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Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes in Africa



MEDIA MONITORING

9 September 2014

New commander appointed to fight ADF in eastern DRC

Source: New Vision

By Raymond Baguma

8 September 2014 - The Congolese army has appointed a new commander for the operation against the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) rebels following the death of Major General Ambamba Bahuma.

Brigadier Emmanuel Lombe now becomes the sector commander in North Kivu to fight remnants of the Ugandan rebels with bases in eastern DR Congo.

ADF has been fighting to overthrow the Uganda government since the late 1990s. The group was defeated and remnants fled to DRC where they are accused of committing atrocities against the local civilian population, which thousands seeking refuge in Uganda. According to the Congolese authorities, ADF has since 2010 kidnapped more than 800 people in eastern Congo.

The spokesman of the Congolese army (FARDC), Gen. Leon Kasonga announced on Sunday that Gen. Bahuma suffered a heart attack on Thursday night in Kasese where he was taking part in the routine joint border security meeting. He was airlifted to Nakasero Hospital in Kampala but later transferred to Pretoria, South Africa where he was pronounced dead on Saturday.

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According to Radio Okapi, Brig. Lombe on Tuesday met FARDC officers and UN commanders in Goma, as his inaugural meeting since taking over command from the deceased commander. The meeting was intended to allow the new commander gauge the security challenges.

Now, Brig. Lombe assumes command of Operation “Sokola” (Lingala meaning for “Clean”) against the ADF rebels in Beni, and will continue the operation launched last January by his predecessor, backed by the UN Intervention Brigade.

Quoting local sources, Radio Okapi said although weakened, the ADF rebels continue to attack Congolese army and UN Intervention Brigade positions in eastern Congo.

Prior to his appointment Brig. Lombe was involved in the Congolese operation dubbed “Rudiya 2”, against the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) and was based in Dungu, in the Orientale Province from 2011 to 2013.

Following the death of Gen. Bahuma, the UPDF second division commander Brig. Peter Elwelu described the incident as very unfortunate.

Gen. Bahuma who commanded the Congolese troops in North Kivu, played an important role in the defeat of ADF. In May this year, the Congolese forces under Bahuma’s command, attacked and destroyed four ADF camps in Beni, including the rebel headquarters.

Le point sur l'épidémie à virus Ebola en République Démocratique du Congo

Source : Institut de veille sanitaire, Bulletin hebdomadaire international n° 467 27 août au 2 septembre 2014.

Auteur : Docteur Jacques MORVAN

7 septembre 2014 - Entre le 28 juillet et le 29 août 2014, les autorités sanitaires de la République Démocratique du Congo ont notifié à l'Organisation mondiale de la santé un total de 53 cas suspects de fièvre hémorragique virale dont 13 décès localisés dans le territoire de Boende, zone rurale et forestière de la province de l'Equateur. Au moins 185 personnes contact sont suivies et 12 personnes sont toujours en isolement.

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Les analyses des laboratoires de l'Institut national de recherche biologique et du Centre international de recherche médicale de Franceville ont confirmé la présence du virus Ebola, souche Zaïre, dans les échantillons prélevés sur les premiers cas. Des analyses complémentaires du virus révèlent une homologie à 99 % avec des souches de Kikwit (épidémie de 1995 - RDC).

D'après les informations disponibles à ce jour, tous les cas ont été en contact avec une même personne à l'origine de la contamination (par consommation de viande de brousse). Le cas index, décédé le 11 août, a successivement contaminé des personnels de santé, des membres de sa famille et les personnes ayant assisté à ses funérailles.

Aucun de ces cas, personne contact ou personne décédée, n'avait voyagé dans les pays d'Afrique de l'Ouest affectés par l'épidémie de fièvre Ebola sévissant depuis le 22 mars 2014. L'identité de la souche du virus Ebola identifié en République Démocratique du Congo ainsi que la localisation du cas index (zone rurale et forestière) sont des éléments en faveur d'une absence de relation entre les deux épidémies.

Les autorités du pays ont annoncé une série de mesures préventives pour lutter contre la propagation de l'épidémie, en lien avec l'Organisation mondiale de la santé et d'autres partenaires internationaux.

Il s'agit de la septième épidémie d'Ebola dans le pays depuis la découverte de ce virus dans ce pays en 1976. La dernière épidémie de cette maladie avait entraîné 100 cas dont 57 décès, d'août à novembre 2012, dans le Nord-Est du pays (province Orientale).

Source : Institut de veille sanitaire, Bulletin hebdomadaire international n° 467 27 août au 2 septembre 2014.

UN peacekeepers prepare for CAR deployment

Source: Newstime Africa (NTA)

Bangui, 8 September 2014 - Two United Nations convoys on Monday headed to Bangui, the capital of the Central African Republic, aboard a ship coming from the Cameroonian Port of

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Douala ahead of the deployment of U.N peacekeepers in the restive country, a diplomatic source said.

