



## RESPONSES TO INFORMATION REQUESTS (RIRs)

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Organization Chart	Burundi: Role of members of the former royal family, the Baganwa (singular, Ganwa) in the political arena; whether a movement supporting the return of the monarchy in Burundi exists; whether the Baganwa have facial traits that distinguish them from Hutus and Tutsis (May 2003 - May 2009)	
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Tribunal	<b>Role of the Baganwa in the Burundian political arena</b>	
Refugee Protection Division	In correspondence sent to the Research Directorate on 8 May 2009, a representative from the Embassy of Burundi in Ottawa stated that members of the former royal family, the Baganwa, are [translation] "represented at all levels" in all of the republic's institutions, but that [translation] "no GANWA or BAGANWA ethnic group exists" in Burundi. Moreover, in correspondence sent to the Research Directorate on 6 May 2009, an honorary research director currently at the National Centre for Scientific Research (Centre national de recherche scientifique, CNRS) in France, who is also an historian and a specialist on the African Great Lakes Region (BiblioMonde.com n.d.), stated that the Baganwa had a [translation] "marginal" political role in Burundi, but that certain groups who identify themselves as Baganwa are trying to get recognized as an ethnic group, because [translation] "that would give them certain political advantages under the provisions of the peace accords signed in 2000" (6 May 2009). The Research Director explained that, by claiming the status of [translation] "Ganwa," the Baganwa are also trying to form closer ties with Hutus, a political strategy that would further distance them from the Tutsis, who are becoming less influential in the political arena (6 May 2009). That is why some Baganwa, including former Prime Minister Léopold Biha, are now active within Hutu political parties, such as the Front for Democracy in Burundi (Front pour la démocratie au Burundi, FRODEBU) (Research Director 6 May 2009). The power-sharing agreement in Burundi, signed on 20 July 2004, provides for the representation of the Baganwa in the National Assembly to be increased to 10 percent (Actualités du Burundi n.d.).	
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News	During a telephone interview with the Research Directorate on 5 May 2009, a representative of the United Nations (UN) Integrated Office in Burundi (Bureau intégré des Nations Unies au Burundi, BINUB) stated that two Baganwa, Rosa Paula Iribagiza Mwambusta and Samuel Mwambusta, hold seats in the Burundian parliament-as a member and a senator, respectively-that belong to the party in power, the National Council for the Defense of Democracy-Forces for the Defense of Democracy (Conseil national pour la défense de la démocratie-Forces de défense de la démocratie, CNDD-FDD), which is predominantly Hutu. The BINUB Representative also indicated that the royal family has asked authorities, through	
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## Proactive Disclosure

Member of Parliament Rosa Paula Iribagiza Mwambusta, to investigate the circumstances surrounding the death of the last king of Burundi, Ntare IV, to organize a state funeral in his honour and to give special treatment to the family members of former leaders (UN 5 May 2009; see also Renaissance FM/Bonesha FM 27 Feb. 2009 and RTNB 30 Apr. 2009). Since the death of Ntare IV on 29 April 1972, [translation] “none of the successive governments . . . has made any effort to find his remains and give him a dignified burial” (Renaissance FM/Bonesha FM 27 Feb. 2009). With regard to the repatriation of the remains of King Mwambusta IV, who died in exile in Switzerland in 1976, the Burundian authorities reportedly consider that the matter [translation] “is not a priority” (ARIB 13 Oct. 2009).

### Monarchist movement

During a telephone interview with the Research Directorate on 5 May 2009, a representative from the Burundian Human Rights League ITEKA (Ligue burundaise des droits de l’homme, Ligue ITEKA) stated that the main political movements supporting the return of the monarchy, such as the Party for the Restoration of the Monarchy and Dialogue (Parti pour la restauration de la monarchie et le dialogue, Abahuza), the Parliamentary Monarchist Party (Parti monarchiste parlementaire, PMP), and the Parliamentary Royalist Party (Parti royaliste parlementaire, PRP), which has become the People’s Reconciliation Party (Parti pour la réconciliation du peuple, PRP) are no longer active in the political arena since the death of their leaders-Mathias Hitimana, leader of the PRP, and Prince Godefroid Kamatari, leader of the Abahuza Party-and especially since their defeat in the 2005 general elections (see also Histoire de l’Afrique n.d.).

