

Report # 138
BUSINESS AND POLITICS IN THE MUSLIM WORLD
Central Africa
Hafiz Akif Naeem
Weekly Report from September, 19 to September 25, 2010
Presentation: September 29, 2010

Summary

1. Politics

- **Congo-Kinshasa: Kabila's Visit Highlights Tension over Lubanga Trial**
- **Rwanda: Journalists Set Up Anti-Corruption Committee**
- **Rwanda: Locals in South Korea Celebrate Kagame's Victory**
- **Rwanda: France Needs to Do More in Dealing with Genocide Perpetrators – Ngoga**

2. Security matters/ Peace Keeping / Conflict Resolution

- **Burundi: Killings Spread Fear, Disrupt Livelihoods**
- **Congo-Kinshasa: Preliminary UN Report Confirms Over 300 Rapes by Rebels in Eastern DR Congo**
- **Congo-Kinshasa: President Calls for UN Reform, Including Security Council Enlargement**
- **Rwanda: More RDF Peacekeepers Head for Darfur**
- **Congo-Kinshasa: UN Steps up Border Patrols after Reported Rebel Arms Trafficking to Uganda**
- **Gabon: UN Anti-Crime Body Lauds Accession to Trafficking Treaties**
- **Rwanda: ICTR Defense Counsels Propagating 'Double Genocide' Theory**
- **Central African Republic: State Can Rely On UN to Help Consolidate Peace, Ban Pledges**

3. Social issues / Human Rights

- **Africa: Nothing to Worry About**
- **Rwanda: Students Vow to Fight Genocide Ideology**
- **Rwanda: Districts Receive Over Frw120 Million for Needy Children**
- **Rwanda: The Fight against Sexual Abuse Must Be Inclusive**
- **Rwanda: NUR Organises Public Lecture on Peace**

4. Economy and Energy

- **Rwanda: Fuel Crisis in Kenya Won't Affect Local Pump Prices**
- **Rwanda: Partnerships Will Help Achieve the MDGs**
- **Rwanda: Informal Cross Border Trade at Rwf40 Billion**

5. Health

- **Rwanda: Health Official Arrested for Stealing Drugs**
- **Africa: WHIO Commends Rwanda On MDGs**
- **Rwanda: MTN Slashes SMS Charges**
- **Rwanda: Nation, France to Sign 3.3 Million Euro Energy Deal**

6. Elections & the Process of Democratization

- **Rwanda: Democracy Varies Depending On History - U.S. Scholar**
- **East Africa: Biruta to Chair First ICGLR Session**
- **Central Africa: Philemon Yang Receives CEMAC**

Summary

1. Politics

Congo-Kinshasa: Kabila's Visit Highlights Tension over Lubanga Trial

Congolese President Joseph Kabila arrived in Ituri as part of a tour of the eastern part of the country, which has also touched the Kivus and Katanga. His visit promised a number of development projects for Ituri, but not everyone was impressed. To some, the visit was dismissed as so much campaigning ahead of the Democratic Republic of Congo's (DRC's) 2011 elections. Kabila's visit formed a rallying point for the Union des Patriotes Congolaises (UPC), the party associated with Thomas Lubanga. Lubanga's ongoing trial at the International Criminal Court (ICC) was at the top of their agenda.

Rwanda: Journalists Set Up Anti-Corruption Committee

A Three day media workshop on corruption concluded, yesterday, at Alpha Palace Hotel in Kigali, with participants putting in place a journalists' committee that will spearhead the media's role in the fight against corruption in the country.

Rwanda: Locals in South Korea Celebrate Kagame's Victory

The Embassy of Rwanda in South Korea on Wednesday hosted a victory party for President Paul Kagame for winning the August Presidential polls.

Rwanda: France Needs to Do More in Dealing with Genocide Perpetrators – Ngoga

The Prosecutor General Martin Ngoga has spoken out on the recent ruling by French Court that released genocide suspect Eugene Rwamucyo. The prosecutor general termed the ruling as a temporary setback against Rwanda's drive towards according justice to those aggrieved by the perpetrators of the 1994 Genocide against Tutsi. He said that I wish that France owe the Rwandan people justice. If genocide remains a serious crime against humanity then as Rwandans, we remain challenged not to be discouraged by some of these decisions or set backs that we experience as we move forward to get justice. Hence such decisions should actually reenergize us to stay on course and to remain focused on what is at stake which is that our people need to get justice. This is a generational challenge.

2. Security matters/ Peace Keeping / Conflict Resolution

Burundi: Killings Spread Fear, Disrupt Livelihoods

Several mysterious killings in Burundi, where memories of civil war are still fresh, have spread fear and disrupted livelihoods, while authorities have sought to play down talk of renewed armed insurrection, blaming some of the deaths on bandits. Tension has been mounting in Burundi since several elections were held earlier this year. The presidential poll was boycotted by most of the opposition amid claims of fraud in the local polls. It was pointed out that the

east of neighboring Democratic Republic of Congo is home to the bases of various rebel groups, with skirmishes reported almost daily.

Congo-Kinshasa: Preliminary UN Report Confirms Over 300 Rapes by Rebels in Eastern DR Congo

A United Nations human rights team today confirmed that at least 303 civilians were raped over a period of four days in late July and early August in the volatile far east of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), warning that the total number of victims may be even higher. The known victims include 235 women, 52 girls, 13 men, and 3 boys, some of whom were raped multiple times, according to the 15-page preliminary report, prepared by the UN Joint Human Rights Office comprising the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the Human Rights Division of the UN mission in the DRC (MONUSCO). The attacks, which took place mostly after dark in the Walikale region, were carried out between 30 July and 2 August by a coalition of around 200 members of three armed groups - the Mai Mai Cheka, the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR), and elements close to Colonel Emmanuel Nsengiyumva, an army deserter who has also in the past been involved with the rebel National Congress for the Defence of the People (CNDP) group.

Congo-Kinshasa: President Calls for UN Reform, Including Security Council Enlargement

President Joseph Kabila of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) called for United Nations reform to enlarge the 15-member Security Council and strengthen the authority of the 192-member General Assembly. He told the Assembly on the first day of its annual session that Reform of the United Nations and the Security Council should be undertaken without delay because it will help the realization of our dreams in the face of new challenges and changes that affect our planet. Mr. Kabila also called for a world environmental authority to confront the impact of climate change.

Rwanda: More RDF Peacekeepers Head for Darfur

100 Rwanda Defense Force (RDF) peacekeepers arrived from El Fasher, the capital of North Darfur, Sudan, an equal number left Kigali to replace them. It is part of the annual rotation of peacekeepers in the AU-UN hybrid Mission in Darfur (UNAMID). Despite the continued rotation, The government's stand on a leaked UN report which alleges that Rwandan troops were involved in mass killings in the DRC between 1994 and 2003, has not changed. It has put RDF contingents on standby for pullout, if the UN publishes the report. Rwanda is the second largest troop contributor to UNAMID after Nigeria, and the UNAMID force commander is a Rwandan, Lieutenant General Patrick Nyamvumba.

Congo-Kinshasa: UN Steps up Border Patrols after Reported Rebel Arms Trafficking to Uganda

United Nations peacekeepers are patrolling the border between the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Uganda after reports of arms trafficking by the rebel Ugandan Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) across DRC and southern Sudan.

Gabon: UN Anti-Crime Body Lauds Accession to Trafficking Treaties

UN News Service

The head of the United Nations crime watchdog highly praised the attainment by Gabon to treaties on human and arms trafficking, noting that the move will help strengthen peace and security in Central Africa. Gabon acceded to two of the Convention's three Protocols: the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children; and the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition. During this year's treaty event, Gabon also acceded to a pact on the International Criminal Court (ICC), ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and consented to be bound to three others.

Rwanda: ICTR Defense Counsels Propagating 'Double Genocide' Theory

All along the government of Rwanda has been arguing that most lead defense attorneys for suspected genocidaires at ICTR are propagating the dangerous idea of double genocide, but the latest revelations need international community attention and scrutiny. The recent UNHCHR report alleging acts of genocide committed by RPA soldiers in the DRC was influenced by some ICTR lead defense attorneys.

Central African Republic: State Can Rely On UN to Help Consolidate Peace, Ban Pledges

The United Nations will continue to help the Central African Republic (CAR) to consolidate peace after years of ethnic conflict and political unrest by enhancing political dialogue and the reintegration of former fighters into national society.

3. Social issues / Human Rights

Africa: Nothing to Worry About

The Organizing Committee of the 2010 Delhi Commonwealth Games has provided assurances of safety for Rwanda's team ahead of their departure to participate in the two-week long event which has been marred by criticism on security and readiness just days before kick off.

Rwanda: Students Vow to Fight Genocide Ideology

Nyakabanda Secondary School in Muhanga District, vowed to fight Genocide and its ideology. The students had just returned from a study tour of Gisozi Genocide Memorial Centre.

