



Democratic Republic of the Congo – Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on 30 January 2015

Is there any information on a protest at the RTNC building in Kinshasa on 30 December 2014 by supporters of Prophet Paul Mukingublia and if the protesters were unarmed. Is there any evidence that the government considered the protests an attempted coup d'état. Is there any evidence of killings/imprisonment of protesters and/or followers of the prophet Paul Mukingublia.

No reference was found to an incident at the RTNC building in Kinshasa on 30 December 2014. Numerous reports refer to an incident involving supporters of religious leader Paul Joseph Mukungubila which occurred in Kinshasa on 30 December 2013.

A BBC News report states:

“The Democratic Republic of Congo's army has repulsed several attacks in the capital, Kinshasa, by a ‘terrorist group’, the government has said. The state TV headquarters, the international airport and a military base in the city were all targeted. Religious leader Paul Joseph Mukungubila told the BBC his followers carried out the raids. Information Minister Lambert Mende said the situation was now under control and about 46 attackers had been killed.”
(BBC News (30 December 2013) *DR Congo 'repulses' TV, airport and army base attacks*)

A Voice of America News report states:

“The government of the Democratic Republic of Congo says 103 people were killed Monday when its forces repelled attacks in Kinshasa and at least two other towns. Eight soldiers were among those killed in the fighting, which appears to have been led by followers of evangelical Christian pastor Joseph Mukungubila, a self-proclaimed prophet who is an outspoken opponent to the government. DRC government spokesman Lambert Mende said security forces had captured more than 150 attackers. He said these young people had been sent on ‘suicide missions’ by what he referred to as a ‘sort of guru.’ But he did not name that person.” (Voice of America News (31 December 2013) *DRC: 103 Died in Monday's Attacks*)

A Reporters Without Borders report states:

“Reporters Without Borders and partner organization Journalist in Danger (JED) condemn yesterday’s attack, on 30 December 2013, on state-owned Radio Télévision Nationale Congolaise (RTNC) in Kinshasa by men armed with clubs and machetes, and urge the authorities to do everything possible to provide journalists with more protection. The approximately 30 assailants stormed the national radio and TV broadcaster’s headquarters at around 8

a.m. and invaded the TV studio. The authorities quickly disconnected its TV's signal to prevent them from broadcasting any message. RTNC personnel were reportedly held hostage for more than three hours, until the security forces recovered control of the building." (Reporters Without Borders (RSF) (2 January 2014) *Ten employees injured in armed attack on national TV Broadcaster*)

This report also states:

"Responsibility for the attack has been claimed by a group led by Gédéon Mukungubila, a self-styled 'prophet' based in the southeastern city of Lubumbashi who was an unsuccessful presidential candidate in 2006." (ibid)

Paragraph 3 of a UN Security Council report states:

"A number of serious security incidents exacerbated the fragile political and security environment in the country. On 30 December 2013, the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Forces armées de la République démocratique du Congo-FARDC) repelled coordinated attacks launched by unidentified armed assailants in the capital, Kinshasa, and in Lubumbashi and Kolwezi in Katanga Province, and in Kindu in Maniema Province. In Kinshasa, three separate groups simultaneously attacked the Congolese armed forces' headquarters/Ministry of Defence compound, the National Radio and N'Djili international airport. In Kindu, the assailants attacked the airport, while in Lubumbashi, violent clashes between the army and unknown gunmen took place on the outskirts of the city. As a result of the attacks, 103 people, including eight Congolese armed forces soldiers, were reportedly killed. These serious incidents appeared to be linked to followers of a self-proclaimed prophet and outspoken opponent of the Government, Joseph Mukungubila." (UN Security Council (5 March 2014) *Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo*, pp.1-2)

A New York Times article states:

"Congolese troops on Monday killed dozens of youths who attacked the airport, a military barracks and the state radio and television headquarters here in the capital, in what appeared to be a failed assault by followers of a disgruntled religious leader. The attackers seized the broadcast headquarters and, before transmission was shut down, shouted slogans in support of Paul Joseph Mukungubila, a Christian leader, and against President Joseph Kabila. Afterward, several corpses lay outside the gates of the state broadcast center. The broadcaster said that security forces had killed 46 of the attackers. Government officials said about 20 more had been arrested." (New York Times (30 December 2013) *Quelling Attacks in the Capital, Congolese Troops Kill Dozens*)

An Agence France Presse report states:

"Congolese security forces repelled a wave of coordinated attacks in the capital Kinshasa and other cities on Monday, in fierce gun battles that left more than 70 assailants and three troops dead, the government said. Armed youths believed to be loyal to a pastor who challenged President Joseph Kabila in elections seven years ago stormed the state television station, the

international airport and the military headquarters. A government spokesman said more than 70 attackers had been killed, 52 of them in Kinshasa, while three troops had died in the fighting in the capital. Government spokesman Lambert Mende said on state television that '39 terrorists were captured, including two wounded who were given medical treatment' and that nine civilians were also injured." (Agence France Presse (30 December 2013) *DR Congo security forces repel attacks, kill at least 70*)

This report also states:

"The identity of the assailants remains unclear, although a television station employee said they had claimed loyalty to pastor Joseph Mukungubila Mutombo, one of the candidates who challenged Kabila in 2006 elections." (ibid)

