



Peace & Justice Update
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The countries for the Peace and Justice updates have been chosen as areas of focus at the Institute. The International Human Rights section is intended to focus on aspects of international law. For information on specific cases of human rights abuses, please visit www.hrw.org or www.amnesty.org. The Gender and Peace section highlights events in peacebuilding that pertain to gender and human rights.

Source information: Information presented in this update is condensed from wire and newspaper reports from Lexis/Nexis and from electronic sites on the World Wide Web. Complete biographical information is unavailable from these services, but every attempt has been made to properly cite information and give credit to source materials. This update is intended for use by IPJ staff and associates for informational purposes only. As the material in this update is condensed, and does not directly quote the primary source, information from the update should not be quoted.

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UPDATE SOURCE ABBREVIATIONS

AP	=	Associated Press (www.ap.org)
AFP	=	Agence France Presse (www.afp.com)
AllAfrica	=	AllAfrica Global Media (www.allAfrica.com)
BBC	=	British Broadcasting Corporation (http://news.bbc.co.uk)
BBC Monitoring	=	BBC Monitoring International Reports (www.monitor.bbc.co.uk/)
CDC News	=	Center for Disease Control News (www.thebody.com)
CNN	=	Cable News Network (www.cnn.com)
CPJ	=	Committee to Protect Journalists (www.cpj.org)
DPA	=	Deutsche Presse-Agentur (www.dpa.com)
FT	=	Financial Times (www.ft.com)
GlobalSecurity	=	GlobalSecurity (www.globalsecurity.org)
HRW News	=	Human Rights Watch News (www.hrw.org)
IWPR	=	Institute for War and Peace Reporting (www.iwpr.net)
IRIN	=	Integrated Regional Information Network (www.irinnews.org) (UN Dept. of Humanitarian Affairs Information Network: (www.unog.ch))
Kantipur Online	=	Kantipur Online (www.kantipuronline.com .)
NCN	=	New Congo Net (www.marekinc.com/NCN.html)
PANA	=	Pan African News Agency (www.panapress.com)
RSF	=	Reporters Sans Frontieres (www.rsf.org).
TASS	=	ITAR-TASS News Agency (www.itar-tass.com/english/)
UPI	=	United Press International (www.upi.com)
VOA	=	Voice of America (www.voanews.com)
WP	=	Washington Post (www.washingtonpost.com)
WPS	=	What the Papers Say (www.wps.ru:8101)
Xinhua	=	Xinhua News Agency (www.xinhuanet.com/english/index.htm)
WWP	=	Women Waging Peace (www.womenwagingpeace.net)

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SERBIA

Prosecution of Milosevic draws to a close: The prosecution phase in the trial of former Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic, charged with 66 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity for his involvement in the wars in Croatia, Bosnia and Kosovo, ended February 19. The trial at the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia has been in progress since February 2002, and the prosecution has called nearly 300 witnesses in its effort to prove Milosevic culpable for atrocities committed during the 1990s wars in the Balkans. He was also indicted on a separate charge of genocide stemming from the 1995 Srebrenica massacre that killed an estimated 6,000 to 8,000 Muslim men and boys. The tribunal recently heard testimony regarding the Muslim enclave from a French general who headed UN forces in Bosnia 1992-1993. General Phillipe Morillion testified February 12 that he had warned Milosevic in 1993 about a “terrible tragedy” that could occur in Srebrenica if nothing was done to calm Serb forces seeking revenge for an earlier attack by Muslims on Serb civilians. Two years later, after Morillion had stepped down from his post, the UN-designated “safe haven” was overrun by Bosnian Serb forces. The prosecution attempted to use this information to prove that Milosevic was ultimately responsible for the massacre. Milosevic dismissed all the charges against him as politically motivated “lies.” He was to have three months to prepare his defense, slated to begin in May 2004. (AFP, February 15; BBC, WP, February 12, 2004)

