



(A French general has defended France's response to the 1994 Rwandan genocide, saying his troops did not give so much as a bullet to the perpetrators and did not immediately grasp the scale of the killing, sources say.)

BURUNDI :

Burundi: la répression succède aux violences

Par RFI/le 08-02-2016

Quatre personnes, dont un jeune garçon d'une dizaine d'années qui vendait des œufs pour vivre, ont été tuées, et une vingtaine d'autres blessées dans la nuit de samedi à dimanche 7 février, dans trois attaques distinctes à la grenade à Bujumbura, dont la plus meurtrière a eu lieu dans le quartier de Kinama dans le nord de la capitale burundaise. Les actes de violence sont redevenus quasi-quotidiens depuis environ une semaine au Burundi.

Quatre morts et une vingtaine de blessés dans la nuit de samedi à dimanche, cinq autres la veille... Les attaques à la grenade, les assassinats ciblés ou encore les assauts sur des positions de police se sont multipliés depuis quelques jours au Burundi, après un début de mois de janvier plutôt calme.

Interrogé sur cette recrudescence de violence, le porte-parole de la police, Pierre Nkurikiye, qui nie l'existence de nouvelles rébellions au Burundi, refuse de les commenter. Mais un haut gradé de la police, sous couvert d'anonymat, explique qu'il ne s'agit pas d'une simple coïncidence :

« A chaque fois qu'il va y avoir une visite diplomatique importante, dit-il, les criminels armés redoublent d'activité. » Allusion à une prochaine visite de cinq chefs d'Etat et de gouvernement africains, mandatés par l'Union africaine pour tenter de convaincre le président burundais, Pierre Nkurunziza, d'accepter le déploiement d'une force d'interposition dans son pays et une reprise du

dialogue avec son opposition.

De son côté, le pouvoir burundais a accentué la répression pour tenter de ramener le calme au plus vite. Des dizaines de personnes, surtout de jeunes gens des quartiers contestataires de Bujumbura, ont été arrêtées ces derniers jours. Et la police refuse de communiquer sur leur nombre et leur sort.

Intervention ou dialogue ?

Ce pays de la région des Grands Lacs est plongé dans une profonde crise politique depuis plus de neuf mois. Cette situation est consécutive à la décision du président Pierre Nkurunziza de se représenter pour un 3e mandat de suite.

La délégation de cinq chefs d'Etat et de gouvernement désignés par l'Union africaine pour se rendre à Bujumbura, à une date qui n'a pas encore été annoncée, pour discuter avec le président Nkurunziza, tentera-t-elle de convaincre le président burundais d'accepter le déploiement d'une force de 5 000 hommes de l'Union africaine pour stabiliser le pays ?

Lundi matin, Moussa Faki Mahamat, ministre tchadien des Affaires étrangères d'Idriss Deby, nouveau président en exercice de l'Union africaine, déclarait sur nos antennes que « si jamais la situation s'aggrave, il ne faut pas hésiter » à intervenir.

Mais pour Emmanuel Issoze-Ngondet, le ministre gabonais des Affaires étrangères, qui fera partie de la délégation, la priorité doit rester le dialogue. « Le message que cette délégation de très haut niveau doit porter au président Nkurunziza est un message d'apaisement et de réconciliation. L'Union africaine a privilégié la voix du dialogue, donc le déploiement immédiat d'une opération militaire et cette délégation va amener le président Nkurunziza à ouvrir le dialogue avec les autres acteurs politiques burundais. Je pense que la délégation burundaise qui était à Addis-Abeba au cours du dernier sommet de l'Union africaine, a donné toutes les assurances pour que les circonstances puissent être créées en vue d'un dialogue constructif. Puisque le Burundi n'accepterait pas le déploiement d'une quelconque force militaire dans les circonstances actuelles. »

RWANDA :

General defends French response to Rwanda massacre

2016-02-08/news24.com

Paris - A French general has defended France's response to the 1994 Rwandan genocide, saying his troops did not give so much as a bullet to the perpetrators and did not immediately grasp the scale of the killing, sources say.

General Jean-Claude Lafourcade was questioned over claims that France's UN-mandated Operation Turquoise, which he led, left ethnic Tutsis to be slaughtered by Hutu killers in the western Bisesero hills in June 1994, sources close to the case said.

