

Rwanda Domestic Media Report (September 13-20, 2010)

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State-Owned Media Sources

*Radio France Internationale – 9 September 2010: **DRCongo Journalist Acquitted***

- The editor of the daily *Le Journal* in the DRCongo has been acquitted of treason charges levied against him five months ago for having published a press release by the FDLR (Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda). The latter—armed Hutu rebels situated in the East—were called a “terrorist” group by the Minister of Communication, who accused the editor of being in collusion with them.
- The association *Journalists in Danger* say the acquittal is a victory for the freedom of the press in the DRCongo. The newspaper is still suspended from publication.

Privately-Owned Media Sources

*The New Times website (retrieved from BBC Monitoring) – 9 September 2010: **Kagame and Ban Ki-moon meet over leaked UN Report of Rwandan abuses in DRCongo***

- Ban Ki-Moon and Rwandan President Paul Kagame met in Kigali to discuss a leaked UN draft report. The UN report accuses Rwandan forces of war crimes against Hutu refugees living in the DRCongo (rape, murder, looting, and possibly genocide) over a period of 7 years, and was leaked by the French newspaper *Le Monde* in August.
- President Kagame dismissed the report as “amateurish” and “outrageous”, and the Rwandan government has threatened to withdraw its peacekeeping troops from all UN missions if the report is published.
- Human Rights Watch and other international human rights groups applaud the report; it is the first time the UN has published such damning allegations against the country.
- In an effort at soliciting cooperation, the UN Secretary-General will release all comments and concerns submitted by the Rwandan government and all other countries concerned along with the final version of the report. The Kagame government, however, maintains that if the report is published as-is, they will retaliate with “strong actions”. The report is scheduled to be released October 1st, 2010.

*The New Times website (retrieved from allafrica.com) – 10 September 2010: **Illegal firearms discovered***

- A recent police report released announced that over 700 firearms have been recovered throughout Rwanda since February.
- Most weapons recovered were surrendered willingly; they were suspected to have been initially distributed to the population by the genocidal government of Jean Kambanda.

*RNA (Rwanda News Agency; retrieved from BBC Monitoring) –13 September 2010: **Regional rights body accuses Rwandan NGOs of hidden agenda***

- The regional rights group LDGL (League for Human Rights in the Great Lakes Region) is being accused by another umbrella rights organization, CLADHO, of disregarding their input in a recent study of the rights situation in Rwanda. The study was requested by the UN Human Rights Council and is to be used as part of the Council's Universal Periodic Review in February 2011.
- CLADHO and 12 other groups say LDGL sent the final report to Geneva without any of their submissions included. CLADHO has threatened to go to court over the issue.

*East African website (retrieved from BBC Monitoring) –13 September 2010: **Leaked UN report links Uganda to “massacre and rape” in DR Congo***

- The UN draft report alleging Rwandan violence against Hutu refugees in the DR Congo (see article of 10 September above) also implicates Ugandan forces in acts including murder, rape, and the training of child soldiers.
- The report states that the Rwandan and Ugandan forces were fighting primarily over control of the diamond riches in the Kisangani area of the DR Congo. It estimates that 800 Congolese were killed, and that both sides violated humanitarian law, including the failure to distinguish between civilians and combatants.
- The report also alleges that Uganda helped fund and supplied troops to the Congolese rebel force AFDL who engaged in the killing of Hutu refugees between 1996 and 1998. It goes on to accuse both Rwandan and Ugandan forces of pillaging the resources of the DR Congo (namely their gold reserves).

*RNA (Rwanda News Agency; retrieved from BBC Monitoring) – 14 September 2010: **French team investigates plane crash that killed former President Habyarimana***

- A 17-member team of French investigators arrived in Rwanda last week to probe the assassination of former President Habyarimana. The government promises transparency and full cooperation in the investigation.
- The investigation is meant to confirm or deny two competing theories: an earlier probe released by the Rwandan government in 2006 in which President Kagame was accused of planning the drowning of the plane, and another released earlier this year that accused extremists in the Habyarimana government (including the First Lady) of planning the plane crash. The results of the probe are expected in January.

*The New Times website (retrieved from BBC Monitoring)- 16 September 2010: **Rwanda's MDG progress***

- An *Actionaid* report released this week, entitled “Who’s really fighting hunger?”, announced that Rwanda’s policies aimed at empowering farmers and fighting poverty are succeeding, but that a stronger legal framework is needed to protect the achievements this far. The report also predicts that Rwanda is set to achieve the MDG goal of halving child malnutrition by 2016, just one year after the 2015 deadline.

*The New Times website (retrieved from BBC Monitoring) – 17 September 2010: **Rwanda condemns French release of genocide suspect** (2 other similar articles covered on BBC, including Radio Rwanda).*

- Prosecutor-General Martin Ngoga has condemned the September 15th release of genocide suspect Eugene Rwamucyo as “disrespectful to Rwanda”. Ngoga accused the French ruling as hasty and executed without regard to proper procedure; he also condemns France’s refusal to extradite Rwamucyo as a sign that Europe lacks confidence in the Rwanda judicial system.
- According to Ngoga, France is one of the countries with the largest population of genocide suspects; this is dangerous, says Ngoga, since these and other related acquittals prove that there is an “impunity gap”, where suspects are neither extradited to Rwanda nor charged in France.

*The New Times website (retrieved from allafrika.com) – 18 September 2010: **DRC plans assault on FDLR** (story not found on BBC)*

- The Congolese army has increased its deployments to the eastern part of the country to combat Rwandan rebel militias, who have been operating there since their fleeing Rwanda after the 1994 genocide.
- The FDLR (Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération de Rwanda), composing rebels who were responsible “for masterminding the killing of over one million people”, have been capitalizing on the region’s mining industry to generate wealth to fuel the conflict; along with causing a “humanitarian catastrophe” through violence (including rape and plundering) against the local population. The most recent eruption of violence was in July-August when an estimated 500 Congolese women and children were raped by the FDLR.
- Atul Khare, the UN Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping admits that peacekeeping efforts in the region have failed, and recommends sanctions targeted against the FDLR.
- President Kabila has recently suspended mining activities in the region in an attempt to cut off the source of the FDLR’s wealth (see BBC story “DRC Congo bans mining in east to prevent “Mafia Activity”, 13 September 2010).

*The New Times website (retrieved from allafrika.com) – 18 September 2010: **Hunt for genocide suspects will not stop***

- Theodore Simburudari, president of IBUKA (umbrella organization of Genocide survivors associations) urged on Rwanda Television for the continued pressure in the hunt for Genocide suspects hiding in countries around the world.
- Specifically addressing the country’s youth, Simburudari compared the search for genocidaires to the decades-long search for those who responsible for the killing of Jews during the Holocaust. He also vowed to support the lawsuit against the Belgian government by the families of the victims of the ETO Kicukiro massacre as a result of the withdrawal of Belgian troops.

*The New Times website (retrieved from BBC Monitoring) –19 September 2010: **Rwandan observers review recent presidential poll process***

- Officials from the National Democratic Institute, the National Electoral Commission, the Media High Council, and the Rwanda Civil Society platform met on September 18th to review the recently completed presidential elections. The purpose of the meeting was to identify areas of future improvement to the electoral process and its regulating laws.
- The parties in the conference commended all parties and observers involved for respecting the independence, non-partisan nature, and coverage rules of the election. The ensuing Commonwealth report, however, called for improvements to the Presidential Election Law, specifically the improvement of tabulation procedures.