

Rwanda Domestic Media Report (March 26<sup>th</sup>-April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2011)

*By Paula Cook-Dinan, MIGS Monitor for Rwanda*

<http://migs.concordia.ca/RwandaRadioandNewsSummaries.htm>

State Owned Media Sources

*There were no relevant articles from state owned media sources for the period of March 26<sup>th</sup>-April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2011.*

Privately Owned Media Sources

*The New Times website—26 March 2011: Rwanda hosts Commonwealth Media Forum 29 March – 1 April*

- Last week Rwanda hosted the Commonwealth Forum on Media and Economic Development, organized by the Rwandan government in conjunction with the Commonwealth Secretariat.
- The forum was intended to bring together local and international media actors to discuss development and professionalism, as well as the role and obligations of the government, businesses and the media itself in the dissemination of information to the public.
- According to the Minister of Information, Protais Musoni, the forums is “just but one of the initiatives that the government, with the support of the players in the media sector, is putting in place to further liberalize and develop the media sector to improve efficiency and effectiveness in the flow of information both in and outside the government.”
- Other initiatives currently underway in Rwanda include the transition of ORINFOR (The Rwanda Bureau of Information and Broadcasting) from analogue to digital broadcasting, which will cost the government an estimated \$12 million.
- Following the conference, deputy-secretary-general of the Commonwealth, Ms. Masire-Mwamba, re-asserted that the Rwandan media should present itself as the voice of the people, be open and transparent so as to offer the people an opportunity to scrutinize the government policies without fear of reprisal.

*The New Times website—29 March 2011: Karongi District to get community radio next month*

- Local authorities have announced the launch of a community radio station in Karongi District, a project made possible by the International Research and Exchange Board (IREX).
- The radio station will, according to the district’s executive secretary, Yves Ningabire, help the population of the region have more access to knowledge valuable for their social and economic well being.
- IREX has over 20 media projects worldwide, including two community radio stations in Rwanda.

*The New Times website—30 March 2011: ICTR to make first ruling of year on Genocide suspect, Gatete*

- The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, in its first ruling of the New Year, has convicted Jean Baptiste Gatete to life in prison after finding him guilty of the massacre of thousands of Tutsis during the 1994 Genocide.
- The former director of the Ministry of Women and Family Affairs and mayor of the former Murambi Commune (now in the Eastern Province) during the Genocide, misused his influence in the region to equip Interhamwe militias with weapons used to kill Tutsis in the

areas under his jurisdiction. According to presiding judge, Khalida Rachid Khan, these weapons were “a decisive factor in the success of the assaults”.

- The development is a great step toward healing survivors of the Genocide, says Executive Secretary of the Genocide survivors’ umbrella IBUKA, Janvier Folongo, who stated that it had the effect of decreasing “the rate of trauma cases that are rampant during this difficult period of mourning.”
- The ICTR is now in its 16<sup>th</sup> year of existence, and has been given until next year to complete its investigations and sentencing. Life is the heaviest sentence that can be handed down by the UN-backed court based in Arusha, Tanzania.

*Rwanda News Agency—31 March 2011: Rwanda said to freeze Libyan assets*

- Rwanda will, in adherence with the UN sanctions against Libya, freeze the assets of the North African nation.
- The main Libyan investments in Rwanda are located in the telecommunications sector, where LAP Green (Libyan African Investment Portfolio), a Libyan investment firm, owns majority share in Rwandatel. LAP Green purchased 80% of the Rwandan telecom company in December 2008 upon the latter’s privatization.
- Libya, specifically its leader Colonel Muammar al-Quadhafi is heavily invested in over 25 African nations, meaning the present conflict threatens to have significant economic ramifications across the continent.

*The New Times website—3 April 2011: France arrests Rwandan genocide suspect*

- Tito Barahira, a Rwandan wanted on charges of Genocide and conspiracy to commit Genocide has been arrested in Toulouse, France, according to unofficial sources.
- According to Alain Gauthier, head of a Paris-based genocide survivors’ advocacy group, Interpol confirmed the development.
- Barahira was, during the Genocide, Director of Electrogaz, as well as the Mayor of Kabarondo Commune in the former Kibungo Prefecture.
- The news was met with joy by the Genocide Fugitives Tracking Unit and the National Public Prosecution authority; French ambassador to Rwanda, Laurent Contini, declined to comment on the matter.
- Some Genocide survivors, however, are skeptical of the arrest, claiming that France has in the past refused to extradite Genocide suspects to stand trial in Rwanda.