French soldiers had been deployed in Rwanda a few days earlier under UN instructions to stop the genocide that had begun in April and which three months later had left at least 800 000 people dead, most of them Tutsis.

No massacres

Lafourcade, who appeared as an "assisted witness" - meaning he has not been charged but can be summoned for questioning at any time - again refuted the accusations during lengthy hearings on January 12 and 14, the sources said.

The retired general, now 72, dismissed as "completely false" allegations that French soldiers supplied arms to the Hutu extremists.

"I will say it again here. No munitions, not even a bullet, was given by Operation Turquoise" to the Hutus, Lafourcade told a judge. "Where the French soldiers were, there were no massacres nor abuses.

"It took some time for the reality of the genocide to sink in seeing... the presence of mass graves...burned villages," he added.

There was "a general underestimation - French and international - of the involvement of local and government authorities."

Survivors in 2005 filed a complaint in France, saying the French troops had on June 27 1994 vowed to return to Bisesero, but when they came back three days later, it was too late for hundreds of Tutsis who were massacred.

Lafourcade said he was short staffed, with a unit of 120-130 soldiers and had as priority the "evacuation of the sisters of Kibuye" nuns in western Rwanda.

He was concerned about "thoughtlessly" launching patrols in the country's interior, fearing the kind of attack on troops that had befallen American soldiers in Somalia in 1993.

Mass slaughter

"I can only regret the death of the Tutsis who died during these two days," he said. "We were very much alone."

His lawyer Pierre-Olivier Lambert said that Lafourcade was "very glad to have finally been able to testify before the French justice system as he has been asking to do for many years."

Rwandan President Paul Kagame has accused Paris of complicity in the genocide because of its support of the Hutu nationalist government that carried out the mass slaughter.

Paris has repeatedly denied the accusations and insists that French forces had worked to protect civilians. Bilateral relations, completely frozen from 2006 to 2009, remain tense.

RDC CONGO :

UGANDA :

SOUTH AFRICA :

TANZANIA :

KENYA :

Kenya MP asks all Supreme Court judges to resign

Sunday 7 February 2016/jurist.org

[JURIST] A Kenyan member of parliament (MP) on Friday evening called for all judges of the Kenyan Supreme Court [official website] to resign after it was recommended that a tribunal investigate Justice Philip Tunoi for allegedly accepting a Sh200 million bribe. MP Olago Aluoch of Kisumu West said [Daily Nation report] the recommendations by the Judicial Service Special Committee had "confirmed confidence crises within the Judiciary." The Judicial Service Commission (JSC) on Friday afternoon made the recommendation to President Uhuru Kenyatta [BBC profile] to form a tribunal to investigate Tunoi. Chief Justice Willy Mutunga stated that the JSC received a report investigating bribery allegations against Tunoi, and concluded that "inappropriate interaction and communication" occurred between Tunoi and an agent of a litigant in a matter that was pending before the Supreme Court. On Sunday Tunoi turned down [Standard Media report] all calls for him to resign from the bench.

Kenya has been the target of international criticisms regarding corruption and other illegal activity over recent years. The International Criminal Court's (ICC) investigation and prosecution of the Kenya Situation [ICC backgrounder] has been ongoing since 2010. Last month Kenyan Deputy President William Ruto appeared [JURIST report] before the ICC to argue for the dismissal of the charges of crimes against humanity filed against him and his co-defendant, broadcaster Joshua Sang. In March the ICC withdrew its charges [JURIST report] against Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta, who was accused of crimes against humanity for post-election violence, but indicated it would renew the charges if presented with enough evidence. In regards to corruption, Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta said [JURIST report] in November that corruption is a "standing threat to our national security." Noting that "the bribe accepted by an official can lead to successful terrorist attacks that kill Kenyans," Kenyatta said that the fight against corruption must be met with a "multifaceted" approach.

EACC clears Anne Waiguru in Sh791 million NYS scandal

By DOMNIC WABALA/the-star.co.ke/Feb. 08, 2016

Ethics body says probe has not found any evidence

THE Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission has cleared former Devolution Cabinet Secretary Anne Waiguru of any wrongdoing in the Sh791 million NYS scandal.

