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## Summary

### 1. Politics

#### **Rwanda: African Leaders to Descend On Kigali**

At least 16 African Heads of State had confirmed attendance of the swearing-in ceremony of President Paul Kagame slated for Monday next week, the Information Ministry announced. They will be joined by high-profile delegations from other countries and organizations. Those who have already confirmed attendance include Joseph Kabila, the President of the DRC and Nigeria's Goodluck Jonathan. Many other head of states confirmed their presence in up coming ceremony.

#### **Rwanda: Genocide Ideology on the Decline - Parliament**

A parliamentary report has revealed that the Genocide ideology is diminishing in terms of its influence across the country. The report was compiled by the Parliamentary Commission on Human Rights and Fighting against Genocide. The chairman of the commission noted that some of the factors that had led to the reduction include the enactment of a law against Genocide ideology and work carried out by the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission.

#### **Legacy of Genocide Fuels Political Repression in Rwanda**

In the 16 years since the genocide, Rwanda has received nearly universal acclaim for rebuilding its shattered society and re-branding itself as a new "African Tiger." But concerns are being raised that the legacy of that brutal event has been manipulated for the benefit of the ruling party. President Paul Kagame has used his considerable authority to quickly rebuild the country, both economically and socially. Mr. Kagame has pushed for the elimination of ethnic identities in favor of Rwandan unity and laid the groundwork for significant investment throughout the country. The country is now working to become the African hub of information technology by the year 2020, a growth strategy modeled after the "Asian Tiger" economies of the 1980s and 1990s. But Mr. Kagame's government has drawn sharp criticism in recent months. The country has come under fire for controversial laws in effect to prevent "sectarianism" and the promotion of genocide ideology. In a new report, Amnesty International warns the laws are too vague and had been abused by the government to silence opposition.

#### **Rwanda Official Critical of Amnesty Law Review Appeal**

Rwanda's Justice Minister has expressed disappointment over the latest report from the human rights group Amnesty International calling on President Paul Kagame's government to review genocide ideology and sectarianism laws. The government has said it will review the laws critics charge it uses as tools to suppress its political opponents.

## **Rwanda: Genocide Ideology and Sectarianism Laws Silencing Critics?**

Over the last decade, Kagame's government has implemented laws against speech and conduct that espouse "sectarianism" or a "genocide ideology" in order to prevent a repeat of 1994. "Revisionism and trivialization of genocide are punishable by the law," states the Rwandan constitution. But an Amnesty International (AI) report released today claims that these laws are unclear, broadly defined and used to silence critics. The AI report follows revelations last week of a leaked draft of a U.N. publication that documents the conflict in Rwanda's neighboring Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) since the early '90's. The 545-page report, which officials say will be formally released soon, claims that Kagame's government is itself guilty of war crimes and crimes against humanity, including possibly genocide, against tens of thousands of Hutu who fled Rwanda after the Civil War and settled in the DRC. Rwanda's foreign minister announced that it was preparing contingency plans to withdraw the country's troops from U.N. peacekeeping missions if the world body publishes the report as is with the inclusion of the so-called double-genocide theory. "Genocide ideology is a form of intimidation," said a human rights activist quoted in the report, which says the genocide ideology and sectarianism laws cause a "chilling effect" on the population and contribute to a culture of silence due to fear of government reprisal.

## **2. Security matters/ Peace Keeping / Conflict Resolution**

### **Tracing DRC's Conflict Minerals a Daunting Task**

Eastern Congo's mines are controlled by militias and rebel groups that use profits from minerals like gold, tungsten, tantalum and tin to perpetuate the DRC conflict, which has claimed more than five million lives since 1998. These militias make millions and millions of dollars. It was estimated that they made about \$180 million from trading in these minerals last year and they're able to continue their existence and their armed struggle on the basis of this trade. Many of the minerals actually get smuggled out to Rwanda, to Uganda and to Burundi. And from there, they get flown out or taken by road to Kenya and Tanzania. And then they get flown out mostly to East Asia for smelting. Smelters in Malaysia, China and Thailand turn the rock ores into metals and sell them to components companies, which, in turn, shape them into various parts for consumer products, depending on the metal. The new U.S. law requires electronics companies and manufacturers to ensure that their supply chains are free of conflict minerals. That means companies will be required to provide increased transparency and disclosure throughout the supply chain. The tracking task becomes even more difficult if the minerals are mined in regions engaged in armed conflict.

### **Rwanda: Uganda, DRC Slam UN Report**

Regional leaders have come out to condemn the recently leaked UN draft report that alleges Rwandan soldiers committed atrocities in the DRC between 1994 and 2003. Uganda's Information Minister and Government Spokesperson, Kabakumba Masiko

stressed that the UN has done nothing to resolve DRC issues, but is instead looking for an excuse. Her Congolese counterpart, Lambert Mende Omalanga, out rightly questioned the credibility of the report. Experts say the leak was the UN's manner of diverting attention away from its failures in the DRC.

### **Burundi's 'Peace Village' a Unique Effort to Reconcile Ethnic Groups**

It has been five years since Burundi's civil war ended. Tutsis and Hutus clashed in a conflict that lasted 13 years, leaving an estimated 300,000 dead. But there is a longer history of ethnic violence in Burundi and a unique effort is under way to reconcile the two ethnic groups. About 1,600 Burundians live in this peace village, with its 300 identical two-room homes constructed of concrete with tin roofs. It was set up by the United Nations and Burundi's government as an experiment in reconciliation to see if Hutus and Tutsis could better understand each other by living side by side.

### **Uganda: Rwanda Defends Kenya on Bashir**

Rwanda has joined the African Union (AU) in defence of Kenya's decision not to comply with the International Criminal Court's (ICC) warrant of arrest issued against Sudanese President Omar al Bashir while he was invited to Nairobi for the new constitution's promulgation ceremony. Rwanda's Minister of Foreign Affairs Louise Mushikiwabo told reporters in Kigali that Rwanda supported the AU's decision on ICC and that Kenya as a sovereign state had the right to invite the Sudanese President.

### **Rwanda: Peacekeepers on Standby for Pull out - Mushikiwabo**

Government has put contingents of the Rwanda Defence Force (RDF) serving under UN-backed peacekeeping operations on standby for pull out, if the UN publishes a report alleging that Rwandan troops were involved in mass killings in the DRC between 1994 and 2003. Foreign Minister pointed out that the leaking of such a report was not an isolated act, but rather part of a larger pattern aimed at discrediting Rwanda's achievements. "It is a report with an agenda." In a statement released last week, the Government described the draft report as malicious, offensive and ridiculous, adding that it appeared that the UN was trying to divert international attention from its latest failure in the Great Lakes Region.

### **Congo-Kinshasa: UN Peacekeeping Official Visits the East after Rape of Civilians**

A senior United Nations peacekeeping official, who is visiting the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) following the recent mass rape of civilians by members of illegal armed groups, has travelled to the eastern region of the country where the crimes were committed.

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

#### **Congo-Kinshasa: More Than 20 Children among Hundreds Raped in East - UN**

More than two dozen children were among the hundreds of civilians recently raped by members of armed groups active in the Far East of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), the United Nations reported on. At least 240 people were raped in a string of villages in North Kivu province between 30 July and 2 August, with the attackers blocking the road and preventing the villagers from reaching outside communications. Many homes were also looted.

#### **Congo-Kinshasa: Further Victims Identified in DRC Mass Rapes Case**

Twenty-eight minors have been documented as victims of last month's four-day raid of more than a dozen villages centred on Walikale, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). Children, including one 12-year old boy were identified. The Walikale victim toll has risen to over 240. As a result of the observed increase in violence and in an effort to reassure and protect the population, the U.N. peacekeeping force in the DRC (MONUSCO) and the 121st brigade of the Congolese military are boosting their presence in the affected areas, according to a statement released today by MONUSCO. Helicopters have also been dispatched for surveillance over the concerned areas.

#### **Congo-Kinshasa: 242 Women Raped By FDLR and Mai-Mai, Says NGO**

Suspected rebels have raped at least 242 women within a few days in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo's Nord-Kivu province, according to an American medical charity. Rapes and beatings took place at the end of July and the beginning of August. The IMC blames the attacks on Hutu rebels of the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) and local militia

#### **Congo-Kinshasa: UN Report on Human Rights Violations to Be Released Next Month**

The report documenting the most serious human rights violations committed in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) between 1993 and 2003 will be made public on 1 October, the United Nations announced. The so-called mapping exercise and its resulting report are "unprecedented in scope," the Office for the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) stated in a news release, noting that it covers 10 years and the entire territory of the DRC, not just the war-torn east. Its overarching objective is to help the people of the region in establishing transitional judicial systems and assist in the fight against impunity.

