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The rest of the world congratulated Ghana for two well-run rounds of voting and a credible transfer of power. But newly elected President Kufuor had a brief honeymoon: he ran into a row when he visited Togo to celebrate Eyadéma's 34 years in power.

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CONGO-KINSHASA I

Kabila est mort, vive Kabila!

The plot to kill the President has created the country's first dynasty and left a door ajar for peace

After a series of unexplained delays, **Joseph Kabila** was due to be sworn in to succeed his father at the Presidency on 25 January and Congolese officials insist they have launched an investigation to find out who was behind the assassination. Congolese doubt official information, especially after the three-day-long 'non-death' of President **Laurent-Désiré Kabila**. They are sceptical about the official version claiming that Kabila's was killed by presidential bodyguard **Rachidi Kasereka**, a Nandi from North Kivu. Shot dead in the palace, Rachidi can't help the investigation. In his home region, at present under **Rwandan** occupation, many people believe there was a link between the President's murder and the arrest, in Kinshasa on 21 November, of Commandant **Anselme Masasu Nindaga**, former leader of the *Mouvement Révolutionnaire pour la Libération du Congo-Zaïre* (AC Vol 42 No 1). This was one of the four organisations which joined up behind Kabila to form the *Alliance des Forces pour la Libération du Congo-Zaïre* (AFDL), which in 1997 swept to power in Kinshasa.

Masasu Nindaga, from South Kivu, was Kabila's first Chief of Staff but was arrested in November 1997 and accused of plotting a coup with other Tutsi officers; eleven people died resisting arrest. Masasu was found guilty by a court martial and remained in the underground prison at Bulowo, Katanga, until Kabila declared an amnesty in April 2000. This time, according to Asadho, a human-rights organisation, he was taken to Lubumbashi and executed a few days after his arrest.

There are plenty of rival theories. Asadho describes as 'opportunist' and 'a fantasy' a claim that the President's assassination was 'a decision to end the bloody Kabila adventure'. This claim was made five days after his murder, in a document sent to *Agence France-Presse* in Paris by the 'soldiers of [André] **Kisase Ngandu**'. Kisase Ngandu, the third musketeer of the AFDL (the fourth being **Déogratias Bugera** of the *Alliance Démocratique des Peuples*, representing the Congolese Tutsi), was murdered in the Virunga game park; various factions linked to the *Mouvement National Congolais-Lumumba* claim that the late President, with Rwandan help, organised the killing.

Chronicle of a death foretold

Kabila's rule was controversial even among his own supporters. His critics say that he deliberately isolated himself to leave no room for rivals and that this was bound to lead to his own destruction. Certainly, he had enemies. If they are seriously asked to do a job, it will take investigators a long time to work through all the possibilities. Some credit goes to the ruling clique in Kinshasa, which held things together after Kabila's demise. Its efficiency points both to Kabila's limited political relevance and to some fairly detailed preparations for his death.

Emile Ilunga was formerly a member of the *Parti de la Révolution du Peuple* (PRP), founded by Kabila in 1967; like the late President, Ilunga is Balubakat, a Luba from Katanga. In August 1998, he reacted to the humiliation systematically heaped upon Kabila's followers by joining the rebel *Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie* (RCD).

Kabila's anti-**Mobutu Sese Seko** guerrillas in Fizi-Baraka, in South-Kivu, fell apart between 1967 and 1986. Observers blamed Kabila's authoritarianism, the slaughter of 2,000 'magicians' who were in fact traditional leaders, the realisation by the Bembi people that they were being exploited by their chiefs; and the squabbling between Kabila and his lieutenants, such as **Caliste Majaliwa**. Eleven years later, this 'paranoid' form of government had been transferred to Kinshasa and extended throughout the entire nation.

Paranoia may help to explain why there are so many alternative explanations of the murder. There was certainly bitterness between those who held power and the soldiers from Kivu. Diplomats in Kinshasa believed for a while that the killing was linked to the dismissal of Generals **Kayembe, Moya** and **Mageri**, all from Kivu, whose troops had been driven back in Katanga by the RCD-Goma's rebel fighters.

It was also rumoured that senior MaiMai fighters were unhappy about Kabila's lack of support for 'General' **Padiri**, who leads the resistance to the Rwandan forces in the South Kivu forest. There is truth in this story. Kabila never forgave the people of Fizi-Baraka for dismantling his mini-republic in 1985.

Kabila's way of running the government ensured that he has no obvious successor. It seems that Major General Joseph Kabila, 31, was made interim President for lack of any other candidate, on the proposal of Colonel **Eddy Kapend**, Kabila Senior's aide-de-camp, in disgrace because he failed to ensure the President's safety. Joseph has much better Kiswahili and English than French or Lingala, the two main languages of the capital. Until now, that hasn't been much of a handicap as his father packed the army with soldiers from Katanga, for most of whom Kiswahili is a second language. He is shy and uncharismatic, and those who know him say he is as weak as is to be expected from one brought up amid the xenophobia and paranoia that have long reigned in the Congo; and in Kinshasa some now condemn his mother – not for being a girlfriend of the late President but for being a Tutsi. Joseph does not have a natural constituency.

Temporary incumbent

Though ranked as Commander of the Army, Joseph Kabila has no special military talent or training (bar three months of instruction by **Chinese** commandos) and is specifically blamed for the loss of Pweto town, near the **Zambian** border late last year, to the RCD and its Rwandan allies. At the time, Joseph was in Katanga. Even some Congolese officials, such as the Ambassador in Brussels, **Rachel Albert Kisonga Mazakala**, believe he will hold the presidency only until things settle down. In Kinshasa, the battle is already on for the succession.

Gen. **Sylvain Lwasha**, Laurent Kabila's old comrade in the Kivu period, is 75 and Chief of General Staff; he was interrogated by a military committee of inquiry on 19 January because he comes from the same region as the killer. Had he been accused or demoted, it would have annoyed senior officials in **Zimbabwe**, where he is in favour.

