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



MEDIA MONITORING

30 July 2015

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

DRC Opposition Seeks to Reopen Probe into \$3 Billion Fraud

NEWS STORY

Source: VOA

By Nick Long

29 July 2015 - The Democratic Republic of Congo's biggest-ever corruption probe was called off without an official explanation, according to both a Congolese lawmaker and a government spokesman. Investigators were looking into fraud that may have cost the government more than \$3 billion.

It was an investigation of alleged corruption over four years, from 2009 to 2013, in the customs service of Katanga province in the southeastern DRC. Katanga is the source of most of the DRC's mineral exports and a powerhouse for the rest of the economy.

Last week, opposition lawmaker Mushizi Kizito called for a judicial inquiry into the alleged corruption to be restarted.

Speaking to VOA, he said the investigation was launched in 2013 after Communications Minister Lambert Mende heard accusations about the service.

Kizito said he does not know who denounced what exactly, but there was information indicating serious corruption and fraud and Mende sent a letter about this to the Justice Ministry.

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Initiating an investigation

This led to the state prosecutor sending a team of investigators to Katanga in September 2013. According to Kizito, the team managed in only 10 days to recover some \$700 million in unpaid customs and other taxes. He said the team was then recalled to Kinshasa, though, before it had examined most of the relevant documents for the period.

Mende confirmed to VOA he initiated the investigators' mission to Katanga.

"I don't know if they recovered any money", he said. "They did identify large amounts of tax owed that had not been paid, but the mission was terminated abruptly, we don't know by whom. Anyway, it would be worth reopening the inquiry."

Kizito said the team recovered more than \$700 million, but he added that was far less than the estimated total that was owed.

"It was estimated to be \$3 billion," he said. "Two-hundred-seventy-nine businesses were implicated — all kinds of businesses including companies in mining, beverages, services, and import export."

That much money would have been a hefty proportion of the annual state budget of about \$8 billion, Kizito added, suggesting there might have been fraud on the same scale in the other 10 provinces.

He cautioned that some of the estimated \$3 billion might have been legal tax avoidance, through transfer pricing and other means, rather than illegal tax evasion.

Following the dollar

He said this was for prosecutors to establish, however, and he said it was a pity the DRC's first ever-tax investigation of this scale had not been pursued.

A spokesman for Congolese organization, the African Association for the Defense of Human Rights (ASADHO), said it had access to details of the 2013 inquiry.

An ASADHO activist from Katanga, Francois Katende, told VOA he could confirm that money had been recovered from companies in Katanga.

He said he has a list of 10 companies that made payments after ASADHO publicized the affair.

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He also suggested that most of the \$700 million was recovered from just two companies.

As for who called a halt to the investigation in 2013, Kizito, Katende and minister Mende all said they do not know who was responsible for that decision.

It is not clear how much money there is left to recover, or what has happened to any money that was recovered. It also is not clear if anyone in the customs service has been punished for the alleged fraud.

As Obama Champions Democracy in Africa, the Democratic Republic of Congo Descends into Political Chaos as its President Clings to Power

OPINION

Source: Amsterdam News (<http://amsterdamnews.com/news/2015/jul/29/obama-champions-democracy-africa-democratic-republ/>)

29 July 2015 - As President Barack Obama sought to advance the principles of democracy on a historic trip to his father's homeland of Kenya last week, the hope for a fair democratic process in the neighboring Democratic Republic of Congo appeared to be slowly eroding.

In developments that have caused alarm among human rights and pro-democracy activists, President Joseph Kabila of the DRC is brazenly moving to consolidate power in an apparent effort to stay in office past 2016, when his term expires. Mr. Kabila seems bent on leading his nation down this potentially destructive path, despite warnings from President Obama, who earlier this year spoke to Kabila and stressed the need for peaceful and credible elections in the DRC in 2016.

As President Obama's trip to Kenya made clear, his primary focus is fostering strong economic ties between the U.S. and Africa, an objective that experts say is best achieved by ensuring that the U.S. has stable, democratic partners on the continent. Mr. Obama's trip included attendance at the first Global Entrepreneurship Summit in Nairobi and ended with an address to the Africa Union in Addis Ababa in Ethiopia.

