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



MEDIA MONITORING

15 October 2015

GENERAL NEWS

Peacekeepers accused of sexual abuse should face tribunal, says UN study

REPORT

Source: The Guardian

Former UN rapporteur on violence against women calls for determined commitment to investigate peace protectors who allegedly turn predator

14 October 2015

An international tribunal to investigate allegations of sexual abuse by peacekeepers and UN staff would give a clear signal that the world is serious about addressing a problem that has “sullied the overall reputation of peacekeeping missions and profoundly embarrassed the UN”, according to a major global study on the role of women in conflict and peace.

The report – entitled Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing the Peace (pdf), and published to mark the 15th anniversary of security council resolution 1325, which sought to put women at the centre of conflict resolution – follows allegations of abuse by peacekeepers and French troops in Central African Republic. The claims resulted in the UN secretary-general, Ban Ki-moon, firing the head of mission in CAR and announcing his intention to name and shame countries whose troops stand accused.

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The proposed tribunal, created under a treaty between member states, would have the jurisdiction to try UN staff in country offices and all categories of peacekeepers.

“It is truly a frightening phenomenon when your protector becomes a predator,” said the report, led by Radhika Coomaraswamy, a Sri Lankan lawyer who was the first UN special rapporteur on violence against women. “It is crucial that the UN signal a determined commitment to address this issue once and for all.”

The official launch of the report on Wednesday came a day after the Security Council adopted its eighth resolution on enhancing women’s roles in conflict and peace-building. The latest resolution, adopted unanimously, calls on member states to ensure increased representation of women at all decision-making levels in conflict prevention and resolution.

The adoption of resolution 1325 on 31 October 2000 followed decades of lobbying by women’s rights groups. It was regarded as a historic achievement in shifting attention to women’s experiences of conflict and recognising that peace is only sustainable if they are fully included in discussions.

The independent study, which involved widespread consultation, noted that some progress had been made over the past 15 years. Since 2000, 72% of peace agreements have referenced women, compared with 11% between 1990 and 2000, and there has been an increase in the number of senior women leaders at the UN. Bilateral aid for gender equality has also quadrupled over the past decade.

However, only 9% of negotiators on peace deals between 1992 and 2011 were female. Moreover, only 4% of the military involved in peace missions are women, very few prosecutions for sexual violence have been recorded, and funding for programmes to support women in peace and security is “abysmally low”.

The report calls on governments to earmark at least 15% of their budgets for peace and security to programmes affecting women. The creation of a new fund – the global acceleration instrument – will coordinate and disburse money for women, peace and security. A donor conference is planned next year to raise money for the fund.

The report also called for greater efforts to end impunity for crimes against women in conflict, and for member states to address the underlying inequalities that make women more vulnerable to violence. It also recognised the need for adequate reparations for survivors of violence.

The study also said UN Women needed to be better funded, and called for a high-level position to be created within the agency specifically to deal with crises, conflict and emergencies.

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Coomaraswamy said the prevention of conflict was central to realising the ambitions of resolution 1325.

“Military spending is at its greatest height,” she told a press conference. “The cycle of escalation must stop.

“We all understand the need to use force, especially in certain contexts – but only as a last resort and after careful deliberation ... The UN was set up to make sure swords were put into ploughshares and not the other way round.”

Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, the executive director of UN Women, said evidence proved that women must be enabled to participate fully at peace tables.

Analysis of 40 peace processes between 1990 and 2013 by the Graduate Institute in Geneva found that peace processes influenced by women’s groups were more likely to culminate in an implemented agreement.

“We must not miss the chance to achieve radical change – moving from treating women’s issues as ... peripheral to the business of the UN, to making women and girls the missing answer to creating a peaceful and just world. Every day that women are excluded is a day longer to wait for peace,” she said.

Madeleine Rees, head of the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom, said the report highlighted the important and difficult job of preventing conflict in the first place. “It’s too late to try to protect women, and anyone else for that matter, in the midst of conflict,” she said. “[The report] raises issues of gender and political economy, emphasises the absolute need for human rights and equality, the rights of women to participate and the benefit that brings. Rightly it is critical of the way in which the multilateral system has dealt with war and peace, and the demand for change is palpable in every chapter.”

She welcomed the recommendation to address sexual abuse by UN staff and peacekeepers. “There are other possible options, but recommending a serious accountability mechanism is a massive improvement on the mere hand-wringing and declarations of moral outrage we get from the senior UN officials at present.”

Abigail Hunt, policy and advocacy manager for Womankind Worldwide, said: “The study correctly identifies that the extensive rhetoric on women, peace and security has not been matched with the funding needed to ensure implementation.

“Womankind has called for many years for a minimum of 15% of all funds in support of peacebuilding to be dedicated to activities addressing women’s needs and advancing gender equality, in line with the UN target. Given the huge shortfall in funding for

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implementation of [resolution] 1325 and subsequent resolutions the reiteration of this call within the global study is crucial – but tangible solutions are also needed.”

Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon Commends African Member States of the UN for Establishing a Continental Free Trade Area

NEWS STORY

Source: <http://atlantablackstar.com/2015/10/13/secretary-general-ban-ki-moon-commends-un-establishing-continental-free-trade-area/>

13 October 2015 - Africa Week 2015 kicked off at Headquarters today [13 October] with Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon commending African Member States of the United Nations for taking an “important step” this year toward the establishment of a Continental Free Trade Area envisioned in the African Union’s Agenda 2063.

“The year 2015 is indeed a critical time for global action,” the UN chief told the High-level Event on the Role of African Regional and Sub-regional Organizations in Achieving Regional Integration.

“The United Nations system is committed to supporting the 10-Year Implementation Plan of the Agenda 2063, including the efforts of the Regional Economic Communities as they strive to further integration,” Mr. Ban said.