GENDER AND PEACE

Police ban women’s peace march in Zimbabwe: Riot police in Zimbabwe banned a planned peace march by women activists February 14 in the capital Harare and other cities. This was the second consecutive year that police prohibited the group, Women of Zimbabwe Arise (Woza), from holding Valentine’s Day demonstrations promoting peace and reconciliation. Woza organizers reported that police threatened to shoot demonstrators if they defied the ban. In 2003, nearly 70 Woza supporters were arrested as they passed out roses and held up banners with messages promoting tolerance and non-violence. A Woza spokeswoman said this year’s ban came after the group published critical remarks about Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe in a recent newsletter. Zimbabwe, a former British colony that gained independence in 1980, has experienced significant economic and political turmoil since 1999 when opposition groups started organizing against President Mugabe’s increasingly autocratic rule. Although Mugabe’s ZANU-PF party was nominally re-elected to power in March 2002, there were wide-ranging allegations of electoral fraud. (BBC Monitoring, February 14, 2004)

One thousand women to be nominated for 2005 Nobel Peace Prize: The Swiss foreign ministry and activist group Swisspeace embarked on a campaign to nominate the names of 1,000 women worldwide for the 2005 Nobel Peace Prize. The symbolic nomination was to be presented as a single candidacy and, according to organizers, was meant to make the “silent work of countless women peace [activists] more visible, recognizable, and understandable.” The nomination was to include at least one woman from every country in the world and organizers hoped to draw most nominees from the grassroots

level. The Nobel Peace Prize, named in honor of its Swedish founder, Alfred Nobel, has been awarded to individuals or institutions that have distinguished themselves for their dedication to peace. The first prize was awarded in 1901, and has been conferred 84 times since then. ([AFP](#), February 14, 2004)

THE GREAT LAKES

BURUNDI

Burundi's army demobilizes child soldiers: Twenty-nine child soldiers in the Burundian army were demobilized February 13 at a ceremony in Bujumbura. Most of the children had accompanied the soldiers as porters or worked as cooks. They were the first group from the army to return to their families since the National Structure for the Disarmament, Demobilization, Reintegration, and Prevention of Child Soldiers was launched in January 2004. The plan targeted approximately 6,000 child soldiers who were either in the army, the guardians of the peace, the government's civilian militia, or in ex-rebel movements. Desiree Gatoto, head of the army's child soldier demobilization program, said that the returnees would either begin school or resume vocational training. The families of the children would receive a \$20 aid package for up to 18 months. However, the Burundi League for Childhood and Youth, a local NGO, expressed concerns that the plan still lacked long-term vision for the reintegration of child soldiers into society. Without concrete plans for social reintegration, returning child soldiers might rejoin rebel forces. Rebels of the Hutu majority fought the Tutsi-dominated army for 11 years until cease-fire agreements were signed last year by the government and most of the rebel groups. During the 11 years of fighting, more than 300,000 people were killed, and approximately 6,000 child soldiers were used by rival sides. ([AFP](#), February 13; [AllAfrica](#), February 14; [BBC Monitoring](#), January 26, 2004).

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO (DRC)

UN investigates the death of a peacekeeper: A Kenyan military observer, Major Peter Wachai, working with the United Nations Mission in the DRC (MONUC), was shot dead February 12 in the northeastern region of Ituri. A Kenyan military officer said that the peacekeeper died of a gunshot wound to the head. The peacekeeper's body was flown to Kenya February 14 and was received with full military honors. Before his death, the late Major Wachai had gone to the village of Katoto to investigate reports that fighters from the Union of Congolese Patriots (UPC) had been attacking civilians. However, in a press statement, a MONUC spokesman said that it was unknown who was responsible for his death. In a press release, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan said that MONUC would investigate the case in cooperation with the government of the DRC to bring to justice all those responsible for the killing. Since 1999, tribal violence between the Lendu and Hema in Ituri has claimed approximately 50,000 lives and displaced half a million people. ([AFP](#), February 14; [AllAfrica](#), February 13, 2004)

UGANDA

IDPs return home: As security situations in eastern Uganda improved, thousands of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) who had sought refuge in the districts of Teso and Soroti began repatriating to their villages. Many of these IDPs were displaced in 2003 when fighting between the government and the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) extended from northern Uganda to the eastern districts. Christine Aporu, the Minister of State for Disaster Preparedness, raised concerns that many returning IDPs were still in dire need of food. Aporu noted that most IDPs fled leaving their mature crops to go to waste when the LRA attacked during harvest seasons. The Ugandan government reopened most schools and roads that were closed due to security concerns. However, many IDPs have been reluctant to send their children to school, fearing that LRA rebels would abduct them. Since 1986, the LRA has been fighting the government in an attempt to replace the existing government with one based on the Biblical Ten Commandments. Over the last 18 years, more than 1.4 million civilians, particularly in the north, have been displaced, and approximately 25,000 children, who were abducted by the LRA, have been forced either to fight as combatants or serve as sex slaves. (IRIN, February 17; Xinhua, February 14, 2004)

