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



MEDIA MONITORING

20 November 2014

Congo-Kinshasa: Kinshasa qualifie d'«ingérence inacceptable» un rapport de HRW

Source: Radio France Internationale

Une opération policière a conduit à la mort de 51 jeunes en RDC selon HRW

Des policiers congolais participant à l'Opération Likofi dans la capitale de la RD Congo, Kinshasa, le 2 décembre 2013

19 novembre 2014 - La publication mardi d'un rapport de l'ONG Human Rights Watch accusant la police congolaise d'exécutions a fait réagir les autorités. Le porte-parole du gouvernement Lambert Mende a dénoncé une « ingérence inacceptable », et estimé que HRW n'apporte pas de preuves pour étayer ses accusations.

Après les Nations unies il y a un mois, c'était mardi au tour de l'organisation de protection des droits de l'homme HRW de publier un rapport pour s'inquiéter de dérives de la police.

L'ONG accuse des policiers d'avoir exécuté 51 citoyens congolais, et fait disparaître 33 autres au cours d'une opération de lutte contre la délinquance menée de novembre 2013 à février 2014 à Kinshasa.

« C'est à nous de décider qui est coupable et qui est innocent »

Le porte-parole du gouvernement congolais Lambert Mende voit dans ce rapport une « ingérence inacceptable ».

Pour les autorités congolaises, le fait que Human Rights Watch demande à ce que le commandant de l'opération policière - le général Celestin Kanyama - soit suspendu et qu'une enquête soit ouverte passe mal.

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« De quel droit une ONG demande-t-elle à un Etat de suspendre un responsable, sans fournir des preuves de ce qu'elle avance ? », a réagi Lambert Mende, joint par téléphone par RFI, ajoutant : « C'est à nous de décider qui est coupable et qui est innocent. »

Le porte-parole du gouvernement affirme qu'aucun élément impliquant directement le général Kanyama dans ces exécutions sommaires n'a été trouvé à ce jour.

HRW, dans son rapport, fait pourtant état de témoignages concordants de policiers, qui décrivent une opération « bien organisée » au cours de laquelle le général Kanyama aurait donné des ordres pour désigner qui devait être tué. Ces témoignages ont été soumis aux autorités.

Sanctions

Autre critique : le porte-parole du gouvernement affirme que HRW ne prend pas en compte les mesures prises par les autorités. Une commission d'enquête a en effet été créée en septembre. Selon Lambert Mende, 34 policiers ont été sanctionnés, avec des condamnations allant d'un an de prison à la peine de mort.

Mais l'organisation de protection des droits de l'homme cite dans son rapport six magistrats chargés des enquêtes sur l'opération policière ; selon eux, huit policiers ont bien été condamnés pour homicide, mais aucun d'entre eux ne travaillait sur l'opération Likofi. Ces homicides auraient été commis dans d'autres circonstances.

Le rapport de l'ONU publié il y a un mois et s'inquiétant également de violences policières avait déjà provoqué la colère de Kinshasa. En réaction, les autorités avaient expulsé le représentant du bureau des Droits de l'homme des Nations unies en RDC.

Kagame Pushes for Quick End to Dependence on Foreign Aid

Source: Digital Journal

Rwanda's President Paul Kagame, who spent nearly a week in the countryside, is keeping the momentum towards self-reliance, pushing the country to embrace the culture of hard-work and increase productivity to help cutback on foreign aid.

KIREHA, 16 November 2014 - Rwanda's President Paul Kagame, who spent nearly a week in the countryside, is keeping the momentum towards self-reliance, pushing the country to embrace the culture of hard-work and increase productivity to help cutback on foreign aid.

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Kagame who visited rural communities - mostly farmers, and inspected development projects deep away from urban centers, said Rwandans must produce surplus food to supply markets to increase household income.

"We should not be fed," he said, adding that agriculture productivity will help Rwanda achieve self-reliance, as the crowd of thousands cheered.

