

**Report # 125**  
**BUSINESS AND POLITICS IN THE MUSLIM WORLD**  
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**Hafiz Akif Naeem**  
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## Summary

### **1. Peace keeping/ Conflict Resolution and Security matters**

#### **Congo-Kinshasa: Military Takes over Chebeya Murder Inquiry**

The inquiry into the killing of the Voice of the Voiceless human rights activist Floribert Chebeya is to be handed over to the army. The Chief Prosecutor in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Floribert Kabange said any suspects would now be brought before a military court.

#### **Former Rwandan Army Chief, Presidential Critic Shot in South Africa**

The former chief of staff of the Rwandan army and a leading critic of President Paul Kagame was shot in South Africa, where he lives in exile. He was taken to a Johannesburg hospital where he is undergoing surgery. Earlier this year, Rwandan officials accused Nyamwasa of conspiring with another former army officer against Mr. Kagame's government.

#### **12 Belgians Accused in 1961 Lumumba Killing**

The sons of Congolese independence leader Patrice Lumumba say they will seek war crimes charges against 12 Belgians they accuse of being involved in their father's death, nearly 50 years ago. Lumumba was the first democratically-elected leader of Congo, now known as the Democratic Republic of Congo, after it won independence from Belgium in 1960. He was soon ousted in a coup by army chief Joseph-Desire Mobutu and murdered by officials in Katanga province in January 1961.

#### **Death Toll Reaches 76 in Congo Train Accident**

The official death toll stands at 76 after a train accident Monday in the Republic of Congo. The train was en route to the Congolese capital, Brazzaville, when it derailed and plunged into a narrow valley near the southern coastal city of Pointe-Noire.

#### **Exiled Editor Says Rwandan Security Killed His Successor**

The exiled editor of the Umuvugizi newspaper in Rwanda said his acting editor was shot and killed late in the Rwanda capital, Kigali. Jean Bosco Gasasira said deputy editor Jean Leonard Rugambage was shot outside his home and died later at a hospital. Gasasira said Rwandan security killed acting editor Rugambage because the paper was investigating the shooting of Rwandan General Kayumba Nyamwasa in South Africa. Gasasira said the article on the Umuvugizi website quoted information which showed that there was communication between Rwanda's chief spy and his driver. He said the chief spy ordered

the driver to finish up the general (Kayumba Nyamwasa) at the hospital with a promise that Rwandan President Paul Kagame would reward the driver.

## **2. Economy and Energy**

### **Rwanda: Govt to Meet Next Week over Fuel Price**

As global oil prices continue to fall, a top government official revealed, on Thursday, that the government departments and fuel dealers are set to meet next week to discuss whether pump prices should remain stable or decrease. In the past few weeks, a barrel of oil on the international market has fall below \$76 (Rwf44, 156) from \$89 (Rwf51, 709) a barrel amid signs the U.S. economic recovery and demand for crude remain uneven.

## **3. Social issues/ Human Rights**

### **Rwanda: Liberation Day to Focus on Development**

Events to Mark the 16th Liberation Day Will kicks off around the country on Monday, with various ministries and institutions engaging in development activities. Radio and television talk shows, town hall meetings and debates at the village level on how best Rwandans can be part of the continued liberation process will be conducted by local leaders throughout the week leading to the Liberation Day held annually on July 4.

### **Congo-Kinshasa: Bishops Focus On 50 Years of Independence**

Losing one's life for others is the path which the local Church indicates to the Congolese people as they prepare to celebrate 50 years of independence on June 30. He reiterated that celebrations for the golden jubilee of independence will be an opportunity to renew commitment, trust in God and in selves, and a commitment to promoting the common good and national solidarity.

### **Rwanda: Stop Attacks On Journalists, Opponents - Government Actions Undermine Democracy As Presidential Election Draws Near**

Insecurity and political repression are increasing in advance of Rwanda's August 2010 presidential elections, Human Rights Watch warned. In the last two days, an independent journalist has been killed, the leader of an opposition party has been detained by the police, and other opposition party members have been arrested. Rona Peligal, Africa director at Human Rights Watch said that the security situation is rapidly deteriorating, with only 45 days left before the election, the government is lashing out to silence its opponents and critics. Human Rights Watch said that the Rwandan government should investigate all incidents of violence and ensure that opposition activists and journalists are able to carry out their legitimate activities in safety.

## **Rwanda: Kagame Accepts UN Appointment**

President Paul Kagame yesterday said that he feels greatly honored to be appointment co-chair of the MDG Advocacy Group, made up of the world's leading thinkers, coming together to combat poverty. He said that he is ready to share Rwanda's experience with the rest of the world. UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon named a high-profile committee including President Kagame as a co-chair, aimed at combating poverty, assessing and fast tracking implementation of Millennium Development Goals.

