

DRC Domestic Broadcasting, 6 September, 2010 (30 August– 5 September, 2009)

by Marie Lamensch, MIGS Reporter for the DRC

Government owned media

(Radio-Television Nationale Congolaise TV, government-owned, Kinshasa, 1230 gmt, August 30, 2010, in French)

- According to Victor Nzuzi Mbembe, the DRC's external debt comes as a result of the Cold War during which the country had to build important infrastructure, most of which did not work fully.

Privately-owned media

(Radio Candip, community radio broadcasting funded by Belgian NGO, Bunia, 1530 gmt, August 30, 2010, in French)

- The office of the presidential political party 'the Popular Party for the Reconstruction and Development' in Ituri District accused several MPs from opposition parties of propagating hate speech among local communities.

(AFP, French news agency, Paris, 30 August, 2010, 1907 gmt, English)

“Journalists' work conditions on the slide in DR Congo – watchdog”

- Reporters Without Borders [RSF] believes working conditions for journalists in the DRC are declining ahead of the presidential elections. The organization therefore urged President Kabila to promote press freedom in the country.
- Deliberate threats, arrests and murders have apparently taken place but were ignored by the government and nothing has been done to improve the situation.
- The head of a newspaper is also being held on treason charges and risks between 20 years of jail or even death for publishing a statement by Hutu rebels of the Rwanda Democratic Liberation Forces (FDLR) in 2009.

(Le Potentiel, privately-owned daily, article dated 30 August, 2010, in French)

“Justice transitionnelle : le gouvernement favorable à la création des chambres spécialisées”

- Minister of justice and human rights, Luzolo Bambi Lessa, announced the creation of special chambers to judge perpetrators of human rights and international crimes committed in the DRC.
- Concerning the Chebeya affair, when a human rights activist who was recently killed in the DRC, the minister said the government wanted truth, justice and an impartial trial.
- The minister also published a “white book” concerning human rights violations which took place in the country and added that the government would make efforts to prosecute those responsible for the crimes. Luzolo referred to human rights crimes, international

crimes, sexual violence, genocidal massacres (Makobola, Kasika, Mwenga), and crimes committed in Kisangani in 2002.

- The government also wants the ICC to sanction human rights violations committed by DRC's aggressors, including Rwanda and Uganda. Crimes committed in the DRC have been referred to the ICC and reports concerning Thomas Lubanga, Mathieu Ngudjolo et Germain Katanga have been opened.
- Concerning rapes in Walikale, the minister said investigations had been opened in late August. The minister also added that a policy of zero tolerance meant that nobody was untouchable and could be prosecuted.

(Radio Okapi website, MONUC/UN-sponsored radio, Kinshasa, 31 August, 2010, in French)

“DR Congo: Repatriated ex-combatants of disputed nationality flee Rwandan camp”

- Some 26 ex-combatants of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) presented as Congolese by Rwandan authorities escaped from the Mutobo Camp. Jean Sayi Nzoga, the head of the Rwandan of Demobilization and Reinsertion Commission said the Rwandan commission would now be more careful in regards to the identity of persons to repatriate.

(Le Potentiel, privately-owned daily, article dated 31 August, 2010, in French)

“Butembo : les FDLR attaquent le camp des FARDC à Kasuo”

- FDLR combatants attacked a FARDC base in Kasuo. Three FDLR rebels died while ten FARDC soldiers were wounded.
- Le Potentiel urges villagers to condemn those responsible for committing abuses, including their Congolese accomplices.

(Radio Candip, community radio broadcasting funded by Belgian NGO, Bunia, 1530 gmt, August 31, 2010, in French)

- District commissioner of Haut Uele District called upon various NGOs working in Dungu town to extend their humanitarian assistance beyond Dungu town. He said thousands of victims of the attacks by the LRA are in urgent need of humanitarian assistance.

(Radio Candip, community radio broadcasting funded by Belgian NGO, Bunia, 1530 gmt, September 1, 2010, in French)

- The Japanese ambassador to DR Congo ended his visit in Bunia town, Ituri District and expressed his satisfaction about peace returned to the area after years of conflict.

(Radio Candip, community radio broadcasting funded by Belgian NGO, Bunia, 1530 gmt, September 2, 2010, in French)

- Fighting between the Armed Forces of the DR Congo and militia fighters of the Popular Front for Justice in Congo has intensified and spread further away from Bunia (Ituri).

(Radio Candip, community radio broadcasting funded by Belgian NGO, Bunia, 1530 gmt, September 3, 2010, in French)

- Sources from the leadership of the Popular Front for Justice in Congo in Uganda announced that their leader Shariff Manda was arrested by the Ugandan police. Sharriff Manda was extradited and is being held at the military barracks of the Armed Forces of DR Congo in Bunia town.

(Radio France Internationale, French state-funded public radio, Paris, 2 September, 2010, 0530 gmt, in French)

“UN threatens to bring war crimes proceedings against DR Congo rape perpetrators”

- UN Secretary-General's Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict on Tuesday threatened to bring war crimes proceedings against perpetrators of recent massive rape in DR Congo after 240 cases of rape were reported in the past few weeks. In areas such as Walikale, rape has become a weapon of revenge and organization on the ground do not know how to control the scourge, particularly since all armed groups are responsible and NGOs are not armed to foil attacks.