#### **UN: Perpetrators of DRC Gang Rapes Must Be Brought to Justice**

The U.N. envoy charged with combating sexual violence in conflict zones says the Democratic Republic of Congo's "zero tolerance" policy toward rapists must be backed

by consequences for the perpetrators. Those who carry out sexual attacks on women, such as the reported gang rape of nearly 200 women in the eastern DRC earlier this month must be brought to justice. These attacks are part of an endemic problem in the DRC. In the first three months of this year alone, the United Nations estimates that more than 1,200 women were sexually assaulted in the Congo -- an average of almost 14 rapes each day. U.N. agencies say the true numbers could be even higher because many survivors stay silent out of fear and shame.

### **Rwanda: Nine Year Old Woos International Quran Contest**

A 9 year old Rwandan Muslim boy, Abdallah Cyusa, was among the World's top 40 competitors, and the only child, during this year's Ramadan Quran recitation contest, held in Dubai. Upon arrival at Kigali International Airport, Cyusa briefly and confidently recited some verses of the Quran mesmerizing many including journalists, family, friends and others who had come to welcome him.

### **Rwanda: Amnesty International Dishonest - Government**

The Government has described the latest report from the human rights watchdog, Amnesty International, as very sensational and portrays the dishonesty of some human rights organizations.

### **Rwandans Receive Free Legal Aid**

The Rwanda Legal Aid Project is a four-year initiative managed by the group Lawyers without Borders (Avocats sans Frontieres). Funded by the United States Agency for International Development the project is designed to give free legal advice from professional Rwandan lawyers to vulnerable Rwandans, meaning mostly people who are poor, orphans, and those with HIV or AIDS.

## **4. Economy and Energy**

### **Congo-Kinshasa: IMF Executive Board Completes Third Review under the ECF Arrangement with Nation, Approves U.S. \$1.78 Million Disbursement**

Press release

The Executive Board of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) today completed the third review of the Republic of Congo's economic performance under a three-year arrangement under the Extended Credit Facility (ECF). The completion of the review enables the disbursement of SDR 1.21 million (about US\$1.83 million), which would bring total disbursements under the arrangement to SDR 3.63 million (about US\$5.48 million). The Executive Board's decision was taken on a lapse-of-time basis, which allows the Board to complete reviews without convening formal discussions.

## **Rwanda: Development Bank Earmarks Rwf 2.5 Billion to Support SMEs**

Rwanda Development Bank (BRD) has said it is in the process of setting up a Rwf 2.5 b "SME Development Fund" in a move that will make it attractive for financial institutions to increase lending to Rwanda's Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). The fund comes at a time government has adopted an SME policy that will provide a mechanism for facilitating SMEs to access appropriate business financing.

## **5. Health**

### **Rwanda: More Coverage of HIV/Aids needed, says CNLS**

Members of the Rwanda Media Network against HIV/Aids (ABASIRWA) have been called upon to double their efforts towards the fight against the Aids scourge in the country. The call was made on by Florida Utamuriza of the National Commission against HIV/Aids (CNLS) while officiating at a one-day workshop organized by ABASIRWA. It was said to participants to always sensitize and mobilize communities to use condoms or abstain from sex and to go for voluntary HIV/Aids testing in order to know their HIV status.

### **Rwanda Tackles Top Killer of Children**

For more than a year now, Rwanda has been immunizing its children against pneumonia. Its goal is to save the lives of 6,000 kids every year.

### **Rwanda takes the lead**

In April 2009, Rwanda, with help from the GAVI Alliance and other partners, started a vaccination program against pneumococcal disease. Alex Palacios, GAVI's special representative, says, "Rwanda itself has ensured, first of all, that public health is a top priority. I think that that is a commitment and a decision made at the highest levels. And it has maintained that special priority over the years. It also happens to be a country which just about a year ago introduced the first pneumococcal vaccine in Africa." Palacios says the two top killers of kids can be prevented with modern medicine. Pneumococcal disease is also a major cause of bacterial meningitis, which is often fatal. Malaria used to be the top killer of children in Rwanda. But a campaign against the disease has seen at least a 27 percent decline in children suffering from malaria. Palacios says great success can also be made against pneumonia and diarrhea.

## Details

### 1. Politics

#### **Rwanda: African Leaders to Descend On Kigali**

The New Times

At least 16 African Heads of State had by yesterday confirmed attendance of the swearing-in ceremony of President Paul Kagame slated for Monday next week, the Information Ministry announced in ceremony of President Paul Kagame slated for Monday next week, the Information Ministry announced.

They will be joined by high-profile delegations from other countries and organizations.s

In an exclusive interview with The New Times, the Director General in the Ministry of Information, Ignatius Kabagambe, revealed that in addition to the 16, more were expected to confirm attendance before Monday.

Those who have already confirmed attendance include Joseph Kabila, the President of the DRC and Nigeria's Goodluck Jonathan.

Kabila's visit comes a year after his meeting with his Rwandan counterpart at the Rwanda-DRC border in which the two agreed to visit the capitals of either country following the normalisation of diplomatic relations.

President Kagame visited Kinshasa last month to attend the DRC's 50th anniversary of independence.

Kabagambe also revealed that those who had confirmed so far included Pierre Nkurunziza (Burundi), Mwai Kibaki (Kenya), Francois Bozize (Central African Republic), Denis Sassou Nguesso (Congo-Brazzaville) Blaise Compaoré (Burkina Faso), Abdelaziz Bouteflika (Algeria), Yayi Boni (Benin), Prime Minister Meles Zenawi (Ethiopia), Ali Bongo Ondimba (Gabon), Ellen Johnson Sirleaf (Liberia), Faure Gnassingbé (Togo), Dr. Bingu wa Mutharika (Malawi), King Mswati III (Swaziland) and Rupiah Banda (Zambia)

Tanzania will be represented by the Prime Minister, Minzengo Pinda while Prime Minister Apollo Nsibambi will represent Uganda.

Also expected are all the 21 members of the Presidential Advisory Council - mainly top global business executives and academics who advise President Kagame on various issues.

Kabagambe added that other top delegates expected to attend include African Union Commission Chairperson, Jean Ping while the World Bank will also be represented by one of its top bosses. Other international organisations are expected to send delegations.

"As far as preparations are concerned, we are ready to accommodate the large number of visitors and ensure that everything goes smoothly. So far, nothing is behind schedule," Kabagambe said.

"About 90,000 people from around Kigali are expected to show up at the stadium, but if the figure exceeds our expectations, we shall have giant outdoor broadcasting screens mounted outside the stadium."

### **Rwanda: Genocide Ideology on the Decline - Parliament**

The new times

Kigali — A parliamentary report has revealed that the Genocide ideology is diminishing in terms of its influence across the country.

The report was compiled by the Parliamentary Commission on Human Rights and Fighting against Genocide.

The chairman of the commission, Hon. Evariste Kalisa, noted that some of the factors that had led to the reduction include the enactment of a law against Genocide ideology and work carried out by the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission.

"According to our analysis and observation, I think this is a result of strong sensitization and mobilization of all residents throughout the country to fight it," Kalisa said.

He revealed that most cases related to the ideology are registered during the Genocide commemoration period, and noted that it remains a challenge in fostering unity and reconciliation.

Kalisa told The New Times that both Chambers of the House are about to embark on a tour of 416 sectors to assess the situation for themselves.

The legislator noted that though the country has done tremendous work in fighting the ideology, especially in secondary schools, it still exists in homes.

The lawmaker also revealed that cases of discrimination and divisionism in the country also decreased. In 2008, 50 cases were registered; 32 cases were registered in 2009, whereas this year the number fell to 17.

## Legacy of Genocide Fuels Political Repression in Rwanda

VOA

In the 16 years since the genocide, Rwanda has received nearly universal acclaim for rebuilding its shattered society and re-branding itself as a new "African Tiger." But concerns are being raised that the legacy of that brutal event has been manipulated for the benefit of the ruling party.

During the past decade, Rwanda has undergone a seemingly impossible transformation. The tiny central African nation, plagued by the 1994 genocide in which an estimated 800,000 ethnic Tutsi's were killed by the country's Hutu majority, has been tirelessly engaged in a campaign to reunite the country and change its international image.

President Paul Kagame has used his considerable authority to quickly rebuild the country, both economically and socially. Mr. Kagame has pushed for the elimination of ethnic identities in favor of Rwandan unity and laid the groundwork for significant investment throughout the country.

The president's government accountability programs have all but eliminated corruption in Rwanda, a minor-miracle in East Africa, and free primary education is nearly universal.

The country is now working to become the African hub of information technology by the year 2020, a growth strategy modeled after the "Asian Tiger" economies of the 1980s and 1990s. There is also a monthly day of national service, called Umuganda, during which citizens contribute to public works such as planting trees and cleaning streets.

President Kagame has essentially run the country since the end of the 1994 genocide, after he led the rebel Rwandan Patriotic Front's campaign against the Hutu government.

