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



## **MEDIA MONITORING**

**6 August 2015**

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### **DRC**

#### **Rebels Abduct Six Muslim Clerics in DRC**

##### **NEWS STORY**

Source: News24wire

**5 August 2015** - Unidentified rebels abducted six Tanzanian Muslim clerics and their driver in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, religious authorities said on Wednesday.

The imams and their Congolese driver were kidnapped on Sunday between the villages of Rutshuru and Katwiguru in North Kivu region, Imam Musa al-Hajji Hashim, executive secretary of the region's Islamic community, told dpa.

The rebels, who are assumed to belong to the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) rebel group, meanwhile demanded a ransom payment of \$40 000 from the Islamic community, according to Hashim.

The FDLR, a Hutu rebel group from neighbouring Rwanda, has opposed Tutsi influence in eastern Congo since its formation in 2000 and regularly launches attacks against civilians in the region.

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## BURUNDI

### Gunshots heard near Burundi's national broadcaster

#### NEWS STORY

Source: Xinhua

**Bujumbura, 5 August 2015** - Several gunshot sounds were heard on Tuesday at around 10:30 a.m. local time near Burundi's national broadcaster, RTNB.

Sources told Xinhua the gunshots from the kalashnikov gun lasted for about three minutes, not far from the RTNB offices, before calm was later restored.

The incident created panic among the workers of RTNB and those of other offices situated within the same zone such as the ministry of geology and mines, sources said.

On Monday night, a vehicle was burnt down by unknown people in the urban commune of Musaga and another in Cibitoke, both respectively situated in southern and northern Bujumbura, the capital.

This comes at a time when Pierre Claver Mbonimpa, the president of the Association for the Protection of Human Rights and Incarcerated Persons (APRODH), had survived an assassination attempt in Burundian capital.

The APRODH boss was attacked after the former director general of the National Intelligence Service and former head of Burundi army, Gen. Adolphe Ndayishimiye, had been killed on Sunday.

Burundi's current political crisis dates back to April 25, 2015, when the ruling party endorsed incumbent President Pierre Nkurunziza to contest for another term, a move the opposition termed unconstitutional.

Since then, the country has witnessed a wave of street protests, a failed coup and fleeing into exile of several opposition leaders as well as continued threats by senior army officers to depose the current regime.

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## Why the crisis in Burundi is tying the African Union in knots

### OPINION

Source: The Guardian

By Simon Allison

Country is reeling after two high-profile shootings but efforts to end the standoff are troubled by the president's trump card – Somalia, says Simon Allison

**5 August 2015** - Two nights in Bujumbura, two assassination attempts on high-profile figures from opposite ends of the political spectrum. One succeeded, the other failed. Together these add up to bad news for a country reeling from weeks of street violence, as hopes for a peaceful resolution dim and the international community runs out of ideas.

Over the past few months President Pierre Nkurunziza has tightened his grip on power, culminating in his disputed re-election on 21 July. As his opponents seek to resist him, residents of the Burundian capital have become increasingly used to the sound of gunfire at night – and the reports of deaths in the morning. But even by Burundi's increasingly low standards, the attacks on two high-profile figures from opposite sides of the divide came as a shock.

The first attack was on Sunday evening. General Adolphe Nshimirimana, a colleague and confidante of the president, was attacked in his car by men in military uniforms. The general was killed, as were his bodyguards.

Nshimirimana wasn't just any old general. He was the president's right-hand man, his war buddy, perceived by many to be the power behind the throne. Whoever killed him – and speculation ranges from armed opposition to plots from within the government's inner circle itself – struck a devastating blow against the heart of the regime.

The second attack was on Monday evening. Human rights activist Pierre Claver Mbonimpa was also in his car, near his home, when he was surrounded by motorcyclists who fired into the vehicle. Mbonimpa didn't die, but he was seriously injured and rushed to hospital. It's believed his injuries are not life-threatening.

Mbonimpa wasn't just any old human rights activist (although there are precious few of them left in Burundi). "I would say he is Burundi's leading human rights activist. [He] has been threatened by all sides, but he's carried out his work regardless, and I think the authorities just can't handle that," says Human Rights Watch's Carina Tertsakian.

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Mbonimpa was also a leading critic of Nkurunziza's decision to run for a third term in office.

