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BUSINESS AND POLITICS IN THE MUSLIM WORLD
Central Africa
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Summary

1. Economy and Energy

Rwanda: WB Approves U.S.$115.6 Million for Rwanda

The World Bank's Board of Executive Directors has approved a US$115.6m from the International Development Association to assist Rwanda implement its Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDPRS). The amount includes US$29.5m under the Crisis Response Window (CRW) of which US$14.3 is a loan to the government while US$15.2m is a grant. It was said by the economists that economic growth in Rwanda will improve the lives of citizens and would change the fate of country.

2. Politics

Rwanda Opposition Leader Says Government Silencing Dissent

The leader of Rwanda's opposition United Democratic Forces (UDF) says President Paul Kagame's government is determined to prevent her from participating in the scheduled August general elections. She states that Kagame's government is not allowing her to come into political arena which is my right. She said that she has been investigating in order to prove her links with FDLR and involvement in Genocide. But she argues that they do not have any evidence of it. Therefore she is highly criticizing on Kagame's government.

Rwanda: PAC Concludes Three-Day Meet

The Presidential Advisory Council (PAC), yesterday, concluded a 3-day meeting in Kigali where they have been assessing and discussing the country's education sector and development of skills and the financial sector. The group which consists of eminent Rwandan and International experts, who offer strategic advice and guidance to President Paul Kagame on Rwanda's development, visited several projects in the country and held discussions with the President and members of his cabinet.

Rwanda: Country, Kenya to Strengthen Ties

The seventh Joint Permanent Commission (JPC) between Rwanda and Kenya ended at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Kigali yesterday with commitment from both sides to implement agreed on decisions.

3. Peace keeping/ Conflict Resolution and Security matters

MONUC Official Says Regional Cooperation Could Counter LRA Atrocities

VOA

A top official of the United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUC) says better intelligence cooperation between Uganda, the Democratic republic of Congo (DRC) and the Central African Republic (CAR) could stop massacres allegedly committed by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) rebel group. MONUC spokesman Madnoudje Mounoubai said LRA rebels have been committing atrocities in remote areas of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and other countries despite efforts to counter their insurgency. Following the latest Human Rights Watch report on the atrocities committed by the rebels, analysts have suggested that increase in troops and cash are needed to counter threats posed by the LRA. The report accused LRA rebels of killing over 300 unarmed Congolese civilians last December.

Central Africa: Ban Names New Head for UN Mission in Chad and Central African Republic

UN News Service

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon today named a veteran United Nations official as his Acting Special Representative for the UN Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT), which was set up over two years ago amid increasing unrest, partly due to the war in neighboring Sudan's Darfur region Chad. Earlier this month the Security Council extended MINURCAT's mandate through 15 May, with Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Alain Le Roy saying this technical roll-over would "give some time to try to find agreement with the Chadian authorities."

4. Military/ Rebels/ Terrorism/ War on Terror

DR Congo massacre uncovered

The DRC army has been attempting to quell unrest in the north and east of the country. The Lord's Resistance Army killed about 300 people and kidnapped 250 more in a rampage in the Democratic Republic of Congo in December 2009, according to an international rights group and the UN. The previously undocumented massacre, undertaken over four-days in the remote Makombo area of DRC's northeastern Haute Uele district, was highlighted in reports by Human Rights Watch and the UN. The UN said that its investigation had shown that the LRA had killed at least 290 people, perhaps more than 300, during the rampage and following LRA threats of such massacres the year before. LRA fighters killed 1,200 people and kidnapped 1,400 others - including 630 children and more than 400 women - in the DRC during a 10-month period in 2008 and 2009, the UN has said.

Rwanda: FDLR Attacks on Civilians Declining - DRC Army

Attacks by the FDLR on the population of the Eastern Democratic Republic Congo have drastically reduced in the past months, Congolese army spokesman has said. In January, the three military chiefs of the Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries (CEPGL), a regional grouping that brings together Rwanda, the DRC and Burundi, agreed to maintain military pressure on FDLR rebels in eastern of DRC. They also recommended setting up a joint monitoring mechanism and the sharing of intelligence information as well as the need for regular meetings between FARDC and RDF to harmonize plans.

