

DRC Domestic Broadcasting, 18 September, 2010 (10 October– 17 October, 2009)

by Marie Lamensch, MIGS Reporter for the DRC

Government-owned media

(Rwandan news agency RNA, government owned, 13 October, 2010, 0000gmt, in English)

“Pressure said mounting on DR Congo rebel leader”

- Pressure is mounting on indicted Congolese General Bosco Ntaganda: new charges accusing him of murdering political opponents within the ex-rebel National Congress for the Defense of the People (CNDP) have been brought against him. Indeed, Human Rights Watch said Ntaganda has been implicated in “the assassination of at least eight people, arbitrary arrests of another seven, and the abduction and disappearance of at least one more,” all this in the past year. The group added that he was a threat to the people of eastern Congo since he does not care about the government’s zero tolerance policy.
- The ICC warrant against Ntaganda was unsealed in April and accuses him of war crimes, including forced recruitment of child soldiers between July 2002 and December 2003.

(Rwandan news agency RNA, government owned, 14 October, 2010, 0000gmt, in English)

“DR Congolese MPs oppose relocation of Virunga Park inhabitants”

- MPs from eastern DR Congo are opposed to the plan to relocate from the Virunga Park some 3,000 families said to have transgressed the park’s boundaries. The MPs' spokesman, Ernest Kavyro, told journalist a relocation plan would lead to serious socio-economic consequences since these families have been living in the area for more than ten years.

(The New Times, government-owned Rwandan newspaper, Kigali, article dated 14 October, 2010, in English)

“Rights groups call for genocide charges against arrested Rwandan rebel leader”

- African Rights, the Collectif des Parties Civiles pour le Rwanda (CPCR) and REDRESS said "there appears to be more to Callixte Mbarushimana than the crimes which have been attributed to him by the ICC with respect to Nord and Sud-Kivu."
- The ICC has indicted Mbarushimana on 11 counts of crimes against humanity and war crimes, including murder, torture, rape, attacks against civilians, destruction of property, inhuman treatment and persecution. The three human rights groups said he had long faced accusations of implications in the 1994 Rwandan genocide, particularly in Kigali where Mbarushimana was working at the time.
- Lawyers with the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) prepared an indictment on charges of genocide; the case was sidelined in 2005. Moreover, they added that “because of the ICC's limited jurisdiction, Mbarushimana will not be held

responsible for crimes he is accused of during the 1994 genocide." The three human rights groups said Mbarushimana's arrest should serve as wake-up call for French authorities.

Privately-owned newspapers

(Radio Okapi website, MONUC/UN-sponsored radio, Kinshasa, 10 October, 2010, in French)

“UN mission delivers electoral material to northeastern DR Congo”

- Electoral materials have been delivered to Kisangani (northeastern DR Congo). These kits will be used for voter registration and other requirements ahead of the elections scheduled for 2011.

(Radio Okapi website, MONUC/UN-sponsored radio, Kinshasa, 10 October, 2010, in French)

“Rights activists oppose closure of Red Cross office in central DR Congo”

- Human rights activists in Mbandaka on Saturday urged provincial authorities to seek an extension for the mandate of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in central DR Congo, which announced that it would closing its office by the end of October. The organization, which has been operating in Kasai Orientale and Kasai Occidentale since 2001, said there was no longer conflict in the region.
- Because the ICRC offers services such family reunification and assistance to prisoners, it shouldn't leave the region.
- Guy Kimwanza Makuma, a lawyer at Mbuji-Mayi law court and a representative of OHCHR the ICRC ensures some of detainees' rights, including food and medical treatment.
- The head of the ICRC office, Roger Kumande, said that the organization had achieved its goals in the two Kasais and that the organisation's presence was therefore no loner justifiable. He nonetheless added that the ICRC would continue to deliver some of its services through the Red Cross, including renewal renewal of equipment for those wounded in the war.

