

State Owned Media Sources

There were no relevant articles from state-owned media sources for this period.

Privately Owned Media Sources

The New Times website—23 April 2011: Rwanda pledges four helicopters to peacekeeping mission in Darfur

- Rwanda Defense spokesperson, Lt-Col Jill Rutaremara announced yesterday that the country will donate four military helicopters to the UN-African Union mission in Darfur.
- The announcement followed a meeting between the new US senior advisor on Darfur, Dane Smith, and the Defense Minister James Kabarebe. Rutaremara also reiterated, “Rwanda is ready to send a battalion of peacekeepers if they request for it”.
- Lack of helicopters has often hampered the mission in Darfur, as has been expressed on several occasions by UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon.

The New Times website—23 April 2011: Rwanda, DR Congo customs bodies sign cooperation accord

- The Rwanda Revenue Authority and the DR Congo customs authorities have signed a Memorandum of Understanding in order to facilitate trade between the two countries.
- The agreement addresses information exchange on smuggling or illicit trade, capacity building and research in areas that improve cross-border trade. The agreement is, according to RRA Commissioner General, mutually beneficial to both countries as “it would be fruitless for one country to try and manage fraud or smuggling across borders without the cooperation of the other.”
- The measures outlined in the agreement will focus in particular on the management of customs services in Goma and North Kivu borders.

The New Times website—24 April 2011: Rwandan government welcomes trial of genocide suspect, Kobagaya in USA

- The United States Federal Court has rejected a defense bid by Genocide suspect Lazare Kobagaya, ruling that he will stand trial in the country.
- The attorneys of Kobagaya sought the dismissal on the grounds that US government unlawfully paid “impoverished witnesses” to stand trial.
- The government of Rwanda welcomed the decision to continue with the trial, which is the first ever of a Rwandan Genocide suspect by the United States, although Kobagaya is not the only fugitive suspected of living there.
- While Federal prosecutors allege that Kobagaya was in Rwanda in 1994 and participated in the slaughter of hundreds of Tutsis, his trial will focus specifically on charges of fraud and unlawfully obtaining US citizenship in 2006 by claiming that he lived in Burundi from 1993-1995.
- Fifty witnesses testify that the 83-year old Kobagaya committed murder and arson in Rwanda between 15 April and 18 July 1994, supporting the US government’s charges that the defendant lied on his immigration application and subsequent interviews.

The New Times website—24 April 2011: Rwandan paper says days of FDLR militia numbered

- According to an editorial in the New Times, the defection of top commanders of the Forces for the Democratic Liberation for Rwanda (FDLR) has gained momentum over the last month. This exodus of members of the military outfit is allegedly due to information regarding the lenient treatment and good living conditions that reaches them from friends and family living in Rwanda.
- The article goes on to claim that the days of terrorist activities of the military operation are numbered, and that the negative propaganda and misinformation it feeds to its members is becoming increasingly ineffective.

The New Times website—27 April 2011: UN court for Rwanda bans US lawyer from appearing in tribunal due to misconduct

- The Appeals Chamber of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) has banned controversial American attorney, Prof. Peter Erlinder, from appearing before the tribunal as lead counsel after he repeatedly disregarded tribunal orders.
- Erlinder, lead counsel for genocide suspect, Aloys Ntabakuze, will be immediately replaced after he ignored several summons to appear in his client's appeal in Arusha, Tanzania. Judge Patrick Robinson ruled his actions amounted to contempt of court as he never informed the tribunal of his absences, violating Rule 46(A) and (C) of the Rules of the ICTR Charter.
- Erlinder has also been on record for promoting Genocide denial, minimizing and trivializing the 1994 Genocide in speeches and publications (although he is not facing legal charges on any of these accusations).

The New Times website—28 April 2011: First ever trial on Rwanda Genocide kicks off in US

- The first ever trial relating to the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda began on 26 April 2011. The suspect, Lazare Kobagaya, is the first suspect to stand trial on American soil; he is being charged of participating in the 1994 Genocide, but his trial will focus mainly on naturalization fraud and misuse of an alien registration card (see above article of 24 April 2011).
- Kobagaya first garnered the suspicion of US Federal prosecutors after he gave a statement on behalf of another genocide suspect in Finland, leading investigators to suspect that he was in Rwanda during the Genocide.
- The trial is taking place in the central US city of Wichita, Kansas.

Rwandan News Agency—29 April 2011: Global Media watchdog asks Rwanda to acquit "cleared" journalists

- Reporters Without Borders, the Paris-based watchdog organization on press freedom, has requested that the Supreme Court of Rwanda acquit journalist Jean Bosco Gasasira of various crimes.
- Gasasira, despite being cleared by the High Court in 2010, was sentenced in an appeal by the Supreme Court to 10 years in prison. The former editor in chief of the newspaper Umuvugizi, he was convicted with "publishing rumors that called on Rwandans to civil disobedience", "attaching the president of the republic", and "deliberately violating the law governing the media in Rwanda."
- Last spring, Umuvugizi was suspended for six months for violating the media law in Rwanda, at which time Gasasira went into exile and began an online edition of the publication.