Around 7,800 U.N. peacekeepers are scheduled to be deployed across the country by September 15, according to the source.

The numbers of the U.N. troops in the country will grow to 11,800 by April.

The U.N. forces, which are affiliated to the African-led International Support Mission to the Central African Republic, will be deployed across the country under three commands in the western town of Bouar, in the central town of Kaga-Bandoro and Bria in eastern of the country.

Around 6,000 African peacekeepers have been working in the Central African Republic since December 2013 alongside with 2,000 French peacekeepers and 150 European troops.

Since last year, the Central African Republic has been plagued by tit-for-tat sectarian violence between Christian anti-balaka militiamen and Muslim seleka fighters.

Anti-Muslim violence escalated after the country's president, Michel Djotodia, stepped down in January. He was replaced by Catherine Samba-Panza, a Christian who had formerly served as mayor of capital Bangui.

Christians, who account for the majority of the country's population, accuse Muslims of supporting former seleka rebels blamed for attacking Christian homes, looting property and carrying out summary executions.

Since last December, some 173,000 people have been internally displaced by sectarian violence while 37,000 others have fled to neighboring countries, according to the U.N. refugee agency (UNHCR).

Over 30,000 have reportedly sought refuge in the nearby Democratic Republic of Congo, while Chad and Cameroon now host roughly 5,600 and 1,000 respectively, according to UNHCR figures.

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Centrafrique : le Burundi participera à la nouvelle MINUSCA

Source : Xinhua

8 septembre 2014 - Le Burundi est choisi pour faire partie de la nouvelle Mission Intégrée Multidimensionnelle des Nations Unies en République Centrafricaine (MINUSCA), qui va remplacer à partir du 15 septembre la Mission Internationale de Soutien en République Centrafricaine (MISCA), selon le porte-parole de l'armée burundaise, le colonel Gaspard Baratuza.

"Ce transfert, une fois établie, le Burundi a eu la chance d'être retenu au moment où certains autres pays qui avaient contribué à la MISCA n'ont pas eu cette chance. Il y a certains pays qui, à partir du 15 septembre, vont mettre fin à leur mission et d'autres qui vont terminer leur mandat avec la date d'une année correspondant à celle de leurs déploiements dans la MISCA", a-t-il indiqué à la presse.

Selon lui, il s'agit d'un contingent de 850 militaires, qui avait été déployé sous les casques de l'Union Africaine.

Ce contingent suit la composante policière qui avait été aussi déployée récemment et le Burundi fera partie du staff de cette MINUSCA, qui sera composé de six officiers généraux, a-t-il ajouté.

Selon le colonel G. Baratuza, la Centrafrique sera divisée en trois secteurs dont un revient au continent africain et qui sera commandé par le général de brigade burundais Athanase Kararuzza, jusqu'ici commandant en second de la MISCA.

La MINUSCA aura comme priorité la protection des civils, et d'autres tâches comprennent le soutien au processus de transition, la facilitation de l'aide humanitaire, la promotion et la protection des droits de l'homme, l'appui à la justice et la primauté du droit et le soutien au processus de désarmement, de démobilisation, de réinsertion et de rapatriement.

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Burundi : l'ex-président de la République Domitien Ndayizeye exclu du parti Sahwanya-FRODEBU

Source : Agence de presse Xinhua

9 septembre 2014 - Domitien Ndayizeye, ancien président burundais (2003-2005), a été exclu du parti Front pour la défense de la démocratie au Burundi (Sahwanya - FRODEBU) pour divers motifs, a annoncé lundi le président du parti, Léonce Ngendakumana.

M. Ndayizeye est accusé d'avoir déserté le parti en abandonnant toutes les activités depuis 2011 et d'organiser des campagnes de désinformation et de subversion au sein des organes et des militants du parti à travers des réunions et organes parallèles à ceux du parti légalement reconnu.

D'autres éléments à sa charge sont notamment le dénigrement des autorités et des organes du parti à travers les media et les organes parallèles en violation des textes qui régissent le parti, le comportement récidiviste doublé d'une arrogance qui frise le mépris et enfin la volonté de créer un autre parti pour des raisons qui restent inavoués.

M. Ndayizeye avait été suspendu de tous les organes du parti en date du 25 juillet. A l'époque, il était accusé entre autres d'animer une administration parallèle du parti.

Kenya leader Uhuru Kenyatta's ICC trial shelved

Source: BBC News Africa

5 September 2014 - Prosecutors at the International Criminal Court have asked for the case against Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta to be adjourned indefinitely.