The president has been lauded as an African hero, receiving praise from world leaders such as former U.S. President Bill Clinton and former British Prime Minister Tony Blair. The president also has near universal support among Rwandans. In the country's two presidential polls, Mr. Kagame was elected by more than 90 percent of the vote.

But Mr. Kagame's government has drawn sharp criticism in recent months. The country has come under fire for controversial laws in effect to prevent "sectarianism" and the promotion of "genocide ideology."

In a new report, Amnesty International warns the laws are too vague and had been abused by the government to silence opposition. The report, entitled "Safer to Stay Silent," charged the laws promoted self-censorship among Rwandans. But Rwandan Media High Council executive secretary Patrice Mulama said the laws were necessary given Rwanda's history.

"Hate speech is never appropriate in any democracy, in any society, because it burns; it kills people," said Mulama. "That is why, world over you have laws against discrimination, laws against segregation, laws against hate speech and stuff like that. You must remember that this is a society that is recovering from a genocide, in which hate speech and racist speech had a very strong role in orchestrating."

In the lead up to the August 9 presidential election, the government was accused by rights organizations, such as Human Rights Watch and Reporters Without Borders, of suppressing opposition and, in effect, guaranteeing the president's re-election.

Opposition newspapers, such as Umuseso and Umuvigizi, were handed suspensions by Rwanda's Media High Council for publishing articles that allegedly incited public instability or promoted genocide ideology.

Opposition figure Victoire Ingabire was also charged with promoting genocide Ideology. Ingabire, who had planned to challenge President Kagame in the election, argued that crimes had been committed by both Hutu and Tutsi populations during the genocide.

Ingabire remains a controversial figure in Rwanda, but the author of the Amnesty report, Erwin van der Borgh told VOA that legitimate calls for accountability deserved a hearing in Rwanda. The author urged Rwandan authorities to review the controversial laws in order to prevent further abuse.

"It is obvious that the Rwandese authorities, like any government, have a responsibility to ensure that hate speech is clamped down on, and that incitement to violence and discrimination and the people responsible for that are investigated and prosecuted," said van der Borgh. "The problem is that with the Genocide Ideology law is the Rwandese government went too far in restricting freedom of expression. We see that it is being abused and misused against political opponents, human rights activists and the media."

Controversy has erupted during the past week that could challenge the traditional narrative of the Rwandan genocide. An upcoming U.N. report, leaked to the media has found the Rwandan Patriotic Front was involved in killing thousands of Hutu refugees in Congo before and after the genocide in Rwanda.

While the Rwandan Patriotic Front has maintained its efforts in Congo targeted Hutu militias, the report found evidence of large-scale human-rights violations committed against civilian populations.

The Rwandan government has blasted the report, calling it "immoral and unacceptable" and accused the United Nations of hypocrisy, citing the organization's failure to respond to the 1994 killings. The central African nation has threatened to withdraw from its U.N. obligations if the report is published. And, it has been revealed the government has completed a plan to withdraw its peacekeepers from the U.N. mission in Darfur.

## **Rwanda Official Critical of Amnesty Law Review Appeal**

VOA

Rwanda's Justice Minister has expressed disappointment over the latest report from the human rights group Amnesty International calling on President Paul Kagame's government to review genocide ideology and sectarianism laws.

Tharcisse Karugarama condemned the report describing it as dishonest and an affront to the government and Rwandans.

The government has said it will review the laws critics charge it uses as tools to suppress its political opponents.

"I did ask different stakeholders, including Amnesty [and] Human Rights Watch to give ideas, if they have any. When they came on board this country, I told them that we are in the process of reviewing that law for different reasons in our own judicial system because we periodically review the laws that we've put in place to see how effective they are," he said.

Karugarama said London-based Amnesty cannot be asking the government to amend the laws when they were aware it was considering reviewing them.

Amnesty international said in its report that both local and international lawyers were unable to define "genocide ideology and sectarianism laws," especially with some judges saying the measures were broad and abstract.

But, Karugarama said Amnesty International "stole" the government's initiative in reviewing the laws.

"They want to take our initiative and make it theirs and that is a very dishonest way of doing business. They know we are amending the law. They have given us their ideas and we have responded to them in writing. There was a cabinet decision in April. We asked different stakeholders to provide ideas on how we can improve that legislation," Karugarama said.

An official with Amnesty International has said that "the ambiguity of the genocide ideology and sectarianism laws means Rwandans live in fear of being punished for saying the wrong thing."

But, the justice minister said the government has reassured Amnesty it will be taking into consideration its concerns when reviewing the laws to improve them.

"What Amnesty International has not told the world, which is really very unfortunate, is that I gave them three assignments to do for us. One [was] to check for us how this legislation is written in other European countries where hate legislation is in place. They

have not responded to that. Then, I ask them also to do research for us on how our courts have interpreted it. They have not done that," he said.

Officials of Amnesty International were not immediately available for comment despite repeated attempts.

## **Rwanda: Genocide Ideology and Sectarianism Laws Silencing Critics?**

IPS

Analysis

United Nations — Among its unstable and conflict-ridden neighbors, Rwanda stands out. It has been pegged as a model of development and one of Africa's success stories: Since the 1990's, when a civil war ravaged the country, average incomes have doubled, its people have become healthier and less hungry and it has the highest proportion of women parliamentarians worldwide. Yet, maintaining this stability is a government accused of muzzling its opponents and committing human rights abuses.

For the last 16 years, Rwandans have lived under the shadow of the infamous 1994 genocide that eliminated one-tenth of its population in a mere 100 days. During that period, 800,000 ethnic Tutsi along with some peaceful Hutu were systematically murdered at the hands of a violent Hutu regime until Tutsi forces led by current Rwandan president Paul Kagame was able to wrest control.

Over the last decade, Kagame's government has implemented laws against speech and conduct that espouse "sectarianism" or a "genocide ideology" in order to prevent a repeat of 1994. "Revisionism, negationism and trivialization of genocide are punishable by the law," states the Rwandan constitution.

But an Amnesty International (AI) report released today claims that these laws are unclear, broadly defined and used to silence critics.

"Prohibiting hate speech is a legitimate aim, but the Rwandan government's approach violates international human rights law," the report states. "The vague wording of the laws is deliberately exploited to violate human rights."

The AI report follows revelations last week of a leaked draft of a U.N. publication that documents the conflict in Rwanda's neighboring Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) since the early '90's. The 545-page report, which officials say will be formally released soon, claims that Kagame's government is itself guilty of war crimes and crimes against humanity, including possibly genocide, against tens of thousands of Hutu who fled Rwanda after the Civil War and settled in the DRC.

The forthcoming report's findings challenge the accepted history of the Rwandan Civil War and have caused outrage in Kigali, which released a statement calling the report "immoral and unacceptable" and blamed the U.N. for failing to prevent the 1994 genocide and subsequent refugee crisis.

Today, Rwanda's foreign minister announced that it was preparing contingency plans to withdraw the country's troops from U.N. peacekeeping missions if the world body publishes the report as is - with the inclusion of the so-called double-genocide theory.

But those in the country who publicly voiced sentiments consistent with the U.N. draft report have often been detained using the "genocide ideology" and "divisionism" laws - including leading opposition figure Victoire Ingabire and humanitarian Paul Rusesabagina.

Christian Davenport of the University of Notre Dame and Allan Stam of the University of Michigan, both political science professors, have been working to document the civil war violence and its aftermath in Rwanda and surrounding areas using data from the Rwandan government and human rights organizations.

"The leaked [U.N.] report is very consistent with what we found," Davenport told IPS. "The Kagame-led government engaged in systematic violent activity during the violence of 1994 and they pursued those who engaged in violence in Rwanda in the DRC, but consistently overshot where most estimated that these perpetrators were located so that they could extract resources from the country."

Accused of revisionism, Davenport and Stam's visas were revoked during a visit to Rwanda in 2003 to present their findings.

"In the Rwanda civil war case, a genocide against the Tutsi took place, but it was part of a broader and far longer lasting civil war in which there were large numbers of victims on both sides," Stam told IPS. "The problem in Rwanda today is that to simply observe this historical fact puts one on the wrong side of the law. One does not have to deny the fact that a genocide occurred, but simply make the additional point that the genocide occurred in a context where a lot of Hutu died, to violate the genocide ideology provisions of the genocide denial statute."

The AI report also documents the use of the genocide ideology and sectarianism laws to silence the government's political opponents and the independent media in the run-up to this year's Aug. 3 presidential elections, during which two leading figures and one journalist were murdered. Kagame won by a landslide 93 percent.

Vague Laws Criminalize Criticism, Says Amnesty

"Genocide ideology is a form of intimidation," said a human rights activist quoted in the report, which says the genocide ideology and sectarianism laws cause a "chilling effect" on the population and contribute to a culture of silence due to fear of government reprisal.

