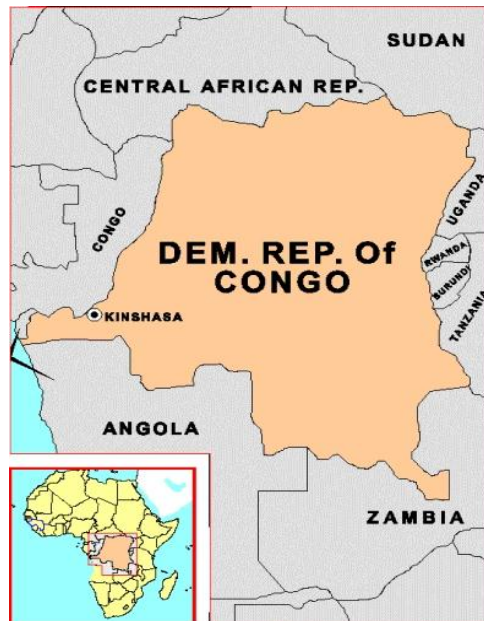


Democratic Republic of Congo: Domestic Media

Monitoring Report

*Montreal Institute for
Genocide and Human Rights Studies*

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11th July-17th July

Main Report Content

- 1. RTLTV banned from broadcasting...then reinstated**
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- 1. RTLTV banned from broadcasting...then reinstated**

Government-owned media

(Agence Congolaise de Presse, République Démocratique du Congo, government-owned news agency, Kinshasa, article dated 15 July 2011, in French)

“Levée de la mesure conservatoire d’interdiction de la chaîne RLTV”

- On Friday, Lambert Mended suspended the decree banning RLTV from broadcasting. The radio station was temporarily banned after “inciting violence and disturbing public order.” Mende called on the media not to incite violence in order to ensure a peaceful electoral process. The government will not tolerate any form of pressure against representatives any level of the government.

Privately-owned media

(Radio Okapi/Radio France Internationale, Kinshasa/Paris, 12 July, 2011, 1230 gmt, in French)

- RLTV (Radio Lisanga Television) has been barred from broadcasting. The radio station has close ties with the opposition. Communication and media minister, Lambert Mende Omalanga, accused RLTV of airing broadcasts disrupting public order. In a decree, he argued that he was applying the law.
- On 4 July, the station reported clashes between supporters of the UDPS (Union for Democracy and Social Progress) and state authorities. The clashes led to the death of two UDPS supporters.

(Le Potentiel, privately-owned daily, article dated 15 July, 2011, in French)

“Au sujet de l’interdiction de la chaîne « RLTV » La lettre de JED à Lambert Mende”

- International NGO Journalist en Danger (JED) wrote a letter to Media and Communication minister Lambert Menda following his decision to ban RLTV from broadcasting.
- The letter states that such intolerant actions will compromise the elections and questions Mende’s decision. According to JED, broadcasting had already been closed before the Minister’s official decree.
- Mende accuses RLTV of contributing to public disorder by justifying violence, yet JED believes the minister is unable to provide proof.
- Baby Balukuna, one of the radio’s journalists, was attacked two weeks earlier after presenting a show supporting opposition leader Etienne Tshisekedi. No investigation has been conducted.
- JED says the current situation is a sign for worry as the government tries to gain the monopoly over media. It should be the role of the Minister of Media and Communication to regulate the media environment in an impartial way. Despite new media laws ensuring the impartiality and press freedom, the law has yet to be implemented. JED therefore calls on Mende to review his decree and allow RLTV to broadcast in order to avoid contributing to an already intimidating political climate.

2. Security and humanitarian situation update

Government-owned media

(Agence Congolaise de Presse, République Démocratique du Congo, government-owned news agency, Kinshasa, article dated 14 July 2011, in French)

“Vol spectaculaire au centre médical Caritas développement à Komanda”

- Armed men attacked and stole goods at a Caritas medical centre in Komanda, south of Bunia. Assailants looted various goods, including money, cell phones, and food. They also attacked the Federation for Congolese Enterprises. In Kasenyi, a group of men attacked several fishermen with machetes

Privately-owned media

(Le Potentiel, privately-owned daily, article dated 12 July, 2011, in French)

“Cours spécialisées en RDC: Amnesty international cogite avec Luzolo Bambi” by Donatien Ngandu Mupompa

- The Minister for Justice and Human Rights met with Amnesty International in order to discuss the best way to deal render justice to war crimes and human rights victims. Amnesty International representative for the DRC, Dr. Theo Boutruche, visited the country in order to contribute to the reform of the justice system, such as the creation of specialized courts. An Amnesty International report will be published soon.