## **4. Elections**

### **Burundi: Security Council Urges All Parties in Country to Participate in Elections**

The Security Council has urged Burundi's political parties to participate fully in the country's legislative elections next month, and work to ensure the proper conduct of the presidential poll scheduled for Monday, amid reports that the opposition is boycotting the presidential contest. In a press statement issued, the Council also commended Burundi for the progress it has made in its peace process and for consolidating democratic debate in the country. In their statement, members of the Council stressed the importance of ensuring an inclusive, peaceful, free and fair electoral process in the spirit of reconciliation enshrined in the Burundian Constitution.

### **Claims of Fraud, Violence Mar Upcoming Presidential Election in Burundi**

As Burundi prepares for its presidential poll next week, incidents of violence and opposition boycotts have cast a cloud over hopes for democratic reform. On Monday, June 28, Burundi will take part in the second in a summer-long series of national and local elections. The hopes that these elections would complete a successful transition to peace and stability after the end of a 13 year civil war in 2005 have been all but dashed as Burundians prepare to elect their president. Almost immediately after the results of the municipal polls were announced, most opposition parties, including main challenger Forces of National Liberation, cried foul, calling the results, which saw the ruling party claim over 60 percent of the vote, impossible. Opposition parties have since withdrawn from the election, saying the upcoming poll would be rigged.

### **Burundi Opposition Party Denies Leader Fled to Congo**

A Burundian opposition leader who criticized the government has dropped out of sight, less than a week before the presidential election. All opposition parties have pulled out of Burundi's presidential election on 28 Jun, saying the ruling party used fraud to win local elections in May. The election commission has rejected calls to re-run those polls or to postpone Monday's presidential vote. President Pierre Nkurunziza is now running unopposed.

### **Burundi Prepares to Vote**

A Burundi analyst says incumbent President Pierre Nkurunziza's legitimacy could be questioned if he wins Monday's presidential vote after opposition parties decided to boycott the poll. Ndikumana Methode said the Independent Electoral Commission (CENI) should have resolved concerns expressed by opposition parties and postponed Sunday's vote.

### **Burundi: UN Human Rights Expert Warns of Violations Ahead of Burundian Polls**

As the people of the small African nation of Burundi get set to cast their votes in Monday's presidential election, an independent United Nations expert today warned of potential violence and human rights violations, citing a number of recent worrisome developments. Akich Okola noted increasing reports of rights violations and security concerns since his last visit to the country during local elections last month. These included arbitrary arrests, detention and harassment of opposition politicians and their supporters, as well as grenade attacks resulting in the loss of life and destruction of property. More than 3.5 million people are registered to vote in the country's elections, the second since the Arusha Peace Accords of 2000 that ended the civil war.

## **Details**

### **1. Peace keeping/ Conflict Resolution and Security matters**

#### **Congo-Kinshasa: Military Takes over Chebeya Murder Inquiry**

Radio France International (Paris)

The inquiry into the killing of the Voice of the Voiceless human rights activist Floribert Chebeya is to be handed over to the army.

The Chief Prosecutor in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Floribert Kabange said any suspects would now be brought before a military court.

Chebeya's body was found tied up on the back seat of his car on 2 June, the day after he was supposed to meet police chief John Numbi but never did.

The DR Congo President Joseph Kabila's government has since suspended Numbi and an unspecified number of police officers in the wake of the activist's death.

Dutch experts conducted an autopsy on Chebeya's body, but the Netherlands embassy said initial results were inconclusive, with violence not ruled out, although there were no signs of excessive force.

The final results of the autopsy should be known some time next month. Crimes suspected of being committed by police officers or members of the armed forces are handled by the military judiciary in DR Congo.

#### **Former Rwandan Army Chief, Presidential Critic Shot in South Africa**

VOA

The former chief of staff of the Rwandan army and a leading critic of President Paul Kagame was shot Saturday in South Africa, where he lives in exile.

General Kayumba Nyamwasa was shot by an unknown assailant. He was taken to a Johannesburg hospital where he is undergoing surgery. South African police are investigating the shooting.

Nyamwasa's wife told the BBC the couple had been returning from a shopping trip when a gunman opened fire on their car. She said she was certain it was an assassination attempt, since there was no demand for money or goods.

Earlier this year, Rwandan officials accused Nyamwasa of conspiring with another former army officer against Mr. Kagame's government.

The country's chief prosecutor accused the two men of being involved in three grenade attacks in the capital, Kigali, in February. Two people were killed and 30 others were wounded.

## **12 Belgians Accused in 1961 Lumumba Killing**

VOA

The sons of Congolese independence leader Patrice Lumumba say they will seek war crimes charges against 12 Belgians they accuse of being involved in their father's death, nearly 50 years ago.

Guy Lumumba told reporters in Brussels Tuesday he and his brother will file a complaint against the 12 in a Belgian court in October. The AFP news agency quoted him as saying the 12 Belgians are still alive.

Attorney Christophe Marchand declined to name the potential defendants but said they were all in Congo at the time of Patrice Lumumba's death.

Lumumba was the first democratically-elected leader of Congo, now known as the Democratic Republic of Congo, after it won independence from Belgium in 1960.