Rwanda: Districts Receive Over Frw120 Million for Needy Children

The Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion has disbursed Rwf 122,748,645 to 10 districts to support Orphans and other Vulnerable Children (OVC) to help their households' start-up income-generating activities.

Rwanda: The Fight against Sexual Abuse Must Be Inclusive

Increasing number of rape and defilement cases in Nyagatare District are becoming the human rights' issue. According to the district's Intermediate Court, on average, 45 out of 50 cases handled by the court, in a month, are related to sexual abuse with most of the victims, children under 14. Initial research has proved that the suspects are at most times under the influence of drugs and illicit prepare locally known as Kanyanga that is imported from Uganda

Rwanda: NUR Organises Public Lecture on Peace

As part of the activities to celebrate the International Peace Day (IPD), the National University of Rwanda (NUR) organized and delivered a public lecture on peace. The lecture that took place at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, focused on the role of NUR in peace education and post-genocide reconstruction, securing sustainable peace through home grown reconstruction strategies and reinforcing women's contribution to peace and development in the great lakes region. A renewed political scientist mentioned some of the solutions as being the use of Transitional Justice which is the short term and often temporary judicial and non-judicial mechanisms and processes. Some of the Transitional Justice tools he mentioned are the Gacaca courts, the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission (NURC), National Commission for the Fight against Genocide (CNLG) and said that all these have helped in the healing of the nation.

4. Economy and Energy

The 12th East African Community (EAC) partnership fund steering committee has approved a budget of approximately \$7 million for the 2010/2011 Financial Year (FY). The EAC Partnership Fund is a basket fund with contributions from development partners to support activities in the EAC.

Rwanda: Fuel Crisis in Kenya Won't Affect Local Pump Prices

Following the fuel crisis looming in Kenya since last week and currently affecting Uganda, a top government official has assured that local pump prices won't be affected.

Rwanda: Partnerships Will Help Achieve the MDGs

It is imperative that governments own the MDGs, there is need to formulate partnerships with the civil society, private sector and development partners. The responsibility that ranges from mobilizing resources and raising awareness, right up to implementation should not be left to governments alone. Through collective effort, priorities can be jointly outlined, and all the partners would have a guiding framework to go by.

Rwanda: Informal Cross Border Trade at Rwf40 Billion

The survey that was conducted by the National Bank of Rwanda between May last year and April this year to find out the volume of Informal cross border trade (ICBT) puts the trade at Rwf40 billion. The results of the report present findings of ICBT census that was conducted on 53 big and small posts including unofficial border posts. Agricultural products and livestock are the major commodities traded in ICBT and the major export product is bovine cattle valued at Rwf3.3 billion which is 12 percent of total exports while the main import product is coffee with a value of Rwf1.9 billion representing a 16 percent of total imports.

5. Health

Rwanda: Health Official Arrested for Stealing Drugs

Police have arrested a medical official of Kigogo Health Centre in Gicumbi District for allegedly stealing HIV/AIDS medicine and selling it to unauthorized dealers.

Africa: WHIO Commends Rwanda On MDGs

The Spokesperson of the Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (PMNCH), Professor Babatunde Osotimehin, has commended Rwanda on the progress registered in uplifting health standards in the country. PMNCH, which operates under the World Health Organization (WHO), aims at accelerating efforts towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Rwanda: MTN Slashes SMS Charges

As competition in the telecom industry continues to stiffen, MTN Rwanda, the largest mobile operator by market share has slashed Short Message Services (SMS) on both On-net and Off-net network by 66.6 percent and 52.8 percent respectively. Under the new tariffs, more than 2 million MTN subscribers will be able to get this facility.

Rwanda: Nation, France to Sign 3.3 Million Euro Energy Deal

Rwanda and France will, at the end of this month, sign a deal which will see France injects €3.3 million into RECO-RWASCO to support the national electrification programs. The agreement will follow another one signed earlier this year between the two countries to recycle

a loan Rwanda owes France and instead channel it into energy access projects. France also agreed to resume budgetary support to Rwanda. Rwanda will pay back the loan to the Bank of France in three years and France will return it to Rwanda as a grant.

6. Elections & the Process of Democratization

Rwanda: Democracy Varies Depending On History - U.S. Scholar

A country's historical background is a major determinant in the kind of democracy a nation will have and how its systems work, Ambassador Jonathan Moore who is a former American Ambassador to the United Nations, was addressing Senators in discussions centred on democracy under the theme: "Functioning of American Senate Versus Rwanda Senate in Promoting Democracy". Ambassador Moore took the Senators through how the American Senators get into office and how they work.

East Africa: Biruta to Chair First ICGLR Session

The President of the Senate, Dr. Vincent Biruta, is currently in Khartoum, Sudan chairing the first session of Forum of Parliaments of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (FP-ICGLR). Rwanda currently holds the chairmanship of the forum.

Central Africa: Philemon Yang Receives CEMAC

The Prime Minister in separate audiences had discussions with a delegation of CEMAC Parliament and the outgoing Ambassador of Morocco. A seven-member delegation of the Central African Economic and Monetary Community (CEMAC) Parliament is on a four-day maiden visit to Cameroon to sensitize the authorities and the population on the existence of the Parliament and preach the message of consolidating integration in the CEMAC zone. The President of the CEMAC Parliament, Pierre Ngolo, who is leader of the delegation, said that our mission is to know the CEMAC institutions and organs in each country, their situation and give suggestions on how they can be more operational and effective in accelerating integration of the CEMAC zone.

Details

1. Politics

Congo-Kinshasa: Kabila's Visit Highlights Tension over Lubanga Trial

Lubanga Trial Website (The Hague)

Analysis

Last week, Congolese President Joseph Kabila arrived in Ituri as part of a tour of the eastern part of the country, which has also touched the Kivus and Katanga. His visit promised a number of development projects for Ituri, but not everyone was impressed. To some, the visit was dismissed as so much campaigning ahead of the Democratic Republic of Congo's (DRC's) 2011 elections.

Radio Okapi quoted Donatien Kanyinziya, a parliamentarian with the opposition Mouvement pour la Liberation du Congo, as saying, "During his visit last week to Ituri, Joseph Kabila did nothing but renew the same promises to Iturians that he made in the 2006 election campaign."

Kanyinziya was not the only one dissatisfied with the visit. In Bunia, Kabila's visit formed a rallying point for the Union des Patriotes Congolaises (UPC), the party associated with Thomas Lubanga. Lubanga's ongoing trial at the International Criminal Court (ICC) was at the top of their agenda.

According to Congolese activists, the UPC is calling for the unconditional liberation of Lubanga following the Trial Chamber's July 15, 2010 ruling to this effect. Although this order was appealed the next day, and the appeals are still being considered in The Hague, the UPC is arguing that the proceedings are unfair and that Lubanga's rights are being violated. According to Congolese sources, UPC members are calling on the government to take responsibility for addressing these rights violations. They are also calling for the release of members of the movement in jail in Kinshasa for four years without trial.

Kabila must carefully consider how to address these arguments - the UPC remains a powerful political force in Ituri. Their message, calling on the head of state to ensure Lubanga's release, is also full of political significance. Activists in Ituri have relayed rumors currently circulating that Lubanga will be released before the end of the year - allowing him to participate in the 2011 presidential elections. The contention is providing a boost to Lubanga's celebratory supporters, a reinforcement of their position that one activist described as "worrying".

However, if this notion is celebrated in areas that are predominantly Hema (Lubanga's ethnic group and the source of most of his support base), it is also important to note that there are other consequences in other areas. Some are disappointed and fear that this may exacerbate ongoing conflict. Colleagues report that other communities, in particular those who are considered not indigenous to Ituri, are concerned about the increase in exclusionary ethnic

rhetoric. Among the Lendu, of course, Lubanga's release would be considered an injustice, particularly as two of their leaders, Katanga and Ngudjolo remain in The Hague.

The UPC is also reportedly attempting to mobilize public opinion in Ituri against the court, arguing that the ICC's engagement has stalled a true reconciliation. On the ground, activists reflect that even if the UPC peacefully submitted its views to Kabila last week, the threat of violence is still present. Many fear that if the UPC's demands are not met, and Lubanga is not freed, that the UPC may return to war.

Rwanda: Journalists Set Up Anti-Corruption Committee

The New Times

A Three — day media workshop on corruption concluded, yesterday, at Alpha Palace Hotel in Kigali, with participants putting in place a journalists' committee that will spearhead the media's role in the fight against corruption in the country. The committee will work closely with the Ombudsman's Office.

Assumani Niyonambaza, the chief editor of Rugari newspaper was elected to head the committee. Participants said they had acquired important skills from the workshop and pledged to tackle the vice.

Closing the workshop, Cabinet Affairs Minister and Acting Information Minister, Protais Musoni called on journalists to always expose corruption and injustices, and to be characterized by integrity in their work.