(L’Avenir, privately-owned daily, article dated 13 July, 2011, in French)

“Dernière situation humanitaire en Rdc: En plus de l’insécurité, les déplacements de la population deploras”

- In a briefing on the humanitarian situation in the DRC, OCHA said the insecurity situation in the east has led to widespread displacement in the two Kivus and in the Oriental Province. Displacement have also been reported in Equateur and Katanga
- OCHA also added that the cholera epidemic in Kinshasa, Equateur and Bandundu is getting worse. The UN and NGOs has responded by launching various humanitarian initiatives
- South Kivu: some residents have been forced to spend the night in the forest after attacks by the FDLR. Cattle and poultry has also been stolen in several era. As part of their rapid response to displaced populations program, humanitarian partners have provided IDPs with various goods.
- In Chaminunu, International rescue committee (IRC) is helping about 1700 displaced families, while the ECC-MERU, Christian Aid and Irish aid has focused on IDPs in

Nyabimungu. The UNHCR facilitated the repatriation of Rwandans in South Kivu. 1266 Rwandans have been repatriated from Bukavu since the beginning of the year

- North Kivu: OCHA deplors the kidnapping of the Oicha General Hospital's head doctor by a group of armed men. The men apparently kidnapped him in order to attend to wounded and sick soldiers. They are now asking for a ransom. In Rutshuru, several cases of cholera have been reported in area of Katwe village. There has been widespread displacement in the region as well, especially in the area of Kazanza/Kakondero.
- Oriental province: the ICRC suspended road rehabilitation work in Dakwa after armed men attacked workers. The ICRC has also provided 5300 households with various goods.
- Equateur: 12462 people have been displaced
- Katanga: OCHA says it finds it difficult to gain access to Wimbi as a result of widespread insecurity and lack of good infrastructure. OCHA reports about 10000 IDPs. The security situation is getting worse and does not allow humanitarian agencies to provide help. The number of IDPs is increasing in Kabimba zone as a result of insecurity as well.

(L'Avenir, privately-owned daily, article dated 14 July, 2011, in French)

“Lutte contre les violences sexuelles : Des relais communautaires de six provinces à l'école de formation de la Monusco” by Papy Maluku

- In its attempt to fight sexual violence, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) is in the process of organizing 23 days of training for social mobilization teams in Bandundu, Bas-Congo, Katanga, Kinshasa, Kasai Occidental and Kasai Oriental. According to Monusco the aim of these 23 days is sensitize local leaders, members of civil society and the population on the subject of sexual violence and to facilitate contact with judicial bodies locally.
- During the same press conference, Monusco said the military situation was almost satisfying, although the Kinshasa has witnessed violence between the Congolese forces and members of the UDPS in front of CENI's offices
- In Equateur province, the UN mission has been deployment troops in order to help the PNC secure the area on time for the elections
- In Bas-Congo, Monusco has reopened its military and monitoring site in Matidi

(L'Observateur, privately-owned daily, article dated 14 July, 2011, in French)

“Territoire d'Irumu/Province Orientale: Récurrentes attaques rebelles contre des FARDC” by Dovin Ntelolo Diasonga

- According to Monusco, belligerents operating in Irumu South, Oriental province, have led several attacks against the FARDC. Spokesman Felix Prosper Basse said this is probably a sign that armed groups have formed alliances in the region,
- The same situation can be observed in North and South Kivu, where the FDLR do not hesitate to attack Congolese troops, a sign that armed groups are not ready to give up fighting and are becoming more “suicidal.” The FARDC is clearly not a deterrent force.
- Despite attacks, Monusco said it would continue to support operations conducted by the FARDC

- The security situation has deteriorated in Mahagi, Aru and Fataki where Monusco has established an early warning system. Results are said to be encouraging
- The 13th battalion of the FARDC in Chekele led an operation in Tsanda where belligerents were active for two days. Two rebels were arrested during the operation.
- Monusco has started a new operation (Black Hawk) in Gangala-Nagero-Gubir with the aim of deterring renewed attacks by Uganda's LRA. Other operations are also being conducted in Haut Uélé.
- In Oriental Province, LRA kidnappings and looting have been reported in Bangadi-Doruma-Banda .
- In North Kivu, armed groups have led repeated attacks against the FARDC in the aim of stealing weapons and ammunitions. Killings, lootings and rapes have decreased.
- Although the presence of Mai Mai Yakutumba in South Kivu remains worrying, no major incidents were reported in the past few days.

