

DRC Domestic Broadcasting, 22 November, 2010 (16 – 21 November, 2010)

by Marie Lamensch, MIGS Reporter for the DRC

Government owned media

(Radio-Television Nationale Congolaise TV, government-owned, Kinshasa, 1900 gmt, 16 November, 2010, in French)

- Prime Minister Adolphe Muzito met MONUC chairman, Roger Meece, and discussed joint efforts made MONUC and the government to consolidate peace in eastern Congo. Meece announced that MONUC would continue to work along FARDC.

(Rwandan news agency RNA, government owned, 17 October, 2010, 0000gmt, in English)

“DR Congo-based Rwandan rebels kill 23”

- According to Okapi, FDLR rebels killed some 23 people in an ambush in Mungazi, about 100km away from Walikale-Centre, eastern DRC. The rebels launched an attack on a truckload of passengers and killed them all.

(Radio-Television Nationale Congolaise TV, government-owned, Kinshasa, 1230 gmt, 17 November, 2010, in French)

- Prime Minister Adolphe Muzito met with MONUC chairman, Roger Meece, to talk about joint MONUC-government efforts. Roger Meece reiterated his desire to support FARDC, police and governmental institutions in order to consolidate peace in Nord-Kivu Province. Roger Meece also met with the Minister of Defense Charles Mwando Nsimba

Privately-owned media

(Le Potentiel, privately-owned daily, article dated 16 November, 2010, in French)

“Selon Human Rights Watch. Congolais et Centrafricains victimes de la LRA sollicitent l’intervention des USA” by Stephane Etinga

- Congolese and Central African victims of violence committed by the Lord’s Resistance Army led by Joseph Kony, have called on US President Barack Obama and other world leaders to act in order put an end to attacks by the rebel group.
- Human Rights Watch conducted extensive research in Northern DRC and the Central African Republic where they interviewed hundreds of victims.
- Human Rights has now called on an international strategy centre on protection of civilians
- Anneke van Woudenberg, researcher for Human Rights Watch, urged Barack Obama and other world leaders to protect civilians and stop perpetrators of war crimes responsible for the violence.

(Le Potentiel, privately-owned daily, article dated 17 November, 2010, in French)

“Reçu par le ministre de la Défense. Roger Meece qualifie d’excellent le partenariat gouvernement-Monusco” by Albert tshiambi

- The Minister of National Defense and Veterans, Charles Mwando Nsimba, met Monusco chairman Roger Meece. After the meeting Meece said the partnership between the DRC and Monusco requires the two partners coordinate their projects and operations, including military operations. It is therefore crucial for the Ministry of Defense and Monusco to remain in constant contact.
- In the face of continued insecurity in Eastern Congo, caused by the FDLR and the LRA, it is crucial for the partnership to work.

(Le Potentiel, privately-owned daily, article dated 17 November, 2010, in French)

“La Monusco se dit incapable de protéger tous les civils en RDC”

- Monusco’s chairman, Roger Meece, said it was impossible for the mission to protect all civilians in Eastern Congo without more men and means.
- Speaking at the UN Security Council, Meece said more than 15.000 rapes had been committed in 2009 alone. Armed groups still operate in the region and often live among civilians.
- Considering the size of the area, it is impossible for Monusco to ensure the security of all civilians. In order for this to happen, more logistical means and troops are needed.
- Oxfam said Monusco should do more to protect the civilian population, especially in areas where the LRA is still in operation. Marcel Stoessel, head of Oxfam, said more troops should be deployed in the north.
- Roger Meece briefly mentioned the LRA at the Security Council, stating that Monusco would support any sub-regional operations against the guerilla group
- Roger Meece said relations between Monusco and the Congolese army are tense
- Margot Wallström, Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict, said Congolose soldiers deployed in the region might themselves have committed rapes and engaged in looting.

(Le Potentiel, privately-owned daily, article dated 17 November, 2010, in French)

“Des réfugiés rwandais à Bukavu en attente d’être rapatriés au Rwanda” by Louis-Paul Eyenga Sana

- In Bukavu, approximately 208 Rwandan refugees are waiting for repatriation to their country. They arrived at that HCR refugee camp last week. The refugees are mostly women and children from Walikale (North Kivu) and Hombo, Nyabibwe, Shabunda et Mwenga (South Kivu).
- The CNR and HCR have now finished checking the applications of all Burundian and Rwandan refugees and asylum-seekers present in the region. There are approximately 3,700 refugees and asylum seekers in the area. Most refugees arrived in North Kivu between 1972 and 1993.

- Some asylum seekers are Rwandan. Asylum seekers want to stay in the DRC under refugee status because they fear for live in their own country.