(Radio Candip, community radio broadcasting funded by Belgian NGO, Bunia, 1530 gmt, October 11, 2010, in French)

- Human rights activists said they were pleased with arrest of Rwandan rebel leader Kaliste Mbarushimana by the French authorities. Victims of atrocities committed by the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Rwanda hope for his trial by ICC.

(Le Potentiel, privately-owned daily, article dated 11 October, 2010, in French)

“Violences sexuelles à Bunia: 80 % des cas enregistrés ont été réprimés”
(through Okapi)

- The Pnud office in Bunia said that 80% of the rapes referred to the authorities since 2009 have not followed suit or have not been investigated yet.
- 463 cases have been recorded since July 2009 but only 263 have been treated. Proofs are said to be lacking in most cases. He said such a system certainly would not help the elimination of sexual violence in the district
- Local judicial authorities also urged the government to pass a law, which would forbid perpetrators of rape to be released on bail.

(Le Potentiel, privately-owned daily, article dated 11 October, 2010, in French)

“Les menaces de mort contre les journalists”

- Death threats against journalists and several civil society actors have been reported in Kasai Oriental. Provincial governor Alphonse Ngoyi Kasanji has been made of the situation. An inquiry commission is being set up and should be composed of provincial, justices, and communication ministers. Journalists are urged to get in touch with the commission in order to file their complaint.

(Le Potentiel, privately-owned daily, article dated 11 October, 2010, in French)

“L’implication de la Société civile dans le processus électoral en RDC”

- Several civil society organizations have found new strategies that will facilitate the participation in the DRC forthcoming elections.
- EISA (Institut électoral pour une démocratie durable en Afrique) originally organized the workshop. Among the goals of the workshop were: establishing a constructive debate concerning the electoral process, informing non-state actors about the work of the CEI, and allow civil society groups to formulate recommendations concerning the electoral process.
- At the end of the workshop, the participants recommended revising voter registration lists, examining monitoring processes in the provinces, reinforcing the role of monitors, recruiting electoral agents, increasing the number of electoral conflicts mediators, improving the working conditions of judicial personnel etc.
- Head of the CEI, Apollinaire Malumalu, said the biggest challenges to the electoral process was first, the lack of funds allocated to programs related to awareness-raising activities concerning the electoral process and second, security issues.

(AFP French news agency, Paris, 12 October, 2010, 0000 gmt, in French)

“DRC: RFI resumes broadcast after 15-month closure on government orders”

- Radio France Internationale resumed broadcasting on FM in the DRC, after 15 months of suspension by the Congolese authorities who accused the radio of "demoralizing" the Army (2009). At the time Congolese authorities accused RFI of developing "a systematic campaign of demoralization of the FARDC.”

- The authorities of the French external audiovisual were in the DRC late June, where they finalized the discussions with the Congolese Government for the reopening of the signal and announced the opening of a Kinshasa office.

(Radio Okapi website, MONUC/UN-sponsored radio, Kinshasa, 12 October, 2010, in French)

“DR Congo welcomes Rwandan rebel leader's arrest in France”

- Minister of communication and media, Lambert Mende said he was pleased with the arrest of executive secretary of the FDLR, Callixte Mbarushimana, in France on Monday. Mende believes it will have an impact on FDLR activities in eastern Congo.
- Asked by Radio Okapi if the Congolese government has accusations against Mbarushimana, Mende answered that multiple accusation existed and crimes are still being committed in North and South Kivu. He says Mbarushimana was commanding and financing the FDLR”

(Radio France Internationale, French state-funded public broadcaster, 0530 gmt, dated 12 October, 2010, in French)

“EU officials in DR Congo welcome ex-rebel leader's arrest in France”

- The EU praised France for the arrest of Callixte Mbarushimana on charges of leading a rebel group, which carried out crimes against humanity and war crimes including rapes in the country’s Nord-Kivu Province.
- Special Representative for the Great Lakes region, Roland van de Geer said there were active FDLR leaders living in Europe and the same measures would be taken against them. He said the arrest showed that Europeans countries are fully engaged in the fight against the FDLR.
- The US is also ready to provide financial assistance the national army operations against the FDLR.
- Van de Geer said a certain amount of military was needed but that other types of solutions had to be identified to convince FDLR combatants to return to Rwandan. However, he added that this would take a long time since huge mineral-rich areas in eastern Congo are still under control of armed groups.