He was soon ousted in a coup by army chief Joseph-Desire Mobutu and murdered by officials in Katanga province in January 1961.

A Belgian parliamentary probe in 2001 concluded that Belgium was "morally responsible" for Lumumba's murder. The government later apologized but there has been no legal action in connection with the case.

News of the lawsuit comes eight days before the DRC celebrates 50 years of independence.

## **Death Toll Reaches 76 in Congo Train Accident**

VOA

The official death toll stands at 76 after a train accident Monday in the Republic of Congo.

The train was en route to the Congolese capital, Brazzaville, when it derailed and plunged into a ravine near the southern coastal city of Pointe-Noire.

Jean-Pierre was on the train. He says we arrived at a downhill slope near Yanga, and the conductor began to brake. He says a car detached and as the train stopped, a boy jumped out to see what happened and saw that cars were on the ground. Of the train's eight

passenger cars, Jean Pierre says only two remained standing. He says three cargo cars were also detached.

Congolese officials now say as many as 400 people were injured.

Jean-Pierre says he could not say how many were injured. He says people were bleeding and there were people trapped under the cars. He says he was able to get out of his car unharmed, but he thinks the train was going too fast.

The government said in a statement Tuesday the accident was caused by excessive speed as the train traveled around a bend.

There have been at least two other deadly accidents along the same train route. In 2001, two trains collided, killing 50 people. In 1991, 100 people died when a passenger train slammed into a freight train in Congo's worst rail accident.

This is the second fatal transport accident in the Republic of Congo this week. On Monday, officials discovered the wreckage of a small plane in the Congolese jungle. All 11 people on board were dead, including the entire board of Australian mining company Sundance Resources.

### **Exiled Editor Says Rwandan Security Killed His Successor**

VOA

The exiled editor of the Umuvugizi newspaper in Rwanda said his acting editor was shot and killed late Thursday night in the Rwanda capital, Kigali.

Jean Bosco Gasasira said deputy editor Jean Leonard Rugambage was shot outside his home and died later at a hospital.

Gasasira said Rwandan security killed acting editor Rugambage because the paper was investigating the shooting of Rwandan General Kayumba Nyamwasa in South Africa.

“I’m 100 percent sure it was the office of the national security services which shot him dead. This happened after publishing a story on the Umuvugizi website which cited Rwanda’s chief spy of being involved in the shooting of General Kayumba Nyamwasa in South Africa,” he said.

Police spokesman Eric Kayiranga told VOA that police do not know who was behind the attack or what the motive was. He said police were investigating.

Gasasira said the article on the Umuvugizi website quoted information which showed that there was communication between Rwanda’s chief spy and his driver.

He said the chief spy ordered the driver to finish up the general (Kayumba Nyamwasa) at the hospital with a promise that Rwandan President Paul Kagame would reward the driver.

“One security operative revealed to my editor that he knows that it is their officers who carried out that suicide mission. But they apparently revealed to my editor thinking that he was a hotel worker,” Gasasira said.

Gasasira said the Rwandan security began watching acting editor Rugambage after they realized he was a journalist and not a hotel worker.

Gasasira said he told acting editor Rugambage to leave Rwanda and cross into Uganda. But he said his offer came too late.

“He called me before using another line, informing me about the constant surveillance. Then I told him if he feels things getting worse, I told him to cross and flee Rwanda into Uganda to see how we can handle the issue. But unfortunately they killed him before,” he said

Rwanda’s Media High Council this year suspended Umuvugizi and Umuseso for six months on the grounds the two weekly newspapers violated Rwanda’s media laws and incited public order.

Gasasira said the killing of acting editor Rugambage fits the pattern of the Rwandan government’s campaign against the independent media.

“We are under tense surveillance. My journalist was also beaten up by the spokesman on Thursday when he was in an office of an opposition leader where he had gone to investigate some story. The same goes to me. Since Sunday, I’m not allowed to get out of my house. Security sources where I am say there are lots of spies they have sent to finish me,” Gasasira said.

## **2. Economy and Energy**

### **Rwanda: Govt to Meet Next Week Over Fuel Price**

The New Times

Kigali — As global oil prices continue to fall, a top government official revealed, on Thursday, that the government departments and fuel dealers are set to meet next week to discuss whether pump prices should remain stable or decrease.

In the past few weeks, a barrel of oil on the international market has fall below \$76 (Rwf44,156) from \$89 (Rwf51,709) a barrel amid signs the U.S. economic recovery and demand for crude remain uneven.

The Ministry of Trade and Commerce, Monique Nsanzabaganwa told Business Times that as it is normally done at the beginning or end of every month, the government will meet with petroleum dealers.

"We are planning to meet with the concerned parties, then we will monitor price structures internationally and reach an agreement on local pump price to decide whether they should remain stable or reduce accordingly," Nsanzabaganwa.