The group of Katangans around the late President may not hold together. Number two in the formal structure of government was his cousin **Gaëtan Kakudji**, Minister of State for the Interior, who therefore has a claim to take charge. However, he has a gift for making enemies and is not a soldier. Another Mulubakat civilian, Justice Minister **Mwenze Kongolo**, has the advantage of protection by **Angola**, Kinshasa's most powerful ally. Education Minister **Yerodia Ndombasi**, who has been involved in some discreet diplomatic soundings with Western embassies (despite facing charges of genocide in Brussels) believes he has a future in the new regime. Foreign Minister **Léonard She Okintundu** is best known for an extraordinary performance at last year's United Nations General Assembly, when he condemned **Uganda** and **Rwanda** in some of the most colourful language ever heard at that New York gathering.

Others who see themselves as Luanda's favourite include Col. Eddy Kapend, a Lunda from Katanga with no regular military training. Within hours of Kabila's murder, he was on state television addressing military commanders by their name, rank and deployment and asking them to ensure that the troops 'remain disciplined'. The military Commander for Kinshasa, Gen. **Jean Yav Nawesh**, is also Lunda, the son of a Katangan *gendarme* who served in the Angolan army, and was brother-in-law to the late President. Gen. **Faustin Munene** is Mulubakat and Angolan-trained but was beaten in combat in Katanga by rebels backed by **Rwanda**. Gen. **Célestin Kifwa**, Inspector General of the *Police d'Intervention Rapide*, was an officer in the Angolan army and commands a force modelled on Angolan lines; he was also brother-in-law to Laurent Kabila.

Two non-Katangan senior figures are **Pierre-Victor Mpooyo**, the Minister of State who was Minister of Petroleum, a director of Sonangol-Congo and worked for Elf-Aquitaine in Angola; he is Luba from Kasai but has serious health problems made worse by a recent

spell in gaol. He was the strategic genius behind the financial tie-ups with Luanda but had a difficult relationship with Kabila. Gen. **Denis Kalumi Numbi**, a Kusu from Manyema, is unusual in having had a genuine military training; he was a general in Mobutu's army, Minister of Reconstruction and Commander of the National Service Production Brigades. If it were decided to implement the Lusaka peace agreement, he could be valuable in negotiations with his old comrades now fighting in rebel ranks.

CONGO-KINSHASA II

The pro-consuls decide

Kabila's murder will increase foreign meddling in Kinshasa politics

Whoever the long-term successor to **Laurent-Désiré Kabila** may be, **Angola** wants to have a say in the choice. As soon as his murder was known, Luanda ordered Angolan reinforcements into Kinshasa from Brazzaville, across the river; Angolan officers oversaw the Congolese *Police d'Intervention Rapide* and soldiers who kept order before and during the funeral. Now Angola must decide how to use its influence. Angolan ministers wearily refer to their 'security commitments' in the Congos – **Brazzaville** and Kinshasa – in the same tones that a 19th century pro-consul might use to describe a troublesome colony.

Angola's main strategic aim in the Congos is clear: to close down the rear bases of **Jonas Savimbi's União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola**. Buttressing that, it wants a sympathetic regime in Kinshasa which would see the sense in cooperating with Luanda in oil supplies and distribution, as well as precious stones and other minerals. From that, it has to decide whether its interests are best served by pushing ahead seriously with the 1999 Lusaka peace accord and it has had several rounds of secret talks with high-ranking **Rwandan** and **Ugandan** officials. While Luanda isn't much exercised by the operations in Congo of the *ex-Interahamwé* and *ex-Forces Armées Rwandaises* – and Kabila's recruitment of them to his government army – it can understand Kigali's concern on the matter. It might even be willing to help Rwanda's case in a new round of peace talks if it could get cast-iron guarantees that there would be no cooperation or communication between Rwandan forces and UNITA.

Last November, an Angolan delegation to the **United States** led by the *Forças Armadas Angolanas* (FAA) military intelligence chief, General **Mario Plácido Cirilo de Sa 'Ita'**, met in the State Department with a delegation led by Rwanda's head of military intelligence, Lieutenant Colonel **Jack Nziza**. We hear Uganda has had high-level meetings with Angolan officers within the last few weeks. Rwanda is also trying to use Angolan allies such as President **Denis Sassou-Nguesso**, **Gabon's Omar Bongo** and **Mozambique's Joaquim Chissano** as channels.

Angola's other choice is the bellicose Kabila's view that the rebels and their backers in Kigali and Kampala must be decisively defeated. Few senior officers in Luanda's FAA are said to believe that an overwhelming military defeat of the rebels is possible. Equally, Angolan officers find it hard to trust Rwandan and Ugandan insistence that they aren't cooperating, at the least, with UNITA on Congolese territory. Most of all, Angola, as the wealthiest state and with the biggest army in the region bar **South Africa**, wants to come out on top.

However, both President **José Eduardo dos Santos** and **Zimbabwe's** President **Robert Mugabe** were angered by military risks taken by Kabila without consulting his allies; examples were the

launch of an offensive in Equateur Province last June, when the *Forces Armées Congolaises* (FAC) were badly beaten by **Jean-Pierre Bemba's** *Mouvement pour la Libération du Congo* (plus Uganda). Late last year, the FAC and the **Burundian** Hutu opposition militia, the *Forces pour la Défense de la Démocratie* (FDD), were trounced and lost Pweto to **Adolphe Onusumba Yemba's** *Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie* (plus Rwandan forces) in Kabila's own Katanga province. In both cases, the Angolan and Zimbabwean commanders on the government side had to do much more fighting than they had planned. Occupying territory is relatively cheap; actual fighting involves far higher costs – human, political and financial, not to mention ammunition and fuel. Yet we have heard no good evidence for the belief that Angola was behind Kabila's murder.

On 21 January in Luanda, Presidents dos Santos, Mugabe and **Sam Nujoma** of **Namibia** met, without even inviting Kabila's successor. They issued a statement in favour of dialogue and concerted action to implement the Lusaka accords and, barring further surprises, they agreed not to step up their intervention but not to pull out.

Rumour and instability

Beneath the calm surface, the situation in Kinshasa was highly volatile in the days following the assassination. The High Command disarmed the troops who kept order. **Belgium** instructed Sabena to suspend its flights for at least a week and, two days after the murder, dispatched first, about 40 troops, then about 20 armoured personnel carriers, stationing them in Libreville in case a quick evacuation of civilians became necessary. Belgium has offered good offices and advice; Foreign Affairs Minister **Louis Michel** attended the funeral on 23 January, a sign of the importance attached to the safety of the 2,500 Belgian citizens in Kinshasa. The USA sent home all non-essential personnel attached to its Kinshasa embassy.

