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Burundi: The Party for the Restoration of Monarchy and Dialogue (Parti pour la restauration de la monarchie et le dialogue, ABAHUZA); background, leaders, structure; treatment by the government and society. Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa

The Party for the Restoration of the Monarchy and Dialogue (Parti pour la restauration de la monarchie et le dialogue, ABAHUZA) is listed as a Burundian political party by the Electoral Institute of Southern Africa (EISA) (EISA Sept. 2006), a not-for-profit organization based in Johannesburg which promotes democratic governance in Africa (EISA n.d.). According to the *Telegraph*, the name ABAHUZA means "'come together'" in the Kirundi language (*Telegraph* 7 Nov. 2004 see also EISA Sept. 2006). Media sources report that ABAHUZA was recognized as an official political party by the Interior Ministry of Burundi in September 2004 (*The Independent* 23 Oct. 2004; ABP 20 Sept. 2004; *MX* 20 Oct. 2004). Information about ABAHUZA prior to 2004 could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

Media sources report that ABAHUZA's leaders aim to restore the monarchy in Burundi and heal ethnic and tribal divisions (ABP 20 Sept. 2004; *The Times* 29 Sept. 2004; BBC 24 Sept. 2004; *Essence* 1 May 2005). ABAHUZA leaders have stated that they hope to establish a constitutional monarchy based on European models (Afrik 18 Jan. 2005; Afrol News 28 Sept. 2004; UMUCO 21 Sept. 2004). ABAHUZA's presidential candidate has criticized the quotas that determine the percentage of Tutsis and Hutus in government (*The Independent* 23 Oct. 2004). According to media sources, the candidate hoped her status as a *Ganwa* [also known as *Baganwa*] (a royal class which considers itself neither Tutsi nor Hutu) would "put her above tribal loyalties" (*The Independent* 23 Oct. 2004; Afrik 18 Jan. 2005). *The Independent* reports that ABAHUZA's presidential platform includes social reforms and economic development (23 Oct. 2004). Similarly, in an interview with Afrik, the presidential candidate indicated that social issues, health and education were ABAHUZA's main priorities (Afrik 18 Jan. 2005).

Media sources report that in 2005 an ABAHUZA leader urged Burundi's president to recognize the Ganwa as a separate ethnic group (PANA 30 Aug. 2005a; Grioo 13 Dec. 2005) and criticized the appointment of political positions based on ethnicity in Burundi (PANA 30 Aug. 2005b). According to the United Nations (UN) Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), in March 2006, the president of ABAHUZA urged the president of Burundi and the UN to include the Ganwa in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (UN 29 Mar. 2006).

ABAHUZA party leaders and structure

Prince Godefroid Kamatari, a high-ranking member of the royal family (*The Independent* 23 Oct. 2004; Afrol News 28 Sept. 2004), was ABAHUZA's leader in 2004 when the party was founded (EISA Sept. 2006; Afrol News 28 Sept. 2004; ABP 20 Sept. 2004; Umuco 21 Sept. 2004). The Panafrican News Agency (PANA) and the website Burundi Contact report that Prince Kamatari died of unknown causes in August 2005 (PANA 21 Aug. 2005; Burundi Contact 22 Aug. 2005).

ABAHUZA's presidential candidate for the 2005 election was the sister of Prince Kamatari, Princess Esther Kamatari, a former fashion model who has been living in France since 1970 (*The Independent* 23 Oct. 2004; *Telegraph* 7 Nov. 2004). She is the niece of the last king (or *mwami*) of Burundi (Eggers 2006, 72; *The Independent* 23 Oct. 2004; PANA 30 Aug. 2005b). Media sources report that Esther Kamatari has been engaged in relief work for Burundi since the 1990s (Afrol News 28 Sept. 2004; *The Independent* 23 Oct. 2004; *Essence* 1 May 2005; All Africa 3 Nov. 2005).

Further information about the leaders and structure of ABAHUZA could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

Treatment by the government and society

Information on the treatment of ABAHUZA members by government authorities and society was scarce among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate. According to an article in the *Telegraph*, Esther Kamatari received death threats and "menacing" letters and phone calls in 2004 after announcing her presidential candidacy (*Telegraph* 7 Nov. 2004).

In a telephone interview with the Research Directorate, a representative of the United Nations (UN) Integrated Office in Burundi (Bureau intégré des nations unies au Burundi, BINUB) stated that ABAHUZA has not been very active politically and is not widely popular in Burundi (UN 7 May 2009). In correspondence with the Research Directorate, a political science professor at the University of Florida similarly noted that the monarchist party played only a minor role in politics and had the support of only a small portion of the population; he doubted members of ABAHUZA would be targeted by the authorities (Professor of Political Science 4 May 2009).

African Elections Database and the the Burundi Human Rights League (Ligue burundaise des droits de l'homme ITEKA, Ligue ITEKA) indicate that ABAHUZA won one seat of 3,225 in the 3 June 2005 communal elections (Ligue ITEKA June 2005; African Elections Database 30 June 2005). The African Elections Database indicates that the seat is in the Cibitoke zone of Bujumbura (*ibid.*).

According to EISA and the African Elections Database, ABAHUZA did not win any seats in the parliamentary elections (EISA Sept. 2006; African Elections Database 5 July 2006), which occurred on 4 July 2005 (*ibid.*). Although the African Elections Database did not list specific results for ABAHUZA, it indicates that "independent and other" parties received 4.51 percent of votes (*ibid.*).

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), European Country of Origin, Information Network (ecci.net), Human Rights Watch (HRW), International Crisis Group, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) RefWorld.

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