



SUMMARY. President Joseph Kabila is exploring avenues for remaining in office beyond his second term. Freedom of the press and freedom of expression took a hit as opposition leader and Member of Parliament Jean-Bertrand Ewanga is arrested, and 61 newspapers are banned (perhaps temporarily).

In partnership with the UN peacekeepers, the Congolese Army is making progress on disarming and demobilizing rebels in the east Congo, with a top priority on putting an end to the FDLR Rwandan Hutu rebel group. The Ebola outbreak in the northwest is hampering exports of minerals and imports of food and other necessities.



POLITICS

Congolese coup-plotters, possibly including President Kabila's half-brother, appear in South Africa court

[FULL ARTICLE](#) | The Citizen

A group of Congolese men appeared in court in South Africa on charges of plotting to overthrow the Government of the DR Congo and assassinate Congo President Joseph Kabila. The 20 men had been arrested in South Africa in February. Their leader, Etienne Kabila, claims to be President Joseph Kabila's half-brother. (Aug 8 2014)



Etienne Kabila

DR Congo President seeks means to remain in office after his second term ends

[FULL ARTICLE](#) | Pragmora

President Joseph Kabila is half way through his second term in office and appears to be laying the ground work to continue as President after his current mandate expires in January 2017—even though the Constitution not only places a two-term limit on a president, but also specifically stipulates that the two-term limit cannot be changed. (Aug 2014)



Pres. Joseph Kabila

Member of Parliament and opposition leader, Jean-Bertrand Ewanga, is arrested

[FULL ARTICLE](#) | Bloomberg

Security forces arrest Jean-Bertrand Ewanga in Kinshasa after his participation in a public rally to voice opposition to any constitutional change that would extension President Kabila's term in office. Ewanga is charged with personally insulting the President in public by calling him a "thief" and a "killer." At the time of the arrest, President Kabila was in Washington DC attending the U.S.-Africa summit. (Aug 14 2014)



Jean-Bertrand Ewanga

The Supreme Court will re-try the 2010 case the murder of human rights activist, Floribert Chebeya

[FULL ARTICLE](#) | News24

Earlier trials were denounced as being biased and riddled with 'irregularities.' Four police officers have already been found guilty of the murder. Civil activists are calling for the former Chief of Police to be tried for this murder. (Aug 30 2014)

Minister of Information bans 61 newspapers

[FULL ARTICLE](#) | AllAfrica.com

The Ministry of Information has banned 61 newspapers on the grounds that they have no legal existence. The decree does not make clear whether not the Ministry will accept notification of proper registration and permit the newspapers to continue to publish. (Aug 25 2014)

DR Congo war crimes trial of Egangela 'a test case of justice'

[FULL ARTICLE](#) | BBC

Lt Col Bedi Mobuli Egangela is being tried in the Congolese military justice system for war crimes and crimes against humanity he allegedly committed between 2005 and 2006. Many view this as a test case as the Congolese military traditionally treats high ranking officers with leniency. The trial is expected to continue into September. (Aug 14 2014)

ARMED CONFLICT

United Nations gives the FDLR rebels an ultimatum

[FULL ARTICLE](#) | Voice of America

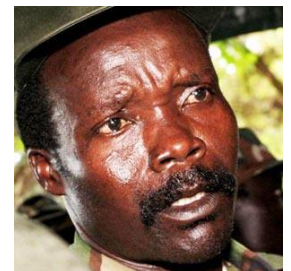
For 20 years, the Rwandan FDLR rebels have been committing atrocities against villagers in eastern Congo. (The FDLR was founded by Hutu leaders of the genocide in Rwanda.) The head of the UN Mission in the DR Congo has given the FDLR 22-days to surrender. Martin Kobler explains this is his top priority "...not so much because of their military capacity, but because of what they represent and the destabilising effect that they have with regard to relations with Rwanda." (Aug 7 2014)



Inter-ethnic violence in Katanga province targets Pygmies

[FULL ARTICLE](#) | France24

Local fighter groups of the Baluba tribe are systematically killing Pygmies in what a confidential UN report has apparently characterized as an attempted "extermination." (Aug 19 2014)



Women and children rescued from the Lord's Resistance Army

[FULL ARTICLE](#) | Al Jazeera

The Ugandan Army reports that it has rescued 45 women and children from Joseph Kony's Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in northeastern Congo. The LRA kidnaps locals to serve as fighters, porters, and sexual slaves. (Aug 13 2013)

ECONOMY / MINING / NATURAL RESOURCES

Canada's SNC-Lavalin Group in running to develop the \$100 billion Inga Dam Hydro project

[FULL ARTICLE](#) | Bloomberg

South Africa has approved a treaty with the DR Congo to begin development of the \$100 billion Inga River hydropower project. Among the three consortia in contention to serve as the project's developer is Canada's SNC-Lavalin Group Inc. in partnership with Posco and Daewoo Corp. of South Korea.(Aug 21 2014)