Xenophobia is widespread among officials and the general public alike. Young people, whipped up by the *Comités de Pouvoir Populaire* (CPP), intimidated foreign journalists during the run-up to the funeral, banging on car roofs and accusing white people – especially Americans – of refusing to allow a 'nationalist like **Lumumba**' to rule the country. Even neighbouring Congo-Brazzaville came briefly under criticism, because of the presence there of ex-soldiers of **Mobutu Sese Seko's** *Forces Armées Zaïroises*. For two days, Ngobila beach, where the ferries leave Kinshasa for Brazzaville, was closed off.

The city is short of almost everything it needs. Home production has fallen steeply in the past year and imports have dropped by half. Well informed Congolese realise that the war is not a sufficient explanation for the resulting misery. The government's insistence on an artificially high official exchange rate for the Congolese franc does much to explain the shortages. The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation has been trying in vain for three months to draw world attention to the food shortages.

The supply crisis, combined with hopes among the government's three foreign allies that they can limit their commitments, could provide a motive for reopening Congo's internal dialogue to establish rules for a transfer of power, or even to start the peace process. Some of the people who genuinely regret the loss of Laurent Kabila have deplored the promotion of his son, **Joseph Kabila**, declaring that Congo 'is not a monarchy' and calling for dialogue.

The main leaders of the unarmed opposition – **Etienne Tshisekedi wa Malumba** of the *Union pour la Démocratie et le Progrès Social* (UDPS), at present in Brussels, and the coalition *Forces Démocratiques et Sociales de l'Opposition Plurielle* – have openly approached Bemba's MLC to talk about dialogue. This is a break-through for Bemba who, as he foretold last July, has become leader of a *Front de*

Libération Congolais combining his own MLC, **Mbusa Nyamwisi's** faction of the *RCD-Mouvement de Libération* (RCD-ML) and **Tibasima Ateni**, formerly head of the *Office des Mines d'Or de Kilo-Moto*.

This almost doubles the territory controlled by Bemba and simplifies Uganda's position by giving it a single Congolese ally to deal with. Uganda is carefully leaving Bemba the job of ending the still raging Hema-Lendu ethnic hostilities in Bunia region.

The second Kabila regime faces fresh foreign pressures. Meeting in Brussels on 22 January, the European Union foreign ministers threatened to impose a formal embargo on arms deliveries to the region. The EU 15 already agree in practice not to sell weapons there and the constraint would become much tighter if **Britain** or **France**, with US backing, proposed a worldwide embargo to the UN Security Council. Cutting off arms and ammunition would hit the government forces much harder than the rebels, who capture rather than buy much of their material.

Even supposing a ceasefire which holds and the start of an inter-Congolese dialogue, the departure of foreign troops would be awkward. Rwanda, Burundi and Uganda require guarantees that their own rebels now based in Congo would be neutralised. For Zimbabwe, there are risks for Mugabe in bringing his troops home. Soldiers who have not received their foreign-service payments could threaten the President and the ruling clique would have to abandon the promise of private profits from Congo.

After two and a half years of war, none of the foreign participants are much closer to their original objectives. Within Congo, the government's FAC are probably incapable without help of dealing with armed factions such as the FDD or the former *Forces Armées Rwandaises* (ex-FAR), which are far better trained, used to warfare and motivated by desperation.

In Kivu, the **MaiMai** and their Wangilima cousins are not included in plans for an inter-Congolese dialogue but would resist arrangements that do not recognise their special claims. Without its foreign allies, the Congolese state would still be weak, unstable and incapable of paying its own troops. In approving the Lusaka accords, the world community has failed to offer those involved in the fighting a good reason to stop.

The soldiers need a way to survive without looting – perhaps some scheme for demobilisation and retraining, such as those operated in Mozambique or **Djibouti**, plus inclusion in the inter-Congolese dialogue. At the same time, negotiations would be needed with Angola, Uganda and Burundi, not to mention Rwanda. The good-will of Joseph Kabila, his successor, his allies and his enemies is necessary but not sufficient. For now, they have nothing to share but disaster.

GUINEA

The war moves north

Burkina and Liberia's warlords take aim at President Conté's rickety regime

As the war slows down in **Sierra Leone**, it is heating up in Guinea. In essence, it's the same war. The **Liberian** and **Burkinabè** sponsors of the Revolutionary United Front are moving their forces northwards to attack eastern Guinea. After six months of fighting, they have triggered the world's worst refugee crisis. More than 250,000 refugees are trapped in the war zone around Guinea's eastern borders with Sierra Leone and Liberia, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees reports.

For more than five years, Guinea has borne the brunt of people fleeing from the region's wars, hosting as many as half a million refugees. At



the same time, President **Lansana Conté** is fast losing any popularity he might have had at the the rigged presidential election of December 1998: like **Samuel Doe**'s regime in Liberia and successive juntas in Sierra Leone, Conté's is an easy target for rebels.

On 14 January, Conté at last opened talks with the main opposition leaders – though his outstanding critic, **Alpha Condé**, was sentenced last September to five years in gaol by the State Security Court. A few days previously, government forces had faced strong armed attacks at Macenta (in *Guinée Forestière*), at Madina-Oula (near Kindia) and at Forecariah, less than 200 kilometres east of the capital, Conakry. The rebels are fighting for the diamond-fields and other key economic targets, repeating the pattern of Liberia and Sierra Leone.

There is method in Liberia's and Burkina Faso's new strategy: pressure is mounting on Presidents **Charles Taylor** and **Blaise Compaoré** after a series of UN reports detailing the involvement of senior Monrovia and Ouagadougou officials in gun-running and gem-smuggling from RUF-held areas of Sierra Leone. Taylor's and Compaoré's denials of sponsoring the RUF ring increasingly hollow. Yet they and the RUF leadership have made concessions to get the heat taken off – an announced withdrawal from Tongo Field, the second most important diamond centre after Kono, and the reopening of several key roads into RUF-controlled territory; and their promised ceasefire is just about holding in the former combat zones.

The RUF's concessions follow a revised ceasefire accord negotiated in Abuja last November (AC Vol 41 No 22) and a commitment to provide 1,500 West African troops to patrol the Guinea-Liberia-Sierra Leone border. Pulling back from Tongo and opening roads (that is, withdrawing much-needed soldiers from patrol duty) makes sense: the RUF are consolidating in their diamond heartland in Kono following repeated reports of a **British**-coordinated assault on the area using Sierra Leone Army forces.