Whether by coincidence or design, there's something ominous about the symmetry of these assassination attempts. It's hard to escape the feeling that they presage a new and disturbing chapter. "Up until now I've been resisting the more alarmist interpretations of what's been going on, but in the last few days the situation is really spinning out of control. These two dramatic and quite shocking incidents are a sign that the violence is likely to escalate," says Tertsakian.

Her fears are echoed by the International Crisis Group's Thierry Vircoulon. "The re-election of Nkurunziza has put Burundi on the path of war," he says. "It sent the signal to the opposition that there is nothing left to negotiate and all they can do is to accept his 'victory'. As a result, the opposition is trying to unite on the political front (with the creation of an opposition coalition in Addis Ababa) and some parts of the opposition have opted for the armed struggle and decided to strike at the top of the Burundian regime's power system. The change of the pattern of violence, from street demonstrations to targeted assassinations is a clear sign of things to come."

**Intervention**

While the signs aren't good, it's important to note that the violence is still relatively small-scale and targeted. Burundi has yet to become the bloodbath some have been predicting. Comparisons with Rwanda in 1994 remain off the mark – for now.

"What you see now is really very similar to what you saw following [the] 2010 elections. But concern is that you have high-level targets, compared to mid to low-level targets previously," says Yolande Bouka, senior researcher with the Institute for Security Studies. "Until you see an escalation of violence in the street or in up-country violence, then we're not at the worst-case scenario."

Naturally, attention turns to what comes next, and specifically what can be done to prevent that worst-case scenario. Options are dangerously limited for the international community, which remains reluctant to be drawn into a costly, open-ended military intervention.

Moreover, it is hamstrung by its reliance on Burundian soldiers to keep the peace in Somalia. Amisom, the African Union Mission in Somalia, has sent 22,000 peacekeepers from around the continent to fight against al-Shabaab – and more than 5,000 of these are from Burundi.

If Nkurunziza withdrew these troops or Burundi's membership of the African Union was suspended, it would be a major blow for Amisom, the continent's flagship peacekeeping

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operation. The chances of finding any country willing and able to replace this commitment at short notice is slim. As the AU and the international community considers how to deal with Burundi, they must also consider how any action taken against Nkurunziza will negatively affect Somalia.

To complicate matters, the measures that are being taken are failing: neither the regional East African Community nor the chief mediator, Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni, have been able to make any headway in negotiations. And while the African Union has been vocal in its condemnation of the assassination attempts, its military observers – deployed only late last month – have been powerless to prevent the violence.

The last word goes to Burundian journalist Domitille Kiramvu, who reported for Deutsche Welle until she was forced out by the violence. In a moving op-ed for the German news organisation, she describes just how chaotic the situation remains – and, in these circumstances, how easily power comes and goes: “In such choppy waters, more or less everybody believes they can lay their hand on the tiller. Former henchmen who helped create the repugnant apparatus of repression now cloak themselves in innocence. Former politicians choose to remember their past deeds in a positive light, forgetting that the people rejected them for their authoritarian and tyrannical excesses. New arrivals to Burundian politics promise everybody everything... One can only hope that with the passage of time, political realism will triumph over the villainy, egotism and thoughtless speculation.”

## UGANDA

### South Sudanese withdraw from Uganda territory after skirmish

#### NEWS STORY

Source: New Vision (Uganda)

By Hudson Apunyo

**5 August 2015** - The situation has normalized at the Uganda - South Sudan border following intervention by the UPDF who marched to the border forcing the invaders to withdraw back to their territory without a serious fight.

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The army said they attacked the invaders who had camped 11km inside Ugandan territory at Ngomoromo and forced them to flee without a serious fight. The army said there was minimal fire exchange with the invaders.

The UPDF 5th Division PRO, Lt. George Musinguzi, Tuesday evening said on phone that they attacked the invaders and they fled without any resistance.

Musinguzi said there was no casualty during the skirmish. He said the UPDF recovered four motorcycles, two flags – one of Magwi County and another of South Sudan.

The army also recovered 120 rounds of ammunition, one bicycle, two empty drums,

A group of South Sudanese including armed men on Friday infiltrated Ugandan territory claiming the area is South Sudan territory.

