

Rwanda Domestic Media Report (November 8-15, 2010)

By Paula Cook-Dinan, MIGS Monitor for Rwanda

State-Owned Media Sources

*No relevant articles from state-owned media sources found

Privately-Owned Media Sources

*The New Times Website – 8 November 2010: **Rwanda journalists call for decriminalization of defamation***

- The Rwandan Journalist Association (ARJ) has called for the repeal of legislation that makes defamation a criminal offense in order to increase the freedom of the media in the country.
- The call was the result of a meeting organized by the ARJ and the Ministry of Information to celebrate the Africa Day of Information.
- According to the participants, press freedom is necessary to ensure the media's role as watchdog over public officials, and criminalization of defamation makes it difficult—or impossible—to critique the actions of the latter.

*Radio Okapi (DRCongo UN-sponsored) – 9 November 2010: **Ten soldiers killed in clash between DRCongo army, rebel coalition***

- A clash between the DRCongo Armed Forces (FARDC) and a coalition of local rebel groups—including the FDLR (Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda)—left 10 FARDC soldiers dead and two others wounded. It was not reported whether there were any deaths or injuries on the assailants' side.
- The violence took place in Mibunda, in the Fizi Territory of Sud-Kivu located in the eastern DRCongo.
- The FARDC was in pursuit of rebel groups allegedly joining forces in the Itombwe Forest in Mwenga Territory, where theft and looting has been escalating.

*The New Times Website – 11 November 2010: **Rwandan army dismisses reports of deployment in eastern DRCongo***

- The Rwanda Defence Forces (RDF) has denied a report in the online magazine Africa Confidential alleging that Rwandan soldiers have been deployed back into the eastern DRCongo.
- The article, which states that “chaos in the Kivus has given Kigali a pretext to send its soldiers back across the border”, is based on the discovery of empty ration packets found in the region.
- RDF spokesperson Col. Jill Rutaremara dismissed the claims as “totally false.” He did, however, agreed that dissidents—such as General Faustin Kayumba Nyamwasa, in exile in South Africa—are forging links with the FDLR and other rebel forces in the DRCongo.

*The New Times Website – 13 November 2010: **Rwandan court turns down opposition leader's bail application***

- Kigali's High Court has rejected the bail application for Victoire Ingabire Umuhoya, leader of the un-registered FDU-Inkingi party.
- Judge Johnston Busingye said only that the court found 'serious reasons' as to why Ingabire didn't deserve bail.
- The prosecution, headed by Martin Ngoga, maintains that Ingabire is a terrorist masquerading as a politician; specifically, that she is working with the FDLR militia to establish a military wing of her party.
- Ingabire's trial is scheduled to begin in a month.

*RNA (Rwanda News Agency) – 15 November 2010: **AGF Condemns Rwanda's Green Party coalition membership***

- The African Green Federation (AGF)—a national body representing Green parties of various African nations—has ordered Rwanda's Green Party to end its membership in the coalition of opposition parties.
- Formally known as the Permanent Consultative Council of Opposition Parties in Rwanda (PCC), the coalition is made up of the FDU Inkingi, the Green Party, and a faction of PS IMberakuri.
- According to the Secretary General of the AGF, the current legal accusations against the leaders of the other two parties in the coalition are tainting the reputation of the PCC and implicating the Green Party in the process. This, in turn, is "detrimental (to the) image and profile" of the AGF
- Frank Habineza, the leader of Rwanda's Green Party, is also the AGF president. The AGF has threatened to end Rwanda's Green Party membership in the national body if it doesn't distance itself from the PCC.