The move northwards to the Guinea front of many of the RUF's key fighters helps to explain its military slowdown in most of Sierra Leone. Most of the RUF's recent battles have been in the northern Kambia district, where it has been battling Guinean forces sent across the border to attack RUF bases. The RUF operates alongside dissident Guinean fighters, who were also trained and equipped in Liberia and Burkina Faso.

The extension of the RUF's war northwards, in concert with Guinean dissidents, may benefit Taylor and Compaoré diplomatically: it makes them more important in any regional solution. It also helps to complicate the regional balance. They may back the RUF but equally, Conté has been backing dissident Liberian factions to cause trouble for Taylor. Taylor's and Compaoré's regimes may be among

the most corrupt and despotic in Africa, but Conté's runs them close.

Conté faces a bitter unarmed opposition, too. **Mamadou Boye Bah**, runner-up in the presidential election of December 1998, complains that Conté has refused to listen to his political opponents. Alpha Condé of the *Rassemblement du Peuple Guinéen* (RPG) was also a presidential candidate and has been gaoled, despite his parliamentary immunity; the European Union, **United States** and United Nations have all said he should be released but the government has done nothing.

No public demonstrations are allowed. Bah admits that the opposition is powerless; Conté has only ever made concessions to the army, which mutinied in February 1996 for more pay. After that mutiny, many soldiers deserted: that was when the present rebellion – and the government's repressive policies – got under way.

Conté first took power in April 1984, after the death of President **Ahmed Sékou Touré**. Under pressure, Conté agreed to hold multi-party elections at the end of 1993. That September, four months before the poll, bloody riots broke out and Conté prohibited any further public demonstrations. Unsurprisingly, he won.

In 1993, the presidential election went to a second round, with Conté and Condé neck-and-neck. The result was decided when the Supreme Court declared the poll invalid in two sizable opposition towns, Kankan and Siguiri; troops mustered on the streets of Conakry, firing in the air to greet Conté's triumph. Nobody dared to protest and the President's power was reinforced when, by similar means, his supporters won the parliamentary elections of June 1995.

Pay rather than politics was behind the 1996 mutiny. Soldiers were earning less than a dollar a day. The mutineers surrounded and fired on the presidential palace, forcibly escorted Conté to Alpha Yaya Diallo camp – then quarrelled among themselves. The argument was won by officers who did not want to change the regime. Conté, back in power, had many soldiers arrested. A few were condemned to death, others died in gaol and some escaped without leaving tracks. Chief among these was Commandant **Gbago Zoumanigui**, a former Sports Minister.

Newspapers which reported the wave of repression were closed down or otherwise disciplined; journalists were gaoled or driven into exile. Security Minister **Seydou Koureissy Condé** (sacked in June 2000) ordered the seizure of computers belonging to two weeklies, *Le Lynx* and *L'Indépendant*. In Conakry, the government ordered the total destruction of one suburb, Kaporo-Rails, where the opposition vote is strong. The declared purpose was to build a road. More than 100,000 people were thrown into the street and the road was never built. (The Minister responsible, **Alpha Ousmane Diallo**, was also sacked last June.) In the resulting riots, several civilians were killed and a security officer was lynched.

Several ministers have been accused of malpractice, notably Conté's associate **Fofana Kassory**, the Finance Minister, but nothing has been proved. A trial was held, at which a couple of middle-ranking officials were convicted but before their appeals were heard, they were released by order of the President. The press was silenced. Meanwhile, the government was seeking funds from the EU, International Monetary Fund and World Bank, which had stopped aid. They broke off the negotiations when Condé was arrested. Inflation soared and so did the price of fuel.

The government's response was to promote practically all non-commissioned officers and other ranks, putting them on a higher pay-scale. The military budget was swollen by Guinea's contribution to peace-keeping in Sierra Leone. In both countries, the uprisings are fuelled by diamonds; Guinea's come mainly from the south, with reserves in the forests estimated at 25 million carats. There are also

large deposits of iron-ore at Mount Nimba near the Liberian frontier and in the Simandou range.

Conté and his allies try hard to make it seem that Alpha Condé is connected with the rebels, seeking to justify his arrest by claiming, in effect, that he was trying to launch a coup d'état with help from President Taylor. Certainly Taylor has never forgiven Conté for contributing troops to the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (Ecomog) force, which stopped his advance on Monrovia. He accuses Guinea of hosting fighters from the Liberian rebel United Liberation Movement for Democracy in Liberia-K (Ulimo-K) faction (under Alhaji **G.V. Kromah**) who, Freetown claims, have staged raids across the border into Lofa county. Equally, Conakry blames Liberia for raids by unidentified fighters at Guéckédou and Faranah. Citizens of Sierra Leone residing in Guinea have been beaten up during the recent troubles, damaging the formerly cordial Conakry-Freetown relationship.

The identities of the Guinea rebel leaders are unclear. The BBC and *Radio France Internationale* have reported claims by a previously unknown **Mohamed Lamine Fofana** to be the spokesman of the hitherto unheard-of *Mouvement des Forces Démocratiques de Guinée* (MFDG), which, he says, has organised all the recent attacks on Guinean targets. He claims that security prevents him from identifying the movement's leader. One newspaper says that the real Mohamed Lamine Fofana is under arrest and that his name is used by Captain **Souleymane Farath Camara**, who deserted after the 1996 mutiny.

A Guinean military source claims that the rebels are led by former Guinean soldiers who were sent for training with **Libya's** Foreign Legion by a former Defence Minister, Colonel **Diarra Traoré** (executed after a coup attempt in 1985). Guinean television showed an alleged rebel commander, after his capture by the army, claiming to have done nine months' training in Libya and to have passed through Liberia, Burkina and **Côte d'Ivoire** en route to overthrow Guinea's government. Other alleged rebels include officers who mutinied in 1996, among them commandants **Nfamara Oular** and Gbago Zoumanigui.

