



Peace & Justice Update
March 26, 2004
(Volume 8, Number 7)

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 bibliographical 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.

The Peace & Justice updates are written by the Spring 2004 interns at the Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace & Justice at the University of San Diego. The interns are Donna Chung (University of San Diego), Erina Fischer (University of California, Irvine), Marjan Nahavandi (University of California, Los Angeles), and Hilary Stauffer (University of San Diego).

UPDATE SOURCE ABBREVIATIONS

AP	=	Associated Press (www.ap.org)
AFP	=	Agence France Presse (www.afp.com)
AllAfrica	=	AllAfrica Global Media (www.allAfrica.com)
Amnesty International	=	Amnesty International (www.amnesty.org)
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)
EU2004	=	European Union Presidency 2004 (www.eu2004.ie)
FT	=	Financial Times (www.ft.com)
GlobalSecurity	=	GlobalSecurity (www.globalsecurity.org)
Guardian	=	Guardian Unlimited Network (http://www.guardian.co.uk/)
HRW News	=	Human Rights Watch News (www.hrw.org)
ICG	=	International Crisis Group (www.crisisweb.org)
IRIN	=	Integrated Regional Information Network (www.irinnews.org) (UN Dept. of Humanitarian Affairs Information Network: (www.unog.ch))
IWPR	=	Institute for War and Peace Reporting (www.iwpr.net)
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)
UN News Center	=	UN New Center Homepage (www.un.org)
VOA	=	Voice of America (www.voanews.com)
WP	=	Washington Post (www.washingtonpost.com)
WPS	=	What the Papers Say (www.wps.ru:8101)
WWP	=	Women Waging Peace (www.womenwagingpeace.net)
Xinhua	=	Xinhua News Agency (www.xinhuanet.com/english/index.htm)

UPDATE SUMMARY

BALKANS

KOSOVO

Ethnic violence flares in Kosovo; Attackers kill policemen

SERBIA

Milosevic refuses to comment on change of judge

GENDER AND PEACE

Pan-African Parliament elects its first President

GREAT LAKES

BURUNDI

Clash results in 13 deaths

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO (DRC)

EU raises concerns over transition process

UGANDA

Army kills 61 rebels; LRA kills 337 civilians

HORN OF AFRICA

ERITREA-ETHIOPIA

Eritrea restricts UN movement

ERITREA-SUDAN

Eritrean refugees return home

SOMALIA

Final phase of peace talks begins

SUDAN

Government agrees to Darfur peace talks; UN official declares Darfur world's greatest humanitarian crisis; Government fuels militia attacks; Chadian troops enter Darfur

INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS

Prisoners report on massacre; UN condemns Yassin's assassination

NEPAL

Maoist attack results in deadly clash

BALKANS

KOSOVO

Ethnic violence flares in Kosovo: Ethnic violence between Albanians and Serbs erupted March 17 in Kosovo, when crowds of Albanians assembled in the town of Mitrovica to protest the drowning deaths of two Albanian boys. The drownings were allegedly caused by Serbs in response to an earlier drive-by shooting of a Serb teenager. Although the initial protest seemed to be unplanned, violent outbreaks soon appeared in more than 30 locations throughout the province. UN and NATO officials claimed that ethnic Albanian extremists had organized the unrest. Large groups of Albanians also attacked UN personnel and vehicles in Pristina as troops attempted to evacuate Serb civilians. Reprisal violence broke out in Serbia, where Muslim mosques were burned in Belgrade and Nis. The violence persisted until March 19, ultimately causing 28 deaths, more than 600 injuries, and the displacement of 4,000 Serbs. UN officials characterized the hostilities as a “reverse ethnic cleansing,” perpetrated by Albanians against Serbs. Kosovo has been under the control of the UN and NATO since 1999, when NATO intervened to halt Serb aggression against ethnic Albanians. The Serbian and Kosovar governments remained divided about the future of the province. Serbia called for it to have autonomous status within Serbia; however, ethnic Albanian leaders continued to press for full independence. (WP, March 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 2004)

Attackers kill policemen: Gunmen attacked a UN vehicle March 23 near Pristina, the capital of Kosovo, killing a UN policeman and a Kosovar police officer. It was unknown who the attackers were and a UN spokesperson noted that direct attacks on peacekeepers were very rare. However, the province experienced violent clashes during the previous week between ethnic Albanians and Serbs, prompting NATO to send 2,000 extra troops to the region to restore peace. It was the worst outbreak of violence in the region since 1999, when NATO air strikes ended Serb aggression in the region. The attacks came on the fifth anniversary of the air strikes. (BBC, WP, March 23, 2004)

SERBIA

Milosevic refuses to comment on change of judge: Former Serbian president Slobodan Milosevic, on trial for crimes against humanity and genocide at the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia at The Hague, refused to comment on the possible successor for presiding justice Richard May, who was to step down May 31 due to health reasons. Under court rules, Milosevic had the right to challenge May’s replacement; however, he instead maintained his position that the tribunal was illegal and refused to comment on what he termed “administrative matters.” Observers believed that May made the decision to step down at this point because the trial was on hiatus after the prosecution rested and Milosevic prepared for his defense. The search for May’s replacement was underway, a procedure which involved a candidate being nominated by their own country and then elected by the United Nations. It was thought that Milosevic would use May’s removal to make a case for mistrial, arguing that the new judge would not be familiar enough with the case to adjudicate fairly. However, most observers believed such a tactic would ultimately be unsuccessful. (BBC, March 24, 2003)