A substantial new oil find on the Congo side of Lake Albert

[FULL ARTICLE](#) | Reuters Africa

The Oil of DR Congo company owned by Israeli billionaire Dan Gertler reports it has discovered around 3 billion barrels of oil on the Congolese side of [Lake Albert](#). It is not yet clear what proportion is recoverable. Oil of DR Congo said production of 50,000 barrels per day at Lake Albert would expand Congo's economy by 25%. (Aug 8 2014)

Due to Ebola fears, export of copper from the Congo comes to a halt

[FULL ARTICLE](#) | Wall Street Journal

Since August 25, the day Ebola was confirmed in the DR Congo, Botswana has blocked the passage of trucks exporting copper and cobalt from the [Katanga region](#) of the DR Congo [on route](#) to South Africa, affecting such mining giants as Glencore and Freeport-McMoRan Copper & Gold. Trucks from the DRC have also been halted in Zambia. (Aug 28 2014)

SOCIETY

Deaths from the Ebola virus are confirmed in the DRC

[FULL ARTICLE](#) | LA Times

The Congo's Ministry of Health confirms that 13 people in the northwestern region of the country have died from the Ebola virus. According to the World Health Organization this is a different strain of the Ebola virus from the one in West African countries. This is the DR Congo's seventh outbreak of Ebola since 1976. (Aug 27 2014)



DRC Health Clinic

In Winnipeg, Congo refugee sisters make humanitarian music videos

[FULL ARTICLE](#) | UNCHR

In 2002, the four Bahati sisters and their family fled the war in eastern Congo and became refugees in neighbouring Uganda. In 2012, they moved again and made Winnipeg home. The sisters have are using their musical talents to create humanitarian music videos and have launched a campaign, "That Could Be Me," to help victims of sexually violence and children who cannot go to school because of war in the Congo (Aug 25 2014)

INTERVIEW: Crispin Mvano, Investigative Journalist & Researcher

EXERPTS BELOW | [FULL INTERVIEW](#) | Sept 1, 2014

Crispin Mvano is an investigative [journalist](#) and researcher. With expertise in security-related issues, Crispin possesses an unparalleled depth of current knowledge about the myriad of illegal armed groups that operate in eastern Congo.

Crispin is also an Accredited Mediator for the disarmament and repatriation of members of the Rwanda FDLR rebel group that operates in eastern Congo, Coordinator of Africa Justice and Peace, and is a founding member and coordinator of the orphanage [Amani Bweremana](#) in Masisi.

Originally from Masisi, Crispin now lives with his family in Goma. He is conversant in French, English, Swahili, Lingala, Mashi, Kihunde, and Kinyarwanda.



[Interview with Crispin Mvano]

Pragmora: For a long time, you have been saying that one of the most important things the international community can do to help bring about peace and stability in the DRC is to protect Rwandan refugees who reside in eastern Congo. Who are these Rwandan refugees and how does their presence in the DRC promote conflict?

Crispin: The Rwandan refugees are unarmed children, women and the elderly, mostly Hutus, who have been living on Congolese territory since 1994. They arrived in different waves in 1994 and 1998; others were repatriated to Rwanda by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

These people are called 'default refugees' because UNHCR [the UN High Commissioner for Refugees] does not recognize this group. UNHCR should protect these refugees, but it does not.

These refugees seek protection from the FDLR armed group who accepts them, so the refugees end up being treated as combatants. Yet the FDLR rebels are the only protection that these refugees have.

In 1996, UNHCR had protected and assisted these refugees, and then abandoned them after the bombing of their camps in North and South Kivu. This attitude of UNHCR has contributed to 'sustainable issues' rather than 'durable solutions'.

This confusion between [Rwandan] refugees and combatants and the lack of a comprehensive solution to their presence on Congolese soil has created a template for all the violent uprisings in the region.

"We must get rid of the génocidaires [FDLR] who rape our women and who constitute a threat against our neighbour Rwanda." This has been the rationale of the rebels from 1996 until now. It is the rationale for such rebel groups as the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation, Congolese Rally for Democracy, Congress for the Defence of the People, the March 23 Movement (M23) and other armed local indigenous groups. All these rebellions were supported by Rwanda.

Pragmora: Concretely, what specific actions need to be taken to help resolve the Rwandan refugee situation?

Crispin: For the refugees, there needs to be physical and psychological protection; food assistance, health and education; and then a lasting solution that will allow them to return home to Rwanda without fear of reprisal.

Pragmora: Is there anything international governments, like the Government of Canada, can do to help bring about long-term stable peace and democracy in the Congo?




Crispin: Canada is recognized as a responsible country and is capable of persuading other countries like the United States to support the peace process—without any dividend or interest. Canada can speak in support of our truly 'humanist interest', that is to say, the interest that helps us Congolese and Rwandan people have peace...and with no peace for politicians who construct their regimes based on maintaining the conflict.

Advocacy by Canadian civil society and the Canadian government would add value to our struggle for peace and be a partner that can accompany us to the peace that we lack.

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