

RWANDA

Date of Elections: 26 December 1983

Purpose of Elections

Elections were held for all the seats in Parliament on the normal expiry of the members' term of office.

Characteristics of Parliament

The unicameral Parliament of Rwanda, the National Development Council (*Conseil National de Developpement*), comprises 70 Deputies elected for 5 years*. There is one Deputy for every 35,000 registered electors.

Electoral System

All Rwandese citizens at least 18 years of age are entitled to vote in the electoral district where they reside. Disqualified are persons who have been convicted of murder or assassination, those convicted of undermining the State's internal or external security and consequently sentenced to a term of imprisonment in excess of 12 months, and members of the armed forces convicted of desertion. The right of vote is suspended as regards prisoners, persons under the Government's care and the insane.

Electoral registers are compiled on the municipal level. Voting is compulsory.

Candidates for Parliament must be citizens at least 21 years of age of good character who have resided for at least six months in the constituency where running and who have obtained a diploma certifying four years' study in a secondary school or the equivalent. Ineligible are persons deprived of the right to vote, those having been convicted and sentenced to imprisonment for 12 months to five years in the preceding 10 years, or to more than five years in the preceding 20 years, fraudulent bankrupts, persons legally incapacitated on a permanent basis, and those having shirked their military obligation through desertion. The parliamentary mandate is incompatible with the office of President of the Republic, certain public functions at the national and local level, membership of the armed forces, and the post of salaried agent in the private sector.

Candidatures must be submitted from 118 to 104 days prior to the election date. The final list of candidates is compiled by the President of the National Revolutionary Movement for Development (MRND), the country's sole political party; it contains twice as many names (140) as there are parliamentary seats. The country's 10 prefectures are deemed to be its electoral constituencies. Within these, the 70 Deputies are elected by simple majority, seats being allocated to those candidates having obtained the greatest number of votes.

Substitutes elected at the same time as titular Deputies fill parliamentary vacancies which occur between general elections.

* See section *Parliamentary Developments*, p. 20.

General Considerations **and** Conduct of the Elections

General elections had previously been held on 28 December 1981. However, the five-year term of the Parliament was counted as from 8 January 1979, and the expiry of the members' term of office was therefore considered a normal one. Electoral Law no. 18/1983 of 27 August 1983 set the date of the presidential and legislative elections, the former taking place on 19 December 1983.

At the fourth congress of the ruling National Revolutionary Movement for Development (MRND - *Mouvement révolutionnaire national pour le développement*), held from 26 to 29 June 1983, President of the Republic Juvenal Habyarimana had been re-elected as President of the MRND and, consequently, was nominated once more as sole presidential candidate. On legislative polling day, which followed a month-long campaign, the MRND candidates were overwhelmingly supported by 99.85% of the electorate; 17 former members lost their seats and 23 new members were elected.

Major General Habyarimana, who assumed power in 1973, announced a reshuffle of the Council of Ministers on 9 January 1984.

Statistics

1. *Results of the Elections and Distribution of Seats in the National Development Council*

Number of registered electors	2,433,265
Valid votes	2,364,592

Political Group	Number of Candidates	Number of Seats
National Revolutionary Movement for Development (MRND)	140	70

2. *Distribution of Deputies according to Professional Category*

Public administration	70
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3. *Distribution of Deputies according to Sex*

Men	61
Women	<u>9</u>
	70