(Le Potentiel, privately-owned daily, article dated 16 July, 2011, in French)

“Sud-Kivu: les FDLR tuent et blessent à Walungu”

- The FDLR attacked two vehicles on Tuesday on the Bukavu-Mwenga road, leading to three deaths and six wounded. Personal and electoral material was looted. A colonel of the FARDC was present and shot at the assailants. The colonel as well as another passenger died during the attack. Another passenger died later at the hospital. A CENI jeep driving behind the first vehicle was also attacked and electoral kits stolen. The FDLR rebels were able to flee.

(Le Potentiel, privately-owned daily, article dated 16 July, 2011, in French)

“La Monusco rouvre le site des observateurs militaires à Matadi”

- Monusco proceeded to reopen its military site in Matadi, Bas Congo, in order to protect the local population. The presence of Front de libération de l'Enclave de Cabinda (FLEC) in Tshela has been a cause for worry and has led to the displacement of several local residents. The UN mission conducted an investigation following rumors of FLEC's presence in Kimuanda and Ntoko, but Monusco said rumors proved false.
- Local population welcome to reopening of the site

3. Election Update

Government-owned media

(Radio-Television Nationale Congolaise TV, government-owned, Kinshasa, 1230 gmt, 11 July, 2011, in French)

- CENI chairman, Pastor Daniel Ngoy Mulunda, announced a two-day extension of the voters' registration exercise in Fizi, South Kivu. The registration exercise was completed in six provinces.

Privately-owned media

(L'Observateur, privately-owned daily, article dated 11 July, 2011, in French)

“Week-end dernier au Centre du renouveau. L'UNC, le MLC, le MR, la LIDEC... ont présenté leurs projets de gouvernance” by Freddy Longangu

- Despite some internal conflict, the opposition seems committed to a change of leadership in the government. Several political parties, including the MLC (Mouvement de libération du Congo), the FNTC (Front pour un nouveau type de Congolais) and the UNC (Union pour la nation congolaise) have already presented their programs to the public. The MR and the Union for the nation organized a forum under the slogan “Alternatives for the Congo” and seek to promote alternative governance methods. MR's president said the goal of the forum was to present clear alternatives and to convince the Congolese people that, once in power, the opposition would not improvise. The forum is a prelude to a possible common program between the two parties. Emphasizing the need for visionary, patriotic and competent leaders, the future of the country is said to depend on change and judicial choices. He therefore called on the opposition to set arguments aside and work in the interest of the people.
- The vice-president of CENI, Jacques Djoli, praised the initiatives of the Union pour la Nation but suggested that forums of such as these should address real questions about the electoral process. Members of the opposition have criticized irregularities within the electoral process but CENI argued that opposition parties should contribute to the monitoring of the registration process. He also added that while international leaders would only come during the elections, political parties should monitor the entire process. On the subject of irregularities, such as the registrations of minors, Jacques Djoli acknowledged these shortcomings and argued that it was hard to verify the age of potential voters, particularly due to the weakness of the administration.

(Le Potentiel, privately-owned daily, article dated 12 July, 2011, in French)

“La Monusco ne certifiera pas les résultats des élections 2011” by Ludi Cardoso

- Monusco said it would not certify the results of the 2011 elections, despite the UDPS's demands
- Roger Meece said certification is the role of CENI. National and international observers will monitor the process, and the UN will provide logistical and technical help through the UNDP . Underlining the need for democratic, transparent and credible elections, the goal is to create the most favorable conditions. Meece added that the security situation has improved since 2006 and hopes that conditions will continue to improve in order to avoid the post-electoral violence observed in 2006.