In that context, Mel Foote, the president and CEO of the Constituency for Africa, said that Kabila's power grab is troubling, particularly in a country that is strategically important because of its vast natural resources and the borders it shares with many African nations.

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Mr. Foote, who is an advisor on Africa policy to the Obama administration and who traveled to the DRC three years ago, questioned whether the DRC would ever enjoy peace and security. “He’s trying to hold everybody down,” Foote said of Kabila.

Mr. Kabila’s actions come at a time when a new generation of leaders has emerged, including Moise Katumbi, who is widely seen as a potential presidential candidate in 2016. The hugely popular governor of the Congo’s Katanga province, Katumbi is also a successful businessman who owns the renowned TZ Mazembe soccer team. Katumbi is most noted for his work to develop Katanga’s schools and mining sector.

Experts say that if the Congo descends into political turmoil, it may impact U.S. efforts to ensure peaceful elections in 14 other African countries preparing for elections next year.

“If the international community lets the DRC get away with some sort of shenanigans then our ability to positively influence outcomes throughout Africa certainly diminishes considerably,” said Dr. J. Peter Pham, director of the Atlantic Council’s Africa Center, told the Washington Free Beacon. Pham fears leaders in the region could take cues from a passive international response to Kabila.

Strong concern has also been expressed by Secretary of State John Kerry, who made the American position clear to Kabila in a conversation last year. “I believe it is clear to him that the United States of America feels very strongly, as do other people, that the constitutional process needs to be respected and adhered to,” Mr. Kerry said then.

Kabila has said he will obey the constitution. Still, he appears to be up to something. Experts say he is now instituting a policy known as decoupage in order to delay the election and possibly weaken political rivals.

The decoupage would divide the DRC’s provinces into smaller political subdivision, potentially weakening the political base of rivals like Katumbi. Moreover, the process would likely push national elections well past its 2016 schedule, assuring Kabila’s maintenance of power.

Political writers have called Kabila on the plan. “Congolese people at home and abroad are waiting. They already have an option and they are very much aware the decoupage is but a political gimmick targeting perceived political challengers. Therefore, whatever Kabila would [do] in his grand scheme aimed at Katumbi may have grave political ramifications,” writes Peter Adamu, a policy analyst for Zambia Reports in an opinion posted on AllAfrica.com.

Kabila has resorted to other heavy-handed tactics, including filing corruption and fraud charges against a list of more than a dozen officials. Though the Kabila administration

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has not publicized specifically who is named in the charges, Katumbi told Reuters that he would not be surprised if he is included.

The Kabila has also tried to pass a law that would require a national census that experts say would delay the elections for years. The plan was rejected by the legislature, but not before mass protests that resulted in the deaths of 40 protestors early this year.

Jason Stearns, a writer who has served on the United Nations group of experts on the Congo, says that Kabila could plunge his country into turmoil if he disregards the constitution. He said, "There is so much internal dissent around Kabila that if he stays in power, regardless of how he does that, it could provoke such an internal crisis it could go any number of routes."

Chinese vice president meets DR Congo FM

NEWS STORY

Source: Xinhua

30 July 2015 - Chinese Vice President Li Yuanchao met on Wednesday with DR Congo Foreign Minister Raymond Tshibanda.

Li said the relationship between China and DR Congo has sound development and the two countries support each other on the other's core interests and major concerns.

Li said China attaches great importance to its ties with DR Congo and is willing to expand win-win cooperation to promote bilateral ties to a new stage.

Calling DR Congo and China as good brothers and friends, Tshibanda appreciates China's sincere assistance to his country, expressing his willingness to strengthen mutually beneficial and win-win cooperation in more fields with China.