In his remarks to start off Africa Week 2015 at UN Headquarters, Mr. Ban also said “operationalizing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – and Agenda 2063 of the African Union – will be a key to our success in ensuring a life of dignity for all.” This event is the first in a series of high-level discussions and events this week held on the margins of the 193-member General Assembly’s annual consideration of the landmark New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD), and other vital issues concerning for the continent.

“You can also count on my Special Adviser on African issues, Mr. Maged Abdelaziz, for his continuing commitment working together with all Member States and myself also,” he added.

The UN chief also outlined ways in which he has been addressing peace and security challenges in Africa.

“I have recently convened, in close cooperation with the African Union and key sub-regional organizations, High-level Meetings on the situations in the Central African

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Republic, Congo, Libya, Mali, Somalia and South Sudan,” he said. “Let us also continue to work together to resolve the pressing refugee and migration crisis.”

In his remarks, the President of the General Assembly said the events of 2015 offer an “unprecedented opportunity” for Africa to reduce poverty, foster sustainable and inclusive economic growth, and to integrate into the global economy.

“These initiatives should not, however, be simply about trade liberalization between African countries,” Mogens Lykketoft cautioned. “Rather they should constitute an important pillar of the continent’s strategy for structural economic transformation. They should focus on harmonizing policies, enhancing infrastructure development and promoting public-private partnerships.”

D.R. CONGO

[Document] RDC: la Céni demande des clarifications sur son financement

INFORMATION

Source: RFI

En République démocratique du Congo, après la démission de l'abbé Malu Malu, la bataille de la succession à la tête de la commission électorale est ouverte. Un nouveau candidat doit être proposé par les huit confessions religieuses du pays. Ce processus de désignation intervient alors que la commission électorale nationale indépendante (Céni) vient d'écrire au Premier ministre pour demander des explications sur les moyens alloués à l'organisation des élections.

13 octobre 2015 - Dans une lettre datée du 9 octobre, dont RFI a obtenu copie (voir ci-dessous), la Céni se plaint des propos tenus par le ministre de l'Economie. Dans l'émission Questions d'actualité sur la radio et télévision nationale congolaise, Modeste Bahati Lukwebo aurait affirmé, selon ce courrier, que la Céni recevait 20 millions de dollars mensuellement pour la prise en charge du processus électoral.

La Commission électorale demande formellement une séance de clarification au gouvernement car, précise-t-elle dans ce document, elle n'a reçu sur les exercices budgétaires de ces trois dernières années que 17 % des fonds alloués par le Parlement. Tous les fonds reçus par le gouvernement sont bien traçables dans les deux rapports annuels de la Céni déposés au Parlement, souligne cette lettre.

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« Il y a une volonté de polémique, nous ne voulons pas rentrer là-dedans », rétorque le porte-parole du gouvernement Lambert Mendé, ajoutant que ce n'était pas avec la Ceni que le gouvernement faisait la reddition des comptes, mais bien avec l'Assemblée.

D'autres sources proches de l'exécutif évoquent des budgets présentés par la commission électorale qui seraient facturés, ou une volonté de se dédouaner avant la désignation du nouveau président.

Mais cette absence de moyens inquiète de plus en plus au sein de la commission électorale. Plusieurs sources internes affirment qu'aujourd'hui même, si des fonds sont rapidement décaissés, seules des élections indirectes pourraient être organisées d'ici début 2016, mais que s'il faut intégrer les jeunes électeurs au fichier électoral ou même les Congolais de l'étranger, aucune élection au suffrage direct ne serait possible avant juin 2016.

Elections en RDC : l'UE conditionne son appui à un calendrier révisé et un plan de décaissement

INFORMATION

Source: Radio Okapi (RDC)

14 October 2015 - L'Union européenne (UE) est disposée à soutenir l'organisation des élections notamment présidentielle et législatives dans les délais constitutionnels en RDC. Dans une déclaration consécutive à la démission du président de la Commission électorale nationale indépendante (Ceni), l'organisation a demandé lundi 12 octobre la publication du calendrier électoral révisé et un plan de décaissement pour apporter son appui.

Elle dit prendre acte de la démission de l'Abbé Malumalu, samedi 10 octobre dernier, de la présidence de la Ceni. Selon un communiqué de la présidence de la République lu à la télévision nationale, il a quitté la centrale électorale pour raison de santé.

Dans sa déclaration, l'UE indique que « le travail du président de la Ceni a permis d'asseoir la crédibilité et l'indépendance de cette institution chargée de garantir la neutralité et l'impartialité dans l'organisation d'élections libres, démocratiques et transparentes ».

Le porte-parole de cette instance internationale affirme attendre la nomination d'un nouveau président afin que la Ceni organise les élections, notamment présidentielle et législative, en respectant les délais prescrits par la constitution.

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L'UE exprime sa volonté, dès que le nouveau président de la Ceni sera nommé, d'appuyer le processus électoral en RDC.

Elle dit attendre la publication du calendrier aménagé le plan de décaissement par la Ceni.

L'UE se dit aussi prête à apporter son concours pour permettre au gouvernement, dans le contexte électoral, « d'assurer une plus grande ouverture de l'espace politique », en veillant au respect des droits de l'Homme et des libertés fondamentales, citant notamment :

- La liberté d'expression
- La liberté d'association et de manifestation
- La protection de tous les acteurs politiques, de la société civile, des journalistes et des défenseurs des droits de l'Homme.

Cette protection se fera conformément à la Charte africaine de la démocratie, des élections et de la Gouvernance et aux engagements pris dans le cadre de la Communauté Économique des États de l'Afrique Centrale (CEEAC), a promis l'UE.

RDC : un journaliste burundais arrêté

INFORMATION

Source: BBC

Le journaliste Égide Mwemero, de la Radio publique africaine (RPA), fermée par les autorités de Bujumbura, a été arrêté mardi après-midi avec deux journalistes congolais de la radio Le Messenger du Peuple.