"Corruption and injustice hinder development in any society, so let us work together as a whole nation to combat these vices," he said.

Rwanda: Locals in South Korea Celebrate Kagame's Victory

The New Times

Kigali — The Embassy of Rwanda in South Korea on Wednesday hosted a victory party for President Paul Kagame for winning the August Presidential polls.

Speaking at the event, Ambassador Eugene Segore Kayihura, highlighted recent government achievements and what the embassy expected from the Diaspora community.

He hailed the Diaspora for turning up in large numbers to exercise their democratic right by electing their President in the recently concluded elections.

During the ceremony, Rwanda - S. Korea Diaspora network was officially launched and election of office bearers was successfully conducted.

The event was attended by over 70 Rwandans in Korea and friends of Rwanda, the majority being students doing Masters and PhD courses in various academic disciplines.

The Embassy was officially opened in November 2008.

Rwanda: France Needs to Do More in Dealing with Genocide Perpetrators – Ngoga

The New Times

Interview

The Prosecutor General Martin Ngoga has spoken out on the recent ruling by French Court that released genocide suspect Eugene Rwamucyo. In an exclusive interview conducted by Fred Oluoch-Ojiwah, the prosecutor general termed the ruling as a temporary setback against Rwanda's drive towards according justice to those aggrieved by the perpetrators of the 1994 Genocide against Tutsi.

Excerpts

What is your department doing to ensure that the release of Rwamucyo does not set a bad precedent in the fight against genocide?

First of all we have to acknowledge the fact that the release has already set a bad precedent. We also have to accept the fact that other decisions that happened before be it by the ICTR or by other European jurisdictions did actually set a bad precedent.

What really happens is that each and every decision refers to a previous one. On that issue I must add that people who influence such decisions particularly some human rights organizations that persuade European courts not to decide in the favour of our requests at a later point, do refer to those same judgements for the purposes of continuing with the trend, setting a pattern.

Such actors have now described it as a build up of a consensus to the effect that Rwanda is not the kind of jurisdiction that can be trusted. I call this a kind of vicious circle of manipulation of the situation whose only beneficiaries are perpetrators of the crimes of genocide.

What is the next course of action?

It is not easy for me to tell the next course of action. Scenarios keep on changing. It is a case by case appraisal of each situation. For the case of Rwamucyo we are trying to reach out to our French counterparts. One thing that we have to keep in mind is that much as we have such decisions that are not in favour of our requests, we cannot just sit back and say that we have to respect them.

If anything, these decisions much as they are serious setbacks to our efforts, can not be taken as a representation of consensus of opinion in those countries. For instance, I would not say that

everybody in France is happy with such decisions. We have our prosecutors who are as dismayed as we are.

We also have other civil parties that are equally on the forefront to bring to book such perpetrators such as Rwamucyo and others. These organizations are still continuing to partner with us to make sure that we can change the course of events surrounding such cases.

So what should we expect in the next few days?

We are depending on our partners such as our prosecutors who are more conversant with the French laws. What I have in mind is to invite them to Rwanda or for us to travel to France to discuss with the relevant parties the next course of action. So what I can say is that options are being thought about. The only option that is not being considered is that of giving up. That is not an option for us.

In your view, is there a connection between the leaking of the UN mapping report on the DRC implicating Rwanda for having made gross human rights violations and release of Rwamucyo? Do you see any connectivity or linkage of sorts between the two incidences in terms of timings and situations on the overall fight against genocide?

I really don't think that there is any connection between those who leaked the report and the Rwamucyo release. However, having said that, I must add the fact that these are series of things happening as a consequence of a general manipulation of people bent on tarnishing the image of Rwanda.

In this plot , some of these people are to some extent succeeding to manipulate the facts in order to get other people to make decisions that are not entirely based on facts and these includes European courts. So, to answer your question, more precisely, I must say that I rule out these two parties coming together to chart out what they should do. However, I am not ruling out the fact that both are products of collective efforts bent on tarnishing Rwanda's image by manipulating the course of events to make sure that we have some of the European courts to be persuaded to make such decisions.

How would you view the work of the French investigation team on the circumstances surrounding the shooting down of the plane of the former Rwandan President Juvenile Habyarimana on one hand, while Rwanda on the other hand, had already wound up its own investigations that included European forensic experts? What does such a move by France mean to the larger Franco-Rwandan bilateral relations while relating it to the larger Rwamucyo case?

I always try not to be involved in the larger and general built up of the political understanding between Rwanda and France. I can only discuss legal issues. However, I am not ruling out the possibility or the fact that political understandings actually facilitate what we do within the justice sector. But the French owe us justice.

That said, it is not enough for the French to make numerous trips of investigations. It is not enough for the French to make statements to the effect that they are willing to change the course of events. What matters more is what they do. It matters less what they say.

In the area of justice, more specifically within the area of dealing with genocide perpetrators, who are abundantly available in France, the French have not done anything tangible. In such a scenario I must emphasize that the French owe us justice. It remains incumbent for the French to do something visibly and tangibly.

What is the status of the Victoire Ingabire trial?

Investigations are on going. For me I have never seen a trend that goes down in terms of what we are doing. So we have an upward trend and as I said in the past it is always our priority to conclude this case. There are people who thought and actually said that this case was likely to be dropped after elections but let me state clearly that we will pursue this case to its logical conclusion.

Why is there a contradiction between the Ministry of Justice that says that Rwanda's judicial system is professional and impartial and those who say that this very system cannot accord genocide suspects fair trial?

I think that we have done a lot in terms of building our judicial system. After the genocide we have carried out wide ranging reforms. Meaning that, our reforms constitute the latest round of comprehensive reforms in the region. We are much better in comparative terms than many countries.

Therefore, the allegations, that ours is not impartial does not hold any water and thus cannot be said to be allegations based on facts. If anything, such allegations are never substantiated.

These are allegations that are made in general terms and are allegations that are made by people who only base their arguments on fallacious assumptions.

By this, I mean that if you were to look at their allegations in isolation, you would definitely come to a conclusion that such people are the same people who accuse Rwanda in everything that we do. They are the kind of people who look at Rwanda as a failed state.

Related to this question is another contradiction by the United Nations on the perception of justice system in Rwanda. While on one hand the UN would happily use Rwandan prisons and soldiers to try and meet global needs of justice, it is the same UN that is saying that Rwanda is actually a perpetrator of impunity.

I don't think that it is a contradiction. It is hypocrisy. They come to us when they think it suits their needs. They are using Rwandan prisons to lock up convicts from Sierra Leone and our soldiers to keep peace in Sudan but at the same time one of the UN agency would happily accuse us of being genocidal. They would even happily accuse us of having one of the worst

prisons on earth. To that end, I would say that it is hypocrisy. However, what is important to us is that we have to continue to be seen to be improving day by day.

So, how would you want to pursue some sort of redress to such perceptions?

The best thing to do is to continue pursuing what is right for us. We have to get those who have good faith to appreciate based on what we have done and based on evidence available on the ground. Otherwise I don't know how easy the task of persuading people who are not even willing to listen. The best approach would be to continue doing what is right for us and not to be deterred by such criticism that are not based on facts.

What is the next course of action now that Rwamucyo cannot be extradited-Should the French try him?

That is the most disturbing situation. We have always cooperated with any foreign jurisdiction that is willing to try these suspects even those that have accused us of incompetence. So if France was willing to prosecute Rwamucyo and others we will fully cooperate irrespective of how they have defined us.

The most disturbing situation is that they are not trusting our system and they are not offering a solution within their own system. So the question is- how more advanced are their system if they cannot offer solutions to the problems that they have identified with our own system which they don't trust.

Closely related to that question is the fact that during French President Nicholas Sarkozy's visit to Rwanda, a new chapter was opened which was meant to herald warming up of relations but it seems that things are not working out, at least within the justice sector.

Obviously, if this question was directed at the French, what they will tell you is that, opening up of a new chapter in the Franco-Rwandan relations is purely a political issue. They would also say that political issues are completely different from judicial matters and that issues to do with Rwamucyo case as judicial matters should not be linked to larger political issues. This kind of thinking would be a straight answer for you. Going by that logic, I would say that I am not going to play down any efforts by French political establishment to open up a new chapter with Rwanda. Neither would I say the decision on Rwamucyo by a French Court is a factor that would slow down the political progress that both countries are making. I would not say that. However, I would rather say that the judicial institutions both in France and Rwanda is challenged to ensure that the impunity gaps being created through some of these decisions is ended. We prefer to take these processes as separate even though I have a belief that both complement each other.

Comment on the likely perception of Rwanda as one of the countries spearheading fight against the genocide once the leaked UN report is published in its current form.

I am not the relevant authority to answer that question. But I will say that the fight against genocide and Rwanda's unwavering commitment to this fight through its contributions to fend

off efforts by other people propagating genocide elsewhere, is fundamentally entrenched in our constitution. It remains our belief. But that is something Rwanda can do in that specific context and framework.