Attempts by local leaders to convince them to withdraw fell on deaf ears as they were reported to be arrogant,

Ochen Mathew Akiya, Lamwo LCV Chairperson said on phone that the situation is now normal and there is free movement between the border.

“As we talk now there is free movement of vehicles along the road and people are relaxed in their villages.”

There was no exchange of fire, no destruction of property, and the army just marched to the border and the invaders withdrew to their country.

Ochen said the information they got is that the South Sudanese in retaliation, are torturing Ugandans who are in Pajok and Magwi.

He said this is very unfortunate because South Sudanese are freely coexisting with Ugandans inside Uganda territory.

Ochen said since Friday when they infiltrated into Uganda, they have been holding dialogue with them telling them to address their concerns to the Central Government in Juba just as they (Lamwo leaders) have addressed theirs to Kampala but they are not listening, instead they were very violent and rude.

“People have really been suffering especially those cultivating simsim in the field. They were being harassed and forced to leave their homes.” Ochen said. He said the invaders looted food stuff from the area they had occupied.

The district chairperson said people do not accept the GPS system saying it has been corrupted by Uganda to read wrong border points.

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Lamwo Woman MP Lanyero Sarah Ochieng said she was in Lamwo and witnessed lorries ferrying South Sudanese into Ugandan territory.

“They came in lorries, started slashing the place and put up makeshift huts.”

This is not the first time they are claiming part of Uganda. Last year a similar incident happened and a meeting was arranged by Okello Oryem with the South Sudan ambassador. It was discovered that South Sudanese had entered 16km inside Uganda.

Lanyero said the problem is that Uganda has not put immigration check point at the border but inside Uganda.

“As long as this is not done, the conflict will continue because the South Sudanese will continue to claim our land because they don’t think like us; they are not educated, they don’t know law and order, they don’t know how to settle disputes.”

Lanyero appealed to the government to put the check point at the border like with Kenya.

## **Uganda: South Sudan Soldiers Attack, Enter 9km into Uganda**

### NEWS STORY

Source: The Monitor

By Bill Oketch

**5 August 2015-** More than 400 people in Lamwo district have fled their homes due to rising tension resulting from border dispute between Uganda and South Sudan, according to the army.

About 200 armed South Sudanese soldiers reportedly entered nine kilometres into Uganda and put a boundary demarcation at River Limu in Lokung Sub-County last Friday.

The displaced are said to be stranded without basic necessities such as food, clothing and shelter and are living in fear of being abducted or killed. Others are now staying with friends and relatives.

The UPDF 5th Division spokesperson, Lt George Musinguzi, has confirmed the development.

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"We have been invaded by South Sudanese and they have entered into Uganda by 9kms," Lt Musinguzi told Daily Monitor on Monday.

He added: "Women and children are suffering in the camps here at Ngomoromo."

South Sudanese soldiers are claiming the area is theirs and are threatening to extend it up to 14kms into Lamwo again.

Lt Musinguzi estimated the attackers to be between 200 and 300.

"When our people tried to talk to them, they refused and instead gave us only three days to evacuate the area," he said.

He said UPDF was doing everything possible to protect the territorial integrity of Uganda as enshrined in the Constitution.

"We have deployed our troops at the border, we are serious and more forces are coming in. If they don't retreat by tomorrow (Tuesday), we are going to attack them," he warned.

## CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

### Security in Central Africa improves, but situation remains fragile: UN envoy

#### NEWS STORY

Source: UN News Centre

**6 August 2015** - Political progress combined with the deployment of United Nations peacekeepers in nearly 40 localities have contributed to the improvement of the overall security situation in Central African Republic (CAR), which nonetheless remains precarious, the top UN envoy in the country told the Security Council on Wednesday.

"The current improvement of the situation on the ground has allowed internally displaced persons (IDPs) to return and the economic activity to recover," said Babacar Gaye, the Secretary-General's Special Representative and head of the UN peacekeeping mission, known as MINUSCA.

Gaye noted that many parts of CAR are still targeted by armed groups. "MINUSCA often reports harassment, racketeering, arbitrary detention and serious violations of



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human rights such as inhuman treatments in cases of witchcraft accusations,” he stated.