14 octobre 2015 - Le Burundais a collaboré à une émission de radio sur son pays diffusée à partir de l'est de la République démocratique du Congo.

Selon Mutere Kifara, directeur de cette radio communautaire sans préférence politique affichée émettant d'Uvira, au Sud-Kivu, le journaliste et le technicien du Messenger du Peuple ont été libérés mercredi, mais pas M. Mwemero.

Les trois journalistes arrêtés réalisaient ensemble, dans le cadre d'un "partenariat" avec la RPA, un magazine d'informations générales sur le Burundi en kirundi (langue du Burundi parlée également au Sud-Kivu) diffusé chaque jour depuis le 5 octobre sur l'antenne du Messenger du Peuple.

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Bernadette Masoka, ministre provinciale de l'Information pour le Sud-Kivu, a confirmé leur arrestation, indiquant qu'elle avait eu lieu "pour des raisons sécuritaires".

Frontalière du Burundi, Uvira est située à la pointe nord du lac Tanganyika.

La RPA était la radio la plus écoutée du Burundi. Accusée par le pouvoir d'être d'opposition, elle avait été fermée fin avril et avait réémis brièvement en mai pendant le putsch manqué contre le président Pierre Nkurunziza, avant que ses installations ne soient détruites par les forces loyalistes.

La quasi-totalité des journalistes de la station sont aujourd'hui en exil.

RDC: la Mission de l'ONU dément toute bavure lors d'un raid aérien dans l'est

INFORMATION

Source: MaliActu (<http://maliactu.net/rdc-la-mission-de-lonu-dement-toute-bavure-lors-dun-raid-aerien-dans-lest/>)

14 octobre 2015 - Les Nations unies ont de nouveau assuré mercredi n'avoir commis selon elles aucune bavure lors d'une opération aérienne menée début octobre par des Casques bleus dans l'est de la République démocratique du Congo, contestant le bilan de cinq civils tués donné par les autorités de Kinshasa.

Après deux missions conjointes de la Monusco et des autorités locales dans la région de Pinga, dans le centre de la province du Nord-Kivu, « nous pouvons confirmer à ce jour la mort d'un combattant dans le village de Musanga », a déclaré Charles Bambara, directeur de l'information de la Mission de l'ONU en RDC (Monusco).

M. Bambara, qui s'exprimait lors d'une conférence de presse, a ajouté qu'une délégation avait vu à l'hôpital de Pinga « quatre blessés » mais que ceux-ci l'avaient été au cours de combats « entre groupes armés » de la zone, « antérieurs » à l'attaque hélicoptère de la Monusco.

Le 6 octobre, la Monusco avait annoncé avoir mené la veille une opération aérienne dans la région de Pinga contre des rebelles accusés d'avoir incendié plusieurs villages.

Le lendemain de cette annonce, les autorités congolaises affirmaient que cinq civils avaient péri à la suite du raid hélicoptère onusien. Quelques heures plus tard, le siège de l'ONU à New-York contestait ce bilan en affirmant que seul un milicien avait succombé à l'attaque.

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« Les personnes rencontrées sur place » et « affirmant avoir perdu des parents » dans l'opération aérienne de la Monusco ont dit « ne pas être sûres qu'elles sont mortes suite aux opérations de la Monusco, car personne n'a vu les corps », a affirmé mercredi M. Bambara.

Les Casques bleus sont présents depuis 1999 en RDC. Aujourd'hui dotée de quelque 20.000 hommes en uniforme – déployés essentiellement dans l'est de la RDC – la Monusco est l'une des plus importantes missions de maintien de la paix au monde.

Son mandat a été considérablement renforcé au fil des années. Malgré cela l'instabilité perdure dans la partie orientale du Congo, en particulier au Nord et au Sud-Kivu, où sévissent encore plusieurs dizaines de milices étrangères ou congolaises.

Depuis 2013, les Casques bleus ont pour mission de neutraliser ces groupes armés et sont autorisés pour ce faire à recourir à la force de manière offensive.

Cependant, la coopération militaire entre la Monusco et l'armée congolaise est sclérosée depuis le début de l'année à la suite d'un différend sur la façon d'agir contre les rebelles hutu rwandais présents dans le pays depuis plus de vingt ans.

RDC : recherche en urgence un nouveau chef de la commission électorale

INFORMATION

Source: Le Monde avec l'AFP

15 octobre 2015 - Le consensus semble être de mise en République démocratique du Congo (RDC) sur la nécessité de trouver « rapidement » un remplaçant au président de la commission chargée d'organiser les élections afin de sauver ce qui peut l'être du processus devant conduire à la présidentielle de 2016.

Les autorités de Kinshasa ont annoncé samedi 10 octobre que le président de la République Joseph Kabila avait reçu la démission du chef de la Commission électorale nationale indépendante (Céni), l'abbé Apollinaire Malu-Malu, malade et indisponible depuis longtemps.

Volonté de s'entendre sur un nom

La démission de l'ecclésiastique survient dans un contexte politique particulièrement tendu en RDC, à environ treize mois de la date limite pour organiser la présidentielle.

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Âgé de 44 ans, M. Kabila dirige le pays depuis 2001. La Constitution lui interdit de se représenter, mais il entretient le doute sur ses intentions, et l'opposition le soupçonne de chercher par tous les moyens à se maintenir en poste au-delà du terme de son mandat, en décembre 2016.

La Céli est composée de membres représentatifs de diverses composantes de la population congolaise et il appartient désormais aux confessions religieuses de ce pays chrétien à près de 80 % de se réunir pour désigner le successeur de l'abbé Malu-Malu.