Whoever the rebels are, they are destabilising Guinea's frontiers and tying-up Sierra Leone government forces, its Kamajor allies and Liberian dissidents in Ulimo-K. The attack, which began at Macenta, quickly spread for more than 1,000 km. Until recently, most attacks were on border villages, which were totally destroyed. More recent incursions have penetrated deeper into the country, with towns as the targets. At Guéckédou, all the houses were wrecked by rockets or machine-gun fire.

The army claims that most of the rebels' weapons come from **Ukraine** or Libya and that the rebel tactics have pushed Guineans onto the government side. Local volunteers are fighting alongside government soldiers. Nevertheless, officers' claims that the rebels possess heavy weapons seem to arise from the government forces' lack of them.

Since late September, the army, with help from France and the USA (both hostile to President Taylor), has acquired armoured helicopters and some old MiG fighter-bombers (four MiG-24s and two ancient MiG-17s; three MiG-21s are on the way). This has helped to limit the rebel advances but Conté's forces need to destroy the main rebel bases, in Liberia and in Sierra Leone, in RUF territory. The government's Kamajor and Ulimo-K allies have proved unreliable. The Toma in the forested region are strongly opposed to Ulimo-K, which is a problem for Conté since the Toma usually support him, while the opposition is mainly Mandingo and Fulani. He will need all the support he can get if and when he organises elections (originally set for 26 November 2001, they have been postponed *sine die*).

This postponement comes as a relief to donors, who do not want to

pay for a vote that nobody will trust. The opposition, in disarray, is no keener on campaigning now. The only significant political move came last May, when ex-Premier **Sidya Touré** joined the *Union pour le Progrès et le Renouveau*. Led by **Bakary Zoumanigui**, the UPR won several coastal towns (Boka, Boffe, Dubreka and part of Conté's own Conakry) at the municipal elections in June, to the President's great displeasure.

Mamadou Bah told *Africa Confidential* that the present uprising was regrettable but that the government's record had encouraged it. He criticises the Guinean army's involvement in Sierra Leone, saying that a backlash was bound to come. He believes the rebellion will not succeed but will bring disorder that can benefit only the army.

On the government side, a member of parliament and of the ruling party's Politbureau, **Decazy Camara**, says patriotism is what really matters and claims that Guinea faces a coalition that includes the RUF, Taylor, Compaoré and, he hints, Libya. He is sure of victory, though, and wants an Ecomog force to arrive soon.

The Chief of Staff, who is also in charge of security, is Commandant **Balo Diallo**, by reputation an efficient officer. At the state security office in the Interior Ministry, *Commissaire Amadou Camara*, formerly commander of the Presidential Guard, is busy with the crime wave that has accompanied the ready availability of weapons. The Defence Ministry has recently been taken over by the President.

The army is so busy fighting the rebels that a coup is unlikely. After the 14 January talks, Conté wants critics to suspend hostilities while the war is on. However, Alpha Condé remains in gaol and talks without the most radical opposition leader look unreal. If President Conté doesn't convince the outside world that he wants a fresh start, he will not get the support – military and economic – that he and his country desperately need.

BURUNDI

Laurent's legacy

Change in Congo-Kinshasa may now concentrate minds on the Arusha accord

The late President **Laurent-Désiré Kabila** left an unfinished mystery for Burundi. He had long supported Hutu rebel groups against Major **Pierre Buyoya's** government in Bujumbura. Yet six days before his murder on 16 January, he attended a surprise meeting in Libreville, **Gabon**, to discuss a Burundi ceasefire. Kabila and Buyoya met **Jean-Bosco Ndayikengurukiye** of the insurgent Hutu *Forces pour la Défense de la Démocratie* (FDD). Kabila said it was a success; Buyoya agreed that a ceasefire would be good. However, Colonel **Epitace Bayaganakandi**, former Interior and Transport Minister and the chosen candidate of the G10 group of Tutsi parties, roundly condemned the meeting because it was organised without the approval of the other signatories to the Arusha agreement. In his view, Buyoya is just buying time.

Kabila tended to avoid meetings, even with his military allies. It is not clear why he bothered to go to this one; possibly it was to curry favour with **France**. Buyoya is under growing pressure to make peace, from **Nelson Mandela**, mediator in the Burundi war, and from the United Nations. Ndayikengurukiye said the Libreville summit underlined the failure of the Arusha peace summit last August (AC Vol 41 No 17), which his FDD did not attend. Some of the 19 groups which did sign the Arusha accord asked why Buyoya had agreed to bilateral talks with a militant non-signatory.

Kabila's death leaves the balance of forces in Burundi unchanged and will not stop Burundian government and rebel troops from operating openly in Congo-K. The Arusha accord is backed by the donor countries, which in December pledged US\$440 million to support it; but the agreement still has no basis in reality. The political parties have agreed on almost nothing. A meeting on 22 January of all the Arusha parties, chaired by Mandela's representative, Judge **Mark Bomani**, said that the main issues would have to be resolved by the end of the week or Mandela might pull out. **Berhanu Dinka**, the UN Special Representative to the Great Lakes region and Chairman of the Arusha Implementation Committee, lamented the lack of progress.

The main Hutu rebel militias are the FDD and the *Forces Nationales de Libération* (FNL). They are seen as tightly integrated with **Rwanda's** Hutu rebels, the *Forces Armées Rwandaises* and their *Interahamwé* associates; all four operate within Burundi and fight in Congo alongside the government's *Forces Armées Congolaises*. Burundi's militias recruit forcibly in refugee camps in **Tanzania**, whose President, **Benjamin Mkapa**, is seen in Bujumbura as openly pro-Hutu. The militias want power more than they want peace and are prepared to sabotage the peace accord; the same is true of extremist Tutsi parties such as the *Parti pour la Renaissance Nationale* (Parena). Until the accords are implemented no aid will flow.

Several rebel attacks in December and early January seem to have been based on unusually good intelligence. A former minister, **Stanislas Mandi**, was killed on 16 December on the Bugarama road; the FNL may have been trying to kill the Defence Minister, Colonel **Cyrille Ndayirukiye**, who was further down the road. On 28 December, more than 30 people were killed in an attack on a bus from Kigali near Kayama on the normally well-patrolled *Route Nationale 1*; this massacre, at 3.00 pm, was a show of strength. Other danger points are Ruyigi and Rutana provinces, bordering Tanzania.