(Reporters Sans Frontières, Paris-based media freedom organization, 12 October, 2010, in English)

“DR Congo journalist held by authorities”

- Reporters Without Borders wrote today to interior minister Adolphe Lumanu Mulenda Bwana N'Sefu concern about newspaper journalist Tumba Lumembu, who has been held by the authorities for the past three weeks. The reasons for his arrest remain unknown.
- Lumembu went missing mid-September. Under pressure from MONUSCO, the National Intelligence Agency admitted after almost two weeks that it was holding the journalist.

- Reporters Without Borders said urged the authorities to either bring charges against him or release him.
- It is not the first or the last time the ANR carries out arbitrary arrests. Another journalist was arrested by three ANR officials near the city of Beni (Nord-Kivu). He had accused the ANR of levying a 20 dollar tax on anyone wanting to build a permanent structure.

(Radio France Internationale, French state-funded public broadcaster, 0530 gmt, dated 13 October, 2010, in French)

“Rights group urges DR Congo to arrest ex-rebel leader”

- Human Rights Watch has urged the Congolese government to arrest former rebel leader, Bosco Ntaganda, now a general in the army. Human Rights Watch said Ntaganda is behind the assassination and arbitrary arrests of several former allies of Laurent Nkunda, the ex-National Council for the Defence of the People leader ousted by Ntaganda.

(AFP French news agency, Paris, 13 October, 2010, 1024 gmt, in French)

“Belgium warns DR Congo of fines if it fails to hand protester's body to family”

- A Belgian court called for the body of Armand Tungulu Mudiandambu, a member of the Congolese opposition who died in a cell in Kinshasa, to be returned to his relatives and "repatriated" to Belgium. Mudiandambu is a resident of Belgium and the court said the authorities in Kinshasa would be fine 25,000-euro for each day this is delayed.
- The family's lawyer said that the fact that the body had still not been returned "strengthens our concern" about the fact that torture might have been used.

(Radio France Internationale, French state-funded public broadcaster, 1230 gmt, dated 13 October, 2010, in French)

“DR Congo government warns ex-rebels in army against rejecting transfers”

- Last month, a group of officers from the ex-CNDP integrated in the regular army wrote public a letter to President Kabila asking him to abandon the project to transfer their troops outside Kivu. One of the reasons given was that they knew the area and would be able to fight the FDLR better.
- The said it would not abandon the mixing of troops in eastern Congo and would therefore not accept the refusal by ex-CNDP rebels serving in the national army to move out of their regions. The government said any soldier who refuses to be transferred will face the law and added that it will no longer accept that military discipline suffers from political and ethnic affiliations.
- RFI ad that these ex-rebels in charge of bringing order in the Walikale area have regularly been accused of exploiting mines for their own gain. The government denied the accusation.

(Journaliste En Danger, Kinshasa, DRC, article dated 13 October, 2010, in English)

“DR Congo: Provincial governor closes Radio Bandundu”

- Journaliste en Danger (JED) condemned the closure of of Radio Bandundu FM, a community station broadcasting in the town of Bandundu, western DR Congo. JED demanded that the radio be reopened.
- Radio Bandundu FM was apparently raided on 30 September 2010 by a group of police officers led by Governor Richard Ndambu Wolang. The latter demanded the closure of the station until further notice. One journalist was arrested and remains in custody. One of his colleagues has gone into hiding as he fears for his safety.
- The incident followed the airing the day before of a programme called "Decouverte" which focuses on "the roles of a provincial member of parliament." One of the guests agreed with the remarks of a listener who criticized a group of MPs who refused to sign a motion of distrust against Governor Ndambu.