(Radio Candip, community radio broadcasting funded by Belgian NGO, Bunia, 1530 gmt, 19 November, 2010, in French)

“Calm returns to northeastern DR Congo after army, Ugandan rebels fighting”

- General Fall Sikabwe, commander of the military operational zone of the Armed Forces of DR Congo in Ituri District, said relative calm had returned to the Nabia area, south of Bunia, after fighting broke out between the FARDC and Uganda’s ADF/NALU (Alliance for Democratic Front/ National Alliance for the Liberation of Uganda)
- FARDC troops have now taken back control over a series of villages in the area after a joint operation between two FARDC operational zones.
- 23 Ugandan rebels, three FARDC soldiers and a dozen of Congolese civilians were killed during the operation.
- Nabia area is located near Mount Rwenzori at the border between the province of Nord Kivu and the district of Ituri. Most of the area has been occupied for more than ten years by the Ugandan rebel group of ADF/ NALU.

(Le Potentiel, privately-owned daily, article dated 19 November, 2010, in French)

“Réforme de l’armée: le choix de l’Africom s’impose”

- The report published by the International Crisis Group has again highlighted the need for the DRC to have a strong republican army, capable of securing national integrity.
- Considering that the DRC is incapable of reforming the army alone, a strong credible partner is needed. Continued insecurity in the DRC comes as a proof that the FARDC does not have the capacity to protect the country.
- Observers have described the FARDC as a heteroclite group, with elements coming from different armed factions that operated during the various rebellions and resisting integration. Some of these elements are trying to weaken the DRC in order to benefit from the country’s resources
- Several months ago, an agreement between Rwanda and the DRC intending to track down FDLR elements in Eastern Congo and the Great Lake region was presented as a victory for peace. But joint operations have proven to be only a media hub and so far they have failed to reach their objective.
- The International Crisis Group report concluded that the military and security strategy in North Kivu should be revised. The Congolese army should increase its capacity.
- But who is to help the DRC? The question of the army was addressed in the Sun City Accord (2003) but little progress has been made since all signatories are trying to secure their interests. It is therefore crucial for the government to find new partners. The USA’s Africom has been mentioned as a partner: General William Kip Ward said he wanted to establish a long relationship with Central African countries and said Africom’s actions would run parallel to the DRC’s demands, especially the needs of the population.
- This confirms the Crisis Groups’ demand that more attention be paid to the Congolese population. According to Ward, the DRC and the USA will both benefit from the

presence of Africom. While the US has chosen Africom partly out of national interest, it is mostly aware of the necessity to ensure sustainable peace in Central Africa. The DRC is therefore at the centre of the issue. The US has reiterated its desire to help the DRC reform its army and it now the role of the Congolese government to create a partnership.

Special report: International Crisis Group

“Congo: No Stability in Kivu despite Rapprochement with Rwanda”

A new report on the security, military and humanitarian situation in the DRC has been published by the International Crisis Group (in French, summary available in English)

- 2008: the National Congress of the People (CNDP), a Congolese rebel group backed clandestinely by Rwanda, withdrew from negotiations with the DRC, leading to a major crisis in North Kivu that the FARDC and Monuc had not anticipated. Several operations to prevent an escalation of the conflict and further tensions between Rwanda and the DRC were launched.
- November 2008: President Kabila reached out to Rwanda president Paul Kagame in attempt to end the crisis. No formal negotiations took place and the agreement has remained secret. Kabila and Kagame are working to implement the bilateral agreement. The rapprochement altered the balance of power in North and South Kivu
- Kabila has been forced to meet the political demands of the CNDP, putting his legitimacy at risk. He also agreed to launch military operations which were not in the interest of the Congolese population, but in the interest of the partner.
- General Nkunda was arrested in 2009 and replaced by Bosco Ntaganda, a suspected war criminal for whom the ICC issued an arrest warrant four years ago.
- The CNDP was integrated into and has become a major part of the national army, putting its interests in the forefront and giving the group more influence
- Two years after the rapprochement between the DRC and Rwanda, the security situation in the DRC is still fragile. Government soldiers are still fighting militias over the control of land and mines. As both sides benefit from the region's natural resources, the conflict has not been stopped.
- The population is being victimized by both retribution campaigns of the rebels and unpunished human rights violations by Congolese soldiers.
- The FDLR has not been disarmed. Although it has been chased from the mine fields, natural resources are not yet under control
- Neighboring countries are interfering in the Kivus
- The humanitarian situation is deteriorating and ethnic tensions are on the rise in anticipation of the repatriation of tens of thousands of Congolese refugees who fled to Rwanda during the 1990s
- This comes as a proof that peace cannot be secured through secret presidential commitments and the approach should therefore be revised. Local communities should be included in the process and dialogue established with other neighboring countries.

- The rapid integration of former rebels, including suspected war criminals, into the national army and their participation in military operations have done little to end the conflict
- UN efforts have not changed the situation and the legitimacy of Monuc has been undermined in the face of continued human rights violations, particularly rape.
- Various groups also compete for local power, leading to land conflicts and inter-communal tensions. There is a crisis of local governance.
- Long term economic development remains elusive despite the growth of trade in the region
- A new approach must therefore be taken in order to put an end to inter-ethnic conflict, to reform the army and stabilize the region.
- A series of recommendations are made.