In a confidential letter obtained by the Star dated February 4, 2015, and signed by the EACC chief executive officer Halake Waqo, the Commission told Chief of Staff and Head of Public Service Joseph Kinyua that it had found no evidence of Waiguru's wrongdoing.

"The Commission has conducted investigations on various allegations touching on the National Youth Service and the Ministry of Devolution and National Planning.

"So far, our investigations have not established any evidence to warrant an adverse recommendation against the former Cabinet Secretary Waiguru.

This is forwarded to you for information," said the two-paragraph letter, reference EACC.6/2/3 (145). The EACC wrote to Kinyua because at the time of the allegations against her, she was an employee of the Presidency.

Yesterday Waiguru said although she was unaware of the development, she was happy that "the truth had finally come out".

"I'm sure I will be receiving communication on the matter through official channels. I'm however grateful to God that the truth is finally out. This gives me courage and strength," said Waiguru.

Waiguru resigned under tremendous external pressure and on doctor's orders to take on lighter duties. The clearing of her name will certainly energize her quest to succeed Evans Kidero as Nairobi governor.

Although she has not formally announced her candidature, the former minister has been holding meetings with women's groups in Nairobi who are pressing her to enter the race.

Former PS Peter Mangiti and former NYS director-general Nelson Githinji were charged with attempting to induce the senior deputy director-general in charge of administration, Adan Harakhe, "not to follow up the matter relating to the conspiracy" to steal money from the government.

The two senior officials were among 26 suspects charged over the loss of Sh791 million from the NYS. In the case, Waiguru was listed as the first prosecution witness.

The prosecution alleged that Mangiti and Dr Githinji threatened their colleague, also a prosecution witness, with dire consequences unless he dropped his pursuit of the matter.

They denied that between May 27, 2015 and June 19, 2015, in Nairobi, they jointly attempted to induce Harakhe "to fail in his duty by dissuading, threatening and intimidating him with consequences should he continue following up a matter relating to the conspiracy to steal Sh695,400,000 with the Directorate of Criminal Investigations".

On December 2, 2015, EACC detectives raided Waiguru's multi-million-shilling Kihingo Estate residence during a simultaneous search of 11 senior government officials' homes while investigating the Sh791million NYS scam.

The EACC had obtained court orders and search warrants for the residences.

They raided and searched the homes of Mangiti, Githinji, Harake, director of Administration at the Devolution ministry Hassan Noor Hassan, and seven other suspended senior officials.

The DPP had recommended the recording of a statement from Waiguru, Family Bank officials and

Central Bank of Kenya officials alongside 22 NYS and Devolution ministry staff.

Kenya: Scientists say Zika Virus Unlikely to Spread in East Africa

February 7, 2016/geeskaafrika.com

NAIROBI (HAN) February 7, 2016 – Public Diplomacy and Regional Stability Initiatives News. It is unlikely that the Zika virus outbreak being experienced in some South and Central American countries will spread to Africa, even as East African scientists plan to conduct studies to establish whether the virus still exists in the region, seven decades after it was first detected.

Researchers at the Kenya Medical Research Institute and Uganda Virus Research Institute say that with the recent emergence of the disease, the two institutions will separately conduct studies to establish if the *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes still carry the Zika virus and if people are silently suffering from the disease unnoticed in the region.

“This is an area we shall start looking into to establish why the *Aedes* mosquitoes do not transmit the disease to Africans,” said Rosemary Sang, the principal researcher and head of arbovirology and viral haemorrhagic fevers unit at Kemri.

Dr Sang, however, added that since Zika does not spread from person to person, the risk of infection is negligible, meaning there is no cause for alarm.

“The level of risk of infection in Africa is much lower than that in the Americas because the *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes have been here for a very long time and cause other related viral infections including dengue fever in the African coastal regions, yellow fever and Nile fever,” said Dr Sang.

These diseases are classified among the neglected tropical diseases found mostly in Africa and Asia.

Immunity

According to the researcher, Africans may have developed immunity to the Zika virus as a result of their exposure to the many related viral infections.

“It is known that immunity to one virus can protect you from the other virus which could be a reason Africa has not had Zika virus outbreaks,” said Dr Sang.