Last month, pump prices increased from Rwf918 to Rwf940 for both petrol and diesel per litre being the first highest pump price the country has ever experienced and the increase was attributed to the hike of a barrel on the international market from \$70 (Rwf40,880) to \$89 (Rwf51,709).

Also in the recent past, concerned government departments and fuel dealers have been engaged in stretched 'internal discussions' aimed at regulating, or even abating, the spill-over effect of what is now a worrying global oil crisis.

Officials at the Ministry recently revealed that policy is ready and being debated, so that local prices are protected in circumstances of hikes on the international and region market to protect consumers.

### **3. Social issues/ Human Rights**

#### **Rwanda: Liberation Day to Focus on Development**

The New Times

Kigali — Events to Mark the 16th Liberation Day Will Kick off around the country on Monday, with various ministries and institutions engaging in development activities.

Radio and television talk shows, town hall meetings and debates at the village level on how best Rwandans can be part of the continued liberation process will be conducted by local leaders throughout the week leading to the Liberation Day held annually on July 4.

Addressing a news conference ahead of the national day, the Minister in the President's Office, Solina Nyirahabimana, said that this year's celebrations will be held both at the national and village level.

The focus will be on development; how Rwandans can continue liberating themselves from challenges they face, including poverty and ignorance.

"This day is important for many reasons. It is the day the Genocide was put to a halt by the liberation forces after three months of massacres. It is the day we liberated ourselves from bad leadership, poverty and many other bad things that came with the regime at the time," Nyirahabimana told the press.

"This day is therefore important for us as Rwandans to assess where we have come from in the last 16 years and where we are going, and how we as Rwandans, can continue to liberate ourselves socially and economically,".

Nyirahabimana who was flanked by the Minister of Defence, Gen. James Kabarebe, said that at the National, celebrations will be held at Amahoro National Stadium while countrywide celebrations will be in villages where people will gather and debate about liberation.

"All Rwandans are encouraged to evaluate together where we are in line with this year's theme-be it on the economy, social welfare and also set goals of where they are going," she said.

"We have come from far, we have achieved impressive progress in the past years but where we are going is still far. Therefore Rwandans will need to sit back and assess all this and at the same time set goals of where we are going".

According to Nyirahabimana, for the second time, foreign personalities who played a role in the struggle will be awarded medals on Liberation Day but she said the list of those to be awarded will not be revealed until the D-day.

Last year President Yoweri Museveni of Uganda, Prime Minister Meles Zenawi of Ethiopia and former President of Tanzania Julius Nyerere were honoured for their contribution to the liberation struggle.

Kabarebe said that the Defence Ministry has arranged talk shows with journalists to give them an insight on the road to liberation--beginning with the struggle itself, where the country is today and the way forward.

"We at MoD believe that the media is one of the strategies that we can use to liberate ourselves. The media plays a positive role in the liberation struggle and that is why we want you to come and we share with you what we are doing so that you can tell the people," Kaberebe said.

### **Rwanda: Ex-Street Children Undergo Civic Education**

The New Times

Kigali — The Minister of Gender and Family Promotion, Dr Jeanne d'Arc Mujawamariya, has called upon former street children in Kigali to make use of the efforts by the ministry to help improve their social welfare in the country.

Mujawamariya made the call yesterday while presiding over the launch of a two-week solidarity camp of 121 former street children that is underway at the Red Cross premises in Kacyiru.

"As children who were once on Kigali streets, I encourage you to always closely work with the ministry and other concerned institutions because this is when you will be able to improve your living standards," Mujawamariaya said.

She urged them to mobilize and sensitize their fellow children who are still on the streets to leave this harsh life and go back to their homes, for those who still have them.

She also encouraged them to desist from drug abuse and strive for excelling in academics so that they become responsible leaders and citizens in the future. The Minister told them that all children in the country have equal rights.

During an interview, Solange Kananga Umurisa, who heads the street children unit in the ministry, said that the camp will cover civic education, gender equality, Unity and Reconciliation and reproductive health as well as fighting against the Genocide ideology.

She added that children in the camp range between 6 to 18 years of age.

### **Congo-Kinshasa: Bishops Focus On 50 Years of Independence**

Catholic Information Service for Africa (Nairobi)

Losing one's life for others is the path which the local Church indicates to the Congolese people as they prepare to celebrate 50 years of independence on June 30.

"What is needed is sincere love for others, the opposite of the present culture of selfishness which renders people prisoners of self and prevents any desire or vision for building up the nation," Bishop Nicolas Djomo, of the diocese of Tshumbe, President of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Congo said in his homily on June 21.

The bishop was speaking during the opening of the 46th Plenary Assembly of the Bishops' Conference.

In his homily, Bishop Djomo recalled that during the jubilee year it will be opportune to offer prayers of thanks to God for the country, for a sense of belonging to a united nation and for the people's resistance to any form of Balkanization or division of the territory.

"We must also beg God's forgiveness for omissions and opportunities lost." God remains faithful despite everything, and on His faithfulness the Congolese people found their optimism and their hope for the future of the country," Bishops' Djomo told those present.

