



RWANDA DOMESTIC MEDIA MONITOR REPORT
FOR THE WEEK OF: JUNE 7TH-13TH, 2011



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

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A. REACTION TO HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH REPORT ON PERFORMANCE OF GACACA COURTS

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ORINFOR—12 June: Gacaca Courts were a Success—Minister Karugarama

This week, Rwandan Justice Minister, Tharcisse Karugarama, publicly announced that the Gacaca Courts—set up to deal with the trial of suspects of the 1994 Genocide—were successful and ultimately instrumental in the healing of Rwandan society. The pronouncement was made on a live talk show on National Radio and Television.

Minister Karugarama said that despite several weaknesses, the process was overall a success and that the Courts met their target. The Courts will no longer try new Genocide related cases, and that means to resolve outstanding cases are being investigated.

Forongo Janvier, spokesperson of IBUKA, said that the organization is equally satisfied with the Gacaca Courts, but stated that there were several issues that needed to be rectified.

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The Independent (Kampala)—11 June: Human Rights Watch under scrutiny over controversial Gacaca Report

A new report released by New York-based advocacy group, Human Rights Watch (HRW), on the performance of Rwanda's post-Genocide courts in Gacaca has garnered criticism from Rwandan politicians. The report's title in particular—"Justice Compromised: The Legacy of Rwanda's Community-Based Gacaca Courts"—has caused the Kagame regime to condemn it as bias and misleading. The report, released on 31 May, details the function and achievements of the Gacaca courts, which were established in 2004 to handle the approximately 130,000 unresolved genocide cases. However, according to the report's author, Leslie Haskell, the court proceedings also left much to be desired. Specifically, the HRW report cites witnesses' apprehension of testifying, for fear they may have been considered complicit with "genocide ideology" under Rwandan law; it also alleges that several trials were used to "settle personal scores". The report also criticizes the exclusion of crimes committed by RPF soldiers from Gacaca's jurisdiction.

When Haskell presented the report in Kigali, she was heavily questioned by government officials, genocide survivors, and diplomats. Dutch

Ambassador, Frans Makken criticized the methodology of the report, stating that the 350 mishandled cases “is a small number to base on to come up with a conclusive view on Gacaca...I find it harsh, unfair, and imbalanced.” The Rwandan government maintains that the unconventional style of the Gacaca courts was the best option at the time (due to a lack of Rwandans with legal training), one formed on the advice of many legal and social experts.

This incident highlights the already tense relationship between Rwanda and the HRW, the latter having often portraying the Kagame regime as dictatorial and ignorant of press freedoms.

B. MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS UPDATE

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*ORINFOR—6 June: Rwanda met 58% of its MDG goal in Hygiene and Sanitation**

In anticipation of the third annual AfricaSan conference set to take place in Kigali on 19 July, Mme Colette Ruhamy announced Rwanda’s attainment of the Millennium Development Goal on hygiene and sanitation. The official announcement will be made at the conference, which aims to discuss the difficulties facing the realization of providing water and increasing sanitation for the 400 million people living in Africa. According to World Bank Representative, Madame Yolande Coombs, these issues are still not being given top priority by the administrations of African nations.

*original article in French

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The New Times website—Nation achieves MDG target on Sanitation

Rwanda achieved the Millennium Development Goal on sanitation, surpassing the 50% target by 8%, according to State Minister for Energy and Water, Colette Ruhamy. This figure means that over half the population of Rwanda have “sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation”, a goal that was set for 2015 under the MDG framework. Rwanda is the only country in sub-Saharan Africa that has achieved this particular MDG. The official announcement will be made at the upcoming continental conference, AfricaSan 3, which will focus on the challenges of increasing sanitation & hygiene programs in Kigali.

C. KAGAME ADDRESSES THE COUNCIL ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

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Official website of the Republic of Rwanda—7 June: President Kagame addresses Council on Foreign Relations

President Kagame addressed members of the Council of Foreign Relations in New York, who invited him to speak on a range of issues including investment, trade, and the AU’s involvement in conflict resolution on the continent.

President Kagame listed the strengthening of

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The New Times website—9 June: Trade and Investment Key to Development-Kagame

**The text of this article was the same as the adjacent article from the Official website of the Republic of Rwanda.*

trade and investment opportunities as the country's top priorities; specifically, the Administration is exploring ways to make Rwanda an attractive environment for investors.

President Kagame also noted that while aid is welcome, it would only "have a meaning if it builds capacity of the people so they can stand on their own two feet. Aid should be accepted and invested in a way that ensures that tomorrow you don't need more aid." The Africa Advisory Committee of Human Rights Watch Chairman congratulated Rwandans for the progress made over the last 17 years.



D. UN HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL ADOPTS RWANDA NATIONAL REPORT ON HUMAN RIGHTS

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ORINFOR—7 June: UN Human Rights Council Unanimously Adopted the Rwanda National Report on Human Rights

Under the framework of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), the UN Human Rights Council (HRC) adopted the National Report of Rwanda on the situation of the protection and promotion of human rights in the country.

During his presentation to the HRC this week, Minister of Justice Karugarama noted that several of the issues and recommendations in the report were based on "totally wrong" or false premises by some member states during the review of January 2011.

Karagurama went on to reiterate that the Rwandan government is committed to the prevention of discrimination especially considering the price it paid for highly discriminatory policies that led to the 1994 Genocide.

Several NGOs of observer states made statements and received adequate explanations to their concerns by Minister Karagurama.

The goal of this review mechanism is to address human rights violations wherever they occur and to ensure equal treatment for every country in the assessment of human rights situations

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The New Times website—8 June: UN unanimously adopts rights report on Country

On 7 June, the 47-member United Nations Human Rights Council (HRC) unanimously adopted the National Report of Rwanda, which details the situation of human rights in the country. The initial report was submitted to the HRC working group in January 2011, and subsequent recommendations were recently issued to Rwanda.

The Head of the Rwandan Delegation, Minister of Justice Karugarama, informed the HRC that 67 out of 73 of their recommendations have been accepted and are in various stages of implementation by the Rwandan government. Among the rejected recommendations was one accusing Rwanda of recruiting child soldiers, which Karagurama refuted by stating, "there are no armed groups on the Rwandan territory," and that "Rwanda has a professional army...made up of adult men and women beyond the age of 18."

All HRC Member States commended Rwanda for its continued efforts and achievements in protecting human rights in various areas.

E. MISCELLANEOUS

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Official Website of the Government of Rwanda—11 June: Kagame addresses thousands at Rwanda Day in Chicago



Rwandan President Paul Kagame addressed thousands gathered at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Chicago to celebrate Rwanda Day, themed 'Agaciro, Our Heritage. Our Future.'

Attendees included Reverend Jesse Jackson who referred to President Kagame as a President who has a vision and passion, and a leader who leads with humility courage and generosity.