Residents of Bujumbura's outer suburbs often hear artillery fire in the small hours, some ten kilometres away near Tenga, where the rebels have been well dug in since October, inflicting heavy losses on the army. Government forces are said to be laying fresh anti-personnel mines on main routes to rebel hotspots. Estimates of rebel strength vary - the FDD are said to have 30,000 fighters but there are no reliable estimates for the FNL. Their hit-and-run operations do not suggest that they have large or well-equipped forces, though there are rumours that the FNL have hired **Chinese** mercenaries and acquired new satellite telecommunications sets.

There was at least one assassination attempt against Buyoya in December, possibly by his own soldiers. Security at his office is tight and his *Chef de Cabinet*, Col. **Alfred Nkurunziza**, works around the clock. Mandela wants to open an office in Bujumbura but things are held up by security worries. An incoming Sabena flight was fired on from inside the airport perimeter on 4 December, when the pilot saw a surface-to-air missile pass the cockpit window. The **Belgian** airline says it won't resume service. **Kenya** Airways still flies in, denying any contact with the rebels, whom President **Daniel arap Moi** backs.

Buyoya is said to be sick of being condescended to by his soldier-politician colleagues from Uganda and Rwanda, **Yoweri Museveni** and **Paul Kagame**. He gets on badly with Mandela, who thinks he should not stay on as President during a transition to peace. However, Mandela's recruitment as mediator boosted Buyoya's standing, by associating him with Africa's most senior figure; handled skilfully, the link could give Buyoya leverage in any post-Kabila round-table on the region's future.

Parliamentary Vice-President **Frédéric Ngenzeuburo**, a dominant figure in the splintered *Union pour le Progrès National* (Uprona) insists that his faction backs Buyoya's Arusha efforts but warns him

not to try to stay on as President during the transition to peace. Other parties in the G7 (pro-Hutu) and G8 (pro-Tutsi) constellations remain fractious. The Tutsi *Alliance Burundo-Africaine pour le Salut*, led by **Terence Nsanze** in Europe and until recently, by **Serge Mukamarakiza** in Burundi itself, includes some ethnic extremists and is firmly against Buyoya's presidency; Nsanze is thought to want the job. Another pro-Tutsi party, **Alphonse Rugamabarara's** *Inkinzo* (*Le Bouclier/Shield*), is expected to combine with **Joseph Nzeyimana's** *Rassemblement pour la Démocratie, le Développement Economique et Social* (Raddes) and to back Col. Epitace Bayaganakandi; he is influential in the capital and has good Batware connections, outside the Buyoya-Bururi clique. Buyoya is thought to view Bayaganakandi as his biggest rival inside the regime. Another significant party is **André Nkundikije's** *Alliance des Vaillants-Intwari*.

In the G7, the most prominent politician is **Domitian Ndayizeye**, Secretary General of the increasingly split *Front pour la Démocratie au Burundi* (Frodebu), the party of the assassinated Hutu Prime Minister **Melchior Ndadaye**. It is regarded as pro-Hutu but has high-profile Tutsi members. Ndayizeye proposes reviving the neo-traditional *bashingantahe* system of localised arbitration, promoted by a Catholic seminarian, **Adrien Ntabona**.

Hardline Tutsi tend to support Parena, but its leader, ex-President **Jean-Baptiste Bagaza**, is in **Switzerland** and probably will not stand for the presidency. Nobody seriously advocates elections. Burundi's problem is to reconcile the concepts of political and ethnic majorities – and nobody knows how.

GHANA

Brief honeymoon

President Kufuor's new team will have to take some tough decisions on the economy

The rest of the world congratulated Ghanaians for two well-run rounds of voting and a credible transition from one elected government to another. The New Patriotic Party's victory in Ghana, following opposition victories last year in **Senegal** and **Mauritius**, showed an important alternative tradition in African politics. Yet newly elected President **John Kufuor** wasn't allowed to enjoy a honeymoon. Within five days of his 7 January inauguration, he was embroiled in a row over his official visit to **Togo** to celebrate the anniversary of **Gnassingbé Eyadéma's** seizure of power 34 years ago.

Supporters of Kufuor's New Patriotic Party and the formerly ruling National Democratic Congress (itself an outgrowth of a military regime) said it was hypocritical of Kufuor to celebrate Eyadéma's coup but condemn ex-President **Jerry Rawlings's** insistence that his coups of 4 June 1979 and 31 December 1981 should be marked. Some say the Lomé trip was more than just good neighbourliness: that Eyadéma had helped the NPP in Ghana's two-round elections by closing the borders, making it more difficult for the NDC (which has mass support in the Volta) to smuggle fake voters across the frontier. Worse still is the NDC allegation – vehemently denied – that Eyadéma had bought influence in Ghana's elected government by contributing to NPP funds.

Other alleged contributors to NPP funds were **Nigeria's** President **Olusegun Obasanjo** and **Burkina Faso's** President **Blaise Compaoré** – both as keen to see the back of Rawlings as Eyadéma, albeit for different reasons. Obasanjo has the distinction of being accused of contributing to both the NPP and NDC campaigns. NPP and NDC

officials deny any receipt of foreign funds for their campaigns (such payments would break Ghana electoral law) and none of Accra's resourceful reporters has yet been able to prove any foreign payments. Yet the controversy raises the issue of accountable party funding if promises of cleaner politics are to mean much.

As the Lomé saga falls down the list of discussion topics on Ghana's FM radio talk shows, the government's economic strategy is coming under scrutiny. Kufuor won high marks by nominating 12 key ministers within three days of the inauguration. And his business-minded team quickly identified the crisis points. The exchange-rate policy under which the NDC government's ill-advised draw-down on reserves had left it with no room to manoeuvre, under the twin blow of soaring oil import prices and crashing cocoa export prices; last year's trade deficit could be as high as US\$1 billion.

The NDC government had worsened the crisis by holding down the retail fuel price (for fear of losing more votes in an election year), leaving the Tema Oil refinery with debts running into hundreds of millions of dollars, according to Presidential Energy Advisor and former opposition activist **Charles Wereko Brobbey**. The government's economic team believes it has little option but to announce a 50 per cent increase in fuel prices, despite the inflationary effect that will have across the economy. Most ministers believe they should talk up the NDC's economic mismanagement as a rationale for taking some unpopular decisions fast. Already the Kufuor government is coalescing into a series of defined groups.

