



“ASSASSINATION”: GENERAL FAUSTIN KAYUMBA NYAMWASA

Government in quandary over shot Rwandan General Nyamwasa

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SOUTH African legal watchdogs have urged the South African government not to grant amnesty to General Faustin Kayumba Nyamwasa – the former Rwandan army chief who was shot and wounded in Joburg on June 19 – or to withdraw amnesty if he already has it.

They have advised the government that the ethnic Tutsi Nyamwasa is not eligible for

amnesty under South African law because of major atrocities he allegedly committed in the 1990s, largely against the ethnic Hutu majority of Rwanda in the aftermath of the Hutu genocide against the Tutsis.

French and Spanish courts have issued arrest warrants against Nyamwasa on these charges and are believed to be preparing requests to their governments to ask the South African government to extradite him.

The legal NGOs are also oppos-

ing a request from the Rwandan government to the South African government to extradite him to face terrorism and other charges related to grenade blasts in the capital Kigali earlier this year.

They suspect these charges may have been trumped up and that Nyamwasa might face persecution or torture if Pretoria delivers him back to President Paul Kagame's government.

Since neither amnesty nor extradition to Rwanda are options, this leaves little space for

Pretoria to deal with Nyamwasa. One option could be to agree to extradite him to Spain or France to face the war crimes charges since the courts there would be likely to grant him fairer hearings than the courts in Rwanda, the NGOs believe.

But they realise that, in the light of its philosophy of African solutions for African problems and also in the light of the huge African resentment about the Netherlands-based International Criminal Court prosecuting so many

Africans, Pretoria is unlikely to give up Nyamwasa to a European court.

The NGOs have instead proposed to the South African government that it offer Nyamwasa permanent residence but on condition that he fully confess his part in the alleged atrocities which the French and Spanish courts have charged him with.

The government has apparently not yet responded. But it appears to be in a dilemma over what to do with Nyamwasa. On June 24, Ayan-

da Ntsaluba, director-general of international relations and co-operation, said that Nyamwasa's status would become clear within two days.

But this week he told a media briefing he was still not in a position to comment on Nyamwasa's fate.

Ntsaluba said the Nyamwasa problem was “very complicated” for the South African government as he had applied for asylum yet Rwanda, a country with which South Africa had “good, strong

relations” had asked for him to be extradited.

Nyamwasa's wife told the media after her husband was shot that he suspected Kagame's agents were responsible. Six suspects have been arrested and four of them have appeared in court.

Neither Ntsaluba nor any other government officials have ruled out the possibility that the Rwandan government was behind the shooting, though Ntsaluba said the government was not yet in a position to point fingers at any country.

Joburg shooting linked to rebels

‘Assassination attempt’ on ex-army chief raises questions, writes De Wet Potgieter

THE SOLUTIONS to the mystery shooting of Rwandan dissident Lieutenant General Faustin Kayumba Nyamwasa could lie thousands of miles away from Joburg, where it occurred last month.

The answers could lie in a burgeoning insurgency against the regime of Paul Kagame in Rwanda and its influence in the mineral- and timber-rich North Kivu province of the Democratic Republic of Congo, intelligence sources told Independent Newspapers.

Nyamwasa was shot in the stomach by a lone gunman close to his Joburg home on June 2 in what his wife, Rosette, described as a botched assassination attempt.

Rwanda has denied that it had anything to do with the incident.

Four suspects – identified as being from Tanzania, Somalia and Mozambique – appeared briefly in court this week charged with the attack. All, it emerged, had prior criminal records in South Africa – and had clearly been in the country for some time.

Two other suspects, at least one of them a Rwandan military operative, according to intelligence sources, were arrested in the wake of the attack, but subsequently released without charge.

It remains unclear whether the released suspects are continuing to assist investigators with their inquiries.

Amid growing speculation that the alleged triggerman was a member of a hit squad for hire, this week Foreign Affairs spokesman Ayanda Ntsaluba confirmed there was more to the shooting than random street crime.

Ntsaluba was quoted by Sapa as

saying “foreign security operatives” were involved in the attack, and that the shooting “involves a country with which we have good and strong diplomatic relations”.

Ntsaluba declined to name the country involved.

Meanwhile, now disaffected Nyamwasa, a former chief of staff in the Rwandan military, has emerged as a key conspirator behind a new militia led by Congolese Tutsi Gad Ngabo.

Styled as the Front Patriotique pour la Liberation du Congo (FPLC), the Ngabo militia, in the latest cycle in a seemingly intractable conflict in the Great Lakes region, is sworn to unseat Rwandan President Kagame, and wrest control of Kivu from the Rwandans and its military surrogates in the DRC.

Ngabo is believed to be backed by Kagame's former ally and one-time military patron, Uganda's Yoweri Museveni.

As tensions in the Great Lakes regions enter a new phase of instability, the FPLC has moved to fill a vacuum left by the detention under house arrest of Kivu's former top-dog insurgent Laurent Nkundwa.

Animosity between Uganda and Rwanda can be traced back to 2001 when Kampala accused Rwanda of rendering financial support to Museveni's main political opponent, Kizza Besigye and also supporting the Ugandan dissident group, the People's Redemption Army, operating from the DRC.