In April 2010, the government announced plans for a review of the genocide ideology and sectarianism laws.

"Unfortunately, we have received very little information within what time frame this review would take place and whether there will be a broader consultation, including with civil society, during the review process," Erwin van der Borgh, Africa Program Director at AI, told IPS.

## **2. Security matters/ Peace Keeping / Conflict Resolution**

### **Tracing DRC's Conflict Minerals a Daunting Task**

VOA

State-of-the-art electronics, from cell phones to laptops, seem to be everywhere these days. But most of us don't know how they work or that they hide a dirty little secret inside: Many are made with minerals that originate in conflict zones like the Democratic Republic of Congo and neighboring countries.

Eastern Congo's mines are controlled by militias and rebel groups that use profits from minerals like gold, tungsten, tantalum and tin to perpetuate the DRC conflict, which has claimed more than five million lives since 1998.

What Are Conflict Minerals?

- \* Conflict minerals include gold, tungsten, tantalum and tin.
- \* Tantalum is used to make high quality capacitors to hold charges for cell phones and other devices.
- \* Tungsten is what makes cell phones vibrate, and tin is used in solder.
- \* Highly conductive and resistant to corrosion, gold is used in connectors, soldered joints, connection wires and the like.

"These militias make millions and millions of dollars," said Sasha Lezhnev, a consultant with enough, a project of the Center for American Progress to end genocide and crimes against humanity. "We estimated that they made about \$180 million from trading in these minerals last year and they're able to continue their existence and their armed struggle on the basis of this trade."

By comparison, Lezhnev says the miners only earn between \$1-5 a day working either for an armed group or for someone who pays off an armed group. The prices of the minerals vary, but in the case of tantalum, for example, the ore can fetch up to 50 times what miners earn.

### **From mine to smelter:**

Many of the minerals are mined by hand in small-scale artisanal mines, where they are close to the surface.

Ores are typically processed and concentrated on-site. After that, the processed minerals are shipped to a regional center for further concentration, explains David Menzie, Chief of the International Minerals Section at the United States Geological Survey.

The minerals pass through a number of hands, from miners to smugglers to traders to wholesalers, before being shipped out of DRC to neighboring countries.

“Many of the minerals actually get smuggled out to Rwanda, to Uganda and to Burundi,” said GRG’s Lezhnev. “And from there, they get flown out or taken by road to Kenya and Tanzania. And then they get flown out mostly to East Asia for smelting.”

Smelters in Malaysia, China and Thailand turn the rock ores into metals and sell them to components companies, which, in turn, shape them into various parts for consumer products, depending on the metal.

### **Regulating trade:**

Not all electronics products use conflict minerals. But those that do have been the target of advocacy groups seeking to end their trade. Their efforts recently yielded congressional legislation, which was signed into law by President Obama in July.

The new U.S. law requires electronics companies and manufacturers to ensure that their supply chains are free of conflict minerals. That means companies will be required to provide increased transparency and disclosure throughout the supply chain, says Stephen D’Esposito, President of RESOLVE, a non-profit organization that mediates conflicts.

“The burden falls on manufacturers to be able to look into their supply chain and show evidence that where they’re getting their supply from and that the people who they’re getting it from and that the people who they’re getting it from know where they’re getting it from and so on down the line.” said D’Esposito. “It takes what the electronics companies were starting to do on a voluntary basis on their own and makes it a legal requirement.”

Some companies are protesting the complexity of requirements in the new law. Others have put their Congo supply chains on hold, pending a review of their sources. And some, like Intel, Motorola and HP, have taken stronger action, with Intel beginning a process to audit its tantalum supplies.

The question D’Esposito asks is whether conflict minerals can be traced to their source, given the many stages they go through before being sold to electronics companies. “Is it possible to create a supply chain where you know your source,” he asked.

One of the challenges, says D'Esposito, is that supply chains are typically very hard to trace in an informal mining sector.

“If you’ve got small-scale mining where there is not good record keeping ... where the government doesn’t necessarily support the mining or validate it, then the record-keeping tends to be difficult or non-existent,” noted D'Esposito. “What has to happen is changes have to occur in the supply chain so that there’s actual paperwork that’s credible that shows you where things came from.”

The tracking task becomes even more difficult if the minerals are mined in regions engaged in armed conflict. By the time the minerals reach the smelter, it is all but impossible.

Both D'Esposito and USGS’s David Menzie say the easiest way to trace conflict minerals is to set up a certification system at the smelter. But that means the smelter will have to ensure that all the minerals are coming from legitimate sources.

GRG’s Sasha Lezhnev takes the approach a bit further, saying the best way is to ensure that no conflict minerals are used is to trace, audit and certify.

“So companies should trace their minerals back to their smelters and back to the mines,” said Lezhnev. “Number two: they should have audits and monitoring conducted of that process independently. And then thirdly, they should contribute to concrete certification efforts on the ground out in Central Africa, which is really going to make this happen.”

### **Who pays?**

Lezhnev maintains that the costs of reforming the supply chain are minimal. But RESOLVE’s D'Esposito argues that it is still unclear what the process will cost, since it depends on the supply, the market price of the minerals, and interest on the part of electronics companies in supporting the development of valid and conflict-free supply chains.

“This complementary strategy will cost money. The question is who will bear the burden of those costs if these systems work? Right now, systems development is being funded by government aid agencies and voluntary donations from some electronics companies. If these systems take hold they will have to be financially self-sustaining and this could increase costs.”

Even if the tracking system works, Herbert Weiss of the Woodrow Wilson Center says Congo miners not only risk losing their jobs but could face increased raids from militias if their mining profits drop.

“One of the dangers in all of this is that if [conflict minerals] are traced to the Congo, if that is successful, you’re talking about thousands of small artisanal miners losing their

wherewithal, losing their bread and butter every day,” said Weiss. “What is going to happen to all of these artisanal miners who are making a living, even though a very, very small percentage of the value of what they are mining goes to them because the intermediaries are the ones that gain the main profit?”

Weiss suggests establishing a fund to support miners who lose their livelihoods as a result of the tracing efforts and help them find work in other industries.

There is no perfect answer to the problem of DRC’s conflict minerals. But RESOLVE’s D’Esposito says U.S. law now helps put the debate on the right track.

“The legislation takes you to a place where consumers can start to know in some jurisdictions that their products are conflict-free. And companies who are part of that scheme ... may be doing it worldwide,” said D’Esposito.

Even with the legislation in place, there is no guarantee that these minerals won’t come from conflict zones. Militias controlling eastern Congo’s mines can easily sell their products to companies not subject to U.S. laws. But experts hope that the legislation will set an example for companies in other countries to curtail, if not eliminate, conflict minerals from their supply chains.

### **Rwanda: Uganda, DRC Slam UN Report**

The New Times

Kigali — Regional leaders have come out to condemn the recently leaked UN draft report that alleges Rwandan soldiers committed atrocities in the DRC between 1994 and 2003.

In an interview with Contact FM, Uganda's Information Minister and Government Spokesperson, Kabakumba Masiko stressed that the UN has done nothing to resolve DRC issues, but is instead looking for an excuse.

"That is what the UN is best at; waiting for a bad situation which is never resolved and when people try to resolve the bad situation, then they turn around and start finger pointing," Masiko noted.

Her Congolese counterpart, Lambert Mende Omalanga, out rightly questioned the credibility of the report.

"We won't call this a report. It is just something written by journalists," Mende said.

"They talk a lot about issues concerning Rwanda and Rwandans in Congo and forget about Congolese issues. They forget what is going on now in Congo where people are still dying."

Experts say the leak was the UN's manner of diverting attention away from its failures in the DRC.

Just days before the report was leaked, reports emerged that the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) and Congolese Mai-Mai militias attacked and gang-raped nearly 180 Congolese women and children in a series of attacks, between July 30 and August 3, in the Walikale region of eastern DRC's North Kivu Province, only 10km from a UN base..

The UN mission in the DRC (MONUSC) reportedly lacked knowledge about the atrocities until more than a week later, when International Medical Corps (IMC), an aid group, revealed the incidents.

Mende said his government was waiting to see if the UN releases the final report, and then denounces it.

"If there is anything jeopardizing our effort to stabilize the country and this region, we won't keep silent. We shall denounce it," he said.

### **Burundi's 'Peace Village' a Unique Effort to Reconcile Ethnic Groups**

VOA

It has been five years since Burundi's civil war ended. Tutsis and Hutus clashed in a conflict that lasted 13 years, leaving an estimated 300,000 dead. But there is a longer history of ethnic violence in Burundi and a unique effort is under way to reconcile the two ethnic groups.

About 1,600 Burundians live in this peace village, with its 300 identical two-room homes constructed of concrete with tin roofs. It was set up by the United Nations and Burundi's government as an experiment in reconciliation to see if Hutus and Tutsis could better understand each other by living side by side.