"As leaders, we pledge to facilitate maximum productivity," Kagame said. The President also repeated his signature message, asking Rwandans not to settle for anything mediocre.

Earlier in the week, after visiting Gasabo District, as part of his regular outreach program, he headed to Nyagatare District in the Eastern Province. On Friday, the president moved to Kirehe District, bordering Tanzania. Kagame visited Cyunuzi marshland, a 630ha rice-field that has created more than 3000 on-farm jobs.

The President praised exemplary farmers, advising others to emulate. The rice-field he visited is capable of producing 12tons per hectare, but it is currently producing four tons.

Meanwhile, the Eastern Province has experienced rapid growth. Kirehe, where the President visited, had no electricity at all, five years ago. Odette Uwamariya, the provincial governor, said the district has now rolled electricity supply to 17% of the population. In Some sectors, every home is connected to the grid.

"There is visible progress in the last 5 years," Kagame said, committing government investment into agriculture and infrastructure, including electricity expansion to allow more economic growth.

Rwanda spends 14% of the national budget into rural development, of which 70% goes into agriculture and social protection programs. Nearly 15 years ago, Rwanda depended virtually on donors to finance its budget. But in the nearly \$2billion budget for 2014/15, up to 65 per cent of expenditure will come from taxes.

Before leaving the region, President Kagame told the youths who had entertained the crowd that their generation should never be dependent on anyone but themselves.

"The children who sang for us here today should grow up to be in a position to help others not to be dependent on others," Kagame said.

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Rwandan UN Ebola Envoy Passes On in Guinea

Source: The New Times (Rwanda)

Rwanda's UN official Marcel Kanyankore Rudasingwa, the Ebola Crisis Manager in Guinea, passed on this afternoon in the Guinean capital of Conakry.

This has been confirmed by Ministry of Health spokesperson Nathan Mugume.

According to Jeune Afrique correspondent Pierre Boisselet, the UN says he died of "non-Ebola causes".

Rudasingwa was, until his appointment on October 9, 2014, the Unicef Representative in Kenya.

It was not immediately clear whether he had been ill.

Born in 1955 in Rwanda, Rudasingwa graduated from Uganda's Makerere University in 1979 with a Bachelor's Degree in languages and communication. He undertook additional studies in psychology and teaching.

In an exclusive interview with The New Times at the beginning of his anti-Ebola assignment last month, he pledged to do everything possible to help the world contain the deadly virus which has killed an estimated 5000 people in the West African countries of Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone.

"Notwithstanding the evident challenge and the enormity of the work, I feel very prepared mainly because I am convinced that the success of this mission is and will continue to receive unwavering support of the international community...I feel a sense of gratification, honour as well as a strong resolve to make my contribution and continue to serve humanity which I have done for over 20 years now," he said at the time.

Rudasingwa is survived by a wife and two children.

UNHCR begins relocating 15,000 S. Sudanese refugees in Ethiopia

Sudan Tribune (Paris)

Addis Ababa, 18 November 2014 – The United Nations refugee agency (UNHCR) said it started relocating by boat some 15,000 South Sudan refugees stranded at the border for months after crossing into Ethiopia after fleeing fighting in the young nation.

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On Monday, a first group of 125 refugees left Matar way station in western Ethiopia and were expected to arrive at Pugnido refugee camp on Tuesday. Pugnido camp in Gambella region currently shelters about 45,000 refugees, mostly from South Sudan.

Two speed boats were used for the first round relocation operation, including one for transporting passengers and the other to carry luggage and their other belongings.

29 other refugees who need special attention, including the blind, pregnant women, nursing mothers and the elderly unable to travel by boat, will be flown by helicopter.

The refugees, UNHCR said, had been stranded at the borders close to South Sudan after the Nip Nip camp, to which they were initially heading, suddenly flooded as a result of heavy seasonal rains and the Baro River bursting its banks last August.

The refugees were provided water, high energy biscuits, and relief items such as blankets as they boarded the boats wearing life jackets.