In the western part of the country, a recent increase of violent incidents on the main road between the capital, Bangui, and Cameroon has been of concern, said Gaye, noting that since May, three peacekeepers were injured in the area, and on 18 July, gunmen opened fire on a World Food Programme vehicle escorted by MINUSCA, killing a driver.

In the centre of the country, clashes between the former Séléka and anti-Balaka groups continue to pose threats for the local populations, while in eastern CAR, the ex-Séléka continue to have a significant military presence. In addition, the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) continues to operate in the south-eastern part of the country.

“MINUSCA is establishing three temporary operating bases in this area to further limit the LRA’s ability to operate,” the Special Representative said.

“Security is gradually improving in Bangui, where signs of normal life lend a sense of confidence and gradual returns from the airport IDP camp to other areas of the city indicate a positive, but fragile, trend,” he went on.

Despite the Mission’s efforts, the humanitarian situation remains a significant concern, he acknowledged, with more than 2.7 million people in need of assistance, some 450,000 refugees, and close to 400,000 displaced persons inside the country.

He added, “However, only 30 per cent of the humanitarian appeal has been funded. Against this background, I urge Member States to sustain the positive developments in the country by responding to the humanitarian appeal.”

At the political level, the envoy continued, the main success of the recently held Bangui Forum is the “spirit of dialogue, inclusivity, and the sense that the good of the country eventually prevail.”

He welcomed the UN Peacebuilding Fund’s support of \$10 million that will be allocated to priorities identified by the Forum.

Against this backdrop, the recent vote of the National Transition Council to deprive the refugees from their right to vote represents an alarming step back and a reminder that more effort should be focused on reconciliation, he emphasized.

After the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) decided to consider positively an extension of the CAR political transition until the end of 2015, the CAR authorities announced the following electoral calendar: a constitutional referendum on 4

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October, the first round of presidential and legislative elections on 18 October, and a second round on 22 November.

In the meantime, 330,000 voters have registered, primarily in Bangui, and the process is getting underway in the rest of the country. Restoration of State authority and the electoral process are being supported by MINUSCA through the provision of transport, training and administrative kits.

Noting a remaining \$11 million funding gap to close the electoral budget, Gaye called on international donors to make additional commitments to this “critical element” of the peace process.

He made a similar appeal to support the Special Criminal Court that was established by the transitional authorities to investigate serious crimes committed since 1 January 2003.

Despite progress towards voluntary disarmament of the ex-Séléka in Bangui, MINUSCA has yet to disarm the combatants throughout the country.

“Indeed, most of the signatories would like to respect their commitment as per the agreement, but recent political developments have raised doubts, in particular among the ex-Séléka,” he warned.

In the meantime, MINUSCA is working closely with the transitional authorities to move the process forward in order to establish a situation conducive to “calm and transparent elections,” the envoy stated.

## **UN Security Council says Central Africa must let refugees vote**

### **NEWS STORY**

Source: Times Live (<http://www.timeslive.co.za/africa/2015/08/05/UN-Security-Council-says-Central-Africa-must-let-refugees-vote>)

**5 August 2015** - The UN Security Council said Wednesday that refugees from the Central African Republic must be allowed to vote in key elections set for October, the first since the country descended into bloodshed in 2013.

The country's transitional authorities have rejected a draft electoral bill that would allow tens of thousands of refugees, most of whom are Muslims driven from their homes, to vote by absentee ballot.

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"Those who are out of the country should be able to vote within the country. It should include every citizen of the Central African Republic," Nigerian Ambassador Joy Ogwu told reporters following a council meeting.

The 15-member council agreed in a unanimous statement that the "absolute priority is the organization of elections which should be inclusive."

Presidential and parliamentary elections are set for October 18 in the Central African Republic, which exploded into sectarian violence following a 2013 coup that pitted mainly Muslim rebels against Christian militias.

Security remains fragile in the impoverished former French colony where the long-delayed elections are shaping up as a test for the prospects of reconciliation.

UN envoy Babacar Gaye, who also heads the MINUSCA peacekeeping force in the Central African Republic, told the council that \$11 million was needed to fund preparations for the elections.

About 478,000 people out of two million potential voters have registered to vote, Gaye said.

But the country's electoral authorities have yet to register potential voters among the 400,000 refugees who fled to Chad and other neighboring countries, he said. Up to 85 percent of the refugees are Muslim.