I think our political authorities have said how Rwanda is likely to react if the report is published in its current form. This thinking is very much in tandem with the framework on Rwanda's contribution to Darfur which is our belief in defending people threatened by genocide.

The main issue is that Rwanda is not ready to continue working with the UN that is on one hand accusing it of committing the genocide when the same Rwanda is being seen as preventing the same genocide. However, I think that Rwanda still believes that it is obliged as a country to come to the assistance of people threatened by genocide. So the issue is under which framework should we be working and under which context should we be assisting such people.

If you fail to get a redress from French courts, will you think about seeking justice in other jurisdictions?

I said that all options remain open except giving up. We will look at other possibilities.

By this I mean that if the French are setting up a precedent then Rwandans have to set up another precedent, elsewhere, as this is a race against justice.

You are right on that one. That is a very fundamental argument. That, we should consider options available beyond one particular European country. I agree with you that as we continue building our efforts, we should also look at certain areas such as at the European Union level of justice.

Anything you would wish to add?

I would wish to conclude that France owe the Rwandan people justice. If genocide remains a serious crime against humanity then as Rwandans, we remain challenged not to be discouraged by some of these decisions or set backs that we experience as we move forward to get justice. Hence such decisions should actually reenergize us to stay on course and to remain focussed on what is at stake which is that our people need to get justice. This is a generational challenge. We should never be naive to think that this fight can be won within our current generation.

2. Security matters/ Peace Keeping / Conflict Resolution

Burundi: Killings Spread Fear, Disrupt Livelihoods

The New Times

Rukoko — Several mysterious killings in Burundi, where memories of civil war are still fresh, have spread fear and disrupted livelihoods, while authorities have sought to play down talk of renewed armed insurrection, blaming some of the deaths on bandits.

Tension has been mounting in Burundi since several elections were held earlier this year. The presidential poll was boycotted by most of the opposition amid claims of fraud in the local polls.

Since the elections, three opposition leaders, including former rebel leader Agathon Rwasa, have fled the country.

Earlier this week, 14 bodies were discovered in marshes near the Rusizi river, about 10km northwest of the capital, Bujumbura.

"It is difficult to identify them or say where they came from or even whether they are the bodies of Burundians," Police Director-General Fabien Ndayishimiye told a news conference.

He pointed out that the east of neighboring Democratic Republic of Congo "is home to the bases of various rebel groups, with skirmishes reported almost daily. Even yesterday we heard gunshots. So far no Burundian has told us about any missing family members. We see bodies but they are not identified."

The following day, however, the head of a fishermen's association told reporters four new bodies had been discovered in the river with Burundian identity papers in their pockets.

"One of them was a senior policeman originating from Bujumbura Rural [a province which surrounds the capital]. The three others were from Nyamurenza commune in the northern province of Ngozi. Two of them were in military uniforms," he said.

"We want the government to investigate and tell us why these people are being killed, or if there is a war," he added.

On 15 September, men in uniform killed seven workers at a sugar plantation in Rukoko, not far from the Rusizi river. Eleven other workers were wounded.

One plantation worker told IRIN that soldiers now walked ahead of any groups venturing deep into the plantation but most workers still feared to stray far from the main road.

However, he said, work continued. "We have no other option. It is our only means of livelihood," he said.

Suzanne Ndayishimiye (no relation to the police director-general), who sells fritters by the roadside, said she no longer allowed her young child to stray beyond arm's reach lest she be left behind in the event of another attack.

"Last week we heard gunshots and left everything behind. I am now afraid and keep her by me," she said.

Arrests

There is a nature reserve in Rukoko, where some cultivation and firewood collection is tolerated so as to provide a living to local residents.

Recently, leaflets were distributed warning people they would be killed if they entered the reserve.

"They told us it is their home and want nobody there," a taxi-cyclist waiting for trade told IRIN.

"We had some rice plantations there," said the fritter seller. "Others go to fetch firewood they can sell or use for building materials. But now we cannot even go to harvest our sweet potatoes."

The director-general of police said some 22 people had been detained in connection with various violent incidents, including two for their alleged role in the Rukoko killings.

Through its spokesman and secretary-general, Philippe Nzobonariba, Burundi's government has pledged "track down those criminals so that a relevant punishment to their crime is applied".

Pierre Claver Mbonimpa, who chairs the Association for the Protection of Human Rights and the Rights of Detainees, said he had been unable to find out where those recently arrested were being held.

"People are arrested here and there, even from market places. Their families do not know their whereabouts, we even asked at the national intelligence services, because we know they were once there. They told us they are not there [now]. Where did they go?" he asked.

Congo-Kinshasa: Preliminary UN Report Confirms Over 300 Rapes by Rebels in Eastern DR Congo

UN News Service

A United Nations human rights team today confirmed that at least 303 civilians were raped over a period of four days in late July and early August in the volatile far east of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), warning that the total number of victims may be even higher.

"The scale and viciousness of these mass rapes defy belief," said UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay.

"Even in the eastern part of DRC where rape has been a perennial and massive problem for the past 15 years, this incident stands out because of the extraordinarily cold-blooded and systematic way in which it appears to have been planned and executed."

The known victims include 235 women, 52 girls, 13 men, and 3 boys, some of whom were raped multiple times, according to the 15-page preliminary report, prepared by the UN Joint Human Rights Office comprising the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the Human Rights Division of the UN mission in the DRC (MONUSCO).

In addition, at least 923 houses and 42 shops were looted and 116 people were abducted in order to carry out forced labour, according to a news release on the report.

The attacks, which took place mostly after dark in the Walikale region, were carried out between 30 July and 2 August by a "coalition" of around 200 members of three armed groups - the Mai Mai Cheka, the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR), and elements close to Colonel Emmanuel Nsengiyumva, an army deserter who has also in the past been involved with the rebel National Congress for the Defence of the People (CNDP) group.

OHCHR spokesperson Rupert Colville told reporters in Geneva that the attackers, armed with AK47s, grenades and machetes, initially pretended that they had come to provide security for the population, before launching attacks in small groups.

They subsequently cut off the main routes into the area and had taken control of a key hill, which was the only place where telephone communications were possible in the area, thereby preventing the population from raising the alarm, he added.

Mr. Colville also stressed that the total number of victims might well be higher, as attacks were still taking place in the area while the investigating team was in the villages. The attacks prevented the team from completing its investigation in six of the 13 affected villages.

In addition to the mass rapes in the Walikale region covered in the report, the FDLR also attacked 19 villages north-east of Shabunda during the first three weeks of August, allegedly committing a further 214 cases of rape. The UN Joint Human Rights Office has, however, not

yet been able to confirm these cases and the exact circumstances surrounding them, due to serious insecurity in the area.

He added that both local leaders and victims believe the prime motive for the attacks were to punish and subjugate the local population whom the attackers viewed as "traitors."

The report points to serious shortcomings in the preparedness and response of the local detachments of the Congolese army and the police stationed in the area. It also notes that their failure to prevent or stop the attacks was compounded by subsequent failings on the part of MONUSCO forces, which the report says did not received any specific training in the protection of civilians.

A number of recommendations are made to both to the Congolese authorities and to MONUSCO to improve their systems to prevent such situations from arising. The report also urges humanitarian agencies to provide the Congolese authorities with much needed medical assistance and psychological care for all the victims, and the international community in general to support the efforts of the Congolese authorities to arrest those commanding the armed groups and bring them to justice.

Ms. Pillay offered the Congolese authorities her support to carry out investigations and bring the alleged perpetrators of these crimes to justice.

"I fully recognize the enormous difficulties this involves, but we have to do better. Impunity for rape in the past, and now, will simply breed more rape in the future. The cycle of impunity for sexual violence in this part of the DRC must be broken."

Congo-Kinshasa: President Calls for UN Reform, Including Security Council Enlargement

UN News Service

President Joseph Kabila of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) today called for United Nations reform to enlarge the 15-member Security Council and strengthen the authority of the 192-member General Assembly.

"Reform of the United Nations and the Security Council should be undertaken without delay because it will help the realization of our dreams in the face of new challenges and changes that affect our planet," he told the Assembly on the first day of its annual session.

"Enlarging the Security Council is an indispensable democratic necessity and this vision must be reinforced by assuring the authority of the General Assembly to enable its president to play a primary role in the search for solutions to the problems of our times."

At present only resolutions of the 15-member Security Council, on which the five permanent members have veto power, are legally binding. The Council has not changed for decades, with

10 non-permanent members holding no veto and elected for two-year terms, and talks to reform it have been under way for more than 17 years.

Some countries have argued that this structure does not represent the realities of today's world. Key issues under discussion are the category of membership, the question of veto, regional representation, the size of an enlarged Council, and the Council's working methods and its relationship with the Assembly.

Mr. Kabila also called for a world environmental authority to confront the impact of climate change.