Advocacy and peace groups express concerns over ICC probe: Save the Children, the children's rights group, raised concerns that the investigation of the LRA by the International Criminal Court (ICC) would inflict harm on children in northern Uganda unless issues of child protection were properly addressed. In a press release, the organization alerted the ICC that the LRA leadership would apply more strict discipline on child soldiers, main witnesses, and victims of war crimes to prevent them from escaping. A local peace group, the Acholi Religious Leaders' Peace Initiative (ARLPI), warned about the possible damage the ICC probe would cause the peace process. The ARLPI commented that an investigation at this stage would close all paths to peaceful negotiations. A month after President Yoweri Museveni appealed to the court to investigate the LRA, the ICC announced January 29 that it would begin investigating the LRA's alleged human rights abuses. (IRIN, February 17, 2004)

HORN OF AFRICA

ETHIOPIA

Fighting renews in Gambella: Renewed fighting in the western Gambella region of Ethiopia broke out February 6 between government forces and two ethnic groups, the Anyuak and Nuer tribes. According to UN officials, as many as 40 people were killed in the fighting. The clashes erupted approximately 500 miles from the capital in a Dimma refugee camp where an estimated 18,700 Sudanese civilians live. The Ethiopian government blamed the conflict on the Anyuak, claiming an escalation of ethnic tensions between the groups on issues of natural resources and power-sharing. This incident renewed fighting was thought to be an extension of clashes that initially broke out December 2003 after eight government refugee workers were killed in an ambush on a UN vehicle. (AP, February 10; IRIN, February 9, 12, 2004)

ERITREA-ETHIOPIA

Landmine casualties decline: The Mine Action Coordination Centre of the UN Mission in Eritrea and Ethiopia (UNMEE) reported that despite continued landmine accidents in the region, figures had shown a steady decline in casualties. According to UNMEE statistics, approximately 100 people were killed by landmines in the four years since the arrival of UN forces. Mine clearance in the estimated 15-mile wide Temporary Security Zone (TSZ) began after the December 2000 signing of the Algiers Agreement, ending the two-year border war between Eritrea and Ethiopia. The Mine Action Program was expected to ensure the safety of UN peacekeepers and villages in high-risk areas, and the eventual delineation of the Eritrean-Ethiopian border. Eritrea and Ethiopia remain two of the world's most heavily mine-contaminated countries; Ethiopia has approximately 2 million mines, and Eritrea approximately 1.5 million in addition to 300,000 units of unexploded ordnance. (IRIN, February 2, 10, 2004)

SUDAN

UN envoy discusses humanitarian access into Darfur: The UN special envoy for Sudan, Tom Eric Vraalsen, arrived in Khartoum February 12 to oversee the promise of President Omar al-Bashir to grant humanitarian access to the Darfur region. The government of Sudan officially declared victory February 9 over two Darfur-based rebel groups, the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army (SLM/A) and the Justice and Equality Movement, after the capture of major towns in the area. Following the victory claim, President al-Bashir pledged to open relief routes for immediate humanitarian access into the region. Despite the government's promise, a spokesperson for Refugees International stated that there had been no change, and that humanitarian access had remained limited in the region. The UN office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs reported that approximately 3 million civilians remained in need of humanitarian aid following the Darfur conflict between government forces and rebel groups. The SLM/A demanded a greater share of resources and political autonomy from the Sudanese government in order to ensure their rights within a unified, democratic Sudan. (GlobalSecurity, January 31; IRIN, February 12,16, 2004)