(Le Potentiel, privately-owned daily, article dated 1 September, 2010, in French)

“Crimes supposés contre des pygmées : des ONG réclament une enquête de la CPI”

- Approximately twenty NGOs urged the ICC to investigate crimes committed against Pygmies and other communities in the east and north-east DRC (Mambasa and Beni) by Jean-Pierre Bemba's MLC and Ugandan officers in 2002. Acts of cannibalism and sexual violence were recorded at the time and were part of an operation named “Effacer le tableau”

(Le Potentiel, privately-owned daily, article dated 2 September, 2010, in French)

“Ituri: les Pygmées contraints de quitter la forêt surexploitée”

- Pygmies in Ituri are the victims of over-exploitation of the forest. Pygmies are being forced to leave the forest to live in camps, where they are finding it difficult to adapt to their new environment. Forests in the area are being exploited for their timber or used as cacao plantations.
- Pygmies are also forced to work on mines or plantations for a low wage.
- There are reported tensions between local villagers and Pygmies as the two different cultures clash.
- Organizations have started programs meant to help and integrate the Pygmies, including literacy and agricultural programs.

(Le Potentiel, privately-owned daily, article dated 2 September, 2010, in French)

“Un émissaire de Ban Ki-moon à Kinshasa pour s’enquérir des cas de viols en RDC” by Louis-Paul Eyenga Sana

- Atul Khar, the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, is in Kinshasa in order to investigate cases of rape in the DRC. Madnodje Mounoubai, Monusco’s spokesperson, that this was a clear sign that the organ was ready to tackle the problem of violence committed against women in the DRC. She added that this was an opportunity for the UN and Congolese authorities to work together.
- Atul Khar met several civil society groups, Congolese officials and members of Monusco, including Roger Meece, the head of the mission. Both men discussed ways to better protect and assist victims of rape.
- Roger Meece also called on the authorities and Monusco to work together to put an end to these crimes.

(L’Observateur, privately owned daily, article dated 3 September, 2010, in French)

“A Muanda, Masimanimba, Sankuru... La pré-campagne électorale sur fond de violence” by Luc-Roger Mbala Bemba

- Incidents have been reported in Muanda during a debate between deputies and representatives of opposition parties. Several people were hurt as members of the PPRD and members of the opposition clashed. Some argue that the episode shows a climate of violence ahead of the elections. A few weeks ago, clashed occurred between opposition parties in Masimanimba. Tensions are seen as the result over leadership debates in the south-west provinces of the DRC.
- Tensions have also been recorded in Kasai Oriental, especially between members of the CCU as partisans clash over leadership issues. Several deputies have accused political leaders of inciting divisions and manipulating the youths. Several radios have been propagating hate speech. North and South Kivu have also been affected.
- The electoral process must be accompanied by a campaign of awareness and sense of responsibility on the part of politicians, civil society and the population in order for the electoral campaign to be peaceful. Some politicians and leaders are still ready to use ethnic and regional tensions to propagate hate.
- Since the publication of the electoral agenda, new political parties have emerged and all the actors only want to work in their interest. It is therefore crucial for politicians and their supporters to understand the need for peaceful and democratic elections.

(L’Avenir, independent daily, article dated 3 September, 2010, in French)

“Génocide des Hutus en Rdc, Onu-Rwanda : L’Onu défiant Kigali, publiera le rapport le 1er Octobre 2010” by Joachim Diana G.

- Following the leak of a document concerning massacres committed by Rwandan troops against Hutus in the DRC, the UN said an official report would be published in October. The UN added that the leak of the draft document had allowed countries concerned by the issue to have a say. These comments will be added to the report.

- The UN is criticized for failing to bring security to the eastern DRC, while at the same time accusing Rwanda of committing abuses. Following mass rapes committed by armed forces in the area, Monusco has once again been accused of non-assistance. However, the mission refuses to admit its mistakes and keeps issuing justifications. First, Monusco said that it had only heard about the rapes 10 days (12 August; the abuses took place between 30 July-3 August) after they occurred then said it had warned IMC, an NGO. IMC, however, denied these claims.
- Other NGOs said Monusco had known about the abuses earlier than it claims and that Monusco itself had warned various organizations. On August 10, a New York Times article stated that 25 people had been raped in the region. Monusco must have therefore been aware of the situation.
- Monusco is criticized for always using the same argument when abuses take place, that is that it is the Congolese government's responsibility to ensure the security of the population.
- It is time to realize that there is a sense of general incompetence and apathy within Monusco.
- Forthcoming elections have led to increased violence and there is a feeling that the FDLR has the capacity to become stronger.

(Le Potentiel, privately-owned daily, article dated 3 September, 2010, in French)

“Nord-Kivu: dormir dans la forêt pour se protéger des bandits”

- Fearing attack by armed groups or the FDLR, villagers in some areas have resorted to spending the night in the woods and the day in the village.
- Attacks on villages in eastern Congo have increased and looting is widespread. Victims are targeted depending on how much they can bring back from their fields. Young combatants take everything they can from the fields and sell products at the market. They also steal the villager's food and goods.
- These young soldiers also work for people who want to take away people's land once they have fled. They have been accused of being linked to the FDLR. Armed groups are trying to recruit villagers and some of them agree to join the ranks in order to survive. When food and goods cannot be found, these young men do not hesitate to rape, kill or abduct in exchange for money.

(L'Avenir, independent daily, article dated 4 September, 2010, in French)

“A quand le process public des violeurs”

- Sexual violence against women is becoming more and more frequent in the DRC, not only in conflict areas. The perpetrators are usually quickly released, either because they have paid a fine or because they know the right people, even though a “zero tolerance” policy is supposed to prevent this.
- L'Avenir urges the authorities to use their power and influence to reinforce positive values. Many believe themselves to be “untouchable” and the Justice Minister should address the issue.

(UBC Radio, Kampala, 5 September, 2010, 0400 gmt, in English)

“NGOs to broadcast radio programmes targeting Ugandan rebels”

- Civil society organizations in Uganda, DR Congo, Central African Republic and Sudan are proposing to broadcast messages appealing to LRA rebels to put down their weapons and surrender. The organizers want the rebels to know that a disarmament and reintegration project is in place.