

Rwanda Runup to Elections: Grenade Attacks, Arrest and Assassination Threats

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On Feb. 19, grenades exploded at a bus station, a restaurant, and a building site in Kigali, Rwanda, in the tense run up to Rwanda's 2010 presidential election on August 9th. Opposition candidates reported threats of arrest and assassination.

Since this [KMEC](#) Radio News report, leading presidential candidate [Victoire Ingabiré Umuhoza](#), of the [FDU-Inkingi Party](#), has [requested temporary refugee status](#) at the UK Embassy in Kigali. [Frank Habineza](#), President of the [Democratic Green Party of Rwanda](#), has also [asked the Rwandan Government to protect him](#) from an assassination plot reported on Feb. 22 by Umuseso, one of the last Rwandan newspapers independent of the Rwandan Government. Umuseso publishes in [Kinyarwanda](#), the African language shared by all Rwandans, who are otherwise largely divided between French and English speakers.

During the same week, Paris-based Reporters without Borders protested state repression of Umuseso, whose [publisher and acting editor were, with an Umuseso reporter, sentenced to prison terms and fines](#) for reporting on an alleged romantic affair between two senior government officials.

French President Nicholas Sarkozy was, at the same time, on a diplomatic mission to Rwanda, so Reporters without Borders called on him to call for press freedom there, [as reported by the Voice of America](#). Sarkozy instead turned his attention to [restoring ties that France and Rwanda severed over disputed histories of the Rwanda Genocide of 1994](#).

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