Burundi's ethnic clashes have been a problem for generations. In 1972, the Tutsi-dominated government launched a campaign of violence against the Hutu majority. In what an international commission dubbed genocide, up to 200,000 people were killed and hundreds of thousands more fled the country.

Nyandwi Philemon was one of them, ending up in Tanzania with his parents in 1972, when he was just three years old. He returned to his homeland five years ago and was given a home in the Peace Village.

He says when his family was in the refugee camps, people used to say, "We cannot live with people from other ethnic groups." But, he says, when we are here, we see that we can live with them without any problems.

Philemon is a Hutu married to a Tutsi. He said he does not care about ethnicity, saying it is used by politicians "to get power." As the camp's government representative, he says he has never received any complaints related to ethnicity.

According to Peace Village resident Denise Ndabige, it is not the problem anymore. The biggest challenge is a lack of food.

She says she has not eaten this morning, and neither have her children. She says the problem is finding food because the residents do not have a way to cultivate crops, and without land they can not even grow small things like vegetables. She says they just stay there, just perhaps waiting for death.

Each family is given a plot of land, but it is not big enough to cultivate crops. Charities are helping, but the Peace Village project was not designed to support the residents, just give them a place to live.

While there is a nearby medical clinic, getting medical care is also a problem for Ndabige and other residents.

He says the residents have no money to go to hospitals. He says he has an eye problem, but the hospital charged so much he decided to stay at home without taking medicine.

The Hutus and Tutsis living together as neighbors say they have come to realize they are not so different and that they are facing similar problems each day in Burundi, be it paying for medical care or figuring out where the next meal will come from.

Despite the challenges of life in the Peace Village, resident David Thomas Ciza said he is thankful to have a home.

He says when the refugees were in Tanzania, they were facing a terrible situation. They were threatened by different security services, like the army and police, but in Burundi, it is safe now and no one comes to ask for your identity card. He says, "We are free," and he is happy to have his feet on Burundi soil because it is his country.

While there is peace, the Hutus and Tutsis who live in the Mutambara Peace Village say they still need food and other resources to lead a meaningful life. This is a problem also faced by millions in Burundi, one of the world's poorest countries. But the government has provided little help, regardless of ethnicity.

### **Uganda: Rwanda Defends Kenya on Bashir**

The Monitor

Rwanda has joined the African Union (AU) in defence of Kenya's decision not to comply with the International Criminal Court's (ICC) warrant of arrest issued against Sudanese

President Omar al Bashir while he was invited to Nairobi for the new constitution's promulgation ceremony.

Rwanda's Minister of Foreign Affairs Louise Mushikiwabo told reporters in Kigali on Tuesday that Rwanda supported the AU's decision on ICC and that Kenya as a sovereign state had the right to invite the Sudanese President.

"As far as my government is concerned, it is Kenya's sovereign decision to deal with its neighbours the way it deems so. Kenya has been involved as a member of The Inter-governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and has been involved in talks including engaging President Bashir," said Ms Mushikiwabo.

"Kenya is making efforts to stabilise Sudan. It makes sense to us that government of Kenya would love to deal with President Bashir. That engagement is in line with the AU's position. Justice doesn't work in a vacuum. Justice is to bring order and not create chaos to satisfy the international community," she added.

Error in judgement

In a statement issued from its headquarters in Addis Ababa Ethiopia, the AU said the ICC had erred in turning a blind eye on the obligations of member states to the AU's decision made in January 2009 and reiterated at the heads of state's meeting in Kampala last month not to cooperate with the ICC's warrant of arrest on Bashir.

The statement said in part, "Thus, the decisions adopted by the AU policy organs are binding on Chad and Kenya and it will be wrong to coerce them to violate or disregard their obligations to the African Union."

The African Union sought to vindicate Kenya and Chad from blame over the presence of Mr Bashir in those countries, who the ICC wants to arrest. The Kenyan government on its part stated that whereas it is obligated to the ICC, Kenya has a legitimate interest in ensuring peace and stability in Sudan and the region.

Ms Mushikiwabo told reporters, "This is an issue that Rwanda has already raised because Rwanda has been affected by the international law system since 1994."

### **Rwanda: Peacekeepers on Standby for Pull out - Mushikiwabo**

The New Times

Kigali — Government has put contingents of the Rwanda Defence Force (RDF) serving under UN-backed peacekeeping operations on standby for pull out, if the UN publishes a report alleging that Rwandan troops were involved in mass killings in the DRC between 1994 and 2003.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs Minister and Government Spokesperson, Louise Mushikiwabo, made the announcement, yesterday, during a news conference to clarify on the government's position on the recently leaked draft UN report.

"We are waiting to see what the United Nations does with this report, but we are very seriously considering pulling out our troops," Mushikiwabo said, adding that the RDF contingent commander in Darfur has already been instructed to be prepared.

"Our troops are on standby; it is up to the United Nations," the Minister said, adding that the government is not happy about the imminent troop withdrawal, but was being forced to.

She further pointed out that the leaking of such a report was not an isolated act, but rather part of a larger pattern aimed at discrediting Rwanda's achievements. "It is a report with an agenda," Mushikiwabo stressed.

"How could the UN accuse Rwanda's army of raping and killing, and at the same time, want them to be the dedicated army that can protect people around the world," she said. "If they (UN) label us as a Genocidal army, then they should be able to find another army to do it."

Army and Defence Spokesperson, Lt. Col. Jill Rutaremara, told The New Times that they were ready to pull out.

"The Rwanda Defence Force [RDF] has finalized a contingency withdrawal plan for its peacekeepers, in response to a government directive, in case the UN publishes its outrageous and damaging report," Rutaremara said.

"The withdrawal will apply to the RDF peacekeepers serving under the United Nations African Union Mission in Darfur [UNAMID] and the United Nations Mission in Sudan [UNMIS]," he added.

Reacting to a question regarding the possible involvement of Kofi Annan - the UN Secretary General during the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi - Minister Mushikiwabo said that work on the yet to be published report started and was funded during his tenure.

She said Kofi Annan is a man whose record, as far as Rwanda is concerned, is pitiful.

"He failed miserably," she said. "I am not surprised and my Government is not surprised that he (Annan) would be the one making sure that there is funding for this kind of report to ensure that it was an important gesture he would pose before he leaves office," Mushikiwabo stressed, adding that the involvement of Annan in the making of the report is unquestionable.

In a statement released last week, the Government described the draft report as malicious, offensive and ridiculous, adding that it appeared that the UN was trying to divert international attention from its latest failure in the Great Lakes Region.

### **Congo-Kinshasa: UN Peacekeeping Official Visits the East after Rape of Civilians**

UN news Service

A senior United Nations peacekeeping official, who is visiting the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) following the recent mass rape of civilians by members of illegal armed groups, has travelled to the eastern region of the country where the crimes were committed, a UN spokesperson said today.

Atul Khare, Assistant Secretary-General in the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) travelled yesterday from DRC's capital Kinshasa to the east, where he will make stops in the towns of Goma, Kirumba, Kibua, Bukavu and Uvira.

He spent several days in Kinshasa meeting with various officials, including the Foreign Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister and the President's security advisor. He also met with representatives of the civil society and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon dispatched Mr. Khare to DRC to work with Roger Meece, his Special Representative in the country, following reports that members of armed groups active in the DRC's troubled North Kivu had raped at least 154 civilians in the province's Banamukira territory between 30 July and 2 August.

Earlier this week, Mr. Meece urged authorities in DRC, the UN peacekeeping mission in the country, MONUSCO, and the international community in general to work together to put an end to crimes against civilians by illegal armed groups.

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

### **Congo-Kinshasa: More Than 20 Children among Hundreds Raped in East - UN**

UN News Service

More than two dozen children were among the hundreds of civilians recently raped by members of armed groups active in the Far East of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), the United Nations reported on Friday.

At least 240 people were raped in a string of villages in North Kivu province between 30 July and 2 August, with the attackers blocking the road and preventing the villagers from reaching outside communications. Many homes were also looted.

The UN said today that 27 minors, including one boy, were among those assaulted, with one attempted rape reported as well.

Child protection officers have also been notified by eight other minors are being treated for sexual abuses by a health centre in North Kivu, but these cases have not been confirmed by the world body.

According to the UN Population Fund (UNFPA), more than 9,000 cases of rape were reported last year in North and South Kivu provinces alone, while many cases are believed to go unreported.

The recent mass rapes underscores the need for an end to impunity for perpetrators of such crimes, Margot Wallström, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's Special Representative for Sexual Violence in Conflict, told reporters earlier this week.

These latest atrocities reinforce that "you cannot have a policy of zero tolerance backed by zero consequences," she emphasized.