ICC chief prosecutor Fatou Bensouda said she still did not have enough evidence to proceed with the trial, which was due to resume next month.

The trial has already been delayed several times, with key witnesses pulling out.

Mr Kenyatta denies organising ethnic massacres after the 2007 election.

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He is charged with crimes against humanity after some 1,200 people were killed and 600,000 driven from their homes.

Africa's leaders have lobbied for the case to be dropped, accusing the ICC of only investigating alleged atrocities in Africa.

Ms Bensouda, a Gambian national, denies this, arguing that she is standing up for the African victims.

She accused Mr Kenyatta's government of failing to fulfil its obligations to the court to supply information she has requested.

She said the case should be delayed "until such time the government of Kenya executes the [prosecution's] revised request in full.

Mr Kenyatta's lawyers have repeatedly said the whole case should be dropped because of a lack of evidence.

They, and the victims' legal representatives, now have until 10 September to respond to the adjournment request.

Mr Kenyatta was elected in 2013, despite facing the charges.

Analysts said he turned the prosecution to his advantage, portraying it as foreign intervention in Kenya's domestic affairs.

In 2007, Mr Kenyatta was a close ally of President Mwai Kibaki, who was declared the election winner despite claims of fraud from his rival Raila Odinga.

The disputes soon turned violent, with targeted killings along ethnic lines, pitting members of the Kikuyu ethnic group of Mr Kenyatta and Mr Kibaki against other communities.

Mr Kenyatta is accused of organising an ethnic Kikuyu gang, the Mungiki sect, to attack rival groups - charges he denies.

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His Vice-President, William Ruto, faces similar charges, although he was on Mr Odinga's side during the violence.

Democratic Republic of the Congo Turns on Their Radios on September 16th

Source: Population Media Center via GlobeNewswire.com

South Burlington (Vermont, USA), 8 September 2014 - A new radio show airing in the Democratic Republic of the Congo doesn't promise to solve every challenge, but it is promising top-notch entertainment that will spur conversation and change. Radio Okapi, a nationwide radio station in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, starts broadcasting Vivra Verra ("Time Will Tell") on September 16, 2014. Vivra Verra, written and produced in French, promises action and suspense, but the writers and producers know Vivra Verra's casts of characters and plot twists will also get the audience talking about important issues, such as maternal and child health, gender-based violence, and adolescent reproductive health. Long-running dramas are a powerful vehicle to introduce audiences to important social concepts," says Bill Ryerson, President of Population Media Center, which is producing the program. "We've been telling stories for social development for over 15 years, and we're very excited to work in the Democratic Republic of the Congo to bring entertainment-education to the airwaves." Population Media Center (PMC), an international nonprofit based in the United States, specializes in entertainment-education, producing what much of the world would describe as "soap operas" for TV, radio, and the web, but these soap operas effect changes in health and social attitudes and behaviors. "We're excited about Vivra Verra," says Kriss Barker, PMC's Vice President of International Programs. "Our method for producing these dramas – we use the Sabido Methodology – has been tested through a variety of environments, cultures, and issues. We're eager to bring our expertise to bear on these important issues facing the Congo." As of 2013, the Democratic Republic of the Congo ranked as second to last of all countries on the Human Development index. The Democratic Republic of the Congo also has one of the highest fertility rates in the world, and PMC explains that these two facts are directly connected. PMC works to address human health and human rights issues, which are key factors in lowering fertility. "When people are empowered with information and choice," says Ryerson, "the fertility rate drops while health, human rights, and

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economies advance. In fact, every country that has been reclassified from developing status to developed status since World War II first started with fertility reduction by promoting family planning and small family norms." "Radio Okapi welcomes the broadcast of serial dramas as they reconcile the two basic elements of radio: information and entertainment," says Denis Faoud, Head of Media at the Hironnelle Foundation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo which oversees Radio Okapi. "Such programs are a good complement to our range of program information, such as news programs and cultural programs. This allows us to talk about serious things without necessarily doing so in a serious way." PMC also hopes to launch up to four more dramas in the Democratic Republic of the Congo to address similar and additional issues in local languages of Lingala, Swahili, Kikongo, and Tshiluba. "The writers and producers of our programs are always local, and the Vivra Verra staff is superb," says Barker. "The local PMC staff looks forward to the Vivra Verra characters coming alive in the minds and conversations of people throughout the Congo and seeing real dialogue around important issues."

ABOUT POPULATION MEDIA CENTER (PMC): Population Media Center is a nonprofit, international nongovernmental organization, which strives to improve the health and well-being of people around the world through the use of entertainment-education strategies, like serialized dramas on radio and television, in which characters evolve into role models for the audience for positive behavior change. Founded in 1998, PMC has over 15 years of field experience using the Sabido methodology of behavior change communications, impacting more than 50 countries around the world.