Les représentants des différents cultes ont fait part de leur volonté de se réunir rapidement pour s'entendre sur un nom, sans pour autant avancer de date. L'abbé Malu-Malu était crédité d'avoir organisé, en 2006, les premières élections libres tenues en RDC depuis l'indépendance de 1960.

Alors conseiller de M. Kabila, il avait été rappelé à la tête de la commission électorale en 2013 - contre la volonté de l'Église catholique, qui défendait un candidat laïc - après le fiasco de la présidentielle et des législatives de 2011. Entachés de fraudes massives, ces deux scrutins sont les derniers à avoir eu lieu dans le pays, qui traverse depuis lors une crise politique profonde.

« Cette démission est peut-être une façon de sauver le processus électoral, si on accélère la nomination du remplaçant de l'abbé Malu-Malu », estime le député d'opposition Juvénal Munubo, « sinon, on va aller vers le glissement » des échéances électorales.

José Endundo, membre fondateur du « G7 », groupe de sept partis passés à l'opposition en septembre, plaide pour que l'on trouve un successeur au chef de la Céli « le plus rapidement possible » insistant pour que cela soit une personnalité « totalement neutre, libre et indépendante ».

Entre doute et espoir

Pour lui, l'église catholique— dont se revendiquent environ 40 % des Congolais – pourrait jouer « un rôle majeur parce qu'elle a montré des signes d'indépendance vis-à-vis du pouvoir », alors que les églises protestantes et les adeptes du kimbanguisme (syncrétisme né au Congo au début du XXe siècle) passent pour être plus proches des autorités.

Henri Mova, secrétaire général du PPRD, le parti de M. Kabila, appelle les confessions religieuses à « désigner rapidement [...] un candidat du consensus ». « Autrement, le doute va encore s'installer davantage », ajoute-t-il.

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Le temps presse d'autant plus qu'une récente décision de la Cour constitutionnelle a rendu caduc le calendrier électoral de la Céni présenté en février. L'opposition, dans l'ensemble, appelle à la publication rapide d'un nouveau calendrier « aménagé », qui se concentrerait sur l'organisation de la présidentielle et des législatives en novembre 2016, à l'exclusion de tout autre scrutin d'ici là.

L'équation est encore compliquée par la question du financement des élections sur fond de querelle entre la Céni et le gouvernement sur les budgets réellement alloués pour l'organisation des élections.

Un des enjeux majeurs pour parvenir aux élections libres, transparentes, démocratiques et dans le respect des délais constitutionnels demandé par l'ONU est la question de la révision du fichier électoral corrompu hérité des élections de 2011 et de l'« enrôlement » sur les listes électorales de tous les Congolais devenus majeurs depuis lors. Selon M. Endundo, cet enrôlement pourrait se faire en trois ou quatre mois.

« L'identité du successeur de Malu-Malu » déterminera la suite du processus électoral en RDC, estime Thierry Vircoulon, directeur du projet Afrique centrale du cercle de réflexion International Crisis Group. « Si c'est une personnalité indépendante et intègre, dit-il, alors il y a un espoir d'avoir des élections en 2016 même si le compteur est déjà bien avancé. »

RWANDA

Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda presents final report to UN

NEWS STORY

Source: APA

14 October 2015 - The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) which has to close its doors in December, 21 years after its creation, presented on Tuesday its last report to the United Nations General Assembly in New York. An official ceremony to end the ICTR will be held on 1 December, at the Tribunal headquarters, in Arusha, northern Tanzania, according to the institution's schedule.

It's a huge honor for me to speak to the prominent members of this Assembly for the presentation of the twentieth and final annual report of the ICTR, the president of the Tribunal, Judge Judge Vagn Joensen said in a speech quoted by UN press service.

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The ICTR was established by a resolution of the Security Council in November 1994 to prosecute people allegedly responsible for genocide and other serious violations of international human right law perpetrated in the Rwandan territory and neighbor State between 1 January 1994 and 31 December 1994.

In total, the ICTR has indicted 92 people for their alleged role in the 1994 genocide of Tutsis and sentenced 61 of them, the last six of whom are awaiting the trial appeal that will be delivered before the end of the year, according to Judge Joensen.

Fourteen defendants were found not guilty. Two died before or during their trial and two indictments were withdrawn.

Nine defendants are still on the run, including billionaire Felicien Kabuga who is presented by the prosecution as the financier of the genocide, former Defence Minister, Augustin Bizimana and Major Protais Mpiranya who commanded the guard of President Juvenal Habyarimana whose assassination triggered the genocide.

According to the ICTR, the nine fugitives are reported to move between Eastern, Southern and Central Africa (including in the Democratic Republic of Congo).

Records regarding six of them were transferred to Rwandan courts under the ICTR's mandate completion strategy. The other three one, considered as big fish including Kabuga, Bizimana and Mpiranya, if they are arrested one day, will be tried by the United Nations Mechanism for International Criminal Tribunals (MICT), a smaller structure which will furthermore ensure the residual functions of the ICTR.

The ICTR referred two defendants to Rwandan courts and two others before the French courts.

On 1 January 2016, all uncompleted ICTR activities will be transferred to the United Nations Mechanism for International Criminal Tribunals (MICT) which is also responsible for managing the legacy of the Tribunal on behalf of former Yugoslavia (ICTY).

In his speech, Judge Vagn Joensen again drew the attention of Member States on the need to help relocate convicted persons who have served their sentence and have been for some 10 years now, at the Tribunal in Arusha, Tanzania, due to lack of host countries.

According to him, the second challenge involves the arrest of the nine ICTR accused who are still on the run.

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On this point relating to defendants who are still free, EU representative, Gilles Marchic has, according to UN press service, reminded States of their responsibility to cooperate, explaining that the failure to arrest these fugitives is a great concern.