The DRC Government must buttress its policies to combat sexual violence with "consistent and visible consequences" for perpetrators, Ms. Wallström said.

"So long as rapists remain at large, they hold the whole reputation of the Congo hostage."

Mr. Ban has dispatched Atul Khare, Assistant Secretary-General in the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), to the region in the wake of the recent wave of sexual violence.

Mr. Khare has met with senior Congolese officials and representatives of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civil in the capital, Kinshasa, and is now in the east. He is expected to brief Security Council members on his visit next Tuesday.

### **Congo-Kinshasa: Further Victims Identified in DRC Mass Rapes Case**

IPS

United Nations — Twenty-eight minors have been documented as victims of last month's four-day raid of more than a dozen villages centred around Walikale, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), U.N. officials told reporters here today. Children, including one 12-year old boy were identified. The Walikale victim toll has risen to over 240.

Following the Jul. 30 to Aug. 3 raid, rebels are now believed to have continued their pillaging spree in neighboring areas. 75 rape victims have been identified in Mubi and Pinga, in addition to the more than 240 Walikale victims.

As a result of the observed increase in violence and in an effort to reassure and protect the population, the U.N. peacekeeping force in the DRC (MONUSCO) and the 121st brigade of the Congolese military are boosting their presence in the affected areas, according to a statement released today by MONUSCO. Helicopters have also been dispatched for surveillance over the concerned areas.

Additionally, the Congolese military "has opened an investigation. One suspect has already been apprehended," the statement said. Although the U.N. maintains a presence in the DRC, the legal burden to arrest and prosecute the perpetrators of the mass rapes lies with the Congolese government.

Victims left in the wake of the rebels' violence have gradually come forward as the Congolese military is able to secure their villages and the rebels retreat, U.N. spokesperson Farhan Haq told IPS.

The U.N. has identified the perpetrators as members of the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) and Mai Mai Cheka - rebel groups that regularly terrorise the mineral-rich eastern DRC region, looting villages and systematically gang raping women and children as a tool of war.

MONUSCO was informed of the additional rapes following the Walikale raid by aid groups who provided care to the victims.

The U.N. is currently conducting its own non-criminal investigation, jointly headed by its human rights office and MONUSCO, "to try to establish the facts related to the U.N.'s mission on the ground, to learn from that and also, in so doing, to try to establish what actually happened," U.N. spokesperson Martin Nesirky told IPS.

The U.N. and MONUSCO have come under fire since news of the mass gang rapes first broke early last week - for their failure to prevent the raid despite having knowledge of rebel activity in the villages. The primary mandate of the one billion dollar MONUSCO force, the world body's largest peacekeeping presence worldwide, is the protection of civilians.

Eighty peacekeepers patrol the densely wooded 300 square kilometre area encompassing Walikale - a number, the U.N. says, is insufficient. "They can't be behind every bush," outgoing U.N. humanitarian chief John Holmes told reporters here last week.

U.N. agencies knew of rebel activity and one reported rape in the Walikale area when the raid began on Jul. 30, and knew of 24 more rapes by Aug. 10, 'The New York Times' reported today, disputing earlier claims by officials that the U.N. did not have knowledge of rapes of any scale until Aug. 12.

A MONUSCO patrol did not pass through the villages until Aug. 2. At this time, the raid was still occurring, but U.N. officials say that the peacekeepers received no indication of the rebels' presence, or of the mass rapes during their visit.

Meanwhile, the DRC government insists that it doesn't need U.N. peacekeepers, who have been in the country since 1999 after a ceasefire was brokered between warring factions in the central African region.

Kinshasa has expressed its desire for the MONUSCO mandate - which expires next summer - not to be extended, and has sought a drawdown of U.N. forces in the DRC. Nearly 2,000 blue helmets stationed in the relatively stable western part of the country were sent home in June.

But aid groups claim that the DRC's security forces are incapable of providing peace and stability to its citizens. The Congolese army has itself been reported to perpetrate human rights abuses, including systematic rape of the civilian population.

As a result, "as long as the Congolese armed forces are in a state of indiscipline where they are themselves a threat to the population and women, mostly MONUSCO is the best hope to protect civilians," Marcel Stoessel, DRC country director for Amnesty International told IPS.

But in the long run, Stoessel said, the way to ensure an end to the impunity for human rights abuses, like sexual violence, committed in the conflict-ridden DRC is comprehensive security sector reform.

"MONUSCO cannot be a long-term solution," Stoessel told IPS.

### **Congo-Kinshasa: 242 Women Raped By FDLR and Mai-Mai, Says NGO**

RFI

Suspected rebels have raped at least 242 women within a few days in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo's Nord-Kivu province, according to an American medical charity. Rapes and beatings took place at the end of July and the beginning of August.

"Two hundred and forty two women have been taken into medical care," said Cris Baguma, a local Congolese doctor with the International Medical Corps (IMC) at Walikale.

Most of the rapes were in Luvungi, a settlement of some 2,160 people, and in surrounding villages, the IMC said.

The IMC blames the attacks on Hutu rebels of the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) and local militias.

"The most striking cases were those of two pregnant women and another who had given birth two weeks earlier," said Baguma, adding that the eldest of the victims was 75 and the youngest 16.

"Women told us they were stripped and left naked, some had their breasts pulled, almost all were beaten, and some were bitten," said Christophe Nyembo, an IMC psychologist.

Nyembo added that the territory around Walikale "is a crossroads for mining sites. The aggressors thought the women were hiding gold in their genitals and pushed in their fingers."

Both doctors said that in the cases of some women raped in front of their husbands, the men told their wives to seek medical attention, which is rare in eastern DR Congo, where men tend to cast off raped spouses.

IMC staff stressed that there could be other victims who have not yet been treated and others in health centres that the charity has still to visit.

The United Nations on 23 August reported that at least 179 women in Nord-Kivu were raped between 30 July and 3 August by the FDLR, which has denied it, and by local Mai-Mai militia.

On Tuesday, UN Special representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Margot Wallstroem, threatened to have people suspected of these rapes prosecuted for war crimes.

The FDLR has been active in eastern DR Congo since the mid-1990s and is feared for its brutality. Its older members are accused by Rwanda of taking part in the 1994 genocide of 800,000 people, mainly minority Tutsis, in the neighbouring country.

### **Congo-Kinshasa: UN Report on Human Rights Violations to Be Released Next Month**

UN news Service

The report documenting the most serious human rights violations committed in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) between 1993 and 2003 will be made public on 1 October, the United Nations announced on Thursday.

The so-called mapping exercise and its resulting report are "unprecedented in scope," the Office for the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) stated in a news release, noting that it covers 10 years and the entire territory of the DRC, not just the war-torn east.

Its overarching objective is to help the people of the region in establishing transitional judicial systems and assist in the fight against impunity.

The report, a draft of which was recently leaked and published in the French newspaper Le Monde, describes a total of more than 600 incidents in the DRC during the 10-year

period in which tens of thousands of people were killed, and reportedly implicates a number of groups in the atrocities.

"Following requests, we have decided to give concerned States a further month to comment on the draft," said High Commissioner Navi Pillay.

"I have offered to publish any such comments alongside the report itself on 1 October, if they so wish," she added.

More than 1,280 witnesses were interviewed to corroborate or invalidate alleged violations, including previously undocumented incidents, and at least 1,500 documents were collected and analysed during the two years that it took to research and write the report.

### **UN: Perpetrators of DRC Gang Rapes Must Be Brought to Justice**

The New Times

The U.N. envoy charged with combating sexual violence in conflict zones says the Democratic Republic of Congo's "zero tolerance" policy toward rapists must be backed by consequences for the perpetrators. Margot Wallström said Tuesday that those who carry out sexual attacks on women, such as the reported gang rape of nearly 200 women in the eastern DRC earlier this month must be brought to justice.

The United Nations has blamed Rwandan rebels and an eastern Congolese militia for the gang rapes in Livungi that took place from July 30 to August 3.

These attacks are part of an endemic problem in the DRC. In the first three months of this year alone, the United Nations estimates that more than 1,200 women were sexually assaulted in the Congo -- an average of almost 14 rapes each day. U.N. agencies say the true numbers could be even higher because many survivors stay silent out of fear and shame.

U.N. Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict Margot Wallström visited the DRC recently. She says it is the Congolese government that has the first responsibility to protect its civilians and that impunity must end.

"So long as rapists remain at large they hold the whole reputation of the Congo hostage. The latest atrocities really enforce a key finding from my mission -- you cannot have a policy of zero tolerance backed by zero consequences. And the government's zero tolerance policy on sexual violence must be backed by consistent and visible consequences for the perpetrators of sexual violence on their territory," she said.

Wallström warns that such acts can constitute war crimes for both the perpetrators and those in command, adding the time when sexual violence is tolerated as a by-product of war is over.