He reiterated that celebrations for the golden jubilee of independence will be an opportunity to renew commitment, trust in God and in selves, and a commitment to promoting the common good and national solidarity.

## **Rwanda: Stop Attacks On Journalists, Opponents - Government Actions Undermine Democracy As Presidential Election Draws Near**

Human Rights Watch (Washington, DC)

New York — Insecurity and political repression are increasing in advance of Rwanda's August 2010 presidential elections, Human Rights Watch warned today.

In the last two days, an independent journalist has been killed, the leader of an opposition party has been detained by the police, and other opposition party members have been arrested.

"The security situation is rapidly deteriorating," said Rona Peligal, Africa director at Human Rights Watch. "With only 45 days left before the election, the government is lashing out to silence its opponents and critics."

The Rwandan government should investigate all incidents of violence and ensure that opposition activists and journalists are able to carry out their legitimate activities in safety, Human Rights Watch said.

### **The Killing of Jean-Léonard Rugambage**

Jean-Léonard Rugambage, a journalist for the newspaper Umuvugizi, was shot dead shortly after 10 p.m. on June 24 outside his home in Nyamirambo, in the capital, Kigali. His colleagues and other sources in Rwanda told Human Rights Watch that the assailant appeared to be waiting for the journalist as he returned home.

As Rugambage drove up to his gate, a man approached his car and fired several shots at close range, hitting him in the head and chest. Rugambage died on the spot. The assailant then drove off. Police arrived on the scene and took Rugambage's body to the police hospital in Kacyiru for autopsy. The police stated on June 25 that they were investigating his death.

Umuvugizi, an independent newspaper that has often been critical of the government, had published an article online on the morning Rugambage was killed, alleging that the Rwandan government was behind the attempted murder of a former Rwandan general, Faustin Kayumba Nyamwasa, in South Africa on June 19, and implicating senior officials. General Kayumba, once a close ally of President Paul Kagame and a former chief-of-staff of the Rwandan army, has become an increasingly outspoken critic of the government since fleeing to South Africa in February 2010. Umuvugizi's editor said that Rugambage had been investigating the murder attempt on Kayumba and had reported being under increased surveillance in the days leading up to his death.

"We are shocked and saddened by the death of this courageous journalist," Peligal said. "Freedom of expression is already severely restricted in Rwanda, but the death of

Rugambage is a further chilling blow to investigative journalism and, more broadly, to freedom of expression in the country."

Human Rights Watch called on the Rwandan authorities to ensure that those responsible for Rugambage's murder are brought to justice without delay, and to ensure the security and protection of other journalists.

#### Arrests of Opposition Party Members

In the early hours of June 24, police entered the house of Bernard Ntaganda, leader of the opposition party PS-Imberakuri, and took him away for questioning. He has spent two days in police custody and is believed to be detained at Kicukiro police station. The exact accusations against him are not confirmed, but it is thought that the police have questioned him, among other things, about his alleged involvement in an attempted arson attack on the house of former party vice-president, Christine Mukabunani, and inciting ethnic divisions.

Members of the PS-Imberakuri reported that the police raided Ntaganda's house and the party's office and took away documents and other belongings. By June 25, the party's flag and sign had been taken down from their office.

Later on the morning of June 24, several members of PS-Imberakuri were rounded up by the police and taken into custody after they gathered outside the US embassy; they had gone there to ask for help following Ntaganda's arrest. Some were released, but several, including the party's secretary-general, Théobald Mutarambirwa, remained in detention in various locations in Kigali on June 25.

Also on the morning of June 24, police arrested several members of the FDU-Inkingi opposition party, who had gathered outside the Justice Ministry to protest a court case against their party president, Victoire Ingabire. Most were released on June 25, but the party's secretary-general, Sylvain Sibomana, treasurer, Alice Muhirwa, and Kigali representative, Théoneste Sibomana, were still in detention at the police station in Kicukiro on June 26. Some FDU-Inkingi members reported that when the police broke up their gathering, the police told them that they should stop being members of the party. Police also surrounded Ingabire's house at about 6 a.m. on June 24, and stayed there for most of the day.

Members of both parties reported being beaten by the police.

On June 25, the Commissioner General of Police issued a statement saying that about 40 individuals had attempted to hold a demonstration without a permit, that 22 people had been arrested and questioned, 14 had been released and eight were being held for further questioning.

"These incidents are occurring at the very moment that parties are putting forward candidates for the presidential elections," Peligal said. "The government is ensuring that opposition parties are unable to function and are excluded from the political process."

## Background

### Intimidation of Independent Media

The killing of Rugambage was not the first incident of violence against journalists. In February 2007, a group of assailants attacked Umuvugizi's editor, Jean-Bosco Gasasira, in a near fatal incident outside his house, after he spoke out at a presidential news conference about the harassment of journalists. No one has been brought to justice for the attack.