5. Human Rights/ Social Issues

Congo-Kinshasa: UN Helps Women Fight Under-Representation in Government

The United Nations is boosting the efforts of women in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) to overcome decades of low female participation in politics and achieve their rightful role in governing the vast African country and rebuilding it after years of civil war. The conference was organized by the Congolese Women's League for Elections in collaboration with the UN, the Government, and the Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa.

Rwanda: Cleric Says Approval of Second Gay U.S. Bishop is Divisive

Anglican Archbishop Emmanuel Kolini of Rwanda has warned that the approval of a second openly homosexual bishop in the U.S. Episcopal Church will further tear apart the 77-million-member worldwide Anglican Communion. The Rev. Mary Glasspool, who has lived with a female partner for 22 years, on 17 March, received the required number of votes from bishops and standing committees to be elected as the bishop of Los Angeles, making her the Episcopal Church's second openly homosexual bishop. Kolini in

the past has used the terms "moral genocide" in referring to homosexuality among Christians in his country, which suffered genocide in 1994. He said in the interview he believes that the churches in the South have a responsibility to show the way to their people over the matter. Kolini believes that homosexuality is being forced on the developing world. He described this as a new form of "cultural imperialism".

Rwanda: Media Coverage on Genocide Improves, MHC Report

A report by the Media High Council (MHC) has indicated that the local media has stepped up efforts to report about the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi. This was announced by the council's Executive Secretary during a press conference ahead of the 16th Genocide commemoration at the CNLG headquarters. The report is aimed at analyzing the role of the various media in educating the public and making in-depth content analysis of programs and newspapers that were broadcast and published from April 1 - 30 2009. The media played a crucial civic role of informing and educating Rwandans and foreigners about Genocide, the security and welfare of genocide survivors and unity and reconciliation. It shows that the media reports were more event-based than issue-based. In both print and electronic media, most items fell into news category compared to interviews, features and opinions. In broadcasting, news items tallied up to 95.18 percent of the total stories about the Genocide, while in print, constituted 62.03 percent of the total items that were published. It shows that benign forms of revisionism like genocide memory trivialization in some print media outlets were cited.

Details

1. Economy and Energy

Rwanda: WB Approves U.S.$115.6 Miliion for Rwanda

The New Times

Kigali — The World Bank's Board of Executive Directors has approved a US$115.6m from the International Development Association to assist Rwanda implement its Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDPRS).

The amount includes US$29.5m under the Crisis Response Window (CRW) of which US$14.3 is a loan to the government while US$15.2m is a grant.

The whole grant is part of the Bank's budgetary support to Rwanda. The areas to be supported by the grant include; increasing the participation of the private sector in the development of the agricultural sector as well as enhancing rural road access by improving the condition of the district road network.

Another area is strengthening the framework of private sector's participation in energy and water and sanitation sectors, and support reforms to raise agricultural production.

According to a statement from the Bank, the grant will also support growth of exports and creating jobs through enhancing the skills of the population.

"Strengthening economic governance and improving implementation capacity are essential for laying the foundations of a strong and sustainable economic growth," the World Bank's Senior Economist Kene Ezemenari, is quoted in the statement.

She added that the World Bank is proud of its partnership with the government of Rwanda which is leading to tangible improvements in the lives of ordinary Rwandans.

The Sixth Poverty Reduction Support Grant (PRSG VI) will continue to support priority areas identified in the previous PRSGs including agriculture, infrastructure and social sectors.

According to the statement, the funds have been disbursed as part of a series of the World Bank's Poverty Reduction Strategy operations for Rwanda that was launched in 2002.

2. Politics

Rwanda Opposition Leader Says Government Silencing Dissent

VOA

The leader of Rwanda's opposition United Democratic Forces (UDF) says President Paul Kagame's government is determined to prevent her from participating in the scheduled August general elections.