Differences emerge following resumption of peace talks: Peace talks aimed at ending the 20-year civil war between the Sudanese government and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) were resumed February 17 after a three-week adjournment. Differences emerged between the two parties on the mandate of a peace-monitoring team to operate during a six-year interim period following the final peace agreement. Samson Kwaje, the official spokesperson of SPLM/A, argued that external peacekeeping forces were necessary to help maintain the cease-fire agreement, in addition to the proposed peace monitors in the region. Peace monitoring teams would be responsible for surveying and safeguarding provisions of the peace deal, and peacekeepers would have discretion to implement the arrangements settled between the two parties. The Sudanese government claimed that the need for peacekeepers would be unnecessary after the final peace agreement. Three monitoring teams facilitated by the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development have been appointed to monitor peace agreements between the government and SPLM/A. The previous talks had made progress on wealth-sharing

and security arrangements before the adjournment, and were expected to resolve the remaining issues of power-sharing and regional disputes. (IRIN, February 10, 18, 2004)

INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS

Tunisian President's visit challenges Bush's commitment to Mideast democracy:

Tunisian President Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali was to meet with President George W. Bush February 18 at the White House. Joe Stork, acting director of Human Rights Watch (HRW) Middle East and North Africa Division, claimed that the meeting would be a "credibility" test for Bush's initiative on democracy in the Middle East. Stork added "Ben Ali's government tolerates almost no dissent. Bush needs to speak candidly and publicly to demonstrate that his initiative is serious." Secretary of State Colin Powell urged political reforms and greater openness during a visit to Tunis in December. However, President Bush, though advocating democracy in the region, has not specifically called on the Tunisian government to stop repressing the opposition. The U.S. has given Ben Ali military aid for his cooperation in antiterrorism efforts despite HRW's claims of human rights violations. The country's parliament approved constitutional amendments allowing Ben Ali, who came to power in 1987, to run for reelection in October 2004 and again in 2009. He was reelected in the past three presidential elections with approximately 99 percent of the votes. HRW called for an end to harassment of human rights organizations, the release of political prisoners, and a declaration of amnesty for all political prisoners convicted of "activities not linked to acts of violence." (HRW News, February 13, 2004)

U.S. releases aid to Colombia despite human rights violations: The U.S. signed its eighth human rights certification January 20 confirming Colombia's compliance with human rights conditions. The certification allowed the release of \$34 million in aid to the Colombian Armed Forces even though U.S. officials agreed that the country's military has continued to work with illegal paramilitary groups. HRW expressed concern for U.S. treatment of human rights issues in this region. "The U.S. certification suggests that the Bush administration sees the defense of human rights as a matter of paperwork, not concrete actions," said HRW. The conditions for aid set by the U.S. Congress had demanded the Colombian government break ties with illegal paramilitary leaders and restore order in disturbed regions. HRW reported that these conditions had not been met and there was evidence that paramilitary groups had seized farmlands and houses at gunpoint in the Urabá region, forcing them to sell their property below cost. The groups have also stopped boats along the Magdalena River, detaining and sometimes killing passengers. The same report revealed that paramilitary groups have punished and sometimes executed those who they accused of breaking curfews, stealing, or other wrongdoings. (HRW News, January 23, 2004)

NEPAL

Country sinks deeper into turmoil: Maoists denied reports by state-owned media that their camp had been seized by security forces. King Gyanendra and Queen Komal canceled an unofficial visit to Kalikot district February 17 due to continued fighting. On the same day, construction work on the Melamchi Water Project was halted after Maoists threatened contractors. The leaders of different political and non-governmental groups were targeted by the Maoists last week. Ganesh Chilwal, head of the Maoist Victim Association, who had led the anti-Maoist rally on the ninth anniversary of the Communist uprising (February 13, 1996), and Khem Narayan Fauzdar, the District Chairman of Nepali Congress (Democratic) in Nawalparasi district and a member of the National Council, were shot and killed February 15 and 17. Meanwhile the eighth conference of the Human Rights Organization of the Asia Pacific region opened February 16 in Kathmandu. Matthew Kahane, a UN representative, expressed concern over the murder of Chilwal. Approximately 9,000 people have died since the uprising began nine years ago with the aim of overthrowing the monarchy. The constitution of 1990, which was sacked by the King October 2002, limited the King's role to a constitutional monarch. Parliamentary parties, who accused the King of trying to derail the democratic process, hoped that he would "correct" his "anti-constitutional" move. (BBC, February 12, 15; Kantipur Online, February 17, 2004)