"I am confident that the refugees will participate in these elections," Gaye told reporters.

"It is an important indicator for the credibility of these elections."

The envoy appealed for donor funding to shore up efforts to disarm rebel groups and urged CAR's authorities to set up truth committees to promote reconciliation.

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## KENYA

### Over 300 killed in Kenya ethnic clashes in 2015: UN

#### NEWS STORY

Source: AFP

**Nairobi, 5 August 2015** - At least 310 Kenyans have been killed and over 215,000 forced from their homes this year in ethnic violence in northern Kenya, the UN said Wednesday.

While violence between rival groups is common in Kenya's northern Rift Valley regions, the number killed and forced to flee in the first six months of this year is already the same as the total for all of 2014.

"Violent inter-communal conflicts continued to be widespread in northern Rift Valley," the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs said in a statement.

"From January 1 to June 30, 2015, 310 people lost their lives, 195 were injured and 216,294 had been displaced as a result of unresolved border conflicts, cattle rustling and revenge attacks, competition over land and water resources, and political conflict."

Rivalries between pastoralist communities competing for scarce resources, such as livestock and water, are worsened by easy access to automatic weapons and the absence of state security officers.

The worst-hit areas were the northern regions of Turkana, Baringo, Samburu, Marsabit and Isiolo.

Some of the worst violence has been between the Pokot and Turkana communities, as well as between the Turkana and Samburu peoples.

In May, some 75 people were killed in just four days of cattle raids and revenge attacks.

In 2014, 310 people were killed, 214 wounded and 220,000 displaced, according to the UN.

The report comes as several top Kenyan athletes -- including former world marathon record holders Wilson Kipsang and Tegla Loroupe -- head to the finish line of a 840-kilometre (522-mile) "Walk for Peace" against ethnic violence.

Ethiopian running legend Haile Gebrselassie will join the walkers as they complete the 22-day trek through some of the hardest-hit areas, due to end on Thursday.

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Ethiopia borders northern Kenya, and armed cattle herders launch raids either side of the porous frontier.

## SOUTH SUDAN

### South Sudan opposition figure blocked from travelling to peace talks

#### NEWS STORY

Source: Reuters

**5 August 2015** - A South Sudanese opposition leader who has been a leading critic of President Salva Kiir said on Wednesday he was barred from boarding a plane to attend peace talks in Ethiopia.

Lam Akol, whose Shilluk ethnic group say they have been sidelined for years, said the IGAD East African regional bloc had invited him to peace talks but he was blocked from boarding the flight from the capital Juba to Addis Ababa.

"Unfortunately, a major general of the police told us that he has directives from the Presidency that the leaders of political parties are not allowed to travel without the permission from the presidency," Akol told Reuters.

Awen Riek, speaking for the president's office, said the government had no information that Akol's party had been invited to the talks.

A political crisis in South Sudan in late 2013 sparked fighting that reopened ethnic fault lines between Kiir's Dinka people and ethnic Nuer forces.

Other ethnic groups, such as Akol's Shilluk, say they have been excluded from peace talks. The talks have made glacial progress and ceasefire agreements have been broken repeatedly.

Akol, a foreign minister of South Sudan when it was a semi-autonomous region before independence in 2011, formed his SPLM-DC party after breaking away from the ruling SPLM. He criticised the scrapping of elections that were due in June and opposed the extension of Kiir's term in office by three years.

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## **S. Sudan has not rejected peace deal: IGAD source**

### NEWS STORY

Source: <http://www.worldbulletin.net/news/162848/s-sudan-has-not-rejected-peace-deal-igad-source>

### **IGAD source dismisses recent media reports that South Sudan government had rejected terms of proposed peace agreement**

**5 August 2015** - A source with the Intergovernmental Authority for Development (IGAD) on Wednesday dismissed media reports that Juba had rejected the terms of an IGAD-proposed peace deal aimed at resolving South Sudan's ongoing conflict.

"This is just propaganda," the source, speaking anonymously, said. "IGAD hasn't formally received anything from the South Sudanese government."

There was "no reason," the source added, why either side would reject the proposal, "90 percent of which is based on the outcome of 19 months of negotiations."