She said that since 2010, Kemri has been conducting research on mosquitoes following the outbreaks of dengue fever between 2010 and 2013 in Kenya and Tanzania’s coastal regions, but no traces of Zika have been identified. However, no recent research has been conducted specifically to find if the Zika virus still exists in African mosquitoes.

Willy Tonui an immunology expert and chief executive Kenya National Biosafety Authority, concurs with her views saying that the mosquito saliva is protective and because Africans have been exposed to the bites many times, they have created immunity to other viruses.

“The outbreak in the US could be because of the mutation of the Zika virus and because their bodies are not used to the mosquito viruses. With time, they will also develop immunity,” he said.

The Zika virus has appeared in more than 23 countries in the Americas and Europe. It is transmitted through bites from the *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes.

The World Health Organisation said that Zika is spreading in the Americas because it is new to the region and people are not immune to it.

Extraordinary event

“There are two main reasons for the virus’s rapid spread,” reads the WHO statement. “First, the population of the Americas had not previously been exposed to Zika and therefore lacks immunity, and secondly Aedes mosquitoes are present in all the region’s countries.”

The health body has declared a global emergency over the explosive spread of the Zika virus, which has been linked to a rapid increase in birth defects, particularly in South America. The WHO describes it as an “extraordinary event” that poses a public health threat to other parts of the world. But the UN agency did not impose travel restriction as one of the preventive measures.

WHO is also working to curb the spread of the virus by bolstering surveillance of reported cases, setting up labs to run tests for the disease, issuing health recommendations, supporting research and helping countries eliminate mosquitoes.

Last week however, health officials in Dallas, US, said that a local resident was infected with the Zika virus by having sex with a person who had contracted the disease while travelling in Venezuela. The case adds a troubling new dimension to this once-obscure disease that is spreading explosively in the Americas, and is suspected of being linked to hundreds and perhaps thousands of cases of babies with brain damage in Brazil.

Dozens of other Zika cases have surfaced in the US, but they have involved people who became infected with the mosquito-borne virus while travelling to Zika-affected countries. Last Tuesday’s case marks the first report in the current outbreak of someone being infected without leaving the US, health officials said.

The development prompted the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention to quickly issue new recommendations urging the use of condoms to prevent the spread of the virus.

Dallas health officials said they had been tracking the local case for weeks. They said the incident began with a traveller who likely had gotten infected through a mosquito bite while in Venezuela. That person, after returning to Dallas County, had sex with the second person, who soon began having flu-like symptoms and went to the doctor.

Christopher Perkins, the medical director for Dallas County, said the doctor recommended that the patient be screened for Zika after learning the person had not travelled outside the area, and had become sick after having sex with the traveller.

First cases

The first human cases of Zika appeared in the 1970s in Uganda, Tanzania, Egypt, Central African Republic, Sierra Leone, Gabon and Senegal and then in some Asian countries including India, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam and Indonesia.

In May 2015, the Zika epidemic was detected in the northwest of Brazil and it quickly spread to other regions of the country. Brazil has declared the highest number of Zika cases ever recorded — between 440,000 and 1,300,000 suspected cases.

According to Brazilian health officials during an 11-week period from November 2015 to January

this year, 270 babies were born with a birth defect called microcephaly. In all of 2014, 147 babies were born with this defect, which is associated with a small head and abnormal brain growth.

Among the 270 recent cases, six of the babies were confirmed to have Zika. In addition, authorities are investigating more than 3,000 suspected cases of microcephaly to see if the babies really do have the defect and if Zika is the cause.

Most of the mothers who had babies with microcephaly were apparently infected during the first trimester but scientists say there is some evidence that the birth defect can occur later in pregnancy.

CDC officials now recommend that pregnant US women consider postponing trips to 22 destinations namely Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Paraguay, Suriname, French Guiana, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, and Venezuela. In the Caribbean, they have warned against travelling to Barbados, Guadeloupe, Haiti, Martinique, St Martin and Puerto Rico. Also Cape Verde, off the West African coast and Samoa in the South Pacific.

Pregnant women are being advised to be particularly careful not to get bitten by the aedes aegypti mosquito. Though common in tropical regions, scientists say climate change is making the mosquitoes more prevalent in North America. Public health officials say cross-border migrations accelerate transmission of the virus.

So how can one tell if they are infected?

