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### A. KAGAME ADDRESSES UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

*The New Times website—22 September: President Kagame Addresses UN General Assembly (author N/A) (private, pro-government source)*

In his address to the 66<sup>th</sup> United Nations General Assembly, Rwandan President Paul Kagame urged members of the UN to focus on “people-centered solutions” in their efforts to foster lasting economic, political, and social stability. The theme of this year’s conference, “The role of mediation in the settlement of disputes by peaceful means”, can only be successfully achieved through the empowerment of citizens and ‘homegrown’ solutions, said Kagame. After his remarks, Kagame met with President Jacob Zuma of South Africa and Allasane Ouattara of Cote d’Ivoire.

*UN News Service—21 September: Home-grown methods of Mediation work best, Kagame tells UN (author N/A)*

Paul Kagame alerted the international community to the dangers of traditional methods of diplomacy in instances of conflict mediation in his speech to the UN General Assembly on 21 September. Speaking in New York, he stressed, “too often, while resolutions are being debated and refined, people are dying,” and went on specify that mediation efforts should not be confused with “supporting one side of the conflict or imposing a solution in the interest of the mediators.” Using Rwanda’s experience in mediating ethnic tensions following the 1994 Genocide, Kagame noted, “it is also important to involve regional and sub-regional players, who have ample knowledge of the often complex regional dynamics of the conflicts in the mediation efforts.”

### B. INGABIRE TRIAL POSTPONED

*The New Times website—27 September: Ingabire trial postponed to next week (author N/A) (privately-owned, pro-government source)*

After three weeks in court, the trial of Victoire Ingabire will be postponed until 4 October after the defense accused prosecutors of pushing charges over which it has no jurisdiction. According to lead defense counsel, Ian Edwards, the charges of terrorism and genocide ideology leveled against Ingabire were allegedly committed outside Rwanda, and the High Court therefore does not have territorial jurisdiction over the case. The defense also objects that the charges against her were laid in 2006 when she was arrested, while the laws in which she is allegedly in violation of were not formally published until 2008-2009. The Prosecution has accused the defense team of delay tactics; the trial is expected to resume next Tuesday.

## C. EX-MAYOR FACING POSSIBLE LIFE IMPRISONMENT

*The New Times website—23 September: ICTR: Prosecution requests life sentence for Ndahimana (author N/A) (privately-owned, pro-government source)*

Prosecutors of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) concluded the trial of genocide suspect, Gregoire Ndahimana, by reiterating their request for a life sentence in a case that began over three years ago. Ndahimana, former Mayor of Kivumu Commune (Western Province) is charged with complicity to commit genocide, after he allegedly planned and participated in the destruction of the Nyange church that killed 2,000 Tutsi refugees in April 1994. According to prosecutor Althea Alexis-Windsor, Ndahimana “betrayed the trust of his people when he ordered policemen to shoot at the church.” Life is the heaviest sentence that can be handed down by the ICTR.

*Hirondelle News Agency—21 September: Prosecution requests life imprisonment for ex-Mayor (privately-owned, Lausanne-based source)*

In the courtroom of the ICTR, the case against former Kibuye prefecture Mayor, Gregoire Ndahimana wound down with the prosecution asking judges for the maximum sentence of life imprisonment for the accused. Charged with genocide and crimes against humanity, Ndahimana was, according to senior trial attorney, Holo Makwaiya, “a man of the moment, he led the attackers by examples, gave them means and facilitated every move.” After the destruction of a church in which 2,000 Tutsis were seeking refuge, Ndahimana allegedly “drank beers in celebration of the deaths of the Tutsis.” The defense argued that Ndahimana was falsely implicated in an event in which he did not participate. The trial opened on 6 September 2010.

## D. CANADIAN NEWSPAPER SAYS TWITTER COULD HAVE PREVENTED GENOCIDE

*Rwanda News Agency—26 September: Twitter could have prevented genocide, author claims by Ottawa Citizen (privately-owned source)*

According to Walter Dorn, professor at the Canadian Forces College and author of a new book entitled, *Keeping Watch: Monitoring, Technology and Innovation in UN Peace Operations*, Twitter and similar social networking platforms could have prevented the Rwandan Genocide had they existed in 1994. Referencing their use in the recent Arab Spring revolutions, Dorn proposes that social media would have allowed General Romeo Dallaire with another channel to warn the Rwandan population or to gather information about the growing ethnic violence. According to Dorn, “we could have had much better intelligence. If there had been a more direct connection to a lot of activities going on in the field, then the UN could have been much better suited to take the measures that should have been taken.” Dallaire, who wrote the forward to Dorn’s book, acknowledged the lack of intelligence in the UN peacekeeping mission in Rwanda, and urged the UN to capitalize on modern technology to “save lives and alleviate human suffering.”