IGAD, he went on to say, would advise negotiators from both sides to come to Addis Ababa on the appointed date and begin talks on a proposed "compromise agreement".

IGAD is an East Africa regional bloc based in Djibouti, which for over one year has been mediating South Sudan's ongoing political conflict.

Following the failure of earlier ceasefire proposals, IGAD recently launched "IGAD-Plus," a new initiative that brought a number of non-IGAD African states – along with several international actors – into the mediation process.

Under the auspices of IGAD-Plus, a "compromise agreement" was recently tabled calling on both sides of the conflict to meet for talks in Addis Ababa on Thursday.

The initiative gives negotiators until Aug. 17 to conclude a final peace deal.

In his recent visit to Ethiopia, U.S. President Barack Obama met with leaders of IGAD, to whom he reiterated the U.S. position that the Aug. 17 deadline must be respected.

South Sudan, which seceded from Sudan in 2011 to become its own country, has been shaken by violence since late 2013, when President Salva Kiir accused Riek Machar, his sacked vice-president, of leading a failed coup attempt against his regime.

Since then, tens of thousands of people have reportedly been killed in fighting between government troops and rebel forces loyal to Machar, while hundreds of thousands of others have been forced to seek refuge in displacement camps across the country.

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## South Sudan Peace Talks to Resume as Mid-August Deadline Looms

### NEWS STORY

Source: Bloomberg Business

**5 August 2015** - South Sudan's government delegation is traveling to Ethiopia to resume talks to end a 19-month civil war, officials said, less than two weeks before a regional deadline for agreeing on a peace deal.

Officials will travel Wednesday afternoon and have prepared a "negotiating position" based on proposals made by East African mediators to end fighting between rebels and government forces, Information Minister Michael Makuei Lueth said by phone from the capital, Juba.

The government can't accept proposals to give rebel leader and ex-Vice President Riek Machar 53 percent of leadership positions in three oil-rich northern states, nor issues of demilitarization, Foreign Ministry spokesman Mawien Makol Arik said by phone.

"We made our amendments and this is what the negotiators are going to discuss," he said, without giving further details. The new power-sharing proposal was one of the major components of the accord prepared by the seven-nation Intergovernmental Authority on Development.

Fighting that erupted in South Sudan in December 2013 has left tens of thousands of people dead and more than 2 million displaced, according to the United Nations. The mediators have set Aug. 17 as the deadline to reach an agreement.

## South Sudan: Another Newspaper Forced to Close

### NEWS STORY

Source: VOA

**5 August 2015** - South Sudan's National Security Service has shut down the Arabic-language Al Rai newspaper, the second paper and third media group to be ordered to cease operations in the space of a few days.

Al Rai's editor-in-chief, Michael Wazir, confirmed to South Sudan in Focus that the paper was ordered over the weekend to cease operations. Wazir was unwilling to go into detail about the closure, saying he is working with the government to try to resolve any issues they have with Al Rai so that the newspaper can resume publication.



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Alfred Taban, the head of the Association for Media Development in South Sudan (AMDISS), said the shutdown was reportedly ordered after an Al Rai board member went to Nairobi to join Riek Machar's SPLM-in-Opposition (SPLM-IO) group.

Taban said government sources told AMDISS that the paper was ordered to cease operations because a media house affiliated with the SPLM-IO cannot be allowed to operate in South Sudan.

Information Minister Michael Makuei was unavailable for comment.

### **Silencing dissent?**

The announcement that Al Rai has been shut down by the government came hours after popular English-language daily, The Citizen, was ordered by the National Security Service to cease publication.

Dutch media group Free Voice was also told on Tuesday to shutter its compound in Juba and halt operations.

South Sudan in Focus journalists work from the Free Voice compound.

No reasons have been given for any of the orders to close.

In a statement released Wednesday, AMDISS said the forced closure of Al Rai was "a clear indication of press censorship, intimidation and violation of media laws, which guarantee the freedom of expression, press and media."

Three media laws that were signed last year by President Salva Kiir are supposed to make it easier for journalists to access information and guarantee their right to work without interference or censorship.

But reporters and rights groups say that journalists' rights have been severely eroded since South Sudan plunged into conflict in December 2013.

Media rights group the Committee to Protect Journalists' (CPJ) East Africa researcher Tom Rhodes said the latest crackdown on the media appears to be targeting groups that have been critical of President Kiir's administration or carried reports that are not to the government's liking.