Turning to his own country, which has benefited from one of the largest UN peacekeeping efforts ever launched as it tries to recover from years of civil war and ethnic conflict, he stressed his government's efforts to eradicate violence in the strife-torn east, especially "the calvary" of Congolese women in rebel-infested North and South Kivu provinces, where there have been numerous incidents of mass rapes as well as massacres.

"Instability is the principal cause of this tragedy," he said. "Armed groups who feed off the illegal exploitation of natural resources are the source of this scourge. We have drawn up appropriate measures to confront this unacceptable situation."

Rwanda: More RDF Peacekeepers Head for Darfur

The New Times

Kigali — Barely two hours after 100 Rwanda Defense Force (RDF) peacekeepers arrived Thursday from El Fasher, the capital of North Darfur, Sudan, an equal number left Kigali to replace them.

It is part of the annual rotation of peacekeepers in the AU-UN hybrid Mission in Darfur (UNAMID). Those who returned yesterday are part of the RDF's 101 battalion being replaced by battalion 11 commanded by Lt. Col. Fred Ruvusha.

Despite the continued rotation, The government's stand on a leaked UN report which alleges that Rwandan troops were involved in mass killings in the DRC between 1994 and 2003, has not changed. It has put RDF contingents on standby for pullout, if the UN publishes the report.

The peace keepers say the report cannot break their morale, at all.

Maj. Chrysostome Ngendahimana, who arrived yesterday said: "It is undeniable; it did upset us just like other Rwandans since no one can be happy about lies being said about them, especially since the work we have done, starting from 1994, is well known. We are an exemplary army in our work ethics and discipline, even in Sudan".

"But it really could not weaken our morale - if you could see the things we have endured in the past, like a Rwandan soldier, I don't see us being weakened by such. It can't even be compared to other hindrances we have encountered in the past".

Rwanda is the second largest troop contributor to UNAMID after Nigeria, and the UNAMID force commander is a Rwandan, Lieutenant General Patrick Nyamvumba.

There are four Rwandan battalions in Darfur. Another 254 Rwandan troops are in Sudan's capital where they protect VIPs and key UNAMID installations. The Darfur rotation ends on September 28 while Khartoum ends September 30.

Congo-Kinshasa: UN Steps up Border Patrols after Reported Rebel Arms Trafficking to Uganda

UN News Service

United Nations peacekeepers are patrolling the border between the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Uganda after reports of arms trafficking by the rebel Ugandan Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) across DRC and southern Sudan.

"This concern stems from information on the seizure in Uganda of vehicles transporting arms," UN Stabilization Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO) spokesman Lieutenant-Colonel Amadou Gueye told the weekly news briefing in Kinshasa, the capital, yesterday.

"Measures to halt this traffic include first of all continuing to patrol this frontier with our units deployed in the sector," he said, stressing that the DRC and Ugandan armies are also cooperating closely in the matter.

The LRA terrorized northern Uganda for two decades before spilling over into neighbouring countries, including the DRC, and has been accused of committing atrocities such as mutilations and the recruitment of child soldiers.

Gabon: UN Anti-Crime Body Lauds Accession to Trafficking Treaties

UN News Service

The head of the United Nations crime watchdog on Wednesday applauded the accession by Gabon to treaties on human and arms trafficking, noting that the move will help strengthen peace and security in Central Africa.

The two pacts are part of the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, which is under the jurisdiction of the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and was adopted in the Italian city of Palermo a decade ago.

Gabon acceded to two of the Convention's three Protocols: the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children; and the Protocol against

the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition.

The former is the first global legally-binding instrument with an agreed definition on trafficking in persons. It also seeks to protect and assist victims of trafficking, with full respect for their human rights.

The latter is the first pact to be adopted at the global level on the illicit trade in firearms, and countries that ratify it commit to adopt a series of crime-control measures.

"Trafficking in firearms in Central Africa is fuelling conflict, which poses a threat to peace and increases the risk of violence against women and the recruitment of child soldiers," UNODC Executive Director Yury Fedotov said at today's signing.

"Without peace and security, development cannot take root and grow," he added. "This makes halting illicit trade in firearms all the more urgent."

The two protocols are among dozens of treaties that address human rights, disarmament, environmental protection, biodiversity, desertification and climate change, terrorism and crime, and the safety of UN and associated personnel that are open for signature, ratification or accession during the annual treaty event that coincides with the high-level segment of the General Assembly.

In addition to these, Member States can also take action with regard to some 500 other treaties.

During this year's treaty event, Gabon also acceded to a pact on the International Criminal Court (ICC), ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and consented to be bound to three others.

Other countries that took action with regard to treaties today were Panama, Lesotho, Bulgaria and Armenia.

Rwanda: ICTR Defense Counsels Propagating 'Double Genocide' Theory

The New Times

Kigali — All along the government of Rwanda has been arguing that most lead advice defenders for suspected genocidaire at ICTR are propagating the dangerous idea of double genocide, but the latest revelations needs international community attention and scrutiny.

The recent UNHCHR report alleging acts of genocide committed by RPA soldiers in the DRC, was influenced by some ICTR lead counsel defenders, who have all along been hatching plans to incriminate RPF in order to justify their allegations of "double genocide" of Tutsis and Hutus; so as to cleanse their clients with whom they share the US dollars.

In the recent article, written by Mr. Christopher Black with the title 'Who was Behind the Rwandan Genocide? The Rwandan Patriotic Front's Bloody Record, the History of UN Cover-Ups', Mr. Christopher Black serves as Lead Counsel for the former Chief of Staff, Rwanda Gendarmerie, General Augustin Ndindiliyimana, in Military II trial at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda.

The article contains several fabricated "leaked" correspondences all intended to mudsling Rwanda's leadership. There is need to scrutinize this so called leaking of UN files especially on developing countries. UN is a body that encompasses all the countries whether poor or rich, but it risks to be high jacked by the powerful countries who want to determine the fate of poor countries by the use and manipulation of unsubstantiated political reports.

Another article was written by Judi Rever (AFP) with the title; "Congo butchery resembled Rwanda genocide" by UN lawyer Luc Cote who is a war crimes prosecutor from Montreal. Mr. Luc Cote is quoted by AFP saying that "Rwandan Tutsi troops and their rebel allies targeted, chased, hacked, shot and burned Hutus in the DRC, from 1996 to 1997, after the outbreak of a cross-border Central African war". He doubles up as one of the authors of the UNHCHR mapping report on DRC.

The article disqualifies LUC Cote as a lead expert in the mapping excise report. Mr. Luc Cote needs to be reminded that Rwandan soldiers are not recruited on ethnicity basis.

Therefore, referring of "Rwandan troops as Tutsi's" is a deliberate lie. On the allegations that Rwandan troops killed Hutus in the DRC, what is correct is that the Rwandan soldiers saved millions of innocent refugees in the Zaire camps who had been held hostage by Interahamwe and ex-Far since 1994. Over 2 million returned to Rwanda and have since been settled. The alarming assertion by Luc Cote that Rwandan troops killed Hutus in DRC is a political statement intended to serve interests best known to him.

From a historical perspective, the refugee camps established in 1994 in Zaire that were placed along the border with Rwanda was habited by over 2 million Rwandans, most of them Hutus.

These were not normal camps, but were extensions of hutu power extremists hide outs in exile. Among the ordinary refugees were members of the Interahamwe - the killers responsible for the genocide who had fled over the borders to avoid the advancing RPF.

The Interhamwe and ex-FAR in the camps established brutal control and everyone in the international community agreed that they needed to be identified and separated from the other refugees, but neither Zaire nor any international force was willing to undertake this task.

The problem delayed the return of the refugees to Rwanda, where the RPF government was otherwise eager to receive them. When the refugees finally began to stream back, after the camps were removed by force in late 1996, some of the thugs of the Interahamwe were still among them, but the more notorious killers, unable to return, stayed in Zaire - where they continued to arm and train for violent attacks across the border.

For the benefit of our dear readers who need to refresh their memory on the background of Tutsi genocide in Rwanda, it dates way back in 1935 when identity cards were issued to Rwandans making a distinction between different social groups of Rwandans.

The Belgian attitude, setting in the distinction between the two groups and favouring one of them against the other, prepared the ground for future genocide. In earlier times ethnic based massacres had never occurred between Hutus and Tutsis. No where in the history of Rwanda whether written or oral was there any conflict between the Hutus and Tutsis, yet Rwanda had existed as a nation state for centuries.

The first massacres of the Tutsi in Rwanda took place in 1959. Thereafter, almost in a regular pattern, killings of the Tutsi became a common practice. Throughout the 1960s, the extremist government launched vicious attacks on Rwanda's Tutsi population, resulting in a mass exodus into neighboring Burundi, Tanzania, Uganda, Kenya and Congo.

For the first time in Rwanda's six century long history, a large portion of the people of Rwanda became stateless, and was denied the right to live in their motherland. It was also the first time in Rwanda's history, that the Rwandan leadership preached a message of division, hate, and violence, resulting in repeated cycles of genocide.

