

# Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada

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## Responses to Information Requests

Responses to Information Requests (RIR) respond to focused Requests for Information that are submitted to the Research Directorate in the course of the refugee protection determination process. The database contains a seven-year archive of English and French RIRs. Earlier RIRs may be found on the UNHCR's [Refworld](#) website. Please note that some RIRs have attachments which are not electronically accessible. To obtain a PDF copy of an RIR attachment please email [Basesdedonnees.DatabaseUnit@irb-cisr.gc.ca](mailto:Basesdedonnees.DatabaseUnit@irb-cisr.gc.ca).

1 March 2012

### **RWA104034.FE**

Rwanda: The Democratic Green Party of Rwanda (DGPR), including its structure, the name of its president and its senior leaders; the treatment of its members by the authorities (2009-February 2012)  
Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa

#### **1. The leaders and the structure of the DGPR**

According to its website, the DGPR was launched on 14 August 2009 (DGPR 2009) by [translation] "deserters of the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF)" (AFP 14 July 2010). Its leader is apparently Frank Habineza (AI 18 Feb. 2010; Human Rights Watch 9 Feb. 2010), and it appears to be a new opposition party that is [Human Rights Watch English version] "critical of government policies" (ibid.).

According to two sources, the RPF has been in power since the end of the genocide 1994 (AI 3 June 2011; Human Rights Watch 9 Feb. 2010). Its leader, Paul Kagamé, became Rwanda's president in 2000 (Encyclopaedia Britannica Inc. 2004-2011; PaulKagame.com n.d.), after being elected by the Transitional National Assembly (ibid.). In 2003, he was elected president of Rwanda (AFP 21 Feb. 2010; BBC 25 Jan. 2007), and in 2010, he won a second presidential mandate (AFP 11 Aug. 2010; Human Rights Watch 11 Feb. 2011). Additional information on the leaders and the structure of the DGPR could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate.

According to an article published by Agence France-Presse (AFP), in 2010, three Rwandan opposition parties-the United Democratic Forces (Forces démocratiques unifiées, FDU), the DGPR and the Social Party Imberakuri (Parti social Imberakuri, PS-Imberakuri) created the Permanent Consultative Council of Opposition Parties (Conseil de concertation permanente des partis d'oppositions, CCP) (21 Feb. 2010; *Le Potentiel* 22 Feb. 2010). This article states that these three political parties [translation] "decided to join forces 'in the face of numerous administrative and legal obstacles set up by the current regime to prevent political parties from formally registering themselves'" (AFP 21 Feb. 2010). Two sources stated that, in fact, the DGPR and the FDU have not been formally registered (AFP 21 Feb. 2010; AI 5 Aug. 2010). Additional information on the formal registration of the DGPR could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate.

An Amnesty International (AI) article reports that the RPF [AI English version] "tightly controls political space, civil society and the media, contending that this is necessary to prevent renewed violence" (AI 3 June 2011). That Amnesty International article also states, [AI English version] "Restrictions on freedom of association and expression prevented new opposition parties from contesting the August 2010 elections" (ibid.; see also Human Rights Watch 11 Feb. 2011).

#### **2. Treatment of DGPR members by the authorities**

According to an article published by Human Rights Watch, [Human Rights Watch English version] "In 2009, several meetings of the Green Party and the PS-Imberakuri ... were broken up by police, in some cases

violently" (Human Rights Watch 9 Feb. 2010). That article also reports that [Human Rights Watch English version] "Green Party members have come under pressure to give up their political activities, and some have received anonymous phone calls asking for information about Habineza [the party leader] and his travel plans" (ibid.).

Also according to that article, ahead of the presidential election in August 2010, [Human Rights Watch English version] "Opposition party members [faced] increasing threats, attacks, and harassment" (ibid.). The article also states that in February of that year, Mr. Habineza was allegedly threatened in a restaurant in Kigali (ibid.; see also AI 18 Feb. 2010). A man reportedly told him that he was being monitored [Human Rights Watch English version] "very closely" and that his past and future comings and goings were known (ibid.).

According to several sources, André Kagwa Rwisereka, Vice President of the DGPR, was found dead on 14 July 2010 (AFP 14 July 2010; *Jeune Afrique* 21 July 2010; Human Rights Watch 2 Aug. 2010; AI 3 June 2011). Amnesty International indicates that he [AI English version] "in the weeks before his murder ... he was concerned for his security" (ibid.). In addition, Human Rights Watch reports that he [Human Rights Watch English version] "feared being killed as a result of his opposition to the ... Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF)" (21 July 2010). The Amnesty International article also states that he had been threatened (AI 3 June 2011); this was also allegedly the case for the party's president (RFI 15 July 2010; *Jeune Afrique* 21 July 2011). Also according to Amnesty International, the police opened an investigation, but the prosecution claimed [AI English version] "to have insufficient evidence to press charges" (AI 3 June 2011).

In January 2012, a grenade allegedly exploded near the DGPR offices in Remera-Kigali (DGPR 5 Jan. 2012). Some people allegedly threatened to [AI English version] "rape and decapitate" certain party members who had decided to reopen the DGPR offices (ibid.). Additional information on this explosion or information indicating that the DGPR was the intended target could not 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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**Publication:** *The Europa World Year Book 2011*.

**Internet sites, including:** Africa Governance Monitoring and Advocacy Project; Afrik.com; Agence de presse africaine; AllAfrica.com; Factiva; France24; Freedom House; *The Guardian*; The Heritage Foundation; International Crisis Group; International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH); *Political Handbook of the World*; *The New Times*; Panapress; Radio Netherlands Worldwide; Reporters sans frontières; Rwanda News Agency; Rwandan Collective of Leagues and Associations for the Defense of Human Rights (Collectif des ligues et associations de défense des droits de l'homme au Rwanda, CLADHO); United Nations – Integrated Regional Information Networks; United States – Department of State, Overseas Security Advisory Council; The World Press.

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