Rhodes said that by shutting down media groups, the government is violating South Sudan's constitution, which guarantees freedom of speech.



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## SUDAN

### Sudan opposition alliance rejects dialogue until war stops in Two Areas

#### NEWS STORY

Source: Radio Tamazuj

**Khartoum, 5 August 2015** - An alliance of Sudanese opposition political parties has reiterated its position not to engage in talks with the current government before the ongoing war is brought to an end in South Kordofan and Blue Nile States.

Tariq Abdel-Majid, rapporteur of the alliance, told Radio Tamazuj that they are still rejecting any talks with the ruling National Congress Party (NCP) if the ongoing war does not stop in South Kordofan and Blue Nile states.

He pointed out that laws restricting political freedoms should also be abolished and that political prisoners must also be released. "A dialogue that will not result in the dissolution of this totalitarian system and a transitional government of national unity is not a fruitful dialogue," he said.

"The transitional government will facilitate a constitutional conference for the permanent constitution," he added.

Sudan's First Vice president Bakri Hassan Saleh on Monday said that his government will provide security guarantees for leaders of the Sudanese Revolutionary Forces (SRF) who will be participating in the National Dialogue inside Sudan.

"We will sit down with them to discuss the nature of the guarantees which they may demand from the government," he said.

President Omar al-Bashir is scheduled to hold a meeting with the national dialogue mechanism known as "7+7" and political parties today to discuss preparations for the national dialogue.

## TANZANIA

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## Tanzania: Opposition parties field Lowassa joint candidate

### NEWS STORY

Source: Reuters

**5 August 2015** - Tanzania's four main opposition parties have named former prime minister Edward Lowassa – once seen as a leading contender for the ruling party nomination – as their joint presidential candidate ahead of October's general election.

The Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) party of outgoing President Jakaya Kikwete has ruled Tanzania since independence in 1961. The opposition's nomination of Lowassa, who crossed party lines last week, could shake up the political landscape.

"I have come to join you for a reason, to remove CCM from power," Lowassa told cheering delegates after being named by the coalition, including CHADEMA – Tanzania's biggest opposition party – in Tanzania's commercial capital, Dar es Salaam.

On July 12, CCM instead nominated Works Minister John Magufuli, a long-serving cabinet minister from the gold-rich lake zone area, the east African state's biggest electoral bloc.

Tanzania has been one of Africa's most politically stable nations, spared of the sort of strife raging in other parts of the continent where some presidents have sought third terms despite constitutional restrictions.

Tanzania's next leader is expected to help develop the country's nascent hydrocarbons industry. Tanzania is estimated to have 53.2 trillion cubic feet (tcf) of gas reserves off its southern coast.

Lowassa, 61, had been seen as a frontrunner in CCM's presidential nomination race, and it caught many by surprise that he was not included in the short list of candidates.

There was speculation that past graft allegations could have hurt Lowassa among CCM leadership. The government was thrown into turmoil earlier this year after a graft scandal in the energy ministry led to the ouster of several top CCM officials, including the attorney general and energy minister.

Lowassa quit as premier in 2008 after a parliamentary investigation linked him to irregularities in a government contract for emergency power generation. Lowassa was never charged with a crime and he has denied wrongdoing.

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The opposition CHADEMA party had previously named Lowassa in its 'List of Shame' of government leaders with corruption allegations, but has now rallied behind the ex-premier saying the allegations against him were never proven.

## **Tanzania election race takes a leaf from Senegal, Nigeria and Kenya; unexpectedly hots up**

### OPINION

Source: Mail & Guardian Africa

### **Coalition politics in Africa are rarely on ideology, but on the single mission of kicking out a dominant ruling party, or retaining power**

**5 August 2015** - THE country's ruling party has dominated politics since modern Tanzania's formation in 1964, but the fallout from the nomination for its presidential flag bearer has kicked up some dust, shaking up a race that was shaping up to be another coronation for the power holders.

Tanzania's four main opposition parties chose ex-prime minister Edward Lowassa as a joint presidential candidate Tuesday, three months ahead of a general election scheduled for October 25.