In December 1963 after an aborted attack on Kigali by Tutsi guerrillas, this prompted the government to declare a state of emergency, emphasizing the need to 'clear the bush' of subversive elements (Inyenzi) cockroaches. Within days some 14,000 Tutsis were massacred in the southern province of Gikongoro, in a coordinated campaign described by historians as 'the most horrible and systematic massacre' since the Holocaust. Genocide re-occurred in 1973 and 1979.

In 1990, after the launch of the struggle by the Rwandese Patriotic Front (RPF) to liberate Rwanda, the government launched yet another cycle of genocide. Between 1990 and 1994, the Bagogwe people of Northern Rwanda were targeted by the Habyarimana regime, resulting in tens of thousands of deaths.

There were similar attacks orchestrated against people of Kibuye, Butare and elsewhere in Rwanda. The violence that occurred in Bugesera is indicated by several sources as the dark turning-point in the anti-reform strategy of Habyarimana's supporters.

"The 1992 Bugesera massacre marked an important turning point in the development of the methods of killings, because of the central role played by extremist propaganda. For four months before the killing started, extremist politicians and ideologues had been active in the area, inciting the Hutu populace" (African Rights, 1994). Rwambuka, the mayor of Kanzenze who belonged to the central committee of the MRND, was the driving force behind the terror.

From such brief history of Rwanda genocide, it is quite absurd to compare the political events in Zaire to the 1994 genocide against Tutsi in Rwanda. The 1994 genocide against Tutsi in Rwanda is unique on its own and it is very inhuman to make comparisons with imagined "genocide" in.

Central African Republic: State Can Rely On UN to Help Consolidate Peace, Ban Pledges

The United Nations will continue to help the Central African Republic (CAR) to consolidate peace after years of ethnic conflict and political unrest by enhancing political dialogue and the reintegration of former fighters into national society.

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon made the pledge today in a meeting with CAR President François Bozizé on the margins of the General Assembly's annual session, a day after a high-level event at UN Headquarters in New York held to provide critical support to prevent a resumption of conflict in the once violence-torn country.

He welcomed progress already made in the peacebuilding process, in particular the adoption of a consensual timetable for delayed elections. He also noted the progress in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) process in the northwest. The two men also discussed security arrangements in the northeast and reintegration plans.

For the past two years CAR, which has seen significant ethnic conflict in its north as well as an overflow of violence from neighbouring Chad and Sudan's war-torn Darfur region, has been on the agenda of the UN Peacebuilding Commission, an intergovernmental advisory body of UN entities and Member States, international financial institutions and others set up in 2006 to coordinate the world community's aid in post-conflict countries.

Yesterday's meeting was part of an effort to ramp up international support for consolidating peace in the impoverished nation, with Mr. Ban's Special Representative for CAR Sahle-Work Zewde warning that the country was at an important juncture, with delayed elections now scheduled for next year.

3. Social issues / Human Rights

Africa: Nothing to Worry About

The New Times

Kigali — THE Organizing Committee of the 2010 Delhi Commonwealth Games has provided assurances of safety for Rwanda's team ahead of their departure to participate in the two-week long event which has been marred by criticism on security and readiness just days before kick off.

The Games Relations & Regional Manager (Africa & Americas) Tejinder Singh told Times Sport yesterday that all efforts are being made to address all issues over the Games Village residential zone raised by several participating countries.

"After the Chief Minister of Delhi toured all the towers and reviewed the work being done there, work on a war-footing to ensure cleanliness and that athletes do not face any problem has been underway in the last couple of days.

"Cleanliness and maintenance of the Games Village has come under sharp criticism from foreign participants as well as Commonwealth Games Federation Chief Executive Mike Hooper who recently described the facility as "filthy and unimaginable".

However, Tejinder noted that security has been beefed up and there is no need of worrying at all. The Games start on October 3.

According to him, the Indian Government has drawn up an elaborate security plan at the cost of hundreds of (US) dollars to thwart any terrorist threat during next month's Commonwealth Games, by installing systems to detect chemical, biological weapons and 'nuclear signature'.

"There is absolutely no need to worry about security. The only concern has been in cleanliness but it has also been sorted, and as a matter of fact several country teams have settled into the village,"

Tejinder confirmed that some of the countries that have already arrived in Delhi include; Australia, Cook Island, England, Isle of Man, Jersey, Kenya, Nigeria, Solomon Islands, Tanzania and Uganda among others.

According to Tejinder, other countries such as Trinidad & Tobago, Norfolk Island, St. Lucia, Cameron and Guernsey were expected to have arrived at the Village last evening.

Rwanda's first batch comprising 23 athletes and officials leaves tomorrow aboard Ethiopian airways while the second batch comprising the cycling team will arrive in Delhi on October 5.

Rwanda: Students Vow to Fight Genocide Ideology

The New Times

Kigali — Nyakabanda Secondary School in Muhanga District, yesterday, vowed to fight Genocide and its ideology.

The students had just returned from a study tour of Gisozi Genocide Memorial Centre.

At the site, the students received lessons on the history of Rwanda, how the Genocide was planned and carried out and the role of youth preventing it.

"The youth of today will not give a chance to Genocide and its ideology to infiltrate us. We have the power to change that history and build a new country and future," said

Maria Gloria Iradukunda, the students' representative.

The training at the memorial site was co-organised by the ministries of education, Sports and Culture under the project-'Leaning from the Past, Building the future'.

"This programme was initiated after the 2008 parliamentary report that indicated the existence of Genocide ideology in schools. The objective is to educate students how to fight Genocide and its ideology," said Parfaite Uwera, the programme coordinator at centre.

The students were accompanied by their parents and staff. The team also paid tribute to Genocide victims and toured the museums at the centre.

Marie Chantal Uwera, the Headmistress of the school, hailed the sponsors for the training, saying: "It was timely and important in providing quality education for a future generation of citizens with sound minds."

On behalf of the school staff, Sharmant Ganza, said the students would sensitize others and participate in nation building by profitably using their energy.

This educational program on Genocide started last year and so far 80 secondary schools (in Kigali, Bugesera and Rwamagana) have been trained.

The program, currently focusing on schools in the southern province, will be extended to all secondary schools and universities countrywide.

Rwanda: Districts Receive Over Frw120 Million for Needy Children

The New Times

Kigali — The Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion has disbursed Rwf 122,748,645 to 10 districts to support Orphans and other Vulnerable Children (OVC) to help their households start-up income-generating activities.

In an interview with The New Times, Gender Minister, Dr Jeanne d 'Arc Mujawamariya, said that more than 500 vulnerable families will be given cows, goats, rabbits and tuition. Others will be trained in bee-keeping, fish farming, pineapple and maize growing, tailoring, among other skills.

The districts include Musanze, Burera, Nyamasheke, Rusizi and Kayonza. Others are Kirehe, Ngoma, Nyanza, Huye and Gisagara. The minister urged beneficiaries to join cooperatives to benefit from economies of scale.

Several development partners are supporting the five-year project which kicked off in 2008.

Rwanda: The Fight against Sexual Abuse Must Be Inclusive

The New Times

Editorial

Kigali — We ran a story yesterday about the increasing number of rape and defilement cases in Nyagatare District. According to the district's Intermediate Court, on average, 45 out of 50 cases handled by the court, in a month, are related to sexual abuse with most of the victims, children under 14.

Initial research has proved that the suspects are at most times under the influence of drugs and illicit brew locally known as Kanyanga that is imported from Uganda

To address this disturbing problem, members of the Nyagatare community, in their various capacities, must join hands to kick out the vice once and for all.

Parents must keep close watch over their children. They should be able to ensure that the children are safe all the time. Important to note is that the safety children should be the responsibility of the entire community and not the parents alone.

Local leaders should work closely with the community and law enforcing organs to stop the trade of illicit brew and drugs and heavy punishment meted out to those found guilty.

Schools should integrate, within their curriculums, lessons on how children can protect themselves from sexual offenders.

And, finally, massive sensitization campaigns should be conducted to raise awareness among the population. As a community, the residents of Nyagatare should come up with home grown solutions specifically designed to address the causes and consequences of sexual abuse within their community.

Rwanda: NUR Organises Public Lecture on Peace

The New Times

Kigali — As part of the activities to celebrate the International Peace Day (IPD), the National University of Rwanda (NUR) yesterday organized and delivered a public lecture on peace.

The lecture that took place at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, focused on the role of NUR in peace education and post-genocide reconstruction, securing sustainable peace through home grown reconstruction strategies and reinforcing women's contribution to peace and development in the great lakes region.

Speaking at the public lecture, Dr. Agee Mugabe Shyaka, an expert in Political Science, explained that although Rwanda has gone through a lot in the past, it has also tried to come up

with lots of home-grown solutions that have played major roles in restoring and maintaining peace.