"When my lawyer asked them that because (their) testimonies were not right and that now Ingabire was free to go where she wants and frees to organize meeting of her political party. They said no not yet. We are looking for other evidence against her. But that was the day after the minister of justice said there (was) no evidence against me,"

The leader of Rwanda's opposition United Democratic Forces (UDF) says President Paul Kagame's government is determined to prevent her from participating in the scheduled August general elections.

Victoire Ingabire Umuhoza said the government is using the country's 1994 genocide to "blackmail" and silence any dissenting views.

"They refused that I go outside the country. I went three times to the police office and there (was) nothing new regarding the questions they asked me. It is the same question that I collaborated with the FDLR (Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda) and (that) there were some testimonies from some members of the FDLR that said that I was in Kinshasa with them in March. But I was not in Kinshasa in March I was there in February," she said.

Ingabire Umuhoza was recently prevented from travelling abroad after police said she was under investigation because of comments she made about the 1994 genocide.
Shortly after returning to Rwanda, Ingabire Umuhoza called for the prosecution of those responsible for the death of Hutus during the genocide.

But a group of genocide survivors called on the government to prosecute the opposition leader, saying her pronouncement belittled the genocide in which hundreds of thousands of Rwandans were killed.

Ingabire Umuhoza said despite the lack of evidence, officials are preventing her from organizing her first official meeting which will pave the way for her party to be registered and fully recognized by the government.

But supporters of the ruling Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF) dismissed the accusations as without merit. They said President Kagame's party can confidently run on its record of ensuring adequate security and rebuilding the economy against an opposition that they said has nothing to offer Rwandans.

But Ingabire Umuhoza said the government is sharply opposed to dissenting views.
"The government of Paul Kagame does not accept or tolerate any other opinion. If you are not aligned with the policy of Paul Kagame… you will end up in jail. And I think it is about time that we stop this regime of Paul Kagame," Ingabire Umuhoza said.

Rwanda: PAC Concludes Three-Day Meet

The New Times

Kigali — The Presidential Advisory Council (PAC), yesterday, concluded a 3-day meeting in Kigali where they have been assessing and discussing the country's education sector and development of skills and the financial sector.

The group which consists of eminent Rwandan and International experts, who offer strategic advice and guidance to President Paul Kagame on Rwanda's development, visited several projects in the country and held discussions with the President and members of his cabinet.

Speaking to members of the press yesterday, PAC member, Sir David King, said that the group which meets twice a year, had an extraordinary successful meeting where various issues were discussed and resolved.

"It was an extraordinary good meeting because we did a lot of business. We worked hard with the cabinet ministers directly, we talked about a number of issues and resolved them," King said, shortly after the group held talks with President Kagame at Urugwiro Village.

"We focussed on two major issues; educational provision and skills development. We also talked about financial issues and financial development."

King, who is the Director of the Smith School of Enterprise and the Environment at the University of Oxford, noted that group, which visited private and public universities, recognised a remarkable development in the country's institutions over time.

"Our conclusion from the visits is that the development of these institutions is simply remarkable. What we see today in KIST, is an institution that is competitive with major institutions around the world," King said.

However, King said, there is still a lot more to be done.

"Rwanda has need for technical people who can repair cars, build roads and water systems, who can mobilise the full aspects of IT and roll it out and keep it running, people who can work with their own hands," King said.

"PAC thinks hands-on work people, who are skilled with their hands, need more considerable effort".

He further noted that after visiting a number of banking and financial institutions around the country, the group observed the need to move towards using electronic money transactions, especially ATM machines.

On behalf of PAC, King acknowledged the vision and determination of the government to deliver in terms of development, adding that PAC is committed to its advisory roles to support the country's development.

Rwanda: Country, Kenya to Strengthen Ties

The New Times

Kigali — the seventh Joint Permanent Commission (JPC) between Rwanda and Kenya ended at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Kigali yesterday with commitment from both sides to implement agreed on decisions.

