

State Owned Media Sources

There were no relevant stories from state-owned media sources for the period of May 15-25th, 2011.

Privately Owned Media Sources

The New Times website—17 March 2011: Rwanda opts out of AU mediation team on Libya due to “other commitments”

- Rwanda, member of the African Union Peace and Security Council, has opted out of the committee formed to mediate the ongoing conflict in Libya on behalf of the AU.
- According to unconfirmed reports, Rwanda was the first choice for the role among the East African countries at a meeting of the PSC in Addis Ababa, but handed the position to Uganda instead. The mediation team will be made up of five heads of state from different regions of the continent.
- In a statement by Foreign minister, Louise Mushikiwabo (the Rwandan envoy at the conference), the country’s decision to opt out was due to other commitments on the continent; namely, peacekeeping. According to Mushikiwabo, “Rwanda is for protecting against the loss of lives in any crisis, and we believe in Africa speaking with one voice on important issues. We are very committed to our role in the PSC, but declined participation in the High Level Committee on Libya because, for the moment, we are busy with other commitments on the continent, particularly in peacekeeping. We are confident that Uganda will represent our region competently.”
- According to sources involved in the debate, although the African Union seeks to play a positive role in resolving the crisis, the complexities involved in the situation provoked a heated debate with some countries hesitating to cast the Libyan leadership in a negative light.

The New Times website—17 March 2011: Rwandan court says opposition leader delaying hearing of her case

- According to the Rwandan High Court, Victoire Ingabire Umuhiza, leader of the FDU-Inkingi political party, has failed to file her defense brief on the charges against her, preventing the High Court from setting a date for the hearing.
- Ingabire is accused of working with a terrorist organization (specifically, with the FDLR militia with the goal of forming a military wing of the FDU-Inkingi), promoting ethnic divisions, propagating the genocide ideology and trivializing the 1994 genocide. She was arrested in October 2010.
- According to the High Court President, Johnston Busingye, despite several written requests since the deadline passed in February, there has been no response from her or her defense team.

The New Times website—20 March 2011: Rwanda’s Muslim community launches website

- The Rwandan Muslim Association has launched a website that will help promote Islam and showcase roles of the Muslim community in the country’s development.

- The site, www.ijwi-islam.org is in Kinyarwanda, and promotes government programs such as education, health, and aims to help fight against genocide ideology.

The New Times website—22 March 2011: Rwanda information office bars state TV from airing “shocking” genocide images

- The Rwandan Information Office (ORNIFOR) has forbid the airing of graphic images of genocide on Rwanda Television (RTV), following complaints from viewers.
- According to Willy Rukundo, acting director general of ORINFOR, the public complained that the gruesome pictures aired on television have been disturbing and traumatic.
- “We were advised by psychologists to tone down the screening of images because they cause trauma, especially among genocide survivors and children,” said Rukundo.
- Others disagree; according to Freddy Mutanguha, director of the Kigali Memorial Centre, modifying genocide images would translate to “trivializing the genocide and that it would not depict how it really happened.”

The Daily Monitor—24 March 2011: Rwanda president supports Libya raids

- Rwandan president Paul Kagame publicly endorsed the UN-authorized no-fly zone and bombing raids on Libya, arguing the situation in the North African country had degenerated “beyond” what the African Union could handle. “Rwanda’s position is the AU’s position”, affirmed Kagame.
- The announcement comes after the bombardment and disablement of Libya’s air defense systems last week, a result of joint efforts between the UK and France, under American central command.
- Kagame’s outlook is in stark contrast to that of neighboring Uganda’s President Museveni, who has criticized UN involvement, iterating his preference for African intervention only. He was quoted on 20 March as stating that military action against Qadhafi’s regime lacked “impeachable logic”, showed the West’s “double standards”, and could even trigger an arms race.