UNHCR will continue similar relocation operation using the same route.

According to UNHCR, about 100 South Sudanese refugees continue to cross into Ethiopia every day mainly through the Burbiey border entry point from South Sudan's Upper Nile and Jonglei states.

"The new arrivals cite insecurity, including sporadic fighting between rival warring factions amid food insecurity as reasons for their flight," said UNHCR spokesperson, Karin De Gruijl.

"A multi-agency response led by the government of Ethiopia and UNHCR is providing protection and assistance to these refugees", added Gruijl.

Since conflict between South Sudan government forces and rebels led by former vice president Riek Machar broke out in mid-December 2013, more than 190,000 South Sudanese refugees have sought refuge in Ethiopia's Gambella region.

Ethiopia is currently Africa's largest refugee hosting nation with more than 600,000 refugees.

Rwanda: un témoin de l'attentat contre Habyarimana disparaît au Kenya

Source: Jeune Afrique

19 novembre 2014 - Un Rwandais qui devait témoigner dans l'enquête française sur l'attentat contre l'avion de l'ex-président rwandais Juvénal Habyarimana, considéré

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comme le signal déclencheur du génocide de 1994, a récemment disparu au Kenya, a indiqué mercredi à l'AFP son avocat.

Les faits se sont produits dans la nuit de jeudi à vendredi à Nairobi. Emile Gafirita a été menotté et emmené par des inconnus, a précisé à l'AFP son avocat français, François Cantier, confirmant une information de la radio française RFI.

"La police kényane a démenti son arrestation, il a manifestement été enlevé", a expliqué l'avocat français. "Ma seule préoccupation est qu'on le laisse en vie et qu'on le libère".

Cette disparition intervient alors que des témoins dans cette enquête sensible ont déjà été assassinés ou visés par des tentatives de meurtre.

L'attentat du 6 avril 1994, objet d'une instruction des juges antiterroristes parisiens Marc Trevidic et Nathalie Poux, est considéré comme l'événement déclencheur du génocide qui a fait au moins 800. 000 morts en trois mois en 1994, essentiellement parmi la minorité tutsi.

16 ans après l'ouverture de l'enquête, les deux magistrats avaient signifié début juillet la fin de leurs investigations. Mais ils ont rouvert après l'été la procédure, décision prise notamment dans le but d'entendre M. Gafirita.

"Il m'avait contacté en me disant qu'il souhaitait témoigner et j'ai pris contact avec les juges", a expliqué M. Cantier, qui a précisé que son client devait être entendu début décembre dans cette enquête.

"Cet homme n'est pas un aimable fantaisiste. S'ils ont décidé de l'entendre, de rouvrir l'information, c'est qu'ils ont considéré que son témoignage était intéressant", a-t-il ajouté.

Dans cette enquête, ouverte en France car l'équipage de l'avion présidentiel était français, l'ancien juge d'instruction Jean-Louis Bruguière avait lancé neuf mandats d'arrêt contre des proches de l'actuel président rwandais Paul Kagamé, ancien chef de la rébellion tutsi du Front patriotique rwandais (FPR).

Le magistrat soupçonnait un commando du FPR de s'être infiltré à travers le dispositif des Forces armées rwandaises (FAR) pour abattre l'avion.

Sept des personnes visées ont été mises en examen entre 2008 et 2010. Le huitième, entré en dissidence, est actuellement réfugié en Afrique du Sud, tandis que le dernier serait décédé.

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Une commission d'enquête rwandaise a au contraire imputé la responsabilité de l'attentat aux extrémistes "Hutu Power" des FAR, qui auraient voulu se débarrasser du président Habyarimana, jugé trop modéré, pour faciliter un coup d'Etat.

Kigali s'était estimé conforté par les expertises techniques présentées début 2012 par les juges d'instruction, qui avaient cité comme zone de tir des missiles "la plus probable" un camp alors tenu par la garde présidentielle rwandaise.