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RWANDA

Rwanda: Ex official declared wanted by Interpol

NEWS STORY

Source: APA

29 July 2015 - Interpol has issued a so-called red notice for the arrest of former Rwandan ambassador to Ethiopia, Protais Mitali who is wanted by the government in Kigali over corruption and embezzlement of public funds. The notice published on Interpol's website on Wednesday states that, Mitali who also served as Rwanda's Minister of Sports and Culture as well as the president of the opposition Liberal Party is being sought for theft of state funds.

Earlier in March, Mitali, resigned as president of the Liberal Party and fled to Europe after he was accused of embezzling Rwf50 Million (\$72,000).

However, analysts argue that his case could be a politically motivated after falling out with President Paul Kagame.

The arrest warrant follows his indefinite expulsion from the Liberal Party (PL) for which he was president, and a lawsuit filed against him for misappropriation of party funds early this year.

According to the Police, Mitali had been requested to present himself to respond to the charges and facilitate investigations.

Police spokesperson Chief Superintendent of Police Celestin Twahirwa said that Mitali fled from his diplomatic post at the time he was being investigated.

"After being requested to return to facilitate investigations, he fled, leaving us with no option but to contact Interpol to issue a red notice," Twahirwa said.

Mitali is yet to respond to the request.

Some members of his former party alleged that following an internal audit conducted from January 2013 to June 2014, financial irregularities were exposed, fueling suspicion that Mitali has been withdrawing money which he never accounted for.

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BURUNDI

Post-election Burundi: The gloomy and the more optimistic scenarios - both make for sobering reading

OPINION

Source: Mail & Guardian Africa

By Frederick Golooba-Mutebi

A triumph president Pierre Nkurunziza could either seek to placate opponents, or deeply scarred by previous weeks, round on them.

29 July 2015 - THE controversial and violent process to determine who, barring unforeseen events will lead Burundi for the next five years, is now over. Despite media reports and claims by Western - and African - officials and numerous commentators that he was unwanted by the people of Burundi, Pierre Nkurunziza is to remain president.

Despite winning 69.41% of the votes cast, his victory has been dismissed by some as without credibility because the political environment was not conducive to free and fair elections.

Meanwhile reports indicate that, while turnout was 30% in the capital Bujumbura and in some peri-urban areas, in most rural areas it was well over 70%. And if one disregards the capital where bullets and explosions were reported, voting happened in a quiet and peaceful atmosphere. It makes one wonder if media coverage of “the crisis” did not mislead the world by presenting what happened in Bujumbura and peri-urban areas as representative of goings-on all over the country.

A rural hero

It suggests that, despite the much-publicised dismal record of his previous 10-year rule, Nkurunziza is popular among the rural masses. Their coming out to elect him in large numbers may as well have been evidence of their indifference to arguments that he was ineligible to stand.

In this, Burundi is not unique. There are numerous examples in Africa of sitting presidents insisting on contesting even when internal circumstances have seemed, at least to detached observers, to indicate that large numbers of their countrymen and women would rather they stepped down.

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The contests have been followed by allegations of rigging alongside reports of peaceful and orderly voting and, subsequently, the incumbents winning handsomely in rural areas. Methinks we in media and the “analysis industry” often fall victim to our own prejudices and are easily seduced by the forceful arguments of the urban elite that we neglect to try and understand why rural people vote the way they do.

Not a solution

In Burundi as in other places where intra-elite quarrels and fights precede elections, the opposition boycotted the polls citing lack of trust in the electoral process and in the institutions superintending it, and unwillingness to legitimise the incumbent’s guaranteed victory.

And here as elsewhere, the incumbent, seemingly confident in his own popularity with the masses, betrayed no signs of caring who would or wouldn’t boycott, or if any potential contestants boycotted at all.

But Nkurunziza’s victory is not one he and his supporters should celebrate. There are several reasons for this. One very important one is that it is not a solution to any of the multiple problems bedeviling Burundi. One unhappy post-election scenario could see intra-elite fights intensify, leading to further internal turmoil.

Although main opposition leader Agathon Rwaso of the Amizero y’Abarundi coalition has called for a government of national unity, and although the ruling party, CNDD-FDD has agreed to engage on the issue, other opposition groups seem intent on doing whatever it takes to bring him down. A key strategy is to “paralyse the work of the government”.