In 2005 and 2006 the Rwandan government in turn accused Uganda of harbouring, and supporting the passage of, Kagame's enemies in the badlands of the DRC, and providing them with Ugandan



IN TANDEM: Rwandan President Paul Kagame, left, and his former army chief of staff Kayumba Nyamwasa consult their watches after addressing a gathering of soldiers in 2001. Nyamwasa, who was shot near his Joburg home last month, has emerged as the force behind a new militia in Rwanda, which has sworn to unseat Kagame. PICTURE: AP

Mystery killings: fingers point at government

DE WET POTGIETER

THE SHOOTING of Kayumba Nyamwasa is not the first incident that has led to accusations of dirty tricks against the regime of Paul Kagame in Rwanda. As long ago as 1996, Rwandan dissident Colonel Alex Rezinde, after flee-

ing the country, was murdered in Kenya. His killers have yet to be brought to book.

More notorious is the killing two years later of senior Rwandan Patriotic Front member and Minister of Interior Seth Sendashonga in Nairobi.

Sendashonga was being driven home in his wife's car when two

gunmen wielding AK-47 rifles opened fire at the car, killing him and his driver. Sendashonga's wife blamed the assassination on the Kigali government.

Sendashonga's assassination also had all the hallmarks of international intrigue. Sources say he was killed exactly 30 minutes after he had been in a meet-

ing with General Salim Saleh, the younger brother of President Yoweri Museveni. Saleh confirmed this information. Immediately Saleh walked out of the meeting, Sendashonga left for home. He was shot on the way.

At the time, tensions between Uganda and Rwanda were high. At the time of the Sendashon-

ga assassination, Karegyeya was director of Rwanda's external security while Kayumba was army chief of staff.

During Karegyeya's reign at external security, the government in Kigali was accused of kidnapping several exiled Rwandan dissidents and spiriting them off to Kigali.

passports for European travel.

In the current climate, with internal resistance growing against the increasingly autocratic Kagame regime, substantial sections of the newly integrated DRC defence force – cobbled together from the various formerly warring splinter groups in the DRC – have defected to Ngabo's FPLC.

Ngabo also enjoys the support of a cadre of former military and intelligence commanders, alienated from their former leader.

Thousands of miles away, several Rwandan hawks are now clustered – seemingly with the blessing of the South African authorities – in a shadowy grouping in Joburg.

Its number includes, along with

fellow dissident, Patrick Karegya, a prominent former colonel in the intelligence of the Rwandan army.

Controversially, South Africa's Foreign Affairs department stated in the fallout from the attack that Nyamwasa had sought and been granted asylum in South Africa after arriving in the country earlier this year.

An immigration law specialist consulted by Independent Newspapers described the granting of asylum “highly irregular” since South African refugee legislation specifically prohibits the granting of asylum to applicants who are the subject of international arrest warrants.

Both Belgium and France have

such warrants against Nyamwasa for alleged involvement in atrocities on the Tutsi side at the time of the 1994 genocide.

South Africa has also failed to accede to calls from the Kagame regime to extradite Nyamwasa and Karegya on suspicion being behind grenade attacks in Kigali in February this year.

Massacre of endangered rhino continues as two more butchered animals found

DE WET POTGIETER

THE MASSACRE of South Africa's endangered rhino population continues with the discovery of two more mutilated carcasses in the North West and Limpopo.

This brings the total number of rhinos killed for their horns to 117 according to anti-poaching investigators, though SA National Parks

has put the figure at 124.

A butchered rhino cow was discovered on Thursday morning in the Borakalalo National Game Park in North West when members of the anti-poaching unit heard four shots fired. The other rhino was found dead near Bela Bela.

Rusty Hustler, head of counter-poaching in North West, immediately deployed his units and summoned a helicopter as back-up

to find the gunmen. A police helicopter zoomed in to assist in the chase.

No poachers were apprehended, but rangers discovered yet another dead rhino in the bushes. It seemed she was killed a week ago and her horn hacked off with a panga.

Ballistic experts could not find any bullets in the carcass. This led investigators to conclude that the rhino was darted with tranquilising drugs before her horn was severed,

then left to die of trauma and organ failure.

Meanwhile the focus of investigators is increasingly falling on helicopters allegedly used in poaching operations.

Last Sunday a family from Thabazimbi in Limpopo took photographs of a helicopter, an R44, which, they told investigators, had been flying suspiciously over their farm. The aircraft registration num-

bers had been deliberately covered over. Farmer Piet van Rensburg subsequently posted a photograph of the helicopter on the aviation website, Avcom.

When the helicopter landed on a rocky outcrop, Van Rensburg's son-in-law drove up to have a closer look. But before he could confront the occupants the helicopter flew off, as if to escape scrutiny.

Other postings said the same hel-

icopter was spotted flying low in the Bela Bela and Modimole areas earlier that week. The identity and ownership of the helicopter spotted on the Van Rensburgs' farm is known to Independent Newspapers.

The police, who believe the helicopter's pilot flies on a freelance basis for two interlinked poaching syndicates, are following up leads expected to tie the aircraft to the poachers.

The public outcry over the brutal annihilation of South Africa's rhinos rose this week when a Kempton Park magistrate passed out the harshest sentence to date in South Africa for rhino horn smuggling.

A security guard from Vietnam, Zhong Whong, 29, was sentenced by Magistrate Prince Manyathi to 10 years in jail for trying to smuggle out of SA, 16kg of rhino horn, worth