The deep-pocketed Lowassa, 61, was the east African country's prime minister between 2005 and 2008, when he resigned over corruption allegations, charges he denied.

He defected last week from the ruling Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) party to join the opposition Chadema party, reserving some choice words for his former camp.

Read: Season of u-turns in African politics: Jilted Tanzania ex-PM new opposition chief, rival jumps in bed with Nkurunziza.

He will run for the top post for Chadema, as well as the Civic United Front (CUF), NCCR-Mageuzi and the National League for Democracy (NLD).

Lowassa had joined the race earlier this month to run as the CCM's presidential candidate, where he was seen as a frontrunner among 42 candidates, but lost out to government minister John Magufuli.

Following his defeat, Lowassa claimed the ruling party was "infested with leaders who are dictators, undemocratic and surrounded with greedy power mongers."

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The four parties will also field joint candidates for parliamentary and council seats.

“Ours is the coalition of victory. We are out to take over from CCM,” Chadema national chairman Freeman Mbowe told a meeting of the party.

“Our party’s central committee nominated Lowassa to run for president last week, and the decision was endorsed by the national congress.”

President Jakaya Kikwete cannot stand again after serving the two term limit. Tanzania is one of the few countries in Africa where incumbents have not tried to remove term limits. Neighbouring Uganda scrapped them in 2005, and Rwanda is also making moves to do so.

But Lowassa’s nomination was at the expense of Chadema’s former presumed flagbearer, Willibrod Slaa, who was sent on “leave”, according to Tanzanian English language daily The Citizen.

Mbowe said Slaa had not backed Lowassa’s pick and with Chadema saying “no one is bigger than the party”, the paper reported, it suggests it was an acrimonious parting of ways.

Slaa has yet to speak on the rapid turn of events, and has skipped a number of Chadema events in the last few weeks, but he will have been aghast at how he has been cast aside for the new man, and a former CCM stalwart at that whom his party liked to portray as the epitome of corruption.

But it is in keeping with African opposition politics, where often desperate attempts to dislodge a dominant party leave the putative candidates on the sidelines, many who have nurtured their parties through lean times.

Many times, the new banner bearer is often a former ruling party member.

In 2002 the long reign of the Kenya African National Union (Kanu) came to an end after the opposition coalition dislodged Daniel arap Moi’s protégé, Uhuru Kenyatta.

The elevation of Kenyatta over other perceived frontrunners in Kanu saw a flurry of political realignments that led to the emergence of the National Rainbow Coalition (NARC), allowing Mwai Kibaki a landslide win against the party that had led for nearly four decades since the country’s independence.

Kibaki had been a former rank-and-file member of Kanu and once forecast the party would not be toppled for decades.

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In Senegal, Macky Sall in 2008 founded his own party, which four years later saw him defeat incumbent Abdoulaye Wade in two rounds, after snagging the backing of the other opposition leaders.

A long-time member of the ruling PDS party, Sall had been Wade's prime minister for three years to 2007, but the two fell out after it was perceived that the president was grooming his son to take over.

In Nigeria, president Muhammadu Buhari only came to power on the ticket of a coalition that dethroned the ruling People's Democratic Party (PDP) in March.

Buhari, a former military ruler, tried his electoral luck three times before, but repeatedly came up empty.

But it was the ticket of the All Progressives Congress (APC), an alliance of the three biggest opposition party, which saw him finally clinch the elusive presidency. The APC coalition, a conservative-leaning grouping, had only existed for two years, with its unitary goal being to better the PDP.

Notably, the losing ruling party candidates in Senegal, Nigeria and Kenya both conceded early, a rare event on the continent. But it would be difficult to foresee a CCM loss in Tanzania, the party is too entrenched and the country's electoral commission doesn't come anywhere to independent as in Nigeria or Ghana, but the new coalition arrayed against it will certainly have livened up the competition.

The reality also remains that Lowassa has been a ruling party insider for decades, and will only be batting from the other side for the purpose of dislodging CCM.

As such it would add credence to the observation that coalition politics in Africa are rarely on ideology, whether social or economic, but for the single-purpose of ascending to power.

In other countries such as Gabon, Burundi, Ethiopia, South Africa and Rwanda, the ruling party is a coalition behemoth that sucks up all the political oxygen, co-opting the major players to retain a strangle-hold on power.