In July 2009, the information minister publicly declared that "the days of the destructive press are numbered," referring to Umuvugizi and a second independent newspaper, Umuseso. Within 24 hours, the national prosecutor's office had summoned Gasasira to answer allegations of defamation, a criminal offense punishable with imprisonment. Gasasira was convicted and sentenced to pay a large fine. Umuseso faced similar defamation charges for exposing scandals involving public figures. In February, a court sentenced its former editor, Charles Kabonero, to a year in prison and the current editor, Didas Gasana, and a reporter, Richard Kayigamba, to six months each. The editors of both newspapers have fled the country after receiving repeated threats.

On April 13, the Media High Council, a government-aligned body in charge of regulating the media, suspended Umuseso and Umuvugizi for six months, and then called for their definitive closure. It alleged, among other things, that some of their articles constituted a threat to national security. The newspapers' appeal against the suspension is still pending. The suspension has effectively shut down most independent reporting in advance of the elections, since Umuseso and Umuvugizi were among the very few active independent newspapers left in Rwanda. Umuvugizi has since posted an electronic version of its newspaper, but access to its website has been blocked inside Rwanda.

### Obstruction of Opposition Parties

Incidents of harassment and intimidation of members of opposition parties have steadily increased in the months leading up to the August elections. Ntaganda and Ingabire, as well as their party members, have been especially targeted. Unless the situation changes in the very near future, none of the three main opposition parties (PS-Imberakuri, FDU-Inkingi, and the Democratic Green Party of Rwanda) will be able to take part in the elections. Parties and independent candidates must submit their candidacies to the National Electoral Commission by July 2.

## **Rwanda: Kagame Accepts UN Appointment**

The new Times

President Paul Kagame yesterday said that he feels greatly honored to be appointment co-chair of the MDG Advocacy Group, made up of the world's leading thinkers, coming together to combat poverty.

He said that he is ready to share Rwanda's experience with the rest of the world.

UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon named a high-profile committee including President Kagame as a co-chair, aimed at combating poverty, assessing and fast tracking implementation of Millennium Development Goals.

On his appointment to co-chair the group with the Spanish Prime Minister, who is also the current President of the European Union (EU), Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero, Kagame said that it is a sign that the UN recognizes the contribution Rwanda is capable of making.

"Through the appointment, it is an honor to our country Rwanda to be recognized that we can make a contribution in this development process which will involve our own country, but also concerns and affects other developing nations.

"We are happy to be there in that capacity as requested by the Secretary General that I participate in a group of selected people who can help examine what has been done, what needs to be done, and when we can be at the level we want, in the next few years."

Kagame said that he will be bringing to this group Rwanda's experience and also "happily share" how the country has come to register impressive progress and at the same time dealing with the many challenges it faced.

"I have happily accepted to be part of that process as a co-chair together with the President of the EU and there will be many people of different backgrounds who have a lot of experience and resources. I am happy to be with them dealing with this challenge," Kagame said.

Others in the group include Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus of Bangladesh, former Chilean president, Michelle Bachelet, Microsoft founder Bill Gates, CNN's founder, Ted Turner and Jeffrey Sachs of The Earth Institute and professor at Columbia University.

Announcing the group, Ki-moon said "distinguished" personalities from China, India, Japan and Britain will also join the panel.

"As you can see, this is a real collection of superheroes in defeating poverty," the UN chief said.

The Secretary General announced the team while releasing the 2010 Millennium Development Goals Report.

## **4. Elections**

### **Burundi: Security Council Urges All Parties in Country to Participate in Elections**

The New Times

The Security Council has urged Burundi's political parties to participate fully in the country's legislative elections next month, and work to ensure the proper conduct of the presidential poll scheduled for Monday, amid reports that the opposition is boycotting the presidential contest.

In a press statement issued late yesterday, the Council also commended Burundi for the progress it has made in its peace process and for consolidating democratic debate in the country.

"The members of the Council call upon all the political stakeholders of Burundi to participate fully in the electoral process, in particular the legislative and senatorial elections scheduled for 23 and 28 July 2010, to respect the result of the polls and to work to ensure the proper conduct of the presidential election scheduled for 28 June 2010," the Council said.

According to media reports, after the ruling National Council for the Defence of Democracy-Forces for the Defence of Democracy (CNDD-FDD) won last month's local council elections, opposition parties grouped under the umbrella Alliance of Democrats for Change accused their rivals of electoral fraud, and said they would not participate in Monday's presidential polls, leaving incumbent President Pierre Nkurunziza as the only candidate.

In their statement, members of the Council stressed the importance of ensuring an inclusive, peaceful, free and fair electoral process in the spirit of reconciliation enshrined in the Burundian Constitution.

"The members of the Council recall the need to respect the legal framework, including the existing legal mechanisms to manage possible disputes emerging from the electoral process. The members of the Council encourage the Independent National Electoral Commission to dialogue with all political parties, within the scope of its mandate," they added.

They commended Burundians for turning up in large numbers to participate in the local council elections last month, saying the impressive turnout was a demonstration of their commitment to democracy and peace.