(Radio Candip, community radio broadcasting funded by Belgian NGO, Bunia, 1530 gmt, October 13, 2010, in French)

Programme summary of DR Congo Radio Candip news 1530 gmt 13 Oct 10

- Administrative leaders of Walendu Bindi area in Irumu Territory announced that a 16-year-old girl was raped by a soldier of the Armed Forces of DRC in a village south of Bunia town.

(United Nations news, dated 14 October, 2010, in English)

“Congo-Kinshasa: Rebel Rape Victims May Face Same Abuse From Army, UN Warns”

- Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict Margot Wallström told the Security Council women who were raped by rebels three months ago are now reportedly facing the same abuse from Government troops (FARDC). Wallström this possibility was “unimaginable and unacceptable.”
- Wallström called on the Council to give MONUSCO "adequate financial resources and other critical assets" to carry out its mandate. She added that UN peacekeepers are demoralized by the scale of the problem as well as by constant criticism.
- She said mass rapes demonstrated the close link between illicit exploitation of natural resources by armed groups and sexual violence. Indeed, local communities are particularly at risk. She believes that Member States should enact law, requiring companies to disclose whether their products contain DRC minerals. She argued that rapes would continue if unpunished in one way or another: “For these women justice delayed is more than justice denied - it is terror continued.”

(Radio France Internationale, French state-funded public broadcaster, 0530 gmt, dated 15 October, 2010, in French)

“DR Congo: Kinshasa terms Belgium's court order an insult”

- Kinshasa has rejected a Belgian court order demanding that the government returns the body of Armand Tungulu who died after being jailed.
- Lambert Mende, government spokesman and communications minister, threatened that DR Congo could also institute legal proceedings against “Belgian officials and state for the real act of aggression that was the assassination of Lumumba in 1960.”
- Mende also added that Belgium's order compromises the inquiry under way in the DRC and amounts to an insult to the country's sovereignty.
- The Congolese authorities called on Armand Tungulu's family to make themselves known.

(L'Observateur, privately-owned daily, article dated October 15, 2010, in French)

“Après plusieurs mois d'occupation illégale” by Kléber Kungu

- Ugandan authorities have given part of the Beni territory (which belongs to the DRC) back to the local Congolese authorities. The area was annexed by mistake two months ago and Ugandans had started their lives there.
- The DRC had denounced the illegal occupation of the area and Uganda acknowledged its mistake
- Questions of boundaries have long caused tensions between Uganda and the DRC, especial mineral-rich areas in the DRC.

(Le Potentiel, privately-owned daily, article dated 15 October, 2010, in French)

“La MONUSCO salue l'arrestation du secrétaire exécutif des FDLR. La MONUSCO se félicite de l'arrestation du secrétaire exécutif des FDLR, Calixte Mbarushimana” by Stephane Etinga

- MONUSCO welcomed the arrest by French authorities of Calixte Mbarushimana (FDLR), who is facing charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity. MONUSCO is all the more proud as the arrest is the result of a multidimensional strategy partly initiated by the mission. MONUSCO called on countries currently sheltering individuals implicated in supporting armed groups in the DRC, to take the appropriate measures.
- MONUSCO also said it was preoccupied by the circumstances surrounding the death of Armand Tungulu. Monusco is said to have reminded the Congolese authorities of their national and international legal obligations, such as the detainee's basic rights such as dignity, physical integrity and the right to a lawyer.
- According to Monusco, because Tungulu died in custody, the circumstances around his death must be explained by a transparent and impartial enquiry.
- Government spokesperson Lambert Mende denounced the interference of foreign actors in the affair, adding that an enquiry had been opened.
- Authorities also said an autopsy would only take place in the presence of members of the deceased's family. They are therefore required to make themselves known.