A report from the UN-sponsored Radio Okapi states:

"In Kindu, the attackers who fell under the bullets of the security forces at the airport wore T-shirts bearing the image of Paul-Joseph Mukungubila and it is in the Kabulameshi neighbourhood where he resides in Lubumbashi that security forces launched an assault on 30 December. Who is this person then? Pastor Joseph Mukungubila Mutombo has been nicknamed by his congregation as 'Prophet of the Lord'. He heads the 'Church of the Lord Jesus Christ', located mainly in Kinshasa, Lubumbashi, Kolwezi and Kalemie. Unsuccessful candidate in the 2006 presidential election, he presents himself as an opponent of Joseph Kabila's regime." (Radio Okapi (31 December 2013) *DR Congo security probes alleged instigator of 30 December attacks*)

A Xinhua General News Service report states:

"The authorities of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DR Congo) have shut down the church of prophet Joseph Mukungubila, who was linked to the deadly attacks this week in the capital Kinshasa and several other towns in the Central African country. A statement released Friday from the provincial government said calm had been restored in Katanga province following the Dec. 30 incidents in Lubumbashi, Kolwezi and Kalemie towns. Supporters of Mukungubila launched attacks and briefly seized state television in Kinshasa. He has been strongly opposed to the election results since losing the 2006 presidential polls. His church has been shut down in Katanga province by DR Congo's authorities until further notice, the statement said." (Xinhua General News Service (4 January 2014) *DR Congo authorities shut down prophet Mukungubila's church after attacks*)

An article published by Africa Review states:

"Joseph Mukungubila Mutombo is blamed for Monday attacks that claimed over 100 A self-proclaimed 'prophet' and televangelist blamed for violence that killed more than 100 people in DR Congo's two main cities Tuesday denied fleeing the country and called on the president to resign. Supporters of Joseph Mukungubila Mutombo, who describes himself as God's 'last envoy to humanity after Jesus Christ and Paul of Tarsus', blamed the army for deadly unrest in Kinshasa and Lubumbashi which he called a 'massacre'. The government said its forces had fought back a 'terrorist offensive' on Monday, including attacks on the airport, the main army headquarters in the capital and

in the second city of Lubumbashi. Government spokesman Lambert Mende said 103 people were killed -- 95 attackers and eight members of the armed forces -- and Mukungubila was now on the run." (Africa Review (1 January 2014) *DR Congo 'prophet' urges Kabila to quit after 'massacre'*)

A Radio Okapi report which refers to the arrest of Paul Mukungubila's supporters states

"More than 60 people arrested on 30 December 2013 following incidents in Kabulameshi neighbourhood have been transferred to the Lubumbashi court martial in Katanga Province. They face charges of taking part in an insurrection together with others arrested in Kolwezi. Sources says the accused are followers of Prophet Paul Mukungubila." (Radio Okapi (8 January 2014) *DR Congo to court martial 60 suspects charged with attacking state installations*)

An article from the South African newspaper Daily Dispatch refers to claims by Mukungubila that his followers were unarmed as follows:

"Former presidential candidate Joseph Mukungubila who calls himself 'Prophet of the Lord' on a website for his Ministry of Restoration and is also known as Gideon said the fighting was instigated by his followers after his own supporters were attacked on December 29 according to a statement on an unverified Facebook page for the ministry. The attacks 'weren't planned' Mukungubila said by phone from a location he declined to disclose. 'It was an expression of anger.' A video published on YouTube of the takeover of Radio Television Nationale Congolaise showed young men wearing T-shirts standing behind two hosts of a morning talk show called Le Panier (The Basket). They answered calls on mobile phones had sticks and a trumpet the video showed. 'They were unarmed ' Mukungubila said." (Daily Dispatch (3 January 2014) *DRC beefs up security after deadly clashes*)

See also report from France 24 which states:

"Amid scenes of utter confusion, Le Panier's two presenters were taken hostage as men armed with machetes and sticks shouted orders in the local Lingala language, mobile phones rang, and at one stage, a vuvuzela incongruously appeared on the set." (France 24 (30 December 2013) *Who is Congo's Mukungubila: 'Prophet' or coup mastermind?*)

An Agence France Presse report refers to allegations of a crackdown on Mukungubila supporters as follows:

"More than 300 people, mostly civilians, have been killed in the government's retaliation for attacks blamed on a self-proclaimed 'prophet' in the Democratic Republic of Congo in December, a rights group said Thursday. The government has previously denied that any citizens have been killed in its hunt for the perpetrators of coordinated December 30 attacks it blames on pastor and former presidential candidate Joseph Mukungubila Mutombo, known by his followers as 'the Eternal Prophet'. But the Paris-based International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) said Thursday that 'some 250' civilians and six soldiers have been killed in the Katanga province in the southeast of the country, and another 71 civilians killed in Kinshasa. 'The toll is still previsionary because there were people, according to some

witnesses... who were thrown in the Katanga river. There are (also) people who are in mass graves,' said Sylvain Lumu, secretary-general of the League of Electors, a local group which helped compile the report. The government had previously put the toll at '103 dead, including 95 terrorists and eight soldiers'." (Agence France Presse (22 May 2014) *Around 300 killed in DR Congo crackdown on rebel assault*)

This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research and Information Unit within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

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