We regret that nine fugitives including Felicien Kabuga are still on the run and we reiterate our call on UN Member States, particularly those in our region, so that they arrest all these génocidaires, representative of Rwanda, Maboneza Sana, also quoted by the UN press service, added.

The Rwandan diplomat further expressed deep disappointment after the French court had pronounced, in this month, a dismissal in the case of priest Wenceslas Munyeshyaka, one of the two cases referred by the ICTR to France.

He finally asked that the Tribunal's archives be transferred to Rwanda and remain there because they are an integral part of the history of the country.

Rwanda Army Off To South Africa for AU Exercises

NEWS STORY

Source: News of Rwanda

Kigali, 14 October 2015 - A total of 41 officers and men of Rwanda Defence Forces left Kigali on 14 October 2015 to the Republic of South Africa to participate in the African Union Commission Field Training Exercise codenamed Amani Africa II. The Exercise will be conducted at the South Africa Army Combat Training Centre (CTC) in the Northern Cape from 17 October to 7 November 2015.

Rwandan Contingent led by Lt Col Martin Kagarura will engage in a series of military exercises aimed at evaluating the readiness of the African Standby Force (ASF) and its Rapid Deployment Capability (RDC) towards achieving full operational capability by December 2015.

The Republic of Rwanda is participating in Amani Africa II as Eastern Africa Standby Force (EASF) Member State and a Volunteer Nation to the African Capacity for Immediate Response to Crisis (ACIRC).

Briefing the contingent before leaving for South Africa, the Army Chief of Staff, Maj General Kamanzi Mushyo urged them to represent Rwanda adequately and to make friends while working together with other Contingents.

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“Bear in mind that you are going representing Rwanda and the RDF, maintain discipline and make friends for Rwanda and the RDF, we have no doubt that you will represent us as it is required”, the Army Chief of Staff emphasised.

Amani Africa II Exercise is set to be conducted in two phases. The Participants in the first phase will have training drills on “Rapid Intervention Scenario” in the cases of genocide or other major violations that require ASF to intervene within 14 days. For the second phase of the Exercise, the Participants will be exercising on the deployment of Peacekeeping Force.

The first Continental Exercise (Amani Africa I) to evaluate the operational readiness of the ASF was conducted in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in October 2010; Amani Africa One was a Command Post Exercise.

The contributing countries to the Exercise are Angola, Algeria, Burundi, Botswana, Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, Swaziland, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

BURUNDI

Pour la CIRGL, la situation au Burundi menace toute la région

NEWS STORY

Source: RFI

La situation au Burundi est une menace sérieuse pour toute la région. C'est ce que dit la Conférence internationale pour la région des grands lacs (CIRGL). Cette organisation sous-régionale tire la sonnette d'alarme suite aux récents actes de violence et appelle au dialogue.

14 octobre 2015 - Macdonald Mwakasendile est l'un des chargés de communication de la Conférence internationale pour la région des grands lacs (CIRGL). Il se dit très inquiet : « Nous exprimons notre vive inquiétude sur la situation sécuritaire au Burundi qui se détériore ainsi qu'à la multiplication des actes de violence et des pertes en vie humaine. Cela constitue une menace sérieuse pour le Burundi, mais aussi pour toute la région ».

« C'est pourquoi, poursuit-il, le secrétariat général (de la CIRGL, NDLR) condamne ces actes inacceptables et demande à ce que des sanctions soient prises contre leurs

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auteurs. Nous appelons aussi au dialogue. En fait, nous aimerions poursuivre notre coopération avec la médiation et le président ougandais et nous exhortons toutes les parties à oeuvrer pour la reprise du processus à travers un dialogue politique. Ce sera la seule manière pour que le Burundi puisse surmonter cette crise ».

Autour de la médiation ougandaise et de son éventuel retour au Burundi, Macdonald Mwakasendile regrette son manque d'informations : « Nous ne sommes pas informés. Mais c'est pour ça qu'on exprime notre inquiétude. D'être sûr que toutes les parties puissent avoir accès à une médiation ou à un médiateur pour traiter de ces questions », achève-t-il.

Violence in Burundi's Capital Leaves at Least 10 People Dead

NEWS STORY

Source: <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2015-10-14/night-of-violence-in-burundi-leaves-at-least-nine-people-dead>

By Desire Nimubona

14 October 2015 - Violence flared overnight in Burundi's capital, leaving 10 people dead, as police fought unidentified assailants and a local journalist and his children were killed.

Three police officers were seized by armed men late Tuesday in the Ngagara district of Bujumbura, sparking a rescue attempt after which five of the kidnappers and one of the abductees were left dead, police spokesman Pierre Nkurikiye said Wednesday on national radio.

Also in Ngagara, national television cameraman Christophe Nkezabahizi and his two teenage children were killed, his channel reported. An unidentified witness cited by national radio on Wednesday said men wearing the uniform of Burundi's presidential guard shot him dead and killed five other people in his compound.

Nkurikiye said an investigation had begun into the cameraman's death. A 10th fatality was reported in Jabe district, where a woman was killed in a grenade blast late Tuesday, while explosions were also heard in three other areas of Bujumbura, he said.

More than 130 people have died in violence in Burundi since April when President Pierre Nkurunziza announced he was a candidate to serve a third term. Opponents say his re-election violates a term-limit set in peace accords that ended the 12-year civil war in 2005.

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Relations between Burundi, Rwanda Deteriorating

ANALYSIS

Source: VOA

Nairobi, 14 October 2015 - Burundi has been dealing with unrest on and off since April when President Pierre Nkurunziza launched his bid for a third term. But the conflict isn't just internal. Tensions with neighboring Rwanda have steadily been on the rise.

Relations between Central African neighbors Burundi and Rwanda, rarely warm, have been on the downswing in recent months.