Moreover, in correspondence sent to the Research Directorate on 4 May 2009, a former professor of political science at the University of Florida who specializes in matters related to the Great Lakes, stated that the Baganwa do not have a significant political role in Burundi; their participation in the 2005 elections did not bring them much success from the voters.

Articles published in 2004 and in 2005 report that Princess Esther Kamatari, who has lived in Paris since her father’s assassination in 1964 (Afrol News 28 Sept. 2004), ran as a candidate in the 2005 presidential elections (Afrik.com 18 Jan. 2005; Afrol News 28 Sept. 2004; BBC 24 Sept. 2004). Afrik.com indicates that Princess Esther Kamatari-niece of King Mwambusta IV and president of the French Burundian Association (Association des Burundais de France) and the “A Child by Rugo” Association (Association “Un enfant par Rugo”)-ran as a candidate for the Abuhaza Party in the 2005 presidential elections (18 Jan. 2005). Officially registered in September 2004, the Abahuza Party, whose name means “bringing people together” (BBC 24 Sept. 2004), was then led by Prince Godefroid Kamatari, Princess Esther Kamatari’s older brother (The Independent 30 Oct. 2004). According to Afrik.com, the Abahuza Party promoted the re-establishment of a constitutional monarchy to ensure peace (18 Jan. 2005) and reduce ethnic divisions in the country (BBC 24 Sept. 2004). Princess Esther Kamatari stated that during the 500-year reign of the monarchy, Burundi enjoyed peace and political stability because “the King was the symbol of national unity” (Afrol News 28 Sept. 2004; see also BBC 24 Sept. 2004).

An article published by the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) on 24 September 2004 indicates that Princess Esther Kamatari advocated for a referendum to be held so that the people could “choose if they want a monarchy or republic” (see also Net Press 20 Sept. 2004). According to The Independent, one of Great Britain’s daily newspapers, Princess Esther Kamatari was hoping that her status as a woman and as a Ganwa, which is neither Hutu nor Tutsi, would “put her above tribal loyalties and win her votes from both ethnic groups” (30 Oct. 2004; see also Telegraph.co.uk 7 Nov. 2004).

In 2006, the Electoral Institute of Southern Africa (EISA), a Johannesburg-

based non-profit organization that is dedicated to promoting democracy, human rights and citizen participation in Africa (EISA n.d.), listed the Abahuzza Party among the parties that are not represented in the Burundian parliament (EISA Sept. 2006). However, in the elections for city councillors that took place on 3 June 2005, the Abahuzza Party won one seat (Ligue ITEKA 3 June 2005) in the municipality of Abioke (Histoire de l'Afrique n.d.). According to the latter source, the Abahuzza Party [translation] "was defeated despite a sympathetic trend in favour of Princess Esther" (Histoire de l'Afrique n.d.).

An article published on 30 August 2005 by the Panafrican News Agency (PANA) indicates that Princess Esther has "criticised how appointments to positions of responsibility in Burundi are based on ethnic affiliations." Moreover, in an open letter to the president of the Republic of Burundi dated 13 December 2005, Princess Esther Kamatari asked the President to recognize the Baganwa-like the Bahutu, Batutsi and Batwa-as a component of Burundian society (Grioo.com 13 Dec. 2005). In a letter sent to the President of the Republic of Burundi and to the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Burundi, the president of the Abahuzza party asked that the Baganwa be included in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (UN 29 Mar. 2009). A representative of the PMP also called for the Baganwa to be considered as a [translation] "component of the Burundian population" in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, just like other communities (Nkurunziza 6 Dec. 2005).

### **Facial traits that distinguish the Baganwa from other Burundians**

In correspondence sent to the Research Directorate on 6 May 2009, the Research Director stated that, in relation to other Burundians, the Baganwa cannot be identified by their name or physical traits because of the [translation] "diversity of marriages between princes and princesses over the generations." The Research Director also specified that the Baganwa are so numerous that they do not all know each other (6 May 2009).

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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**Internet sites, including:** Amnesty International (AI), Grands Lacs.Net, Human Rights Watch (HRW), Institut Panos Paris, Réseau documentaire international sur la région des Grands Lacs africains.

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