



## **Democratic Republic of Congo - Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on 26 July 2013**

### **Information on Bundu Dia Kongo over the past 3 years, including: Treatment of the group by the government between July 2012-2013 and whether it is perceived by the government as a religious or political group**

A report issued in April 2013 commenting on events of 2012 by the *United States Department of State* notes the:

“...Bunda dia Mayala (formerly known as Bunda dia Congo), a political and religious movement...” (United States Department of State (19 April 2013) *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2012, Congo, Democratic Republic of the*, Section 6. Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and Trafficking in Persons/Women/Reproductive Rights)

In June 2013 a report by *Freedom from Torture* states:

“Bundu Dia Kongo' (BDK) – a 'banned' political-religious group centred in the Bas-Congo province.” (Freedom from Torture (25 June 2013) *Freedom from Torture submission to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women for its examination of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)*)

In November 2010 the *United States Department of State* points out that:

“Members of the ethnically based spiritual and political movement Bundu dia Mayala (BDM), formerly Bundia dia Kongo (BDK), reside predominantly in the Bas-Congo Province. After significant persecution in 2008, the organization was forced to change its name and purpose; BDM has not been able to gain official recognition as a political association although the religious branch of the group continued to meet secretly.” (United States Department of State (17 November 2010) *International Religious Freedom Report 2010: Congo, Democratic Republic of the*)

An article published by *Reuters* in February 2013 states:

“Followers of Bundu dia Kongo (BDK) reject central authority over the western province and are campaigning for the re-establishment of the pre-colonial Kongo kingdom, which encompassed parts of present-day Angola, Democratic Republic of Congo and Gabon...In 2008, the group changed its name to Bundu dia Mayala (BDM).” (Reuters (26 February 2013) *Congo (DR) conflict*)

A document released in November 2011 by the *United Nations Organisation Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo* notes:

“On 23 May 2011, the Minister of Interior and Security prohibited the functioning of the Bundu Dia Mayala movement, considered to be highly popular in the Bas-Congo, as a political party. However, according to the Law No. 04/002 of 15 March 2004 on the organization and functioning of political parties, in this case only the Tribunal de grande instance would be competent to ban the movement as a political party. In

Bas-Congo province, several human rights violations against members of this movement, including arbitrary arrests and ill-treatment, have been documented by the UNJHRO. The Bundu Dia Mayala movement was created in March 2009 following the qualification of Bundu Dia Kongo (BDK) as an association de malfaiteurs by the Court of Appeals of Matadi on 30 August 2008.” (United Nations Organisation Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (November 2011) *Report Of The United Nations Joint Human Rights Office On Human Rights And Fundamental Freedoms During The Pre-Electoral Period In The Democratic Republic Of Congo*,p.15)

Research issued in April 2011 by the *Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada* including the following, stating:

“According to a 17 December 2010 article by Radio Okapi, the radio of the United Nations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo...in a press release issued on 15 December 2010, the BDM accused the police special services of arresting and detaining four of its members in December 2010.” (Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (6 April 2011) *Democratic Republic of the Congo: Information on the Bundu dia Kongo (BDK) movement, including its political program, location of its offices, the number of its members, its situation with respect to other political parties, and the attitude of government authorities toward its leaders and members (2007 - April 2011)*)

## References

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This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Refugee Documentation Centre within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

### **Sources Consulted**

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