"Before the crisis, the relations were already a bit complicated, but during the crisis, there has been an exchange of accusations between Bujumbura and Kigali, and both capitals consider that the other capital is supportive of its opponents," said Thierry Vircoulon, Central Africa project director at the International Crisis Group.

The crisis he refers to is Burundi's internal unrest. Opponents of Burundian President Pierre Nkurunziza said his bid for reelection in April violated the constitution and the Arusha Agreement that led to the end of Burundi's civil war in 2003, when the cease-fire was signed.

A coup attempt in May and Nkurunziza's re-election in a poll boycotted by opponents did nothing to calm the situation.

Rwandan President also criticized Nkurunziza's decision to seek a third term, and accused him of harboring a Rwandan rebel group.

"Kigali accused the Burundian government of basically hosting or relegating some elements of the FDLR (Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda) to be in Burundi, and to move more or less freely between Burundi and Congo. And at the same time, the Burundian government has accused Kigali of supporting its opponents," said Vircoulon.

Some Rwandans traveling to Burundi have reported arrests and beatings. Earlier this month, Burundi expelled Rwandan diplomat Desire Nyaruhirira, whom it accused of trying to destabilize the country.

Meanwhile, Kagame has been accused by Burundian officials of aiding the coup attempt and backing fighters in northern Burundi -- allegations that Kigali denies.

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Steve McDonald is a global fellow at the Woodrow Wilson Center in Washington.

"Kagame and Nkurunziza -- there is no love lost there. There's a long history of animosity and Kagame, in my mind is a Tutsi nationalist, and Nkurunziza is Hutu but he tried to take the development in Burundi in a different direction, trying to move beyond sort of the ethnic dimensions in his first years of presidency," he said.

But many analysts, including McDonald, believe the current tensions appear to be political in nature. The hope is that they do not take on an ethnic dimension later, if the crisis continues.

For now, there's concern that Nkurunziza's re-election could represent a change in how the peace agreement signed in 2000 is viewed.

"Basically, it means that the Arusha Agreement isn't going to be implemented anymore by the new regime," said McDonald.

And this disregard for the peace agreement could be one of Burundi's most worrying developments so far.

UGANDA

Uganda police brutality warning ahead of polls: rights group

NEWS STORY

Source: AFP World News

Kampala, 15 October 2015 - Police brutality against opposition supporters in Uganda is on the rise ahead of elections due next year, Human Rights Watch (HRW) warned Thursday.

Opposition supporters and activists "risk beatings, arrest, or worse," said Maria Burnett of the New York-based advocacy group, as momentum grows in the run-up to the vote next February.

"Uganda's police brutality consistently favours the incumbent," Burnett added.

The police is notorious for its use of tear gas, rubber bullets, pepper spray and batons when confronting opponents of President Yoweri Museveni, who next year will mark three decades in power, HRW said.

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His main opponent is three-time loser Kizza Besigye of the Forum for Democratic Change (FDC) who has himself been arrested, beaten and teargassed on numerous occasions in the past.

In a recent example cited by HRW, a female FDC supporter at a political protest in Rukungiri in western Uganda was snatched from the crowd by police, manhandled, partially stripped and flung into a truck.

The incident on Saturday sparked outrage on social media, but it has had little impact on police actions.

On Wednesday, women protesting her rough treatment in the capital Kampala were themselves pepper-sprayed and kettled by officers.

"(The) Ugandan police's handling of public order management has been a source of serious human rights violations over recent years," said Burnett.

Police have in the past also used live fire to disperse opposition rallies deemed illegal.

Uganda police arrest opposition leader

NEWS STORY

Source: <http://www.newsfultoncounty.com/politics/news/1511858-uganda-police-arrest-opposition-leader>

By Halima Athumani

Kampala, 15 October 2015 - Ugandan police have arrested the country's main opposition leader after surrounding his home in the capital Kampala.

Dr. Kiiza Besigye is the presidential candidate of the opposition Forum for Democratic Change (FDC).

On Wednesday night, police deployed riot officers on all roads leading to the opposition leader's home on the outskirts of Kampala.

Before his arrest on Thursday morning, Besigye told journalists in front of his home that: "They are turning my home into a prison; I can never allow this to happen as long as I am alive."

The police eventually moved on his car, pulled him out and bundled him into a waiting truck and drove off.

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Last evening, police chief Gen. Kale Kayihura had criticised the FDC for not notifying officers about planned rallies on time.

“We want you to postpone your program and give police enough time according to the law,” Gen. Kayihura said.

Kayihura added that a letter signed by Nandala Mafabi, the FDC secretary-general, was intended to “notify the police about opening of offices and mobilization of party rallies”.

However, Kayihura warned that police had “no problem with opening of party offices, but the fact that the exercise contains mobilization of rallies, the police shall not allow.”

According to Uganda’s Public Order Management Act, those seeking to hold open meetings have to notify the police within three days before they can be allowed to proceed with gatherings or demonstrations.

Speaking to Anadolu Agency, police spokesperson Polly Namaye claimed that officers moved in as “a preventive action to stop a repeat of what we saw during the weekend [and] to ensure everything moves peacefully”.

Namaye said it was a more peaceful alternative to breaking up rallies or groups of opposition supporters on the country’s highways.

Over the weekend, Besigye was stopped by police along a highway, an event which ended up in ugly scenes where a female FDC member was stripped naked.

The head of the FDC’s Women’s League, Ingrid Turinawe, told Anadolu Agency: “We are not campaigning, these are party activities and these people are bent on failing us.”

“We were supposed to open up offices in Kireka town council, Mukono district and hold a rally in Iganga and Jinja districts in Eastern Uganda.”

“As a presidential aspirant, [Besigye] is allowed to consult around the country,” she added.

Ibrahim Ssemuju Nganda, an FDC legislator and spokesperson, has also been arrested and taken to an unknown location.

