

Ndadaye invested as Burundi's first ethnic Hutu president

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BUJUMBURA, July 10 (AFP) - Melchior Ndadaye was invested Saturday as Burundi's first president from the country's Hutu ethnic majority following his election victory achieved against the odds last month.

A former psychologist turned bank executive, Ndadaye, 40, unexpectedly defeated incumbent Pierre Buyoya, a member of the traditionally ruling Tutsi minority, in elections in early June.

After the investiture ceremony Ndadaye, who has pledged to put an end to the east African country's bloody history of ethnic strife, honoured an earlier undertaking by naming a Tutsi, Sylvie Kinigi, as prime minister.

In his investiture speech Ndadaye promised to "build a new Burundi characterised by peace for all, a culture respecting human rights and an ethic of true unity."

Ndadaye also announced a general

amnesty for prisoners jailed prior to June 1, which should bring the release of more than 500 political and common-law detainees.

The president also plans to pave the way for the return of Burundian exiles who fled the country's ethnic conflicts.

The investiture at Congress headquarters in Kigobe, north of the capital, was attended by Mobutu Sese Seko, Juvenal Habyarimana and Ali Hassan Mwinyi, the presidents of Zaire, Rwanda and Tanzania respectively.

Kinigi, a senior figure in the Buyoya administration, has named a government which includes seven other Tutsis.

Thousands of Tutsis held demonstrations following Ndadaye's election campaign, which they accused him of running on "ethnic-based" lines.

And last Saturday five rebel army officers ordered troops to surround

Ndadaye's residence in an attempted insurgency thwarted by their commanders. thousands of lives since Burundi's independence in 1962.

Ethnic clashes between Hutus and Tutsis have claimed hundreds of dn-sa/jms/bb AFP AFP SEQN-0198