Amb Eugene Munyakayanza, thePermanent Secretary in the Ministry, said that following up on the decisions was always a challenge.

"Implementation has always been a problem, but I am sure now work will be done differently since what we have achieved in this meeting will help to monitor the implementation process," Munyakayanza said.

His Kenyan counterpart, Thuita Mwangi, also concurred, but added that they addressed the challenges.

"We have also been able to re-examine the challenges, particularly meeting deadlines that had been agreed upon," Mwangi said.

"This time around, we have been able to focus more specifically on the areas that had not been accomplished and we have established clear timelines in which they should be established".

3. Peace keeping/ Conflict Resolution and Security matters

MONUC Official Says Regional Cooperation Could Counter LRA Atrocities

VOA

A top official of the United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUC) says better intelligence cooperation between Uganda, the Democratic republic of Congo (DRC) and the Central African Republic (CAR) could stop massacres allegedly committed by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) rebel group.

"Money or military troops on the ground that's not enough…we need more cooperation between the three countries where the LRA is operating -- that is the DRC, Uganda and Central African Republic. Also those countries need to have better cooperation in terms of exchanging intelligence so that they can better organize the operation on the ground,"

A top official of the United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUC) says better intelligence cooperation between Uganda, the Democratic republic of Congo (DRC) and the Central African Republic (CAR) could stop massacres allegedly committed by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) rebel group.

MONUC spokesman Madnoudje Mounoubai said LRA rebels have been committing atrocities in remote areas of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and other countries despite efforts to counter their insurgency.

Following the latest Human Rights Watch report on the atrocities committed by the rebels, analysts have suggested that increase in troops and cash are needed to counter threats posed by the LRA.

The report accused LRA rebels of killing over 300 unarmed Congolese civilians last December.

Mounoubai said any troop surge will need support.

"The troops they are calling for will have to have mobility. This means they need some logistical support in terms of air transportation so that they can move quickly to operate once the LRA is spotted. Because you know that the LRA now moves in very small groups, they are very mobile. If they can't move quickly, they will never be able to deal efficiently with the LRA," Mounoubai said.

Observers also said claims by the DRC government and neighboring countries that the LRA rebels have been contained are overstated.

But Mounoubai said the LRA rebels have been restricted.

“The LRA as a major military organization does not exist anymore. Today you have smaller groups. We don’t know how much coordination exists between those different groups because they move in groups of 20 to 30 people at the most. They are very mobile, but they are armed and because they are armed they can cause a lot of harm on the civilian population,” Mounoubai said.

He also said the United Nations Mission in Congo has about 1,000 troops in the vast areas where the rebels operate, which Mounoubai said are not enough to prevent any atrocities the LRA may commit.

Central Africa: Ban Names New Head for UN Mission in Chad and Central African Republic

UN News Service

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon today named a veteran United Nations official as his Acting Special Representative for the UN Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT), which was set up over two years ago amid increasing unrest, partly due to the war in neighbouring Sudan's Darfur region.Chad

Youssef Mahmoud, a Tunisian national who joined the UN in 1981, replaces Victor Angelo who retired this month. He has already been in Chad for over a week discussing the Mission's future after the African country called for the withdrawal of its military component, saying it had served its purpose and it was better for Chadian forces to take over security responsibilities.

Earlier this month the Security Council extended MINURCAT's mandate through 15 May, with Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Alain Le Roy saying this technical roll-over would "give some time to try to find agreement with the Chadian authorities."

MINURCAT was set up in 2007 to ensure the security of hundreds of thousands of refugees from Darfur, other displaced persons and humanitarian workers in both countries.

Last month Chadian Permanent Representative Ahmad Allam-mi told a news conference at UN Headquarters in New York that that the military component had served its purpose. With new agreements on border security with Sudan, and with MINURCAT not strong enough to provide complete security in eastern Chad, he said, it was better for Chadian forces to take over and for the mandate to be adjusted.