The presidential group:

● **D.K. Osei**, Secretary to the President, 50, a career diplomat who has served in Kinshasa, Paris, Conakry and Abidjan. A surprise appointment, he was an NDC stalwart and a friend of the Ghana National Petroleum Corporation Managing Director, **Tsatsu Tsikata**. A former confidant of Rawlings, he is a nephew by marriage of Kufuor.

● **Jake Obetsebi-Lamprey**, Minister of Presidential Affairs and Chief of Staff; former Managing Director of Lintas (Ghana). His father was a minister in **Kwame Nkrumah's** presidential campaign who died in preventive detention. Stronger on marketing than policy, Obetsebi-Lamprey was important in the NPP campaign strategy (always available to the press) and Kufuor treats him as a confidant.

● **Elizabeth Ohene**, Minister of State at the Presidency (Media Relations); a former Editor of the government's *Daily Graphic*, Ohene went into exile soon after Rawlings' 1981 revolution and was Deputy Editor of the BBC African Service. Tough-minded, highly regarded as a journalist, she will face demands from former press colleagues for the repeal of criminal libel laws and for a freedom of information act.

● **Dr. Kwame Addo-Kufuor**, Minister of Defence; MP for the central Kumasi constituency of Manhyia in the NPP's heartland and brother of Kufuor. As a former President of the Ghana Medical Association, he had been expected to go to Health. His vetting will be rough, with the NDC raising the issue of nepotism. His appointment shows the President's thinking on security, even though ministers of defence rarely stop coups. The front line:

● **Hackman Owusu-Agyeman**, Minister of Foreign Affairs; MP for New Juaben North, sociable and breezy; a specialist in agricultural economics, he worked for the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation for two decades. He will be at home in Western chancelleries but there are worries that he's too much of a gentleman to deal with the region's warlords.

● **Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo**, Attorney General and Minister for Justice; a barrister and MP for Abuakwa in the Eastern Region. His grand-uncle was United Party founding father **J.B. Danquah**, who died in custody under Nkrumah; his father, **Edward Akufo-Addo**, was President of the Second Republic. Shrugging off his 'book-long' image, he campaigned in English, Twi and fluent Ga, staying witty in all three

languages. He stood against Kufuor for the NPP leadership and came a respectable second; strongly tipped as a future NPP leader if he proves effective in this tough portfolio, undertaking major reform of the moribund civil and criminal justice systems.

● **Alhaji Malik Yakubu Alhassan**, Minister of the Interior and MP for Yendi; popular and effective, Yakubu played a key role in winning major gains for the NPP in the north. Another rising star, he's friends with **Akufo-Addo** and Finance Minister **Yaw Osafo-Marfo**.

● **Joseph Henry (J.H.) Mensah**, Majority Leader in Parliament, Minister of Government Business and Chairman of the National Planning Commission. The 72-year-old MP for Sunyani East is the oldest member of the Kufuor cabinet and a political survivor dating back to Nkrumah. An economist (ex-Legon, London School of Economics and Stanford) he stood against Kufuor, his brother-in-law, for the party leadership in 1994 and 1998. Tough and outspoken; if he differs with Kufuor, he will say so publicly.

● **Peter Ala Adjetey**, Speaker of Parliament; former President of the Ghana Bar Association, with an uncompromising and feisty attitude, but he will be tested in what promises to be a boisterous parliament.

The economic team:

● **Yaw Osafo Marfo**, Minister of Finance; an engineer turned banker and economist. A veteran of the World Bank, African Development Bank and UN Development Programme missions, he has also run banks in Ghana. Well liked across party lines but worries about his willingness to take unpopular economic decisions.

● **Kofi Apraku**, Minister of Trade and Industries; outspoken, ambitious and one of the brains behind the anti-Value Added Tax protests against the NDC regime, Apraku is a trained economist who had been expecting the Finance portfolio. A key challenge will be to push for cuts in Western tariffs on African produce.

● **Kwesi Nduom**, Minister for Economic Planning and Regional Cooperation; a candidate of the Nkrumahist Convention People's Party, Nduom was chief executive of Goldfields Securities, a top financial services firm, and is highly regarded in business circles.

● Retired Major **Courage Quarshigah**, Minister of Agriculture; the NPP's National Organiser and coordinator of all campaigning in the pro-NDC Volta Region, his home region. Ex-revolutionary socialist, confidant of Rawlings and veteran of UN peacekeeping missions in **Egypt** and **Lebanon**. His links with soldiers in intelligence and national security will be important.

● **Kwadwo Baah-Wiredu**, Minister for Local Government and Rural Development; trained as a chartered accountant and quick-witted, he aims to restructure the local government system of district chief executives, an innovation of the outgoing NDC regime. A favourite of Kufuor's, he is tipped for higher things, such as the Finance portfolio some years hence. Party unity should survive the first year at least: the ministers will be too busy tackling the inherited economic and political mess.

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Pointers

ANGOLA

Ciao João

Speculation about the departure of General **João de Matos**, Chief of General Staff of the *Forças Armadas Angolanas*, suggests he may be Luanda's first casualty from the 'Angolagate' sanctions-busting scandal which threatens the highest reaches of France's political establishment (AC Vol 41 Nos 24 & 25). De Matos' tactical acumen is credited with the FAA's striking military turnaround in 1994. Arrest warrants have been issued in France for two foreign nationals who were granted Angolan citizenship—**Pierre Falcone** (detained) and **Arkady Gaidamak**—and who were the principals in a US\$130 million arms deal in 1993. Official Angolan sources told *Africa Confidential* that De Matos remains in his post 'but we cannot be certain about the future'.

Perversely, De Matos could be pushed out because he has no connection with the bizarre financing of **Russian** arms that prompted the Angolagate investigation. He is outside the magic circle; that is problematic for a military chief in Luanda's paranoid politics. Luanda gossips suggest that he helped the French investigators who have named Angola's National Security Advisor, Gen. **Manuel Helder Vieira 'Kopelipa'**, in their public documents. De Matos' friends dismiss this, saying he is far too politically astute to dabble in such intrigues and instead concentrates his efforts on the military and private business.

Arms procurement has long been the preserve of state purchaser Simportex under Kopelipa's management; he also negotiated a **United States'** lobbying contract with Cabelly-Riley International, one of the most lucrative such contracts in Washington. De Matos has long expressed public but coded dissatisfaction with arms procurement procedures and intelligence, such as the purchase of several high-tech missile systems from **Israel** and eastern Europe of little use on the battlefield and massive intelligence failures prior to the government's planned offensive of December 1998.