Although it is the primary responsibility of the government to protect its citizens, U.N. peacekeepers based in the DRC came under criticism for not intervening to stop the attacks. The United Nations says its troops were not informed of the attacks when they happened and that they did not learn of them until nearly two weeks after they had occurred. Wallström says she did not know about the attacks until August 21st.

She defended the peacekeepers -- whose numbers have begun to shrink at the request of the Congolese government -- saying that it is unrealistic to expect them to protect all of the women in the vast area of the eastern DRC. But she accepted that the United Nations must improve its response in such situations.

"So, of course, they can't be everywhere. That doesn't mean to say we shouldn't look at were there early warning signals that were not picked up. And how can we improve that understanding of early warning signals? What can we do to better communicate? Can we equip the women in those villages better to actually report on their fears and to pick up the early warning signs? So I think this is part of the follow up," she said.

U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon says he was "outraged" by the Luvungi attacks. He has dispatched an envoy to the DRC to investigate the incident.

### **Rwanda: Nine Year Old Woos International Quran Contest**

The New Times

A 9 year old Rwandan Muslim boy, Abdallah Cyusa, was among the World's top 40 competitors, and the only child, during this year's Ramadan Quran recitation contest, held in Dubai.

Cyusa returned home yesterday in the company of his cheerful father, Kasim Rwabakika, a devout Muslim, who had escorted him to Dubai in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) for the month-long stay during the contest.

Upon arrival at Kigali International Airport, Cyusa briefly and confidently recited some verses of the Quran mesmerizing many including journalists, family, friends and others who had come to welcome him.

"I really don't know how to say how happy I feel, but I am so happy. It is my dad who taught me how to read the Quran," the youngster told The New Times later.

The bright and jolly boy arrived home partly draped in the national flag colours, According to the Mufti of Rwanda, Sheikh Saleh Habimana, Cyusa was the only contestant who was hugged and kissed on the fore head by the ruler of Dubai, Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid al-Maktoum, an exceptional show of honor and admiration by the King.

"On this occasion the king kissed the forehead of the boy, a sign of extreme admiration," said the happy Mufti, adding that Arab kings are greeted by their shoulders and hands being kissed, unlike the case of Abdallah where the king did the kissing.

"But most importantly, the child demonstrated that he belongs to Rwanda. While other Rwandans dressed in normal Muslim attire, this young child put on a Rwandan flag. To me, this is of great value. The king was impressed."

"To me, as a Mufti, this child is another trophy to the President of this country. My message to all Rwandans and the Muslim community is - we can do it," Sheikh Habimana said.

He revealed that Sheikh al-Maktoum had promised to fully take care of the boy. The king requested that the boy return to Dubai with his family after celebrating the upcoming Eid el Fitr Muslim holiday that marks the end of Ramadan.

The Ramadan Qur'an reading contest is an annual event that encourages memorization and understanding of the Holy Quran.

### **Rwanda: Amnesty International Dishonest - Government**

The New Times

Kigali — The Government has described the latest report from the human rights watchdog, Amnesty International, as very sensational and portrays the dishonesty of some human rights organizations.

Addressing a news conference yesterday, Government Spokesperson and Minister of Foreign affairs, Louise Mushikiwabo, said that the report entitled "Safer to Stay Silent: The Chilling Effect Of Rwanda's Laws On 'Genocide Ideology' And 'Sectarianism'", is part of the group's fundraising schemes.

Mushikiwabo accused the human rights watchdog of breaching the goodwill offered by the Government of Rwanda, to provide views on the possible review of the two Genocide laws, and instead chose to rush and publish the report, as if they had made a new discovery.

"Amnesty International is acting like they have made an important discovery - that Rwanda is making laws to stifle expression from its own citizens. These are Genocide ideology laws that are nothing new - neither to Amnesty nor to us," said Mushikiwabo.

"Amnesty had approached our Ministry of Justice wanting to collaborate, wanting to provide ideas and suggestions and they were welcomed with open arms. They were requested to give their views and to contribute and before the exercise was over, they are out with a report very sensational," Mushikiwabo said.

"That is not the way we expect human rights organisations to function. If Amnesty International really wants to improve the state of human rights and help Rwanda to keep improving on issues of human rights, this kind of manipulation and dishonesty will not work."

Mushikiwabo said that the move by Amnesty International was to garner funding.  
Vague Laws Criminalize Criticism, Says Amnesty

"I am convinced that this is just another fundraising scheme for Amnesty International because it doesn't make sense that one would be collaborating and then half way decide to publish a report with sensational titles," Mushikiwabo said.

She added that it's a known procedure for some human rights groups to publish such reports as it is one of the best ways to raise money, and that Amnesty International is using Rwanda because there is a lot happening in the media with Rwanda.

"I express the wish for my Government that Amnesty International and other human rights organisations would try and work in transparent and honest ways in order to make a difference in the state of human rights in this country," the minister added.

The London-based human rights group, on Tuesday, released a 116-page report alleging that the country's laws on Genocide ideology were being used to suppress political dissent and free speech.

## **Rwandans Receive Free Legal Aid**

VOA

It has been more than 16 years since the 1994 genocide in Rwanda left 800,000 dead and forced hundreds of thousands of people to flee the country. Since then, Rwandans have been returning to their homeland, but some have found their land occupied by others, resulting in court cases about land and other disputes. .

The Rwanda Legal Aid Project is a four-year initiative managed by the group Lawyers without Borders (Avocats sans Frontieres). Funded by the United States Agency for International Development the project is designed to give free legal advice from professional Rwandan lawyers to vulnerable Rwandans, meaning mostly people who are poor, orphans, and those with HIV or AIDS.

Lawyer Pascal Dusengeyeru gives legal advice to his client, Bernadine Nyiramugisha. They are sitting inside a room in the Gisenyi Legal Aid Clinic, located on a dirt road just a few minutes from the center of Gisenyi in northwest Rwanda, a city of about 350,000 people.

Nyiramugisha explains why she came to the center from her hometown of Rugerero, about an hour and a half away.

She says she lived with a man out of marriage and they had two children ... but after three years, the man left. She says he went to look for another woman and he married her. Now he will not recognize his children and he does not help her educate them. She came here to the legal aid center and they advised her to go to court so that the man would be ordered to help educate their children. "I went to court for the first time and I won," she says

The alleged father appealed to a higher court and Nyiramugisha's victory was overturned. So she is back at the legal center working with her lawyer Pascal Dusengeyeru to prepare her own appeal.

Dusengeyeru is one of more than 50 lawyers who works with Lawyers without Borders. Having worked for the legal aid center for about five months, he has helped about 30 Rwandans, mostly with paternity cases and land disputes.

The Internal Displacement Monitoring Center reports that land disputes are about 80 percent of the cases presented before provincial courts. Family members may claim they have been allocated an unfair share of an inherited piece of land. Making the problem worse, there are often no official documents to backup claims.

Despite the challenges, Dusengeyeru said he has been successful in helping his clients.

When the people come to us, he says, they are in trouble, but after providing them legal advice, they feel confident, they feel better. He says when he was on his way home the other day, he met three people and they told him 'thanks' for his help.

Dusengeyeru said he too is happy in helping vulnerable populations.

The United Nations reports about two-out-of-three Rwandans can read and write, and Dusengeyeru said only three of his clients attended secondary school.

He says those people are from the villages and they do not know anything about their legal rights. So we help them, he adds.

Like most of Dusengeyeru's clients, Nyiramugisha just went to primary school. The 33-year-old Rwandan said she is confident about her lawyer's competency and she is grateful for the free legal advice.

She sees this legal aid office as very beneficial, but she thinks they have to look for more funds so they can come and have similar legal aid offices in the villages. Because she says many of her neighbors lost their rights because they do not have a background in law.

Mary Louise Mukasuma manages the Lawyers Without Borders legal aid project. She said it is important for people to get legal advice.

"Access to justice is one of the indications of development. A country cannot develop without access to justice with the people. That is why the government now is implementing Access to Justice bureaus countrywide," she said.

But the Ministry of Justice only has 13 legal aid bureaus setup. Outside of a few other university run legal centers, Lawyers without Borders' Gisenyi Legal Aid Clinic is one of the few non-governmental places to provide free advice on the law.

The center is open two days a week. On the other days, the Legal Aid Project sends its lawyers to three prisons around the country where they provide legal aid to prisoners and detainees.

In Rwanda, about 60 percent of the population lives below the poverty line. About 42 percent of the population live in what the United Nations calls "absolute poverty." So, Lawyers Without Borders also has a mobile legal advice service, going to rural areas because transport costs can prevent Rwandans from receiving help.

Mukasuma said the Rwandans receiving the legal services are happy to be educated about their rights, especially if they have to go to court. "Because you know many people, they are afraid of judges sometimes. When he sees a judge there, he is sometimes afraid. But when he come here, after he feels confident. He says now I know my rights. I know how to plead in court," she said.