(Le Potentiel, privately-owned daily, article dated 12 July, 2011, in French)

“La CENI clôture les opérations d’enrôlement dans six provinces”

- On Sunday, CENI’s president, Daniel Ngoy Mulunda, has completed the voters’ registration exercise in six provinces (Bandundu, Equateur, North-Kivu, Kasai Oriental, South-Kivu and Oriental Province). He explained that 30.5 million voters has been registered and took the opportunity to announce a two-days extension of the exercise in Djoa, Equateur province, as well as in several areas in Walikale (North Kivu) and Fizi, Baraka, Minembwe and Kalehe (South-Kivu). The reason for this prolongation is continued insecurity in these areas.

(Le Potentiel, privately-owned daily, article dated 13 July, 2011, in French)

“Autour des élections 2011” by Freddy Monsa Iyaka Duku

- Political alliances are still strong in the DRC, leading *Le Potentiel* to question the real capacities of political leaders and political parties. Alliances may be a sign of weakness and none of the parties can win the elections. The list of political parties and alliances is growing but there seem to be little political convictions. It seems that politicians are only looking for power.
- The current situation and lack of strong parties shows that egocentric political parties and opportunistic politicians have failed to come up with real ideas and programs. Without strong parties, national institutions will be weak as well.
- *Le Potentiel* is worried about the country’s future and refers to South Africa’s ANC as a strong political party capable of fostering national development and promoting democracy

(L’Observateur, privately-owned daily, article dated 15 July, 2011, in French)

“Malheur aux distraits” by Rombaut Ot

- The voters’ registration process ends today, except in Kinshasa, which is benefitting from a ten-day extension. According to the first statistics, registration has been evaluated at 95%, meaning a little more than 30 million voters, close to CENI’s 31 million target. The registration process took place without the active participation of political parties, which is problematic.
- The next target is not the vote but political parties seem distracted. Except for the UDPS, which has already organized a congress at the beginning of the year, no other party has done so although registration for candidacy opens in two weeks. Thus few parties will probably have a congress and the presidents will probably be responsible for choosing candidates, therefore leaving little room for objectivity as party leaders have a tendency to favor friends. Most parties will therefore probably fail and *L’Observateur* therefore urges political parties to organize themselves in all seriousness. They must adopt an electoral strategy and a budget. In terms of electoral strategy, parties should ensure the presence of monitors at various voting centers and during the counting of the votes. According to the newspaper, there is no room for improvisation.

(Le Potentiel, privately-owned daily, article dated 15 July, 2011, in French)

“Révision et après?”

- After a ten-day extension, the voter’s registration exercise ended on Friday in Kinshasa. Three million people have been registered in the DRC, according to the President of CENI, Jacques Djoli. Despite technical and logistical difficulties, numbers are in keeping with CENI’s expectation. Yet opposition parties are not satisfied with the process and would have liked CENI to defer the exercise once more.
- The most important remains the post-registration process, meaning verifying electoral lists in order to look for irregularities, an exercise which requires transparency and impartiality. *Le Potentiel* says this is CENI’s opportunity to prove its independence and neutrality. The body will have to take into consideration all the contestations already put forward by the political parties while at the same time avoiding chaos. CENI should also be transparent and open to all political and social groups in order to ensure peaceful elections.

(L’Observateur, privately-owned daily, article dated 15 July, 2011, in French)

“Processus électoral en RDC : Les Etats-Unis soutiennent un dialogue entre les acteurs politiques” by Luc-Roger Mbala Bemba

- The US has confirmed its support of the electoral process in the Congo. During a press conference, Jitou Sardar, an adviser at the US embassy in the DRC said the electoral process should be owned by Congolese people and for Congolese people. The US hopes the process will be democratic, transparent, fair and peaceful, and therefore encourages open dialogue between all actors involved.
- On the subject of violence between the UDPS and Congolese authorities, the advisor said the US is keeping an eye on the current process and will not accept violence. He added that each citizen has the right to express his or her opinion and rights.
- Asked whether the US would help Congolese people organize and improve dialogue between the different parties, the US said it has no appropriate solution despite their long experience. The mode of dialogue should be determined by Congolese people, although the US is ready to help them, especially in terms of civic education and support to Monusco,
- Concerning the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), a free market exchange with the US and African countries, the American diplomat said the US would work with the DRC but that the relationship depends of US legislation. Indeed, the DRC was excluded from AGOA in 2010 after human rights violations were reported on Congolese soil.