Any government worth its salt will respond robustly to this kind of challenge. In Burundi it is likely to be with repression and retribution.

Fortunately, regional and international efforts are underway to try and calm things down and bring the protagonists to a roundtable for dialogue. The objective is to goad Burundians into agreeing about where they want to take their country and what they need to do to get it there.

Recipe for more violence

It is possible that, with victory secured, Nkurunziza and what remains of the CNDD-FDD leadership will become more obstinate than they have hitherto been and seek to dictate terms to a similarly obdurate opposition. It is a recipe for more violence.

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There is, however, a chance that now he has achieved another term in office, the one objective he was not prepared to forego, Nkurunziza will seek to placate his opponents. He could do so by bringing those who are prepared to work with him into the government via the tried and tested method of offering positions and privileges.

There is, nonetheless, no guarantee that those who object to him personally and to his record in office which, according to a local observer, has entailed enjoying the trappings of power while showing no interest in governing, will want to facilitate his continuation or that if they don't, they will at least sit out his next term, in the hope that it will be the last.

Paid a heavy price

Burundi has been lauded for the “vibrant” media and civil society that have emerged and thrived over the last 10 years under Nkurunziza. Local commentators say that, before the crisis, CNDD-FDD saw this as one of their big achievements.

Alongside international praise for successful post-conflict reconciliation, it has been key to their sense of “mission accomplished”, even as the country made only modest progress elsewhere.

However, it was the same media and civil society that led opposition to Nkurunziza's pursuit of another term in office. For that, they have paid a heavy price in terms of assets and lives lost, and members who are now in exile.

An optimistic scenario would envisage the government reaching fresh accommodation with now weakened media and civil society.

A gloomy one envisages a deeply scarred government narrowing the space within which they operate to ensure they remain weak and subdued, a move that could further damage relations between the government and the donor community.

The situation may be rendered even more complicated in terms of what the government chooses to do, if Nkurunziza's former allies who have been threatening to fight him go ahead and launch a full-scale insurgency.

In addition to harming the prospects for an inclusive dialogue, it would threaten the wider region's pursuit of durable peace, stability, and prosperity.

If Burundi descends into civil war, and this is possible given reports of defections from the national army and of armed skirmishes in parts of the country, the fall-out would have far-reaching implications for the region.

The “Rwanda angle”

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There is, for example, “the Rwanda angle”. The Nkurunziza government and some of its allies and lobbyists have seemed keen to drag Rwanda into the Burundi crisis.

This can be seen from allusions in some media to cross-border incursions by armed elements from Rwanda. Although as yet not sufficiently specific, the claims raise the spectre of a similar situation to the one in the Democratic Republic of Congo in 2012/2013. When the M23 insurgents took up arms against its government, allegations about Rwanda’s involvement rallied the DRC’s allies and major powers against it, leading to damaging aid cuts.

If repeated in connection with war in Burundi, they would again offer Rwanda’s regional allies and antagonists and other actors a chance to intervene in ways that could ignite a wider conflict. A key risk would be the diversion of attention and resources from development initiatives such as the infrastructure development projects of the Northern Corridor countries. The Rwanda angle does not end here.

Until 2012, Burundi and Rwanda cooperated actively against the FDLR, leading to disruption of their cross-border networks. In 2010, for reasons that remain unclear the cooperation ended. Since then, sources in Kigali say FDLR elements have stepped up their presence in Burundi. Whether this is with official blessing remains unclear.

However, some observers are sceptical, saying they have seen no evidence of it, and accusing Kigali of exaggeration. Others, though, go as far as naming locations along the Burundi-DRC border, which they say are used by the insurgents. Were the claims to be true, a civil war in Burundi might present FDLR elements with a chance to infiltrate Rwanda and compromise its internal security. It is unlikely Rwanda would do nothing. Potential for escalation would be high.