The mission currently comprises nearly 4,000 uniformed personnel and 430 international civilian staff, 500 local civilians and 143 UN Volunteers. Its mandate calls for it to liaise with the national forces to create a more secure environment, combating in particular the

problems of banditry and criminality; and to support efforts to relocate refugee camps which are close to the border.

In the humanitarian field, it is entrusted with promoting human rights, with particular attention to sexual and gender-based violence, recommending action to fight impunity, and assisting the Government in promoting the rule of law, including support for an independent judiciary and a strengthened legal system.

Before his arrival in Chad, Mr. Mahmoud served for three years as Executive Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the UN Integrated Office in Burundi (BINUB). He has held several high profile positions, including UN Resident Coordinator in Guyana and Director in the Department of Political Affairs (DPA). He has also held posts with the UN Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) and Office of Human Resources and Management (OHRM) in New York.

4. Military/ Rebels/ Terrorism/ War on Terror

DR Congo massacre uncovered

AL JAZEERA

The DRC army has been attempting to quell unrest in the nroth and east of the country [EPA]
The Lord's Resistance Army killed about 300 people and kidnapped 250 more in a rampage in the Democratic Republic of Congo in December 2009, according to an international rights group and the UN.

The previously undocumented massacre, undertaken over four-days in the remote Makombo area of DRC's northeastern Haute Uele district, was highlighted in reports by Human Rights Watch and the UN on Sunday.

The killings of 321 civilians occurred between December 14 and 17, HRW said in a reportafter documenting the deaths in a visit to the region in February.

The Ugandan anti-government group were said to have abducted 80 children among the 250 people kidnapped.

"The Makombo massacre is one of the worst ever committed by the LRA in its bloody 23-year history, yet it has gone unreported for months," Anneke Van Woudenberg, HRW's senior Africa researcher, said.

"The four-day rampage demonstrates that the LRA remains a serious threat to civilians and is not a spent force, as the Ugandan and Congolese governments claim."

However, Obonyo Olweny, a former LRA spokesman, has told Al Jazeera that while the group is still active, it is not fighting civilians.

"I want to say categorically to the world that the LRA is not responsible for the killings going on in the [Democratic Republic of] Congo or the CAR [Central Africa Republic]," he said from Nairobi, Kenya, on Sunday.

"It is the UPD [the Ugandan armed forces] carrying out the killings - it is part of the government's propaganda."

'Really brutal'

The UN said that its investigation had shown that the LRA had killed at least 290 people, perhaps more than 300, during the rampage and following LRA threats of such massacres the year before.

"The men were tied by the chest by the same rope and killed with wood sticks on the back of the head and neck - it was really brutal and fast," Liliane Egounlety, who led the UN investigation, said.

"They also used machetes. Many witnesses found it too hard to talk about."

The UN said that at least 150 people had been abducted.

HRW's investigation found that the LRA had made some of the 80 abducted children murder other children.

The LRA has a reputation of forcing children into becoming soldiers.

HRW said that the attacks in at least 10 villages were well planned, targeting men first, but also killing women and children.

The group said that the youngest person to die was a three-year-old girl who was burned to death, while at least 13 gangs and 23 children were killed.

Their document said that some people were killed by having their heads smashed with axes and heavy wooden sticks.

Regional problem

The LRA was formed in northern Uganda in the late-1980s as an opposition group.

In 2005, they were forced out of the East African country to the DRC, Central African Republic and south Sudan, from where they continued to launch cross-border attacks.

LRA fighters killed 1,200 people and kidnapped 1,400 others - including 630 children and more than 400 women - in the DRC during a 10-month period in 2008 and 2009, the UN has said.

Van Woudenberg told Al Jazeera that the LRA had become a regional problem that needed action by the United Nations and African governments.

"What it does show is that it is high time for the Lord's Resistance Army leaders to be arrested, for them to be brought to justice and these kind of atrocities to end," she said.

"I think what is needed is some bold leadership, some really courageous steps taken by the governments of the region, by the United Nations peacekeeping forces to put together an regional strategy to end the terror of this group."