(Le Potentiel, privately-owned daily, article dated 16 July, 2011, in French)

“Agitations, interferences. Elections 2011: attention à la confusion” by Freddy Monsa Iyaka Duku

- With the end of the voters' registration project, the elections have taken a new turn. As the country is trying to ensure peaceful elections, several administrative bodies are putting pressure of parties and politicians to ensure the election's smooth running. The state should be responsible for ensuring the rule of law and the constitution of the Republic. *Le Potentiel* is calling on politicians to be responsible and respect Congolese, that is respect people's right to chose their leader.
- Interferences and tensions have already been reported. CENI is responsible for organizing the elections, is the aim centre of decision and should call on all the parties to respect the electoral law and code of good conduct. CENI should not be used by those in power, such as the majority and the opposition, to disrupt the electoral process.

4. Cholera Update

Privately-owned media

(L'Observateur, privately-owned daily, article dated 15 July, 2011, in French)

“L'épidémie de choléra dans l'ouest de la RDC : Déjà 1927 cas détectés pour 126 décès” by Dovin Ntelolo Diasonga

- According to OCHA, the cholera epidemic in the province of Badundu, Equateur and in the city of Kinshasa has already led to the death of 126 people. Badundu remains the most affected province, with 1271 cases and 72 deaths
- The number of cases in Kinshasa has increased dramatically within a week although no deaths have yet been reported. In order to stop the epidemic in Kinshasa, two medical centers have been opened by MSF and COOPI (Cooperation internationale)
- The situation is particularly worrying in Bolobo, Bandundu, and in Yumbi and Kwamouth
- Humanitarian groups said they were ready to intervene in order to help the government. Several operations have been launched, including a sensitization campaign aimed at promoting good hygiene, and chlorination of water in high-risk areas. Treatment for cholera is free.
- Operation “Clean-Up Village” has also been launched in order to improve water infrastructure and other individual and collective hygiene measures. According to Unicef and the OMS, the main worry remains access to clean water as well as safer individual and collective hygiene practices. The latter remains the most important and effective prevention tool. Unicef, the OMS and OCHA therefore urge populations to improve their daily habits.
- New polio cases have also been reported. Vaccination is the most efficient way to protect oneself.

5. Jean Pierre Bemba: the MLC's unlikely participation in the elections

Privately-owned media

(L'Avenir, privately-owned daily, article dated 15 July, 2011, in French)

“JP Bemba, c’est perdu : Les juges en vacances jusqu’au 22 août 2011” by Joachim Diana G.

- The MLC was hoping to welcome its leader on time for the elections but Jean Bemba’s trial has been delayed and the voters’ registration program is coming to an end. Bemba will not be able to register on time and, according to Congolese electoral law, cannot therefore apply as a candidate unless he is able to register when he apply for candidacy in November.
- In terms of the trial, judges are still hearing witnesses, a process that has already taken 7 months, and the trial has now been suspended until mid August as the judges are going on holiday.
- François Muamba, the party’s former Secretary General, is still suing the MLC after he was ousted in April amid infighting over the MLC’s future leadership. No verdict has yet been presented.

(Le Potentiel, privately-owned daily, article dated 15 July, 2011, in French)

“Elections 2011: J.P. Bemba hors course”

- Jean Pierre Bemba’s (LC) hopes to participate in the 2011 elections are crumbling as his ICC trial could start again by the end of August. Bemba’s is being detained since 2008 on charges of crimes against humanity and war crimes committed by his troops between 2002 and 2003. There is little chance that the he will be able to register for candidacy on time.
- Bemba’s failure to participate in the elections could lead to the break-up of the MLC and one’s doubts the party will be able to reform itself. Despite his arrest, Bemba remains powerful within the party and the party’s influential members will now probably leave.
- Etienne Tshisekedi wa Mulumba of the UDPS will travel to the Hague to meet with Bemba. Little is known about the reason for the visit

(Le Potentiel, privately-owned daily, article dated 16 July, 2011, in French)

“Hier à La Haye. Face-à-face Tshisekedi – Bemba” by Didier Munsala Buakasa

- Etienne Tshisekedi, the president of the UDPS, met with MLC leader Jean Pierre Bemba at the ICC where they discussed the elections and current situation in the DRC. Considering his arrest, there is little hope for Bemba to participate in the elections. This could explain the political rapprochement between the UDPS and Bemba as they attempt to find political strategies. Considering the elections will only have one ballot, alliances within the opposition are likely.
- UDPS sources say Bemba asked Tshisekedi to watch over the electoral process