Said by seasoned observers to be shaky, Burundi’s security architecture and related internal dynamics within its security organs are also cited as potential threats to regional stability. Specifically, reports point to active ethnic divisions within the military, reportedly little trusted because of its constitution along ethnic quotas, and ideological antagonisms between the army on the one hand, and the highly trusted and largely mono-ethnic police on the other.

This, analysts contend, is underlain by instability within the intelligence services, which apparently lack ‘basic cohesion’, and wider internal contradictions stemming from all-too frequent changes in leadership. It is the kind of context in which a determined insurgency would thrive.

Identify solutions

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War or no war, the Burundi economy is now on its knees. Its capacity to export and import has been severely diminished by nearly three months of upheaval.

Donors have withdrawn aid and are unlikely to restore it soon. It is therefore hardly certain that even with the elections over, the country's citizens, now reported to be leaving at the rate of hundreds a day in all directions, will stop from trying to cross into neighbouring countries.

There is the immediate problem of impoverished refugees imposing a financial and social burden on countries that need all the meagre resources they have to cater for the needs of their own citizens. And then there is that of Burundi's business and other elites taking their money and skills out of the country in such of safer places to work and invest. This can only prolong the economic crisis and exacerbate the same urban disaffection that observers credit with igniting protests once it became clear that Nkurunziza would seek another term in office.

It is entirely possible that none of the gloomy scenarios will materialise. However, regional and international actors must be prepared in the event that they did. Whoever wishes Burundi and the wider region well must strive to identify solutions that pose no risk of enflaming an already highly combustible situation.

The efforts should entail, first and foremost, helping Burundians reach a political settlement that prioritises political stability, as the foundation for whatever else needs to happen. It can only be one that does not exclude actors with capacity for trouble making.

Grenade blast injures policeman in Burundi's capital

NEWS STORY

Source: Xinhua

Bujumbura, 30 July 2015 - One policeman was injured in a grenade explosion that targeted policemen who were Wednesday morning rehabilitating a road damaged during protests in the Burundian capital Bujumbura, a police spokesman has told Xinhua.

"The grenade attack occurred early in the morning at about 06:00 (04:00 GMT) when police agents were rehabilitating a road damaged during the period of protests at Jabe neighbourhood. One policeman was injured and was evacuated to hospital," said Burundian Police Spokesman Pierre Nkurikiye.

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According to Nkurikiye, gunshots were also heard right after the grenade explosion.

The unidentified attacker ran away after detonating the grenade, he said.

Jabe is one of the neighborhoods in the Burundian capital Bujumbura where demonstrations against the third term bid of President Pierre Nkurunziza took place.

At least 80 persons were killed in protests against the third term bid of Burundian President Pierre Nkurunziza that broke out after the ruling party, the National Council for the Defense of Democracy-Forces for the Defense of Democracy (CNDD-FDD), designated Nkurunziza as its candidate for the presidential election.

The opposition argued that Nkurunziza's third term bid was a violation of the National Constitution and the Arusha Agreement.

However, the country's Constitutional Court earlier in May issued a ruling saying that Nkurunziza's 2005-2010 term should not be considered as a term, arguing that he was elected by the parliament and not directly by citizens.

Despite boycott by the opposition, the country held election on July 21. Provisional result shows Nkurunziza appearing winner of the election while UN says the election wasn't "inclusive, free or credible."

UGANDA

Obama Urged to Back Up Africa Democracy Call with Action

NEWS STORY

Source: VOA

30 July 2015 - The former leader of Uganda's opposition Forum for Democratic Change (FDC) said U.S. President Barack Obama's criticism of African leaders clinging to office beyond their terms is not backed by concrete action.

Speaking Tuesday to the African Union in Addis Ababa, Obama warned the continent's democratic progress is at risk from leaders who refuse to step aside when their terms end.

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Kizza Besigye said that if Obama is serious about encouraging democracy in Africa, then there must be consequences for those who don't embrace it and encouragement for those striving to adhere to democratic principles.

"I think what is most prominent in his engagement with the political process in Africa is that his words are not backed by action. If you are talking about encouraging democracy, encouraging peaceful change of leadership in Africa, then there must be action that encourages that, there must be consequences for those who don't follow that kind of direction [and] there must be encouragement for those who strive to bring that to happen in Africa," he said.

Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni has been in power for nearly 30 years. Besigye said Museveni has kept himself in power since manipulating a 1995 constitution which had placed limits on presidential terms.

"Unfortunately, it was removed on the very test it had because, in 2005, President Museveni was completing the second term under that constitution. But, unfortunately, he being the only person in Uganda affected by that provision did everything to cause its removal from the constitution," he said.

Besigye who unsuccessfully contested in three consecutive presidential elections (2001, 2006, and 2011) is seeking the nomination of his party for the 2016 election. He said that because all three elections were marred by irregularities, every Ugandan who believes in democracy must work for a free and fair electoral process.

"There has been a very strong demand throughout the country for fundamental electoral reform to be undertaken ahead of the next election, and I am coming into this process primarily to pursue that demand, to rally the population so that it's not just a demand that remains on paper, but that the whole control can put the force of the people's will behind it, and that we force reforms to be undertaken ahead of the next election," Besigye said.

Former Ugandan Prime Minister Amama Mbabazi is seeking the nomination of the ruling National Resistance Movement (NRM). The deadline for filing nomination forms is July 31.

Besigye, who himself was once a member of the NRM, had been quoted in the local media as saying that Mbabazi was no different from Museveni. He said he will support anyone who recognizes the government has failed the people.

"I strongly support Mr. Mbabazi in taking a firmed stance of saying you know the regime I have been serving was on the wrong path and I would like to join my fellow citizens

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who are challenging this wrong path in correcting it. Then, obviously, I will embrace him and work together with him," Besigye said.

REPUBLIC OF CONGO

Congo Opposition Urges Resistance to Third Term for Sassou

NEWS STORY

Source: VOA

Brazzaville, 29 July 2015 - Republic of Congo opposition parties called on the population Wednesday to resist attempts at constitutional reform that could pave the way for President Denis Sassou Nguesso to seek a third term in next year's presidential election.

The country's opposition parties and some civil society groups convened an alternative meeting in the capital after boycotting a government-sponsored forum earlier this month that opened the possibility for Sassou Nguesso, 71, to seek another term.

Sassou Nguesso, who has ruled oil-producing Congo for a total of 31 years during two separate periods in office, is banned by the Constitution from seeking another term. He has not said whether he plans to run, but his party and supporters have pushed for constitutional reforms, which the opposition argues is a ploy to enable him to run.

"We, the participants of the alternative national dialogue on the respect of constitutional order and democratic political change in 2016, call on the Congolese people to resist and defend the Constitution if it were to be violated," a statement from the gathering said.

Opposition to long-ruling African leaders trying to extend their reign has triggered protests in several countries in the continent in recent months.

During a speech Tuesday at the African Union in Ethiopia, President Barack Obama admonished African leaders who are trying to change constitutional term limits, warning that they threaten democracy on the continent.

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SOUTH SUDAN

S. Sudan says African Union inquiry found 'no evidence of genocide'

NEWS STORY

Source: Sudan Tribune

Juba, 29 July 2015 - The South Sudanese government has welcomed and commended the African Union (AU) for releasing a report, which it said found no evidence of genocide committed in the country's ongoing war and recommended the need for reconciliation.

The AU commission of inquiry on South Sudan, chaired by ex-Nigerian president, Olusegun Obasanjo released on Friday its report into allegations of atrocities and human right abuses committed in the country during the initial start of the conflict.

According to the South Sudanese foreign affairs minister, Benjamin Marial, the AU report found no evidence of genocide, though misunderstanding within the leadership of ruling party (SPLM) over reforms sparked violence and subsequent loss of lives and properties.

"There was no evidence of genocide in the report. It reflected truth and reports about real events. As the government we welcomed it and assure our commitment to fully implement its recommendations, especially on the issues of peace and reconciliation", Marial told Sudan Tribune Wednesday.

Marial was present at the AU Peace and Security Council meeting as representative of the South Sudanese government during which the report was released by the committee.