"The members of the Council condemn any recourse to violence. The members of the Council underline that Burundi has the opportunity to provide an example to Africa and the rest of the world of a country that has come together and emerged from conflict and progressed towards democracy, stability and development," the Council's statement said.

### **Claims of Fraud, Violence Mar Upcoming Presidential Election in Burundi**

VOA

As Burundi prepares for its presidential poll next week, incidents of violence and opposition boycotts have cast a cloud over hopes for democratic reform.

On Monday, June 28, Burundi will take part in the second in a summer-long series of national and local elections.

The first of these polls, to elect members for municipal councils, experienced a surprisingly large voter turnout amidst a climate of relative calm. After weeks increasing tension, the municipal elections smoothly confirmed victory for the ruling National Council for the Defense of Democracy and praised by observers from the European Union as "generally meeting international standards."

The hopes that these elections would complete a successful transition to peace and stability after the end of a 13 year civil war in 2005 have been all but dashed as Burundians prepare to elect their president.

Almost immediately after the results of the municipal polls were announced, most opposition parties, including main challenger Forces of National Liberation, cried foul, calling the results, which saw the ruling party claim over 60 percent of the vote, impossible.

Opposition parties have since withdrawn from the election, saying the upcoming poll would be rigged. Current President Pierre Nkurunziza is now guaranteed victory as the sole candidate on the ballot while fresh incidents of violence have significantly increased tension in the central African nation.

Tension and violence

The past few weeks have seen confrontations between police and the Forces of National Liberation and last week, a series of grenade attacks injured 21 in northern Burundi. Police are now reporting that a further string of blasts Tuesday have killed one and injured eight more.

While no groups have claimed responsibility for the attacks, both opposition and ruling parties have accused each other of the violence.

The tension has also affected the media, which enjoyed relative freedom before the polls. According to a spokesperson from Paris-based Reporters Without Borders, Ambroise Pierre, the government has been eager to limit press freedom in light of the election controversies.

"The coming election is making the climate for everybody more tense and for journalists more difficult because, with the election coming, the government is keen on controlling the information and controlling what is said and what is done," he said. "So obviously journalists are now being targeted whereas they were not in such a situation even one or two months ago."

According to the organization, journalists have been victims of the recent violence. One man was beaten by police outside of his home for publishing a report critical of law enforcement in Burundi. The group also said the government has utilized a private radio station, Rema FM, to manipulate news and broadcast negative reports on opposition leaders.

While opposition groups have yet to provide evidence of fraud in the previous poll, their withdrawal from the presidential election has damaged the electoral process.

Though expectations for the upcoming vote are low, the chief of the European Union election observer team, Renate Weber, expressed hope the process could be salvaged for the two legislative elections in late July.

"In any country where you see that the opposition does not want to participate any more in an electoral process, this raises concern," said Weber. "Although there will be presidential elections with only one candidate I hope that things may change for the future legislative elections in July."

Opposition groups have not yet expressed their position on the July elections, but a decision made by Burundi's electoral commission earlier this month may actually salvage some semblance of opposition participation next week.

### Ballot system

Burundi's ballot system is unique in that all voters choose candidates by placing their choice in a sealed white envelope while placing all other tickets in a corresponding black envelope.

The electoral commission has decided to treat all black envelopes containing President Nkurunziza's ticket as a no vote, essentially creating a referendum on his re-election. Regardless of the outcome, opposition candidates will not be allowed to re-enter the race, but the EU's Weber believes it could bring them back into the process.

"This would be interesting for all of us, I think, to observe. I think that in this respect the opposition is quite split in the sense that some parties, specifically those which are now

members of the alliance, they call for a boycott while others do not say necessarily that they advise their voters not to come," he said.

Burundi will hold its presidential elections Monday. Two legislative elections will then be held July 23 and 28, followed by village elections on September 7. If unsuccessful, the country could see a return to the violence experienced during the civil war, in which many of the current political parties fought as armed factions.

### **Burundi Opposition Party Denies Leader Fled to Congo**

VOA

A Burundian opposition leader who criticized the government has dropped out of sight, less than a week before the presidential election. The AFP news agency reports that Agathon Rwasa, leader of the FNL party, crossed into the Democratic Republic of Congo before dawn on Wednesday.

Rwasa has accused the government of rigging Burundi's ongoing election process.

In an interview with VOA's Central Africa Service, an FNL spokesman did not specify Rwasa's whereabouts, but said he has gone on a two-week vacation. The spokesman, Jean Bosco Havyarimana, says Rwasa "has the freedom go anywhere he chooses, whether it is inside the country or outside the country."

All opposition parties have pulled out of Burundi's presidential election on 28 Jun, saying the ruling party used fraud to win local elections in May. The election commission has rejected calls to re-run those polls or to postpone Monday's presidential vote. President Pierre Nkurunziza is now running unopposed.

The FNL was the last rebel group to lay down its arms in Burundi's long civil war.