Pour les parties civiles, ces expertises n'offrent aucune certitude sur l'identité des tireurs et des commanditaires. Les juges d'instruction ont rejeté en 2013 une demande de non-lieu faite par les mis en examen.

Rwanda : début d'une enquête sur le rôle de la BBC dans le génocide de 1994

Source: Agence de presse Xinhua

18 novembre 2014 - Une commission du gouvernement rwandais débutera mercredi une audience publique sur le rôle joué par la BBC le génocide de 1994, a révélé lundi le Parlement rwandais.

Cette commission, nommée récemment par le gouvernement rwandais, permettra à différents témoins de déclarer ce qu'ils savent sur les encouragements à la division qu'aurait pu prodiguer cette chaîne britannique.

La commission, composée de cinq experts en droit et en communication ainsi que de représentants de la société civile, sera présidée par l'ex-procureur général du Rwanda Martin Ngoga.

Cette audience fait suite à des plaintes de "la population locale" accusant la chaîne d'information britannique d'avoir incité à la haine, au déni de génocide et à la division dans ce pays d'Afrique centrale.

Cette équipe aura pour mission de faire la lumière sur le comportement des médias britanniques suite à des plaintes pour incitation à la haine, au divisionnisme, au déni de génocide et au révisionnisme de la part de la chaîne britannique, selon le Parlement.

La BBC a été suspendue de diffusion au Rwanda suite à un documentaire controversé, "Rwanda's Untold story" (l'histoire secrète du Rwanda), diffusé en fin octobre par la chaîne britannique également accusé d'autres infractions à l'éthique journalistique depuis un certain nombre d'années.

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D'après ce communiqué, certains éléments écrits et diffusés impliquant la BBC seront mis à la disposition de cette commission d'enquête qui les examinera "objectivement" lors de ses procédures.

Certaines accusations ont été portées à l'encontre de la BBC, pour sa position à l'égard du génocide au Rwanda, suite à l'adoption par le Parlement d'une résolution appelant le gouvernement à interdire la BBC et à entamer des poursuites pour "dénigrement de génocide" à l'encontre du diffuseur et producteur d'un documentaire télévisé controversé sur le génocide de 1994 qui a ciblé l'ethnie Tutsi et fait des millions de morts.

Le travail de cette commission consistera semble-t-il à examiner tous ces aspects par des témoignages et audiences de personnalités qui devraient venir répondre aux questions des experts.

La BBC est diffusée dans la région des Grands Lacs depuis 1994, en langues Kinyarwanda et Kirundi, cependant le gouvernement rwandais l'avait déjà suspendue temporairement en 2009, suite à un "discours inacceptable" diffusé par la chaîne de télévision britannique concernant le génocide des Tutsis dans ce pays d'Afrique Centrale.

Kenyan police arrest 109 at mosques, seize explosives

Source: Reuters

By Joseph Akwiri

Mombasa, 19 November 2014 - Kenyan police found explosives at three mosques in Mombasa on Wednesday and arrested 109 people on suspicion they were undergoing militant training, in the latest in a series of raids in the port city.

Kenya is looking to break up Islamist militant networks it blames for a series of attacks in the capital Nairobi as well as along its Indian Ocean coastline, saying many of the recruits are inspired by al Shabaab, an al Qaeda-linked Somali group.

"These operations have started and will go on until all places of worship especially mosques in Mombasa are set free from terrorist and criminal elements," Robert Kitur, Mombasa County police commander, told Reuters.

"We have been gathering intelligence for a long period, and it was time to act."

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Police raided two mosques on Monday, seizing weapons and literature that they said was evidence of militant activity. The following day, a group of youths with machetes and knives killed three people.

Richard Ngatia, a local police chief, said investigators on Wednesday found three machetes at Mombasa's Mina mosque and a grenade, while two 10-liter petrol bombs and a bomb detonator were uncovered at Swafaa mosque.

