

OFFICIAL NAME: Republic of Burundi

CAPITAL: Bujumbura

SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT: Unitary Multiparty Republic with Transitional Government

AREA: 27,837 Sq Km (10,747 Sq Mi)

ESTIMATED 2000 POPULATION 6,840,900



LOCATION & GEOGRAPHY: Burundi is a landlocked country in the center of Africa. It is bound by Rwanda to the north, Tanzania to the east and south, Lake

Tanganyika to the southwest and Democratic Republic of the Congo (Zaire) to the west. Burundi is a high rolling country that is part of the Great African Plateau while it forms the divide between the Nile and the Zaire River Basins and has three natural regions. (1.) The Rift Valley also known as the Imbo which is a narrow plain along the western border with Zaire. (2.) The eastern zone known as Kumoso which consists of the central and eastern plateaux and the savannas of the eastern border. (3.) The central mountain region which is a series of ridges that lie north to south. The Ruzizi is the most important river which flows into the Zaire River Basin and all other rivers and tributaries are connected to the Zaire and Nile River Basins. Major Cities (pop. est.); Bujumbura 236,000, Gitega 21,000, Ngozi 15,000 (1990). Land Use; forested 3%, pastures 36%, agricultural-cultivated 53%, other 8% (1993).

CLIMATE: Burundi has an equatorial climate that is uncomfortably hot but varies with altitude and season. There are two wet seasons alternating with two dry seasons. The dry seasons are between June to August and January to February with the long wet season between March to May and the short one between September to December. Rainfall is irregular falling mainly in the northwest with violent rainstorms common at higher altitudes. Average annual precipitation in Bujumbura is 850 mm (33 inches) and the average temperature is 24 degrees Celsius (75 degrees Fahrenheit). The upper elevations of the Kumoso are generally cool with temperatures below 19 degrees Celsius (66 degrees Fahrenheit).

PEOPLE: The principal ethnic majority are the Hutu who account for 82% of the population with the Tutsi also known as the Watutsi or Batutsi accounting for 14%. The Twa, a pygmoid group account for 1% with Europeans and Asians accounting for the remaining 2% of the population.

DEMOGRAPHIC/VITAL STATISTICS: Density; 216 persons per sq km (560 persons per sq mi) (1991). Urban-Rural; 7.5% urban, 92.5% rural (1986). Sex Distribution; 48.5% male, 51.5% female (1990). Life Expectancy at Birth; 50.0 years male, 54.0 years female (1990). Age Breakdown; 45% under 15, 27% 15 to 29, 16% 30 to 44, 7% 45 to 59, 4% 60 to 74, 1% 75 and

over (1990). Birth Rate; 47.0 per 1,000 (1990). Death Rate; 15.0 per 1,000 (1990). Increase Rate; 32.0 per 1,000 (1990). Infant Mortality Rate; 111.0 per 1,000 live births (1990).

RELIGIONS: Mostly Christians which account for 86% of the population, of which around 78% are Roman Catholic and there is also a Protestant minority. Around 14% of the population follow local native tribal beliefs and 1% are Muslims represented by the Asian groups.

LANGUAGES: The official languages are Rundi and French, although Swahili is also widely spoken throughout the country. Only 3% of the population can read or write French.

EDUCATION: Aged 25 or over and having attained: N/A. Literacy; literate population aged 15 or over 50.0% (1990).