The current elections are aimed at capping a transition to democracy started by peace deals that ended the war in 2005

### **Burundi Prepares to Vote**

VOA

A Burundi analyst says incumbent President Pierre Nkurunziza's legitimacy could be questioned if he wins Monday's presidential vote after opposition parties decided to boycott the poll.

Ndikumana Methode said the Independent Electoral Commission (CENI) should have resolved concerns expressed by opposition parties and postponed Sunday's vote.

“The elections may go ahead in accordance to what the (ruling) CNDD-FDD wants. However, in my opinion I think it is rather unfortunate because it really takes Burundi a little back in (terms of) its democratic process. Because, we have seen so far in our history, all the elections were multi-party and multi-candidates,” he said.

Burundi’s opposition parties unanimously pulled out of the presidential election after accusing the electoral body of failing to prevent fraud in last month’s district elections won by the ruling CNDD-FDD party with over 60 percent of the votes.

Opposition parties also demanded a re-run of the district elections after rejecting the results. But the electoral body, CENI said the presidential vote will proceed as originally scheduled.

Pierre Claver Ndayicariye, chairman of Burundi’s electoral body (CENI) told VOA that the electoral body has a track record of organizing elections that both local and international observers have judged to be free and fair.

“We are a technical commission and our mission is to organize technically the elections. Today, we are preparing (for) the presidential election, which are scheduled on 28th June 2010. We are really preparing (for) this election,” he said.

But analyst Methode said CENI should have addressed the opposition concerns before the vote.

“The committee in charge of elections should have looked into them, giving answers to them then maybe come to some kind of negotiation at local level before they went ahead with the election,” Methode said.

Recently, U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon, as well as other foreign diplomats, called on the various opposition parties to reconsider their decision to boycott the 28 June election.

Analyst Methode said the opposition boycott weakens the credibility of the election.

“I think they do and yes the legitimacy is pretty much in question. And I mean what is an election for (only) one man or one candidate or one party? I think they should have sat down and maybe postponed the election and maybe agree on a period of time so that any cloud is removed from this election,” Methode said.

Meanwhile, incumbent President Nkurunziza is expected to win by a landslide after opposition parties including his main challenger decided to boycott Sunday’s presidential vote.

### **Burundi: UN Human Rights Expert Warns of Violations Ahead of Burundian Polls**

UN News Service

As the people of the small African nation of Burundi get set to cast their votes in Monday’s presidential election, an independent United Nations expert today warned of

potential violence and human rights violations, citing a number of recent worrisome developments.

Akich Okola noted increasing reports of rights violations and security concerns since his last visit to the country during local elections last month. These included arbitrary arrests, detention and harassment of opposition politicians and their supporters, as well as grenade attacks resulting in the loss of life and destruction of property.

"I am concerned that this situation may lead to further violence and human rights violations," Mr. Okola, the UN Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in Burundi, warned in a news release issued in Geneva.

Burundi was torn by ethnic conflict between majority Hutus and minority Tutsi, much like its northern neighbor Rwanda, site of the 1994 genocide, for decades after it became independent from Belgium in 1962.

More than 3.5 million people are registered to vote in the country's elections, the second since the Arusha Peace Accords of 2000 that ended the civil war.

Mr. Okola, who reports in an independent and unpaid capacity to the Geneva-based UN Human Rights Council, also voiced regret that political parties decided to boycott presidential and other elections in protest against perceived irregularities during the local elections.

According to media reports, after the ruling National Council for the Defence of Democracy-Forces for the Defence of Democracy (CNDD-FDD) won last month's polls, opposition parties grouped under the umbrella Alliance of Democrats for Change accused their rivals of electoral fraud, and said they would not participate in the presidential election, leaving incumbent President Pierre Nkurunziza as the only candidate.

The Independent Expert appealed to political parties to continue participating in the electoral process, particularly the legislative elections slated for 23 July. "Boycotting them will impede the democratic process which was launched with the successful elections of 2005 and may increase the risk of violence and insecurity in the country," he stressed.

During his visit to Burundi earlier this month, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon stressed how important it is that the remainder of the electoral cycle be as inclusive as possible, so that the Burundians conclude this critical phase of peace consolidation smoothly.

"I can assure you that the Secretary-General is continuing to follow developments closely, through his Executive Representative on the ground, Charles Petrie, who is working very closely with the African Union (AU), as well as regional partners and all

stakeholders in Burundi," Mr. Ban's spokesperson, Martin Nesirky, told reporters in New York.

The Security Council too has spoken out on the situation in Burundi, urging political parties there to participate fully in the elections, while commending the progress made in the peace process so far.

"The members of the Council call upon all the political stakeholders of Burundi to participate fully in the electoral process, in particular the legislative and senatorial elections scheduled for 23 and 28 July 2010, to respect the result of the polls and to work to ensure the proper conduct of the presidential election scheduled for 28 June 2010," the 15-member body said in a press statement issued earlier this week.