

## General

Rwanda was part of the former UN trust territory administered by Belgium. It is a landlocked country with the highest population density in Africa. However, only 5 per cent of the population lives in cities as the right of residence is restricted to those born or having recognized employment in them.

## Political and Economic Situation

The current president, a former cabinet minister, took power in July 1973 by means of a bloodless coup. A new constitution was approved by referendum at the end of 1978, and President Habyarimana was confirmed as head of state. Rwanda has just witnessed major political upheaval as the result of an invasion of armed rebels from the northern border. The Mouvement Révolutionnaire pour le Développement (MRD), established in 1975, is the only political party.

Rwanda has limited resources and is one of the 18 poorest countries in the world. Agriculture is the major employer and principal earner of foreign exchange. Industry accounts for 18 per cent of GDP, but its growth is limited by small markets, poor transportation facilities and unreliable supply. Debt service remains at acceptable levels due mainly to substantial levels of foreign aid.

## Foreign Relations

Although very dependent economically on foreign assistance, Rwanda has been able to maintain a relatively autonomous foreign policy. Relations with Western countries, particularly France, Belgium and Canada, are good. Rwanda has had good relations with China for a long time.

## Relations with Canada

Relations between Rwanda and Canada are very good. However, they are primarily based on aid and "francophonie" and are not highly diversified. Both countries have official representatives in each other's capital. Official visits are frequent.