De Matos' departure would have wider repercussions. He disagreed with Kopelipa over tactics, favouring a more gradualist approach in the war against **Jonas Savimbi's** *União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola* and arguing that the FAA should be more mobile and flexible, with a hearts-and-minds campaign in ex-UNITA areas. Kopelipa emphasises military might and capital-intensive war. He has brought in 24 ex-Soviet generals as advisors, so far without notable success. Racial politics in Luanda preclude any political bid: as a *mestiço*, he is the butt of resentment at the rapid promotion of white and mixed-race officers, a legacy of **Portuguese** rule. ● Whitehall has confirmed that international financier Gaidamak has indefinite leave to remain in **Britain** but says it has no evidence that he is in the UK now. London insists the French arrest

warrant, issued on 6 December, is not internationally valid and that Paris has not asked for help to track him down. On 6 December, it seems he was staying at London's prestigious Dorchester Hotel, where he held court to some journalists, including a correspondent from *Le Monde*, which published an interview the next day. Gaidamak, who denies any wrong-doing in Angolagate, is now based in Tel-Aviv, with occasional forays to Luanda. His son **Alexandre** operates a financial and property business from impressive offices in Carlos Place, London.

EGYPT-SUDAN

Pharaoh speaks

Cairo is trying to coopt Western governments, **Algeria** and **Saudi Arabia** into a scheme to present President **George W. Bush's** new team with a detailed ready-made policy for dialogue with Sudan's National Islamic Front, *Africa Confidential* has learned. A second aim is to replace the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development peace process (**Eritrea**, **Ethiopia**, **Kenya** and **Uganda**) by the **Libyan-Egyptian** Initiative, returning Sudan to the Arab fold (AC Vol 41 No 20).

Egypt's Foreign Minister **Amr Moussa** has just been to Khartoum to discuss the plan with an NIF that wants nothing more than for other governments to consolidate its power. Moussa went on to Riyadh, then declared in Cairo there would be 'no peace in Sudan without Egypt'.

The aim is to coopt the opposition National Democratic Alliance but pare off the Sudan People's Liberation Army, its main fighting force. This is to persuade governments the opposition is finished and they must talk to the NIF. Cairo has been saying publicly the SPLA must be included in any settlement. Khartoum has already vacuumed up the Umma, leaving **El Sadig el Mahdi** railing against both NIF and NDA. Vice-President **Ali Osman Mohamed Taha** keeps saying political 'reconciliation' is only 'on the Salvation Revolution's terms' yet Egypt and its Euro-allies insist the reconciliation is real. Egypt favours moving some more visible hardliners sideways, such as security boss **Nafi'e Ali Nafi'e**, who has been making venomous attacks on the opposition. (He last 'disappeared' after 1995's murder attempt on President **Hosni Mubarak**.)

Meanwhile, the NIF (which says it's doubled military spending since oil began flowing), is unleashing a massive offensive on opposition-held areas: its offensive in the Nuba western jebels has begun; aerial bombing in the east, Blue Nile and south continues.

Cairo's scheme also involves foreign carrots. The NIF will try to attract more foreign companies, with Saudi quietly helping persuade **United States'** oil interests; it's unclear whether Saudi has agreed to any part of the plan. Ditto for Algiers, expected to convince Ethiopia and Eritrea to complete their rapprochement with the NIF and, as Organisation of African Unity chair, giving the scheme legitimacy on a continent wary of NIF intentions.

Most surprising is Egypt's proposal that, with

Saudi, it will help mediate a Palestinian-**Israeli** settlement if Washington helps it bring peace in Sudan. The sub-text is for the NIF to promise to stop backing Islamists in Egypt, Libya and the Middle East. NIF leaders' recent declarations on the non-negotiability of their 'Islamic fundamentals' don't augur well for Egypt's plans.

FRANCE/AFRICA

Not franc

The assassination of **Congo-Kinshasa's** President **Laurent-Désiré Kabila** played havoc with the running order at **Cameroon's** Franco-African summit, the 21st since 1973. Underlying the scheduled theme, '*L'Afrique – l'heure de la mondialisation*' (Africa at the time of globalisation) are renewed doubts about the short-term future of the Franc Zone held by regional economists and leaders such as **Malian** President **Alpha Oumar Konaré**.

Currently heading both the Economic Community of West African States and the *Union Economique et Monétaire Ouest-Africaine*, Konaré wants a fully integrated West African monetary zone but is anxious about UEMOA's deteriorating economic fundamentals and, above all, the impact of economic chaos and xenophobia in **Côte d'Ivoire** on the rest of the Union. At its Bamako summit last November, he compared the present situation with the run-up to 1994's historic 50 per cent devaluation of the CFA franc, before confirming a push to an Ecowas zone by 2005 at the latest. In private, he is furious with Ivorian President **Laurent Gbagbo's** belligerent attitude to the International Monetary Fund and World Bank – and the rest of the outside world.

French officials, too, are pondering the Zone's future, especially since non-oil investment has failed to flow. A few feel the CFA is again overvalued in the UEMOA, while the Abidjan mess has put the single market experiment back 'by at least two years', says one.

Prospects for key regional exports cocoa, cotton and, to a lesser extent, gold, are gloomy in the medium term. French Cooperation Secretary **Charles Josselin** remains firmly opposed to altering the current fixed rate of FF CFA 655 = one euro, as does President **Jacques Chirac**. Yet the run-up to the abolition of individual European currencies on 1 January 2002 could see a further repegging. (And Chirac will be preoccupied by his re-election campaign.) This could split the Zone in two. The economies of the Central African countries in the Zone are more oil-price influenced than ever; their integration, in the *Communauté Economique et Monétaire de l'Afrique Centrale*, is lagging. **Omar Bongo** has repeatedly threatened that any more changes to Zone arrangements will result in **Gabon** printing its own currency.

Regional experts such as former **Burkinabè** Planning and Finance Minister **Ousmane Ouédraogo** say that if the Ecowas monetary zone were finally to happen, UEMOA would have to move to a floating 'snake' arrangement against the euro, to accommodate new members. Others discount the project as 'impractical'.