Rarely show symptoms

According to Dr Kevin De Cock, CDC Kenya country director, most people who get infected with the Zika virus rarely show symptoms of infections.

“For the few who exhibit mild symptoms like fever, rash, joint pain and reddened eyes, these last no more than a week,” said Dr De Cock, adding that there is no medicine or vaccine to cure the condition.

He recommends that individuals can protect themselves from mosquito bites using insect repellents and wearing long sleeves and trousers during the day when the mosquitoes are active.

Dr De Cock said that there is a need to conduct studies in African countries to verify if there are any cases of microcephaly, and if there is any link to Zika.

The Institute Pasteur estimates that about 80 per cent of infected people do not develop any symptoms. For the remaining 20 per cent, the symptoms caused by the Zika virus are flu-like.

The institute notes that different types of skin rash also feature among the symptoms. Some patients also experience conjunctivitis, pain behind the eyes, digestive problems or even swelling of the hands or feet. In most cases, the symptoms are mild and do not require hospital treatment.

GlaxoSmithKline is conducting feasibility studies to evaluate whether vaccine technology is suitable for the Zika virus.

Zika is also suspected of having links to a rare condition known as Guillain-Barre, which can cause paralysis and death in extreme cases in adults and children with compromised immune systems.

ANGOLA :

AU/AFRICA :

UN/AFRICA :

US/AFRICA :

CANADA/AFRICA :

AUSTRALIA/AFRICA :

EU/AFRICA :

CHINA/AFRICA :

Chinese businesses urged to respect Namibian laws

February 8th, 2016/by New Era Staff Reporter

The Chinese Foreign Minister, Wang Yi, who visited Namibia for the first time on Friday urged Chinese business people operating in the country to abide by the national laws.

“From the perspective of the Chinese government, we would like to ask each and every Chinese business – be it a state-owned enterprise (SOE) or private – to abide by the local laws and regulations. They must behave in accordance with the national laws, show their social responsibility and make friends with local people. They must also make their contribution to economic and social development,” he advised.

Over the years some Chinese businesses have reportedly been ill-treating locals, in contravention of the Labour Act.

Further, Wang said the purpose of his visit was to translate and turn cooperation into action, as announced by Chinese President Xi Jinping during the Forum for China Africa Cooperation Summit (FOCAC) in Johannesburg, South Africa last year.

Wang said that in terms of the 10 Africa and China major cooperation plans, both countries have identified the priority areas and agreed on the basic framework of approaches to further cooperation.

Among priorities they agreed to address the power shortage, which is most urgent in Namibia, through solar and wind power cooperation. China also pledged to assist Namibia to create new growth areas through cooperation in the marine economy as well as ports.

Chinese President Xi and President Geingob both attended FOCAC.

Additionally, China pledged to help Namibia to ensure food security through cooperation in agriculture and technology transfers.

During the FOCAC summit, President Xi announced that China would help Africa to train about 200 000 personnel in the coming three years.

Foreign Minister Wang was hopeful that Namibia would take an important share from the agreement and that with better equipped personnel and professionals, Namibia would be able to accelerate its industrialisation and achieve economic independence.

Wang visited President Hage Geingob at State House where Geingob highly commended China for being a long standing friend of Namibia from the days of the liberation struggle.

Geingob also commended the new ways of thinking and specific measures announced by the Chinese president during the FOCAC summit, especially the 10 major cooperation plans.

“We are saying now that we are free those people must also come and invest in Namibia to create win-win situations to develop our country. We would like to have very useful economic politics and industrialisation with China and by so doing transfer technology and at the same time create national jobs,” he noted. Geingob expressed satisfaction with the current relations and cooperation between Namibia and China.

Wang further held talks with Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah, Minister of International Relations and Cooperation where she said it’s Namibia’s intention to put in motion a comprehensive programme to herald a structured implementation of the agreed commitment of both leaders.

Wang applauded Namibia for maintaining political stability and economic development.

Wang congratulated President Geingob for the initiative on poverty eradication, improving people’s lives and pursuing the second revolution in terms of economic development.

Wang pledged to support Namibia in maintaining its legitimate and lawful rights and interests in regional and international affairs.

INDIA/AFRICA :

BRAZIL/AFRICA :

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