He mentioned some of the solutions as being the use of Transitional Justice which is the short term and often temporary judicial and non-judicial mechanisms and processes. Shyaka said that transitional justice aims at addressing and attempting to heal divisions that arise from human rights violations.

Some of the Transitional Justice tools he mentioned are the Gacaca courts, the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission (NURC), National Commission for the Fight against Genocide (CNLG) and said that all these have helped in the healing of the nation.

Gacaca has made it possible to judge hundreds of thousands responsible for Genocide in relatively short time, solving the problems of slow judicial practice, hence promoting peace and social cohesion.

According to Jean Bosco Habyarimana, who works with NUR's Centre for Conflict Management (CCM), the University has played a big role in creating and maintaining peace since 1995.

"The National University was born in a very tense social and political climate, it was created a year after independence, a period marked by political and ethnic violence.

But since 1999, NUR created the CCM which is both a catalyst to inspire research policies, and an opportunity to generate native knowledge on deep causes of conflicts, and potential strategies for the development of sustainable peace in Rwanda and the region," noted Habyarimana.

The centre has also organised a number of symposia, seminars, national workshops, international conferences, community outreach programmes and published many articles and books that have inspired mechanisms of handling post Genocide critical issues and post conflict management.

4. Economy and Energy

East Africa: Development Partners Commit \$7 Million to EAC

The New Times

Kigali — The 12th East African Community (EAC) partnership fund steering committee has approved a budget of approximately \$7 million for the 2010/2011 Financial Year (FY), The New Times reports.

The EAC Partnership Fund is a basket fund with contributions from development partners to support activities in the EAC.

According to an EAC statement sent to The New Times yesterday, the budget will cover eleven key priority areas which include supporting the implementation of the Common Market Protocol which came into force in July this year.

Other areas include; support to laying the foundation for the EAC Monetary Union, the bloc's communications, publicity and outreach programme and the Comprehensive Sensitization Programme in the Partner States.

The disbursements have progressively increased from USD 640,920 in FY 2006/2007 to USD 1,923,000 in FY 2007/2008; USD 6,611,000 (FY 2008/2009); and USD 6,226,875 (FY 2009/2010).

The EAC Secretary, General Juma Mwapachu, commended the development partners for their continued support and noted that their disbursements to the tune of \$15.4 million to the EAC Partnership Fund demonstrated continued confidence in the EAC regional integration agenda.

Speaking on behalf of the donors, Ambassador Toivonen from Finland reiterated the Development Partners' continued commitment and support to the regional bloc.

The Development Partners' representatives were from Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Germany, Finland, France, Ireland, Japan, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, UK, USA and the European Union.

Rwanda: Fuel Crisis in Kenya Won't Affect Local Pump Prices

The New Times

Kigali — Following the fuel crisis looming in Kenya since last week and currently affecting Uganda, a top government official has assured the Business Times that local pump prices won't be affected.

The crisis is attributed to a dispute between market leader in Kenya, KenolKobil, and the industry regulator, the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC). It allegedly came about when KenolKobil's crude import licence was withdrawn by the Kenyan government early this month.

Emmanuel Hategeka, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Trade and Industry, has said that this will not affect local prices in the near future; but if it persists, there is no doubt Rwanda will be affected.

"We are trying to manage the existing stock and replenishing it so that we won't be affected in the meantime," Hategeka said.

Every end-of-month, government meets with petroleum dealers to review price trends on the international and regional market, in order to determine the local pump price.

Late last week, pump prices of petrol and diesel on the local market dropped from Rwf 925 to Rwf 920 and from Rwf 917 to Rwf 913 respectively after the meeting between oil dealers and government officials.

Despite the slump in local prices, pump prices in most stations in neighbouring Uganda and Kenya have shot up, while others have closed down due to lack of fuel.

However, 80 percent of the fuel consumed locally comes from Dar el Salaam. Meanwhile, according to Hategeka, the supply from Kenya is very much needed because it is the cheapest.

"The Kenyan pipeline serves a lot of consumers along the way, making it difficult to bring in the required supply," he added.

"To offset upheavals caused by international and regional price fluctuations, a Fuel Storage Facility is being built to assist in controlling local pump prices in case of a sudden price hike. The facility is set to be completed before the end of next year," according to the officials.

Rwanda: Partnerships Will Help Achieve the MDGs

The New Times

Kigali — As the world leaders wound up the MDG's summit, there was a collective agreement that the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) should become a priority for the governments concerned. Initially, there was doubt that the MDGs could be achieved on time.

However, after sharing success stories from some countries, Rwanda inclusive, that have registered remarkable progress, the element of doubt is fading away.

Achieving the MDGs requires political will and the determination of leaders. It is the citizenry that will benefit if the goals are achieved since they are designed to improve the people's standard of living. Leaders should, therefore, be held accountable if they do not fulfill their responsibilities, many of which rotate around ensuring that their citizens have a better life.

While it is imperative that governments own the MDGs, there is need to formulate partnerships with the civil society, private sector and development partners. The responsibility that ranges from mobilizing resources and raising awareness, right up to implementation should not be left to governments alone. Through collective effort, priorities can be jointly outlined, and all the partners would have a guiding framework to go by. With a common objective, hard work and determination among the partners, there would be no reason for the MDGs not to be achieved on time.

Rwanda: Informal Cross Border Trade at Rwf40 Billion

The New Times

Kigali — The survey that was conducted by the National Bank of Rwanda between May last year and April this year to find out the volume of Informal cross border trade (ICBT) puts the trade at Rwf40 billion.

The results of the report present findings of ICBT census that was conducted on 53 big and small posts including unofficial border posts

The report was presented yesterday at Serena Hotel by the National Bank of Rwanda in collaboration with ministry of trade and industries, National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda and Rwanda Revenue Authority.

"The major objectives of this census was to determine the value and volume of ICTB flows between Rwanda and her neighboring countries, the composition of commodities traded as well as their direction," said Francois Kanimba the Governor of NBR.

The census put the total of Rwanda's exports and imports to Rwf27.6 billion and Rwf12.3 billion respectively resulting in trade surplus of RwfRwf15.3 billion and this surplus contributes to the country's current account of balance of payment.

Kanimba also said that the survey captured unrecorded trade transactions in goods along Rwanda's borders with neighboring countries that are not otherwise recorded in official customs data.

Agricultural products and livestock are the major commodities traded in ICBT and the major export product is bovine cattle valued at Rwf3.3 billion which is 12 percent of total exports while the main import product is coffee with a value of Rwf1.9 billion representing a 16 percent of total imports.

However, on the other hand, Rwanda's total informal export to the four neighboring countries is Rwf27.6 billion compared to formal exports that is worth Rwf109.6 billion bringing the overall combined exports to Rwf137.3 billion in the same period leading to an increase of 25.2 percent.

"We have to be committed and see how we can increase our trade with the immediate neighbors as well as transforming the informal business into formal," said Monique Nsanzabaganwa, the minister of trade and industry.

In an effort to formalize cross border trade, the minister said that trade information points have been established at some border posts and five cooperatives have been established to improve on the capacity.

5. Health

Rwanda: Health Official Arrested for Stealing Drugs

The New Times

Kigali — Police have arrested a medical official of Kigogo Health Centre in Gicumbi District for allegedly stealing HIV/AIDS medicine and selling it to unauthorized dealers.

Eric Mugabo, who works in the laboratory at the health centre, was arrested on Tuesday in Kigali with some of the medicine he was transporting to his customers.

Mugabo who has been working at the health centre since 2007 was the only authorized medical personnel at the centre to acquire drugs from The Rwanda Drug, Consumables and Equipment Central Procurement Agency (CAMERWA).

He is, however, alleged to have been diverting some of the medicine and selling it to some pharmacies and clinics which are not authorized to sell such medicines.

Pharmacies need to be accredited by the national centre for infectious diseases control and prevention, TRAC Plus, to sell HIV/AIDS drugs.

At the time of his arrest, Mugabo was found with boxes of SD-Bioline, Rapid HIV card test, QBC and HEMOCUE, all which are HIV screening tests.

Police Spokesperson, Supt. Eric Kayiranga confirmed the arrest saying they carried out investigations after finding out that government drugs that are supposed to be given out freely were being sold by some unauthorized dealers.

"With this information, we carried out investigations and actually some confirmed that Mugabo was the suppliers.

Mugabo who was by yesterday still at the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) headquarters in Kacyiru, however, said that he got the medicine from someone (name withheld) who, he said, smuggled them from Burundi.

However, Eric Nyiligira, the Acting Director General of CAMERWA dismissed Mugabo's claims and said that the medical equipment carried the agency's markings.

"All drugs from our stores are marked and these boxes have the same mark," Nyiligira said, adding that together with the police, investigations will continue to see if CAMERWA employees are involved.

Nyiligira, who warned dealers from buying unauthorized and smuggled drugs, reassured that the theft has no impact on the supply of AIDS screening tests.