MODERN HISTORY - WWII TO 1993: After World War II the former German colony of Ruanda-Urundi was made a trust territory under Belgian administration by the UN. In 1959 it was split into Rwanda and Urundi. In Sept. 1961 Prince Louis Rwagasore became Prime Minister but was assassinated two months later. In the same year Urundi voted to become the independent Kingdom of Burundi and on July 1, 1962 it gained independence with the Tutsi controlling the country. After Burundi's independence, ill feeling between the Hutu and Tutsi led to almost continued unrest. Between 1962 and 1965 two more Prime Ministers were assassinated and in 1966 a military coup led by Michel Micombero overthrew the monarchy and Burundi became a republic. In 1972 an unsuccessful revolt by the Hutu against the Tutsi resulted in 100,000 deaths, most of which were Hutu as well as the death of King Mwami Ntare V. In 1976 Col. Jean-Baptiste Bagaza ousted Micombero and became President. In 1981 voters approved a new constitution which provided for a National Assembly and in 1982 an assembly was elected. Under Pres. Bagaza relations between Burundi's government and its influential Roman Catholic church deteriorated. Discontentment within the army led to the overthrow of Bagaza in 1987 and Pierre Buyoya succeeded Bagaza. He began working for greater religious freedom, although ethnic fighting flared up resulting in an estimated 5,000 further deaths during 1988. In Feb. 1991 Pres. Buyoya signed a decree which established the Charter of National Unity as a result of a national referendum and on Feb 12, 1991 reshuffled the Council of Ministers in an attempt to mend the ethnic differences resulting in the appointment of 12 Hutu members to the Council including the Prime Minister, Adrien Sibomana. On Nov. 23, 1991 while Pres. Buyoya was on a visit to France some 270 people were killed in simultaneous attacks by rebels that continued for several days in some of the regional provinces. By Jan. 1992 the death toll was estimated to be some 550 with 10,000 mainly Hutu refugees. On Jan. 4, 1992 the Presidents of Burundi, Rwanda and Zaire agreed to reactivate permanent security commissions while on Mar. 9, 1992 a referendum on a draft constitution resulted in overwhelming support for

changes that included multiparty politics. In Mar. 1992, some 30 soldiers thought to be in pay of ex-Pres. Bagaza unsuccessfully attempted a coup and in April former hard line Tutsi minister Cyprien Mbonimpa was arrested for his alleged involvement in the plot. On Apr. 17, 1993 Pres. Buyoya signed a decree setting June as the date for Burundi's first democratic multiparty elections. The elections resulted in Melchoir Ndadaye of the Democratic Front being elected as President, the first Hutu to become head of state, although demonstrations followed by disgruntled Tutsi. On June 29, 1993 legislative elections resulted in a Tutsi woman, Sylvie Kinigi, being appointed Prime Minister of a carefully balanced government. On Oct. 21, 1993 a Tutsi inspired attempted coup resulted in the death of Pres. Ndadaye while Kinigi sought refuge in the French embassy. Waves of ethnic violence followed the attempted coup with thousands of Hutu and Tutsi being killed and whole villages being burnt to the ground while some 800,000 refugees had fled.

CURRENCY: The official currency is the Franc (FBu) divided into 100 Centimes.

ECONOMY: Gross National Product; USD \$1,102,000,000 (1993). Public Debt; USD \$999,000,000 (1993). Imports; FBu 56,467,600,000 (1994). Exports; FBu 26,499,300,000 (1994). Tourism Receipts; USD \$3,000,000 (1993). Balance of Trade; FBu -22,603,000,000 (1994). Economically Active Population; 2,779,777 or 52.9% of total population (1991). Unemployed; N/A.

MAIN TRADING PARTNERS: Its main trading partners are Belgium, Luxembourg, Germany, France, Kenya, Japan, the UK, the USA and the Netherlands.

MAIN PRIMARY PRODUCTS: Bananas, Beans, Cassava, Cobalt, Coffee, Coconuts, Columbium, Copper, Maize, Nickel, Peat, Phosphates, Platinum, Sweet Potatoes, Tantalum, Tea, Timber, Tin, Tungsten, Uranium, Vanadium.

MAJOR INDUSTRIES: Agriculture, Beverages, Blankets, Fishing, Forestry, Shoes, Soaps.

MAIN EXPORTS: Beer, Cigarettes, Coffee, Cotton, Soft Drink, Tea.

TRANSPORT: Railroads; nil. Roads; length 6,300 km (3,915 mi) (1991). Vehicles; cars 11,791 (1989), trucks and buses 9,798 (1989). Merchant Marine; vessels 1 (1979), deadweight tonnage N/A. Air Transport; N/A.

COMMUNICATIONS: Daily Newspapers; total of 1 with a circulation of 20,000 (1994). Radio; receivers 300,000 (1994). Television; receivers 4,500 (1994). Telephones; units 15,600 (1993).

MILITARY: 12,600 (1995) total active duty personnel with 99.2% army, 0.0% navy and 0.8% air force while military expenditure accounts for 2.4% (1991) of the Gross National Product (GNP).