Mukasuma said she hopes that when the Lawyers Without Borders legal aid project comes to an end in two years, the government-funded Access to Justice bureaus will be able and ready to cater to all Rwandans in need of legal advice.

## **4. Economy and Energy**

### **Congo-Kinshasa: IMF Executive Board Completes Third Review under the ECF Arrangement with Nation, Approves U.S. \$1.78 Million Disbursement**

International Monetary Fund (Washington, DC)

Press release

The Executive Board of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) today completed the third review of the Republic of Congo's economic performance under a three-year arrangement under the Extended Credit Facility (ECF).

The completion of the review enables the disbursement of SDR 1.21 million (about US\$1.83 million), which would bring total disbursements under the arrangement to SDR 3.63 million (about US\$5.48 million). The Executive Board's decision was taken on a lapse-of-time basis, which allows the Board to complete reviews without convening formal discussions.

The three-year ECF arrangement for the Republic of Congo was originally approved on December 8, 2008 (see Press Release No. 08/311) in an amount equivalent to SDR 8.46 million (about US\$12.8 million). In completing the third review under the three-year ECF arrangement, the Executive Board endorsed the staff's appraisal, as follows:

The near-term outlook for the Congolese economy is favorable. Strong policies, improving external conditions, and debt relief obtained under the Heavily Indebted Poor Country (HIPC) completion point (January 2010) will support macroeconomic stability. Fiscal consolidation in excess of program targets and progress on key structural reforms have strengthened policy implementation and resilience to shocks.

These continuing efforts, together with investment in basic infrastructure, augur well for a take-off of non-oil growth and lasting poverty reduction. Promptly directing resources freed by HIPC debt relief toward pro-growth and pro-poor spending may help mitigate public pressures for increasing public expenditure, while helping to advance development objectives.

Structural reforms have moved ahead, particularly in the area of public financial management (PFM) and the management of oil resources. The broader reform process was not impacted by the non-observance of two structural benchmarks due to technical issues, and the authorities are taking actions in these areas.

In the period ahead, efforts should continue in key areas, such as tax reform, improving expenditure efficiency and strengthening oil wealth management. Simultaneously supporting the objectives of the authorities' Poverty Reduction Strategy and fiscal sustainability, while maintaining a prudent external debt policy, necessitates redoubled efforts to increase non-oil revenue collection to expand the resource envelope for improving public service delivery and raising priority spending. Scope for increasing non-oil tax collection is potentially large, and staff supports the authorities' request for technical assistance in the area of tax policy.

The authorities' planned implementation of their tax action plan is welcome, but should be accompanied by continued efforts to improve tax and customs administration. As fiscal space widens some additional spending may be justified. However, it will be critical to bolster gains in expenditure efficiency, including through a well-designed civil service reform and further strengthening of oil wealth management, while continuing efforts toward achieving fiscal sustainability.

Reaching the completion point has significantly reduced Congo's debt burden. Staff welcomes the authorities' good faith efforts to obtain comparable treatment from all remaining commercial creditors and their best efforts to conclude bilateral agreements as soon as possible. Staff also welcomes the authorities' intention to continue closely monitoring of public finances, including through an indicative target on net domestic financing. New foreign borrowing should only be considered if extended on concessional terms.

## **Rwanda: Development Bank Earmarks Rwf 2.5 Billion to Support SMEs**

The New Times

Kigali — Rwanda Development Bank (BRD) has said it is in the process of setting up a Rwf 2.5 b "SME Development Fund" in a move that will make it attractive for financial institutions to increase lending to Rwanda's Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs).

The fund comes at a time government has adopted an SME policy that will provide a mechanism for facilitating SMEs to access appropriate business financing.

In an interview with Business Times yesterday, Jack Kayonga, the Managing Director of BRD said the Fund through which BRD will provide guarantee of up to 50 percent of the loan for an SME and Rwf100million per SME or individual, will be also supported by government.

"Government is bringing in different funds such as the Agriculture Guarantee Fund. We are finalizing the documentation and we intend to have it functional by beginning of October," Kayonga said.

"We are open to work with different financial institutions. There are two significant things that are critical for the development of SMEs - technical assistance through capacity building and collateral," he said.

BRD in which government is the biggest shareholder with 38.8 percent shares aims at eradicating poverty especially in rural areas through investment in agriculture and other projects.

"This will definitely increase the appetite of the banks. It will be open to all financial institutions - if the institution is willing to finance an SME but not comfortable with the collateral or need technical assistance we will provide that," Kayonga explained.

Kayonga observed that with most SMEs still in "incubation stage", technical assistance will come to bridge the skills gap and facilitate them to grow.

Relevant Links

"To grow (SMEs) them to maturity requires teaching them good business practices in terms of managing the whole value chain from production to the market."

The Fund will be open to all SMEs, though the bank would like to see "a good element" of value addition, he said.

BRD has been investing in various sectors including education, energy, health, tourism and agriculture.

Since 2003, the bank has been supporting farmers in form of soft loans to build coffee washing stations and the expansion of their business.

This year approximately Rwf4 billion is available in loans for export promotional funds including coffee, which is one of Rwanda's top revenue earners.

## **5. Health**

### **Rwanda: More Coverage of HIV/Aids needed, says CNLS**

The New Times

Kigali — Members of the Rwanda Media Network against HIV/Aids (ABASIRWA) have been called upon to double their efforts towards the fight against the Aids scourge in the country.

The call was made on Tuesday by Florida Utamuriza of the National Commission against HIV/Aids (CNLS) while officiating at a one-day workshop organized by ABASIRWA.

The workshop aimed at enabling participants to learn more about the HIV status, efforts and current challenges on response to AIDS in the country.

"I advise you as journalists who collaborate with CNLS and UNAIDS in the fight against HIV/Aids, to always disseminate information concerning HIV/Aids and other pandemic diseases," Utamuriza said.

She requested participants to always sensitize and mobilize communities to use condoms or abstain from sex and to go for voluntary HIV/Aids testing in order to know their HIV status.

The acting vice President of ABASIRWA, Bukuru Ntwari, said that the workshop was also essentially aimed at strengthening and sharing knowledge about the current status of the pandemic.

### **Rwanda Tackles Top Killer of Children**

The New Times

For more than a year now, Rwanda has been immunizing its children against pneumonia. Its goal is to save the lives of 6,000 kids every year. This week, health officials and others are checking on the program's progress.

Pneumonia is the leading killer of children under age five worldwide. Over one and a half million die every year from the disease, mostly in developing countries.

## **Rwanda takes the lead**

VOA

In April 2009, Rwanda, with help from the GAVI Alliance and other partners, started a vaccination program against pneumococcal disease.

Alex Palacios, GAVI's special representative, says, "Rwanda itself has ensured, first of all, that public health is a top priority. I think that that is a commitment and a decision made at the highest levels. And it has maintained that special priority over the years. It also happens to be a country which just about a year ago introduced the first pneumococcal vaccine in Africa."

Palacios says the two top killers of kids can be prevented with modern medicine.

"If you consider that the combination of pneumonia, mostly from pneumococcal disease, and diarrhea, generally the result of rotavirus infection, are the major causes of child mortality - you're looking at globally about 8.8 million children dying each year from often preventable disease. And about 40 percent of those are dying from just two causes: pneumonia and diarrhea," he says.

Pneumococcal disease is also a major cause of bacterial meningitis, which is often fatal.

Malaria used to be the top killer of children in Rwanda. But a campaign against the disease has seen at least a 27 percent decline in children suffering from malaria.

Palacios says great success can also be made against pneumonia and diarrhea.

Thomas-Rippe

Rwandan children receiving pneumococcal vaccine, April 2009

"The good news is that when GAVI was first created in 2000 we didn't have those two particular vaccines against a form of pneumonia and rotavirus. Today we do. So we have the opportunity, over the next 5 years or so, in particular if you're thinking about the Millennium Development Goal of reduction of child mortality by two-thirds, to make a very major contribution to achievement of that goal and save many lives," he says.

He says the lives of well over four million children could be saved over the next five years.

Currently, immunization against pneumococcal disease is only in its early stages in Africa, with Rwanda at the forefront. But that's about to change.

“Over the next four or five years, we will see 47 countries, based on their own expressions of interest in applications for support, introducing the pneumococcal vaccine and actually over 40 countries introducing the rotavirus vaccine,” he says.

Palacios adds immunization has the power to bring dramatic improvements in health in a relatively short time.

“It’s not easy to do that across all of development or across all of health, but immunization luckily has that capacity,” he says.

The GAVI Alliance special representative says an “enormous opportunity” exists to improve health. But to do that takes money. Palacios says to save the lives of millions of children over the next five years will cost \$2.6 billion in additional funds. It’s a serious “resource challenge,” he says, but one that can be overcome.