"The mosques have been radicalizing youth, training and encouraging them in jihadism. We also recovered a booster used to accelerate explosions ... and literature about jihadism," Ngatia said.

Police have arrested 376 people so far during the raids, which started on Sunday, but 91 were subsequently released for lack of evidence. Prosecutors said 158 would be charged with being members of al Shabaab. Police said they were still considering what to do with the other detainees.

Al Shabaab killed at least 67 people in a gun and grenade raid on a Nairobi shopping mall last September, saying it was revenge for attacks on its fighters by Kenyan troops in Somalia.

Insecurity plagues East Africa's biggest economy, and attacks in the past year on the coast and in the capital have prompted Western nations to issue travel warnings, hitting the tourism industry, which is a big source of hard currency.

Ebola's impact on Africa economy might be less than feared - World Bank

Source: Reuters

By Joe Brock

- * Impact likely closer to \$3-\$4 billion-region's chief economist
- * African tourism has been "ravaged" by Ebola
- * Nearly half of Liberia workforce no longer working
- * Lower oil prices a concern for Africa fiscal stability

Johannesburg, 19 November 2014 - The cost of the Ebola epidemic for Sub-Saharan Africa's economy is likely to be closer to \$3 billion-\$4 billion and not the worst-case scenario of \$32 billion, the World Bank's chief economist for the continent said on Wednesday.

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Francisco Ferreira said in a lecture in Johannesburg that successful containment of Ebola in some West African countries made the gloomiest forecasts less likely, but the economic damage could still escalate if there was any complacency.

"The risk of the highest case of economic impact of Ebola has been reduced because of the success of containment in some countries. It has not gone to zero because a great level of preparedness and focus is still needed," Ferreira said.

"I would say the outlook has moved closer to the lower case of \$3-\$4 billion, than the upper case," he said.

In a report in October, the World Bank said that if the Ebola epidemic spread significantly outside the epicenter states of Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia, the potential cost for Africa in disrupted cross-border trade, supply chains and tourism could amount to tens of billions of dollars.

One specific estimate provided by the bank said the regional impact could reach \$32.6 billion by the end of 2015 in the worst case scenario.

The bank said a scaled-up global response was needed to prevent this happening. Since then, the United Nations has led international efforts to send more medical personnel to the Ebola zone and increase funding to fight the worst recorded outbreak of the deadly haemorrhagic virus.

The latest WHO Ebola tally on Nov. 14 reported 5,177 deaths out of 14,413 cases, mostly in the three worst-hit countries.

IMPACT ON FOOD SECURITY, WORK

The World Bank says the impact on the three most affected economies has already been severe, hitting everything from food output to employment levels.

In Liberia, nearly half of those working when the outbreak was first detected in March no longer have jobs as of early November, according to a separate World Bank report on Wednesday, based on surveys carried out via mobile phones.

"Even those living in the most remote communities in Liberia, where Ebola has not been detected, are suffering the economic side effects of this terrible disease," Ana Revenga, Senior Director of the Poverty Global Practice at the World Bank Group, said in a statement accompanying the report.

"Relief efforts must focus not only on those directly affected by the virus, but also on those in the poorest communities for whom market access, mobility, and food security continue to get worse," she said.

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More than 90 percent of those surveyed in Liberia worried that their household would not have enough to eat.

The World Bank Group is mobilizing nearly \$1 billion in financing for the countries worst hit by the Ebola crisis.

Ferreira said that the Ebola crisis had already ravaged tourism in Africa because the "fear factor" kept visitors away from countries even where there had been no cases of the virus, like Kenya and South Africa.

He also highlighted a more than 30 percent drop in global oil prices since June as a major concern for the fiscal stability of African oil producers, particularly the continent's largest crude exporter, Nigeria.

Sudan government and rebels suspend peace talks

Source: PressTV

18 November 2014 - The Sudanese government and rebels fighting in the war-torn states of Blue Nile and South Kordofan have suspended their peace talks.