A much-criticised UN mission remains in the east of DRC but is under pressure to leave the country by next year, when presidential polls are due to be held.

Monuc, the peacekeeping force, has about 22,000 soldiers in the region to keep peace in the face of Rwandan Hutu fighters.

"The difficulty and the challenge for United Nations peacekeepers that are stationed in that region, the Ugandan army and the Congolese army is that these men move through the bush at night; in many instances they dressed in military fatigues," Al Jazeera's Yvonne Ndege said from Nigeria.

"Many of the villagers are unsuspecting to begin with ... initially these villagers were assisting the LRA fighters because they thought they were regular soldiers."

Major challenges

Alan Doss, the UN special representative to DRC and head of Monuc, says the sheer size of the territory the peacekeepers are supposed to cover is one of the major challenges facing the mission.

"We have no soldiers in that area. At that time [of the massacre], we had focused on the major population centres, which are quite a distance away," he told Al Jazeera on Sunday.

"They [the LRA fighters] are made up of small groups that move around.

"To deal with them effectively, we need to improve intelligence gathering, have additional air mobility [as there are no roads in many places], and be able to put special forces into these areas quickly to anticipate their moves and deal with them."

Rwanda: FDLR Attacks on Civilians Declining - DRC Army

The New times

Kigali — Attacks by the FDLR on the population of the Eastern Democratic Republic Congo have drastically reduced in the past months, Congolese army spokesman, Capt. Olivier Hamuli has said.

Speaking to The New Times from Bukavu, Capt. Hamuli stressed that the pressure currently being amounted on the rebel movement has led to the reduction of attacks on the civilian population in remote areas of the country.

"We continue to mount operations against small groups of the FDLR in the region. Their capacity of fighting has been reduced," said Hamuli.

In January, the three military chiefs of the Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries (CEPGL), a regional grouping that brings together Rwanda, the DRC and Burundi, agreed to maintain military pressure on FDLR rebels in eastern of DRC.

Gen. James Kabarebe of Rwanda, DRC army Chief, Lt. Gen. Didier Etumba and Burundi's Maj. Gen. Godefroid Niyombari, made the commitment during a meeting in the western Congolese port city of Matadi.

They also recommended setting up a joint monitoring mechanism and the sharing of intelligence information as well as the need for regular meetings between FARDC and RDF to harmonize plans.

Rwanda Defence Forces spokesman, Maj. Jill Rutaremara confirmed Wednesday that intelligence exchanges and other related issues have been going on well but noted that the date for the next high level meeting has changed.

"We continue to share intelligence, and if we can help in any way possible, we always do," Maj. Rutaremara said.

"The meeting will be held in Kisangani but the exact date is yet to be conclusively confirmed. It will not be the 15th of April as announced".

5. Human Rights/ Social Issues

Congo-Kinshasa: UN Helps Women Fight Under-Representation in Government

UN News Service

The United Nations is boosting the efforts of women in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) to overcome decades of low female participation in politics and achieve their rightful role in governing the vast African country and rebuilding it after years of civil war.

"Achieving democratic governance is not possible without equal participation of men and women in decision-making processes," UN Development Programme (UNDP) gender expert Marie Bapu told the first national conference of Congolese women which concluded in Kinshasa, the capital, yesterday.

This implies "a good definition of public policies and the establishment of laws and programmes for the encouragement and achievement of equality," she said.

The conference was organized by the Congolese Women's League for Elections in collaboration with the UN, the Government, and the Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa.

The senior gender adviser for the UN Mission in DRC (MONUC), Elsie Effange-Mbella, noted that this year marks the 15th anniversary of the UN World Conference on Women in Beijing, which emphasized gender equality at all levels, including in decision-making processes and national policies through democratic elections.

She stressed that MONUC had striven to ensure that the conference achieve nationwide participation by arranging for delegates from 11 provinces to use MONUC flights and covering their accommodation and living expenses.

"This investment has been worthwhile considering the seminar's objectives and the fruitful exchange of experiences and ideas," she said.