This is the second time drugs from the national drugs' store are being stolen. In 2008, two CAMERWA employees were arrested and sentenced for stealing and selling drugs from the store.

Africa: WHIO Commends Rwanda On MDGs

The New Times

Kigali — The Spokesperson of the Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (PMNCH), Professor Babatunde Osotimehin, has commended Rwanda on the progress registered in uplifting health standards in the country.

PMNCH, which operates under the World Health Organization (WHO), aims at accelerating efforts towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Osotimehin, a former health minister in Nigeria, attributed the progress to the country's high level of accountability and functioning institutions.

"Rwanda has performed credibly because they have put in place institutions that deliver results," he said in a phone interview with The New Times yesterday.

The official, who is currently in New York attending the MDGs conference, further appreciated the fact that there is a human resource base in Rwanda which operates under a binding contract to achieve set targets.

"Most of Africa is not doing that," he added.

The MDGs are eight internationally-agreed targets which aim to reduce poverty, hunger, maternal and child deaths, disease, inadequate shelter, gender inequality and environmental degradation by 2015.

Meanwhile, African Union (AU) officials have warned that effects of climate change continue to threaten the sustainability of the gains that the continent has made towards achieving MDGs.

"We now know that Africa has been significantly affected by the recent shocks," a release quotes the AU Commission Chairperson, Jean Ping, as saying.

"It is therefore up to us to ensure that we implement the right policies to make sure that Africa escapes out of poverty".

The President of the African Development Bank Group, Donald Kaberuka, cautioned that given the encouraging achievements made, international support for the MDGs in Africa remains high, but that it must be scaled up if the continent is to achieve wide-ranging success.

Rwanda: MTN Slashes SMS Charges

The New Times

Kigali — As competition in the telecom industry continues to stiffen, MTN Rwanda, the largest mobile operator by market share has slashed Short Message Services (SMS) on both On-net and Off-net network by 66.6 percent and 52.8 percent respectively.

Under the new tariffs, more than 2 million MTN subscribers will be able to send a text message for as low as Rwf10 on On-net from Rwf30 and Rwf25 Off-net from Rwf53.

The company's Senior Marketing Officer, Yvonne Makoro, said that the new tariff is not permanent but a promotion package.

As competition grows, operators are fighting to retain and attract more subscribers on their networks. Currently, MTN is also running a promotion whereby subscribers are able to get a 70 percent discount on international calls. The calls include USA, Canada, China and India.

Rwandatel charges Rwf 10 On-net and Rwf 15 Off-net per SMS; while Tigo is charging Rwf 3 On-net and Rwf 25 Off-net.

Rwanda Utilities Regulatory Agency (RURA) is seeking to issue a fourth licence by the end of this year.

Rwanda: Nation, France to Sign 3.3 Million Euro Energy Deal

The New Times

Kigali — Rwanda and France will, at the end of this month, sign a deal which will see France injects €3.3 million into RECO-RWASCO to support the national electrification programmes.

The agreement to be signed on September 28 between Finance Minister John Rwangombwa, French Ambassador Laurent Contini and the Regional Director of the French Agency for Development (AFD), Yves Terracol, will be part of the resumed economic cooperation between the two countries.

According to the French Embassy in Kigali, the funds will be channelled into supporting rural electrification programmes and also increase access to electricity, as part of the commitment by the French government to support economic development in the country.

The agreement will follow another one signed earlier this year between the two countries to recycle a loan Rwanda owes France and instead channel it into energy access projects.

The agreement came after the two countries restored diplomatic relations and also agreed to resume other economic cooperation programmes. France also agreed to resume budgetary support to Rwanda.

Rwanda will pay back the loan to the Bank of France in three years and France will return it to Rwanda as a grant.

According to a statement released by the French Embassy, the money will particularly be used for the electrification of several parts of the country, including Cyanika, Miko, Mbazi and Nyamagabe District.

During the signing of the first agreement, Rwangombwa said the money was vital in supporting government plans to increase rural electrification and hailed France for its commitment to support development in Rwanda.

The French Embassy also stressed that France is committed to continue working with the Government of Rwanda to pursue long term and sustainable economic development.

6. Elections & the Process of Democratization

Rwanda: Democracy Varies Depending On History - U.S. Scholar

The New Times

Kigali — A country's historical background is a major determinant in the kind of democracy a nation will have and how its systems work, Ambassador Jonathan Moore told the Senate yesterday.

Moore, who is a former American Ambassador to the United Nations, was addressing Senators in discussions centred on democracy under the theme: "Functioning of American Senate Versus Rwanda Senate in Promoting Democracy".

"All this depends on what the country has gone through ... its socio-political background," he said.

Ambassador Moore took the Senators through how the American Senators get into office and how they work.

He informed the Senators that the Senate is a powerful arm of government pointing out that the President is required to consult with them before he nominates any high profile leader into office.

Ambassador Moore also explained that the Senate was looked upon by the members of the public as a solution to whatever crisis the country may be going through.

"When there is a major problem that especially involves the interests of the people, the Senate is looked upon as the body that will come up with a lasting and fair solution," he said.

He explained that though the US government was made up of Republicans and Democrats, the structure too had its advantages and disadvantages.

Led by Senator Joseph Karemera, who also heads the Political Affairs Commission, the Senators took the opportunity to ask questions ranging from elections to the mandate of the Senate.

Karemera updated Ambassador Moore on the structure and functioning of the Senate saying that the differences between both countries were minimal.

"The differences perhaps lie in our duties which include the fight against the Genocide ideology, following up on the power sharing laws, and promoting equal rights among others," he said

"Rwandans should know that democracy is not a particular size that fits all. It all depends on the background of the country".

Karemera castigated those who make judgements about Rwanda without first doing their research.

"There is always talk that the government is hostile to political parties and yet most of these parties they are referring to lack the requirements set by the law. People tend to forget that we have 11 political parties operating in this country," he said

Karemera called to mind that the government understands democracy and its principles and is very happy to see the country progress.

He asked those who question the government's systems to remember that the systems are put in place by the constitution.

7. Pan Africa

East Africa: Biruta to Chair First ICGLR Session

The New Times

Kigali — The President of the Senate, Dr. Vincent Biruta, is currently in Khartoum, Sudan chairing the first session of Forum of Parliaments of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (FP-ICGLR).

Rwanda currently holds the chairmanship of the forum.

Biruta will moderate the three-day session while other Rwandan lawmakers will be among the speakers during the meeting.

The meeting is attended by 12 member States including Angola, Burundi, Congo- Brazzaville, Kenya, the Republic of Central Africa, the Republic of Congo, Sudan, the United Republic of Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia.

During the meeting, Sen. Valens Munyabagisha will make a presentation on the progress report on the activities of the Executive Committee and on the proposed rules of procedures of FP-ICGLR.

Central Africa: Philemon Yang Receives CEMAC

The New Times

The Prime Minister yesterday in separate audiences had discussions with a delegation of CEMAC Parliament and the outgoing Ambassador of Morocco.

A seven-member delegation of the Central African Economic and Monetary Community (CEMAC) Parliament is on a four-day maiden visit to Cameroon to sensitize the authorities and the population on the existence of the Parliament and preach the message of consolidating integration in the CEMAC zone. In the discussions that Cameroon's Prime Minister, Head of Government, Philemon Yang had with the CEMAC Parliamentarians, yesterday, September 22, he gave them the green light to tour the country.

The President of the CEMAC Parliament, Pierre Ngolo, who is leader of the delegation in a press interview said the Parliament's delegations were dispatched on mission to the six-member countries of CEMAC since Monday, September 20. "Our mission is to know the CEMAC institutions and organs in each country, their situation and give suggestions on how they can be more operational and effective in accelerating integration of the CEMAC zone", the Congolese-born Pierre Ngolo explained. In each of the countries, they also meet and sensitise the authorities and population on the existence of the CEMAC Parliament and through the different fora bring the message of integration. Prime Minister Philemon Yang, Mr Ngolo said, showed much interest in the CEMAC Parliament and its expected role in accelerating the integration of the zone. Mr Yang, the President of the CEMAC Parliament disclosed, approved their plan to tour Cameroon and suggested that they could visit national institutions such as the country's elections management body, Elections Cameroon.

The CEMAC Parliament with 30 members, six of them from each of the member countries, was installed in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea on April 15, 2010 in the presence of all the Heads of State of the zone.

Morocco's Ambassador

After the CEMAC MPs, the Prime Minister on behalf of the Head of State, Paul Biya received in audience the outgoing Ambassador of Morocco to Cameroon, Abdelfattah Amour. He leaves Cameroon after five years at the head of his country's diplomatic mission. Abdelfattah Amour disclosed to the press after meeting the Prime Minister Yang that they had fruitful discussions. "I used the audience to express my gratitude and those of the Moroccan people to the

authorities and people of Cameroon", he concluded. Mr Yang last September 13, received in audience the Moroccan diplomat who came to bid him goodbye.