## E. MISCELLANEOUS

*Reporters Sans Frontieres—21 September: Rugambage Murder Trial-One defendant gets 10 years, other acquitted (author N/A) (privately-owned, Paris-based source)*

Reporters Without Borders (RSF) is protesting against a verdict handed down by the High Court of Rwanda in the case against two men accused of murdering a former magazine editor. Jean-Leonard Rugambage, deputy-editor of the bi-monthly, *Umuvugizi*, died after being shot four times outside his home in Kigali last June. On 15 September, the High Court sentenced Didace Nduguyangu to 10 years in prison for the crime, while the second defendant, Antoine Karemera, was acquitted. According to RSF, the

punishment was not in proportion to the crime, and “[raised] more questions without providing any answers.” Following Rugambage’s murder, RSF had requested that the French government and the European Union delegation in Kigali undertake an independent investigation into the matter, but no such investigation was ever carried out.

The murder of the former editor was committed shortly after Rugambage published an article in Umuvugizi accusing the Rwandan government of orchestrating the assassination attempt of exiled army General Kayumba Nyamwasa, also in June of last year. The sequence of events raised suspicion that Rugambage’s killing may have been organized by the Kagame government, a regime that is heavily criticized for its crackdown on freedom of the press.

*The New Times website—22 September: Media reforms on track-officials (author N/A) (privately-owned, pro-government source)*

In an update addressed to media managers and editors, the Executive Secretary of the High Council of the Media said that reforms to the media sector are progressing smoothly with a number of milestones already reached. Reforms currently on the table include amendments to laws that will make it easier for unbiased journalist work as well as the establishment of a self-regulated body made up of industry participants. According to Executive Secretary of the High Council of Media, Patrice Mulama, the reforms will enhance freedom of and access to information by media practitioners. Amendments that have been approved thus far include those to the Access to Information Bill, the Media Law, and the reform that will see the transformation of ORINFOR (the Rwanda Information Office) into a public broadcaster.

*The Independent—23 September: Kagame’s uneasy relationship with the British Press* by Claire Macdonald (**privately-owned, Kampala-based source**)—excerpts from editorial

“Parts of the British press have decried Rwanda’s president Paul Kagame as a ‘dictator accused of war crimes’, a huge leap from the days when he was lauded as his country’s saviour. The Daily Mail, whose reputation for scare tactics precedes it, made headlines in March this year with: ‘Forget Gaddafi. Blair’s NEW best friend is a despot guilty of even bloodier slaughter’. Alongside the piece, the paper published a horrifying photograph of rows of skulls sitting on a tin shelf, victims of the Rwandan massacre, an irony obviously missed by the Mail, which deemed it irrelevant that the ‘despot’ was the one to stop the genocide, and shoulder the responsibility of preventing it from ever happening again. While the Rwandan genocide was unfolding, the media wasn’t interested in a country that had been judged by the world to be too small, too black and simply too far away; no headlines there.

Today, 17 years on, the politicians and the media have chosen very different directions in their attitudes toward Rwanda. Britain’s Prime Ministers, from Labour’s Tony Blair, to the current conservative PM David Cameron, are still hungry to atone for the sins of their predecessors’ omissions, whether it’s via the creation of the social action project, Umubano, or most recently being photographed standing shoulder to shoulder with Kagame, their chosen hero of the peace, of the genocide, as they announced a 57 per cent increase in aid to Rwanda. The media, however, has chosen to depict Kagame as the villain, because in journalism it’s easier to report the good and the bad, and a lot harder to report the grey area in between. To a large degree, Kagame deserves to wear the West’s badge of honour. Leader of the Rwandan Patriotic Front, he ended the genocide and has made huge progress in rebuilding a broken country, pushing economic reform, investing in infrastructure, education and farming, and has more women in his government than anywhere else in the world, all the while earning the reputation for transparent governance.

Beneath Rwanda’s flourishing economy and progress, the consequences of the genocide still flow hauntingly close to the surface. For many survivors the genocide is still ongoing, having slipped silently into the next generation through the children born of the mass rapes. Today these ‘children of the enemy’ are teenagers trying to come to terms with their identity. Some vow to avenge their mothers, some aim to

join their Hutu fathers, but the majority of them have grown up rejected by both parents, and both communities, posing an enormous threat for the stability of Rwanda's future. With survivors and perpetrators still living alongside each other as neighbours, tensions obviously remain. Seventeen years is but a blink of an eye in term of forgiveness and healing. Is it not natural that Kagame should feel the need to keep a strong grip on power? The British media would be the first to blame him if he didn't.”

\*Claire Macdonald holds a MSc in International Relations from Kingston University. For the full editorial piece, visit <http://allafrica.com/stories/201109231062.html>.