national elections "before local polling took place" (*La Dernière Heure* 18 Aug. 2010). Tshisekedi also said he considered the 2006 elections a [translation] "'sham'" (ibid.).

Sources note the formation in February 2011 of a coalition of political parties called the Tshisekedi President Dynamic (Dynamique Tshisekedi Président, DTP) (DTP 19 Feb. 2011; *La Prospérité* 17 Feb. 2011; *Le Potentiel* 17 Feb. 2011). *Le Potentiel*, a Kinshasa daily newspaper, states in a 17 February 2011 article that the DTP is composed of the following political parties: the Commitment to Citizenship and Development (Engagement pour la citoyenneté et le développement, ECIDé), the Lumumbist Progressive Movement (Mouvement lumumbiste progressiste, MLP), the Labour Party (Parti travailliste, PT), the Rally of Democrats for Breakout and Renewal (Rassemblement des démocrates pour la rupture et le renouveau, RADER), the Rally of Conciliatory Democrats (Rassemblement des démocrates conciliants, RADECO) and the National Alliance of Congolese Liberals (Alliance nationale des libéraux du Congo, ANALCO). Other parties, including the Bundu dia Mayala of Ne Mwanda Nsemi and the Unified Lumumbist Party (Parti lumumbiste unifié, PALU) of Thérèse Pakasa, reportedly support the DTP (*La Prospérité* 17 Feb. 2011). According to a DTP official quoted by *La Prospérité*, [translation] "only Étienne Tshisekedi can realistically defeat the current regime" (ibid.). The DTP has given itself three main objectives [translation]:

1. Unite and support the candidacy of Etienne Tshisekedi in the upcoming presidential election [in 2011].
2. Adopt a government agenda based on a democratic and progressive ideology and governance model
3. Develop a common, unitary election strategy for elections at all levels. (DTP 19 Feb. 2011)

Treatment of UDPS members and leaders

According to the UDPS diplomatic adviser in the Canadian representative office, opposition leaders and members officially have freedom of expression; however, in practice, they are at the mercy of the police and military in power (UDPS 18 Mar. 2011). As example, he reports that the authorities systematically refuse to allow members of the opposition to organize public demonstrations (ibid.). Similarly, the Committee of Human Rights Observers (Comité des observateurs des droits de l'homme, CODHO), a human rights advocacy organization in the DRC (CODHO 30 Apr. 2003), states in a 27 September 2010 news release that the government of the DRC has still not authorized-either before or after the 2006 elections-peaceful demonstrations to be held by opposition political parties and independent civil society organizations. According to the CODHO news release, on 26 September 2010, UDPS members attending a meeting in Kinshasa to discuss, among other things, the 2011 election process were arbitrarily arrested and detained (CODHO 27 Sept. 2010). Members of the Congolese National Police (Police nationale congolaise, PNC) reportedly fired live rounds at UDPS members and arrested approximately 30 people (ibid.). PNC officers also seized all equipment, including over 100 chairs and an electrical generator (ibid.). CODHO notes that, according to its sources, [translation] "despite informing municipal authorities of its meeting through correspondence, a National Police battalion ... attacked the building with barbaric violence" (ibid.). According to the 30 September 2010 statement signed by UDPS spokesperson Bernard Ali Risasi Kasongo, the 27 party members who were arrested on grounds of [translation]

"malicious destruction and incitement to disobedience" were released.

Factions within the UDPS

The diplomatic adviser stated that, since the creation of the UDPS, there have been factions within the party and that some of these factions have formed alliances with the party in power as autonomous member-parties of the Presidential Movement (mouvance présidentielle, MP) (UDPS 18 Mar. 2011). These reportedly include the UDPS/Kibasa and the UDPS/Ngoyi (ibid.). No information on these two UDPS member-parties could be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate. However, an 8 December 2010 article published on the KongoTimes! news site reports a schism within the UDPS, which it says has divided into two groups: the UDPS-Mutanda (Zinnias/Limete) and the UDPS-Beltchika (Cardinal Malula/Righini). According to the KongoTimes!, although both groups reject each other's legitimacy, they both acknowledge the authority of Étienne Tshisekedi (8 Dec. 2010). No other information on these divisions within the UDPS could 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.

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Oral sources: Attempts to contact representatives of the Bundu dia Kongo (BDK), the Centre des droits de l'homme et du droit humanitaire (CDH), and La Voix des sans-voix pour les droits de l'homme (VSV), as well as a journalist from the Brussels daily newspaper *Le Soir*, were unsuccessful.

Publications: *The Europa World Year Book 2010, Political Handbook of the World 2010, Political Parties of the World 2009.*

Internet sites, including: Africa Governance, Monitoring and Advocacy Project (AfriMAP); Agence France-Presse (AFP); Amnesty International (AI); Association africaine de défense des droits de l'homme (ASADHO); British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC); CongoForum; *La Conscience* [Kinshasa]; Digitalcongo.net; Fédération internationale des ligues des droits de l'homme (FIDH); Freedom House; Human Rights Watch; International Crisis Group; Inter Press Service (IPS); *Jeune Afrique*; Organisation internationale de la francophonie (OIF); Organisation mondiale contre la torture (OMCT); Radio France internationale (RFI); Radio Okapi; Réseau documentaire international sur la région des Grands Lacs africains; Syfia Grands Lacs; United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO); United States-Department of State.

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