UNDP, together with other partners, including the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), has been supporting the Government in formulating a national gender policy to promote gender mainstreaming in all government actions at the national and provincial level.

The goal is to support Congolese women in their quest for leadership and make them aware that they have "a key role in rebuilding their country," Ms. Bapu said.

Rwanda: Cleric Says Approval of Second Gay U.S. Bishop is Divisive

cumenical News International (Geneva)

Kigali — Anglican Archbishop Emmanuel Kolini of Rwanda has warned that the approval of a second openly homosexual bishop in the U.S. Episcopal Church will further tear apart the 77-million-member worldwide Anglican Communion.

In an interview with Ecumenical News International in Kigali, Kolini said the ratification will make it harder for the grouping to heal the rift created by the debate on homosexuality over the years.

"It is clear that those on both sides of the issue are not of the same mind and are not going to work together," he told ENI in an interview on 24 March during which he accused Western churches of imposing homosexuality onto the South.

The Rev. Mary Glasspool, who has lived with a female partner for 22 years, on 17 March, received the required number of votes from bishops and standing committees to be elected as the bishop of Los Angeles, making her the Episcopal Church's second openly homosexual bishop.

In 2003, Bishop V. Gene Robinson was elected the bishop of New Hampshire. After Robinson's election, a number of Anglican bishops, mainly in the South, broke ties with Episcopalians. Four U.S. dioceses and dozens of parishes have also left the Episcopal Church since then.

Kolini in the past has used the terms "moral genocide" in referring to homosexuality among Christians in his country, which suffered genocide in 1994. He said in the interview he believes that the churches in the South have a responsibility to show the way to their people over the matter.

The Rwandan church leader said differences over homosexuality in the Anglican Communion are cultural, although some provinces, or church regions, want them to be seen as biblical. Kolini believes that homosexuality is being forced on the developing world. He described this as a new form of "cultural imperialism".

"They ask us to read the Bible with them [on the issue], but the difference is culture; it is not the understanding of the Bible," said Kolini. "If they interpret it in their own cultural contexts, let them keep it that way with themselves. It is not supposed to be imposed upon us."

African Anglican dioceses have been consecrating bishops to serve in a splinter U.S. church formed as a result of the split over homosexuality and Rwanda has 10 bishops serving under the Anglican Mission in the Americas, a group launched in 2000.

Rwanda: Media Coverage on Genocide Improves, MHC Report

The New Times

Kigali — A report by the Media High Council (MHC) has indicated that the local media has stepped up efforts to report about the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi.

This was announced yesterday by the council's Executive Secretary, Patrice Mulama, during a press conference ahead of the 16th Genocide commemoration at the CNLG headquarters.

The report, according to Mulama, is the sixth in a row and has greatly improved from the previous years.

"The report is aimed at analyzing the role of the various media in educating the public and making in-depth content analysis of programmes and newspapers that were broadcast and published from April 1 - 30 2009," Mulama said.

"The media played a crucial civic role of informing and educating Rwandans and foreigners about Genocide, the security and welfare of genocide survivors and unity and reconciliation."

However, the report also indicated that the coverage of the Genocide is still wanting in some aspects.

It shows that the media reports were more event-based than issue-based. In both print and electronic media, most items fell into news category compared to interviews, features and opinions.

In broadcasting, news items tallied up to 95.18 percent of the total stories about the Genocide, while in print, constituted 62.03 percent of the total items that were published.

The report indicated that as a result of being event-focused, the challenges faced by the Rwandans during the commemoration period go unreported.

Unbalanced reporting and benign revisionist content was also another issue that was noticed in the media last year, according to the report.

It shows that benign forms of revisionism like genocide memory trivialization in some print media outlets were cited.

According to Mulama, such words used in the media can incite hatred, divisionism, and violence and can even derail the efforts and programmes of national unity and reconciliation.

The acting Director of ORINFOR, Willy Rukundo, highlighted the sensitivity of journalistic work during the commemoration week and urged journalists to always scrutinize their stories to avoid any errors in their reporting.