Thabo Mbeki, the African Union's chief mediator and former South African president, said on Tuesday that the week-long peace talks adjourned late last evening.

Mbeki added that the negotiating parties had shown "great seriousness" during the talks which were held in Ethiopia.

"We are really not too far from concluding the kind of peace agreements that the country needs," said Mbeki, adding, "We are very positive for the future of the negotiations."

Leaders from both sides spoke positively after the talks, with Sudan's delegation leader Ibrahim Ghandour saying, "We have moved ahead towards what we hope is concluding the peace."

Yasir Arman, the delegation leader of Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North echoed the same opinion, saying, "We are committed... to make things happen in Sudan, and we believe we are on the right track."

No date has been set for the next round of talks yet. Previous rounds of negotiations have all failed, with continuation of fighting in the two volatile states.

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Violence broke out shortly before South Sudan split from Sudan in 2011. The non-Arab armed groups are fighting over what they call neglect and discrimination by the Arab-dominated government.

More than one million people in both states have been affected by the violence.

Sudan denies U.N. access to Darfur village to check rape accusations

Source: Reuters

Khartoum, 18 November 2014 - Sudan has refused to let U.N. and African Union peacekeepers visit a village in the western Darfur region to investigate allegations of mass rape for the second time this month, saying it was skeptical about the motives for the visit.

The United Nations said Sudanese troops initially denied members of the joint peacekeeping mission, known as UNAMID, access to Tabit in north Darfur earlier this month.

The force was later allowed to visit the area and said in a statement on Nov. 10 that it had found no evidence to substantiate media reports that Sudanese soldiers had raped about 200 women and girls there.

But after that visit, Australian U.N. Ambassador Gary Quinlan, president of the Security Council this month, said the heavy presence of Sudan's military during UNAMID's interviews of alleged rape victims in Tabit had raised serious concerns. UNAMID said it intended to conduct further investigations and patrols in the area.

But Sudan's foreign ministry issued a statement late on Sunday saying it had denied UNAMID entry to the area because the mission had sought to bypass Khartoum and had gone directly to Darfuri authorities for a permit on Saturday.

"Sudan is skeptical about the motives behind the mission's insistence on a second visit to the Tabit area," the foreign ministry said.

The United Nations issued a statement on Monday saying that Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon was concerned about the fact that UNAMID was again denied access to Tabit.

"Only a full investigation by UNAMID will help shed light over these serious allegations," it said. "The Secretary-General therefore urges the Government of Sudan to grant UNAMID unfettered access, without further delay, to Tabit and its population so that these (rape) reports can be verified."

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Law and order have collapsed in much of Darfur, where mainly non-Arab rebels took up arms in 2003 against the Arab-led government in Khartoum, accusing it of discriminating against them. UNAMID has been deployed in the region since 2007.

Last month, an internal U.N. review found that UNAMID had failed to provide U.N. headquarters in New York with full reports on attacks against civilians and peacekeepers. The review had been ordered in response to media reports alleging that UNAMID intentionally covered up details of deadly attacks.

Sudan objects to African Union programme on border demarcation

Source: Radio Tamazuj

Khartoum, 19 November - The Sudanese government has rejected a programme to demarcate the disputed border between Sudan and South Sudan during a confidence-building workshop earlier this week. But they are still willing to push forward on reaching a solution.

The workshop was organised in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, by the African Union Border Programme as part of a panel headed by former South African President Thabo Mbeki.

The Sudanese state minister of the presidency said they rejected the proposal to reach a resolution in the workshop, but agreed to compile a special report at the end of the workshop on Friday.

The official added that South Sudan was cooperative on the demarcation of the common border so that the border communities can live in stability. He indicated that Khartoum is also willing to cooperate and suggested a series of meetings in the countries' capitals.

Al Rashid Haroun, the head of the Sudanese delegation, said the workshop is aimed at building confidence on border issues between the two Sudans.

He said they received information on global border trends from African experts and various joint border commissions.