

Rwanda Domestic Media Report (December 13th-20th, 2010)
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Privately-Owned Media Sources

RNA (Rwanda News Agency)—15 December 2010: Dutch government said stops aid to Rwanda

- The Netherlands has decided to stop its development aid contributions to Rwanda, as well as Senegal, Benin, and Tanzania.
- The decision comes after months of negotiations between the different political groups in the Dutch Parliament, and will effectively end the flow of approximately 44 million Euros sent to Rwanda from the Netherlands each year. Specifically, the cuts apply to direct budget support—that is money that flows directly into the national budget of a developing country in order to help the government execute its primary duties.
- According to Dutch lawmakers, the decision to cease aid was made largely due to Rwandan officials' failure to address the human rights situation in the country. According to MP Klass Dijkhoff, "In Rwanda we have some concerns about the judicial system and the way politics and democracy are carried out."

The New Times website—15 December 2010: Search carried out at Rwandan opposition leader's Dutch residences

- Dutch police have searched the houses of jailed Rwandan opposition leader Victoire Umuhoza Ingabire, located in the villages of Zevenhuizen and Bilthoven, near Rotterdam in the Netherlands.
- Several documents and a computer were removed from the premises following the search.
- The Prosecutor General in the case against Ingabire, Martin Ngoga, applauded the long-awaited cooperation from Dutch officials, although he noted that the time lapse (the search request had been submitted to Dutch officials in February) could have affected the outcome.
- Ingabire is being held on charges of working with and forming a terrorist organization with the aim of threatening state security.

RNA (Rwanda News Agency)—16 December 2010: French judges indict six Rwanda officials for attack on ex-president's plane

- Six Rwandan officials and soldiers have been indicted by two French judges for their role in the downing of the plane carrying former Rwanda president, Juvenal Habyarimana, in April 1994.
- The decision came after a week of testimonies by witnesses and visits in September, the purpose of which was to identify the origin of the gunfire

- that took down the plane. The proceedings were approved by both the French judiciary and the Rwandan government.
- The Rwanda government has not reacted to the indictments against its officials.

The New Times website—17 December 2010: Rwanda lauds French decision on arrest warrants

- The Government of Rwanda has publicly welcomed the decision by French judges to reverse the indictments issued against top RPA (Rwanda Patriotic Army) officers by the controversial French judge, Jean Louis Bruguiere.
- Bruguiere had indicted the officers in 2006 on the grounds that they were responsible for the assassination of former President Juvenal Habyarimana. The indictments have since been contested by other Rwandan officials and the media on the grounds that they were politically-motivated. The issue was brought to the fore by recently-released documents by the whistle-blowing website, Wikileaks, which show Bruguiere conniving with French officials including former French president Jacques Chirac to issue the indictments.
- Justice Minister Tharcisse Karugarama hailed the development as a “first step” toward revealing the truth behind the President Habyarimana’s death.

RNA (Rwanda News Agency)—17 December 2010: Media body calls on Rwanda official to withdraw accusation against journalist

- The Committee to Protect Journalists has condemned a statement made by Brig-Gen Dr. Richard Rutatina, in which he condemned Nelson Gatsimbazi, managing editor of the tabloid Umusingi, of receiving illicit funding and working with “enemies of the state.”
- The accusation was made by Presidential adviser Rutatina during a forum on political space in Rwanda that was broadcast on state-sponsored radio and television stations. In response to a question by Gatsimbazi about prolonged pretrial detentions, Rutatina said “we know all those paying you to do what you do, including names, places.”
- According to the New-York based Committee to Protect Journalists, the statement from Rutatina “seemed designed to intimidate critical journalists,” and that it is “unacceptable in a democracy for a senior military officer to make unsubstantiated accusations against a journalist who asked a question in a public forum.”

The New Times website—20 December 2010: Rwandan Hutu officer surrenders to UN mission in eastern DR Congo

- Colonel Jonas Nteziyaremye (alias Makoto), the officer of a breakaway faction of the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) has been repatriated to Rwanda from the DR Congo.
- The colonel, who had spent 16 years with the Rally for Unity and Democracy (RUD) in the forests of the DR Congo, told the United Nations Mission in Congo (MONUC), “I was tired and frustrated by life in the bush; although it was not easy to escape, when the opportunity presented itself, I decided to return home.”

- According to Nteziyaremye, his return was made easier after communication with fellow ex-combatants and his relatives who live in Rwanda, all of who assured him that the government welcomed those who returned voluntarily.
- Nteziyaremye was the liaison officer between the militiamen and the local population; he revealed that the 300-rebel group is “suffering from lack of logistics and shortage of recruits,” and that “it would be wrong to assume that any rebel group in eastern Congo can take over power in Rwanda.”

Rwanda News Agency (RNA)—20 December 2010: US leader urges Rwandan leader, others, to put pressure on Sudanese President

- US President Barack Obama has written to President Kagame urging him and other African leaders to exert pressure on the Sudanese President, Umar Al-Bashir, on peace in Darfur and upcoming elections in the South.
- The referendum in Darfur is to take place on January 9th, in which southerners are expected to vote overwhelmingly for independence from the north. The vote for independence is part of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), meant to broker relations between the predominantly Muslim north and Christian south to end two decades of civil war.
- The Obama administration has affirmed that the violence in Sudan is a top US foreign policy priority, and that “an on-time referendum is the best means of preventing the resumption of a full-scale war between northern and southern Sudan.”
- Currently, Rwanda has 3,500 troops in Darfur as part of the UN/AU forces; they are concentrated in Khartoum and Southern Sudan.