"The recommendations of the report are very clear. The outcome made it very clear that what happened in South Sudan was not genocide but it is the responsibility of the African to carry out proper investigation and come out with the findings reflective of their research and investigation", he said.

OBAMA CALLS FOR END OF WAR

In his speech to the people of African on Tuesday at the headquarters of the African Union on Tuesday, Obama called to end wars in Africa. He mentioned the armed conflicts in Central African Republic, Mali, Sudan and South Sudan.

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He further stressed on the urgent need to stop the inter-South Sudanese conflict and to hold account the perpetrators of atrocities in the youngest African nation.

"In South Sudan, the joy of independence has descended into the despair of violence," he said adding "And neither Mr. Kiir, nor Mr. Machar have shown, so far, any interest in sparing their people from this suffering, or reaching a political solution".

Obama further disclosed that he agreed with the IGAD and AU leaders that the warring parties must sign a peace agreement by 17 August and warned saying "because if they do not, I believe the international community must raise the costs of intransigence".

"And the world awaits the report of the AU Commission of Inquiry, because accountability for atrocities must be part of any lasting peace in Africa's youngest nation," he stressed.

SUDAN

Sudanese army torture to death man accused of intelligence with Darfur rebels

NEWS STORY

Source: Sudan Tribune

Khartoum, 29 July 2015 - A human rights group has claimed that the Sudanese army in West Darfur state tortured to death a man accused of providing information to the rebel Justice and Equality Movement (JEM).

The African Centre for Justice and Peace Studies (ACJPS) said in a statement issued on Wednesday that the victim, Abakar Adam Ishag, and two other men detained with him were severely tortured at the Jebel Mun Military base in the Silea area of West Darfur.

"Wounds on his corpse indicated that he had also been stabbed or beaten with a sharp object," the rights centre said, pointing that he died while he was transported to the Teaching Hospital in El Geneina town.

"Immediate steps should be taken to guarantee the safety of the two men, who face an ongoing risk of torture and have been detained incommunicado without charge in military custody in West Darfur since 17 July," ACJPS further said.

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The group said the military intelligence service of the Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) arrested the three men from Ishag's home in Karo Karo village, which lies to the east of Jebel Mun area.

The three men who belong to the Misseriya Jabal ethnic group "were accused of providing information to the JEM. Abakar Adam Ishag was reportedly accused of being a key JEM informant".

JEM rebels in the past years controlled partly Jebel Mun but the West Darfur area which is not far from Chad was retaken by the Sudanese army since 2010.

Following the defeat of JEM fighters in South Darfur state near the South Sudanese border last April, the Sudanese government said they crushed the largest rebel group in western Sudan and captured hundreds of its members.

Sudan Summons EU Representative Over 'False Information

NEWS STORY

Source: Radio Dabanga

Khartoum, 28 July 2015 - The Sudanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs summoned the representative of the European Union to Khartoum concerning a recent statement by the Union. In an announcement that it will provide extra humanitarian aid to Sudan, the European Commission reported that the humanitarian situation in the country is getting worse each day, especially in Darfur, Blue Nile, and South Kordofan states.

Ali El Sadig, the Director of the Peace and Humanitarian Affairs Department at the Ministry, told the official Sudan news agency (Suna) on Tuesday that he conveyed Sudan's strong rejection to the "deceptive and erroneous information" in the Commission's statement.

El Sadig stressed the stability of the humanitarian and security situation in the three mentioned states, and pointed to efforts Sudan undertakes in cooperation with the World Food Programme and the South Sudanese government for receiving and helping refugees.

The ministry official criticised the statement for mentioning the serious restrictions to humanitarian access, and that safer working conditions need to be assured for relief workers. The rebel SPLM-N in Blue Nile and South Kordofan block the delivery of humanitarian aid, El Sadig said, but the EU did not refer to that in its statement.

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The number of entry visas and permits issues by the Ministry to employees of humanitarian and development organisations has reached 500 in the first half of 2015, El Sadig concluded.