Speaking to Anadolu Agency, his wife Faridah Ssemuju said: “He was supposed to go to Iganga this morning, but last night the police deployed two pickup trucks with officers and a tear gas van outside our home.”

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She adds: “They blocked the entrance of the gate and six officers entered our home this morning, they spoke to Ibrahim and after a few minutes grabbed him and bundled him onto a police truck and drove him off. I don’t know where he is now.”

Police insist all opposition party activities have to begin after Nov. 9. Uganda’s National Independent Electoral Commission has set Nov. 3 and 4 for the nomination of candidates who intend to contest the presidency in 2016.

So far only four presidential candidates have fulfilled requirements for the elections out of 49 aspirants who picked presidential nomination forms.

Suspected rebels kill six civilians in southern Uganda – Sources

NEWS STORY

Source: APA (<http://en.starafrika.com/news/suspected-rebels-kill-six-civilians-in-southern-uganda-sources.html>)

14 October 2015 - Suspected rebels of the Allied Democratic Forces in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) have attacked villages in Uganda, on the border with the DRC, killing at least six people, APA learns here Wednesday.

Reports indicate the attack was in Tenambo and Mukoko villages, near the DRC town of Beni, on the border with Uganda.

The attack which took place on Monday is said to have left several other people wounded.

The commander of the Operation Sikola against the rebels, Brigadier Marcel Mbangi confirmed the incident. He said the attack may be in retaliation against the operation launched by the Congolese government against the rebels.

The ADF is a coalition of Islamist sects and local opposition forces opposed to the Ugandan government.

Originally based in western Uganda, ADF now operates in the DRC and it is considered a terrorist organization by regional governments.

The rebels are also said to be regrouping following the arrest of its founder, Jamil Mukulu, who had been hunted for years and was in July 2015 arrested in Tanzania and extradited to Uganda.

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New Nomination Timetable for Uganda Candidates Released

NEWS STORY

Source: VOA

14 October 2015 - Uganda's Electoral Commission has revised its timetable for political parties to nominate their presidential candidates ahead of the 2016 presidential, legislative and local elections.

The electoral body said recently that the nomination process would be held November 3-4 at the Mandela National Stadium in the capital, Kampala.

The commission also said only four presidential aspirants out of the 49 who filled out nomination forms had met all the commission's requirements.

Nominations for district chairpersons and councilors are scheduled for November 16-20, while nomination for parliamentary aspirants is planned for December 2-3, according to the electoral commission.

Jotham Taremwa, spokesman for the commission, said official campaigns for presidential elections would begin November 9 and end in February.

"We tried to emphasize the need for the aspirants to follow the guidelines issued to them and ensure that they don't charge up the environment," Taremwa said. "The environment remains calm, remains peaceful as we prepare to nominate and then flag them off for official campaigning."

"We work closely with the political parties through the national consultative forum," he said. "We have periodical meetings with party leaders in that forum, and whichever issues that may bring in misunderstandings, they try to be ironed out during that forum. Where there is need, we invite and interact with them and discuss and understand one another."

Ugandans have expressed concern about next year's vote following what they say has been frequent use of force by the security agencies to prevent opposition leaders from addressing rallies or meeting their supporters.

They also contend that if not checked, the violence could undermine the credibility of the outcome of the presidential election, which they said could plunge the country into chaos.

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Taremwa said the electoral commission planned to work with political parties, security services and international development partners to ensure a peaceful general election.

"We are going to have periodical meetings in which any issues that are raised, we are able to openly discuss them and agree on the way forward," he said.

"[The election] is not going to be violent, because security is on alert to secure the electoral environment," he said. "So we are not bothered. There could be cases of isolated [violence], but not necessarily to affect the election environment and the electoral process."

Uganda has had a turbulent political history and has seldom had a peaceful transfer of power.

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

Armed groups, parties boycott Central African Republic talks

NEWS STORY

Source: Reuters

Reporting by Crispin Dembassa-Kette; Writing by Emma Farge; Editing by Ralph Boulton

14 October 2015 - Armed groups and politicians in Central African Republic boycotted the start of a political forum this week, dealing a blow to attempts to get an election process back on track.

Interim President Catherine Samba-Panza called for the discussions, which began on Tuesday, partly to discuss elections scheduled for October 18 but which are expected to be postponed for technical and security reasons.

The former French colony has been torn by bloodshed since 2013 and authorities are struggling to disarm militias despite a peace agreement in May. A surge in violence in the capital Bangui last month sparked by the murder of a Muslim man killed 77 people and injured 400.

"We categorically refuse these meetings called by a government that is clan-like, sectarian and incompetent," said Ahmat Nejad of Union for Peace in Central African Republic (UPC), a faction of the mostly Muslim Seleka militia.

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An official at a party linked to the main Christian militia, the anti-balaka, also said his Party for Unity and Development (PCUD) group would not participate.

SANCTIONS PUSH

About 10 political parties of the country's 50, including some led by presidential candidates, also boycotted the talks which Samba-Panza said were aimed at "restoring dialogue, discussions and the search for consensus".

"This is just another example of political fraud, just like the Bangui Forum," the 10 groups said in a statement on Tuesday, referring to the talks that preceded the May peace deal.

The talks are set to continue until Oct. 21.

France threatened last week to push for sanctions at the UN Security Council for new individuals who were considered to be blocking the political transition.

Central African Republic has been in turmoil since Seleka fighters briefly seized power in the majority Christian country in 2013. While they later handed power over to an interim government, Seleka still control vast swathes of the north.

At the weekend, French and U.N. troops based in the country halted a rebel march towards Bangui, clashing with a faction of Seleka fighters.

The international community is pressing for Central African Republic to go ahead with an election intended to restore democratic governance by the end of this year, despite widespread lawlessness.

