

Rwanda Domestic Media Report (October 13 –October 19, 2010)

By Paula Cook-Dinan, MIGS Monitor for Rwanda

State-Owned Media Sources

*No articles from state-owned media sources found for the week of Oct 13-19 2010.

Privately-Owned Media Sources

*The New Times website – 13 October 2010: **Activists say Rwanda rebel group “struck on the head” after leader’s arrest***

- The Monday arrest of FDLR Executive Secretary, Callixte Mbarushimana, in France has severely weakened the terrorist group, according to activists.
- “The arrest...may weaken the FDLR in the Congo. The main political leaders are in jail. The FDLR are struck on the head,” said Alain Gauthier, the president of the Collectif des Parties Civile pour le Rwanda (CPCR), a French group aiming to locate and try Genocide fugitives.
- According to former Maj-Gen Paul Rwarakabije, Mbarushimana’s arrest will diminish the trust and consequent links of communication between the soldiers inside the DR Congo and their European supporters.
- Mbarushimana was captured under the mandate of an ICC arrest warrant; Mbarushimana faces five charges of crimes against humanity, six charges of war crimes including murder, rape, torture, and destruction of property in the DR Congo in 2009.
- According to an article by RFI, Rwanda is not requesting Mbarushimana’s extradition.

*RNA (Rwanda News Agency) – 14 October 2010: **Rwanda media council lifts suspension of two newspapers***

- Wednesday marked the end of the six-month suspension of the Umuseso and Umuvugizi tabloids imposed by the Rwandan Media High Council
- The Media High Council accused the publications specifically of violating Article 83, citing a “total breach of media ethics.” The Council added that “most of the articles produced by the two tabloids since January this year were full of fabrications and were provocative,” and that the stories were highly opinionated and were written with the aim of instigating fear among the public.
- The Council has, in the past, brought the magazines to court in attempts to have them banned completely. These cases have all been dismissed on largely technical grounds.
- According to Executive Secretary of MHC, Patrice Mulama, the newspapers’ resumption of operations depends on their fulfilling the requirements prescribed by the new media law. Article 24 of the new law requires all media houses in existence before the law to register with the MHC.
- The self-exiled editors of the two publications are rumored to have continued to publish The Newline, an English tabloid, in Uganda.

*RNA (Rwanda News Agency) –14 October 2010: **Rwandan opposition politician arrested; to be charged with treason***

- Opposition leader Ingabire Victoire Umuhoza is being charged with treason after evidence emerged linking her to the FDLR group operating in the DR Congo.
- The evidence was provided by rebel commander Maj. Vital Uwumuremyi during intense interrogations after his capture at the DR Congo-Rwandan border on 13 October. He reportedly admitted plans to create a new rebel group, which would have links to a terrorist military wing of Ingabire's yet-to-be-registered FDU (United Democratic Forces) Inkingi party.
- Authorities denied Ingabire's attempts to register the FDU in the August 9th election which was won by President Kagame.
- Ingabire has been under house arrest since April after she allegedly denied the 1994 Genocide.

*Missionary Service News Agency website – 18 October 2010: **Rwandan opposition group urges UN to secure release of political leaders***

- The Council of opposition parties in Rwanda (PCC) has appealed to the UN to intervene to secure the release of political prisoners, including Victoire Ingabire Umuhoza, leader of the unregistered FDU Inkingi party.
- The PCC counts members of the Social Imberakuri and FDU Inkingi parties, as well as the "Green Democratic Party"; they have attracted the attention of the international community over the lack of freedom exercised by the government of President Kagame. They cite the shutting down of several independent newspapers as evidence of the oppression of the Kagame regime.