Central African Republic: Analyst - Intercepted Calls Show Prohibited Contact between Bemba's Lawyer and Witnesses**NEWS STORY**

Source: AllAfrica.com (<http://allafrica.com/stories/201510150370.html>)

By Wairagala Wakabi

14 October 2015 - An analyst with the prosecution office at the International Criminal Court (ICC) has testified that intercepted communications and phone records show that Jean-Pierre Bemba's former lead defense lawyer was in contact with witnesses during periods when such contact was prohibited.

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The analyst, who works with the Investigative Strategies and Analysis Unit of the Office of the Prosecutor (OTP), said that Aime Kilolo Musamba phoned seven defense witnesses and sent text messages to an undisclosed number of witnesses during the period of their testimony. The analyst testified on September 30, 2015 under the pseudonym Witness P-433, and was the first witness the prosecution called in the witness tampering trial against Bemba and four others.

Based on a study of various communication logs, the analyst found that there was a total of 897 contacts between Kilolo and 14 witnesses who testified for Bemba in his crimes trial. "I've concluded that 487 of those contacts were of 10 seconds or longer in duration. And of those, 110 occurred during a period where contacts with the witnesses were not permitted in accordance with the Victims and Witnesses Unit protocol," stated the analyst.

Furthermore, he said, there were eight contacts via SMS between Kilolo and defense witnesses at a time when such contacts were not permitted.

The telecoms operators that provided data records to prosecution investigators include KPN, Vodafone, and T-Mobile (The Netherlands); Orange (Cameroon); Telia Sonera (Sweden); Free Mobile (France); Belgacom, BASE Company, and Movistar (Belgium); and VodaCom (Democratic Republic of the Congo).

Bemba, a former vice president of the Democratic Republic of Congo, has been on trial at the ICC since November 2010 for the rape, murder, and pillaging reportedly committed by his Movement for the Liberation of Congo (MLC) troops when they were deployed in the Central African Republic in 2002 and 2003.

Last month, Bemba went on trial for corruptly influencing witnesses by giving them money and instructions to provide false testimony. On trial alongside him are Kilolo, former defense case manager Jean-Jacques Mangenda Kabongo, former defense witness Narcisse Arido, and Congolese legislator Fidèle Babala Wandu.

According to the prosecution, the charges of evidence tampering relate to the testimony of 14 witnesses, but a criminal plan by the five accused involved many more witnesses who testified for Bemba.

Witness P-433 reviewed various types of telecommunications evidence in the possession of the OTP and produced a report that was tendered into evidence. The review included call logs generated from the ICC detention center, which contained records of communication between detainees at the center and other parties. There was also evidence forensically extracted from communication devices including mobile handsets, tablets, and computers confiscated from the suspects.

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The prosecution is also in possession of financial records from international money transfer companies such as Western Union and Express Union, which contain telephone numbers of various individuals.

The prosecution has also called Rene Pluijmers, who testified on October 9 as an expert witness on how the interception of communications is conducted. Witness P-261, one of the defense witnesses who allegedly provided false testimony in Bemba's main trial, has also testified for the prosecution in the new trial. The prosecution is expected to call no more than 11 witnesses.

TANZANIA

Tanzania president warns against violence ahead of polls

NEWS STORY

Source: Reuters

By Fumbuka Ng'wanakilala; Reporting by Fumbuka Ng'wanakilala; Editing by George Obulutsa and Catherine Evans

14 October 2015 - Tanzanian President Jakaya Kikwete dismissed opposition accusations on Wednesday that his CCM party planned to rig a presidential vote next week and warned against violence ahead of the Oct. 25 elections.

Addressing a rally in the administrative capital Dodoma, Kikwete accused the opposition of stoking unrest before the parallel presidential, parliamentary and local government polls.

"Anyone who participates in violence during the elections will be dealt with," said Kikwete. "Our security forces will ensure that the elections are peaceful ... we will never allow our democracy to be kidnapped."

Kikwete cannot run after serving two terms in office but the ruling Chama Cha Mapinduzi party's John Magufuli leads in opinion polls ahead of what is expected to be the closest presidential race since Tanzania became independent in 1961.

The main opposition parties have for the first time united behind one presidential candidate, former Prime Minister Edward Lowassa, whose rallies have drawn thousands of supporters across the East African country.

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Lowassa switched to become the opposition coalition's contender after failing to win the CCM's candidacy last month. The 62-year-old quit as premier in 2008 over corruption allegations that he denies.

Some 22.6 million Tanzanians are registered to vote out of a total population of 47 million.

'GUARDING THE VOTE'

Kikwete rejected accusations that the ruling party, in power for almost four decades, planned to rig the vote.

"This is just a plot by the opposition to cause violence and prevent other people from voting. We are aware of their plot and they shall not succeed," he said.

Opposition parties have accused the CCM of vote-rigging in previous elections, which the party denies.

Tumaini Makene, spokesman for the main opposition party CHADEMA told Reuters on Wednesday: "There is historical evidence that CCM has been supported by the government machinery to rig previous elections."

"Public statements made by CCM leaders in this election also clearly indicate that the vote will be stolen," he added, without elaborating.

The head of Tanzania's electoral body has pledged that the vote will be free and fair, and has rejected calls by opposition leaders for supporters to stand outside polling stations and "guard" the votes until the results are announced.

The electoral body has ordered voters to disperse after casting their votes, saying each party will be allowed to post one agent inside every polling station to oversee vote counting.

Tanzanian elections have been relatively peaceful since the reintroduction of multi-party politics in 1995, but some analysts warn there is a risk of violence in some areas around next week's polls.

"The opposition's fuelling of widespread fears of vote-rigging has increased the probability of violence, but this is likely to be limited to pockets of the country, particularly urban areas," said Ahmed Salim, senior associate at consultancy Teneo Intelligence in a note to clients.