GENDER AND PEACE

Pan-African Parliament elects its first President: The African Union (AU) held the inaugural meeting of the new Pan-African Parliament March 18, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The establishment of the Parliament was the culmination of two years of AU efforts, following resolutions passed at the organization's 2002 meeting in South Africa. The Parliament was to be a continental body that represented all Africans, and its aim was to enable Africans to have direct participation in solving the continent's problems. It was envisioned as being the new law-making arm of the AU, although during its first five-year term, the Parliament would only have consultative and advisory powers. At the inauguration, non-governmental organizations urged the Parliament to devote much of its first term to empowering women to help develop the African Continent. Each of the AU's 53 member states were to elect five parliamentarians, at least one of whom had to be a woman. Senior Tanzanian diplomat and activist Gertrude Mongella was unanimously elected President of the Parliament. Besides holding various diplomatic and governmental posts in her native Tanzania, Ms. Mongella served as UN Secretary-General on women's issues and development and the World Health Organization's Goodwill Ambassador for Africa. (AllAfrica, March 18; BBC Monitoring, March 18; DPA, March 19, 2004)

GREAT LAKES

BURUNDI

Clash results in 13 deaths: During fighting between the Burundian army and ethnic Hutu rebels from the Forces for National Liberation (FNL) in Kabezi Commune March 17, approximately 13 people were killed and tens of thousands were displaced. Major Adophe Manirakiza, an army spokesman, said March 18 that the army killed 10 rebels during the fighting, but did not mention any casualties suffered by the army. Felicien Mtahombaye, a local administrator, reported that the majority of the Kabezi Commune residents, who were internally displaced persons, fled towards the neighboring commune of Muhuta. He added that if the situation did not improve soon, immediate humanitarian assistance would be necessary. Hutu insurgents fought the Tutsi-dominated army for 11 years until cease-fire agreements were signed in 2003 by the government and most of the rebel groups. The FNL refused to sign the agreement and continued their attacks against the army. (IRIN, March 18, 2003)

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO (DRC)

EU raises concerns over transition process: The European Union (EU) expressed concerns March 18 on the political tensions and obstacles delaying implementation of the transitional programs in the DRC. The EU called for the immediate application of the necessary measures to restore confidence in the transitional government and to develop good relations within the transitional institutions. It also urged the transitional government to work on restoring state authority throughout the national territory by speeding up reform of the justice, police and military sectors. Alarmed by the continued instability and human rights violations in the east, the EU advised the transitional

government to make every possible effort to restore security with assistance from the UN Mission in the DRC. The conflict in the DRC, which erupted in the summer of 1998, led to the deaths of more than 3 million people. The Lusaka Peace Accords signed in 2000, officially ended the activities of foreign countries in the conflict. In August 2003, the DRC interim government began serious efforts to end existing conflicts and to rebuild the country. (EU2004, March 18; IRIN, March 19, 2004)

UGANDA

Army kills 61 rebels: The Ugandan army said March 22 that 61 Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) rebels were killed over the weekend during intense fighting. The clash occurred near the border of Sudan where the LRA was planning to launch a large military campaign against civilians. In a press release, the army spokesman, Major Shaban Bantariza, said that LRA deputy chief, Vincent Otti, managed to escape from the battle. Last week, the Ugandan army extended deployments inside Sudan to destroy rebel bases and training camps in the mountainous areas near their common border. The Ugandan army received authorization to enter southern Sudan in pursuit of the rebels when it signed a bilateral treaty, the Operational Iron Fist agreement, with Sudan in June 2002. The LRA has continued its insurgency, which began 18 years ago in an attempt to replace the existing government with one based upon the Biblical Ten Commandments. (IRIN, March 22, 2004)

LRA kills 337 civilians: After investigating the February 21 rebel attacks on the Barlonyo camp for internally displaced persons (IDPs), leaders in Lira district announced that approximately 337 people were killed as a result of the attacks. The UN Children's Fund protection officer claimed that the death toll increased after discovering another 100 people who were killed outside the camp. Last February, about 300 LRA rebels dressed as regular army soldiers attacked IDPs at Barlonyo camp, home to 4,800 civilians. The largest LRA killing of civilians before the Barlonyo incident occurred in 1995 when at least 240 people were killed. (IRIN, March 16, 2004)

HORN OF AFRICA

ERITREA-ETHIOPIA

Eritrea restricts UN movement: Eritrea continued to restrict movements of UN peacekeepers in the region north of the Temporary Security Zone (TSZ) despite a Security Council resolution March 15. The resolution urged Eritrea to ease restrictions for the UN Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) to allow it to carry out its mandate in the buffer zone between the two countries. Although Ethiopia lifted bans on UNMEE peacekeepers February 5, Eritrea has protested the presence of UNMEE and has refused to comply with the request until full implementation of the 2000 Algiers Agreement was completed. The two-year border war between Eritrea and Ethiopia ended with the stipulation that a boundary commission would demarcate the border. Since Ethiopia's rejection of the commission's ruling in 2002, Eritrea has refused to engage in dialogue. (IRIN, March 16, 2004)

ERITREA-SUDAN

Eritrean refugees return home: Approximately 1,770 Eritrean refugees exiled in Sudan returned to Eritrea March 10. Twenty-five return movements were to take place by the end of June 2004 under a voluntary refugee repatriation program of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Since the program launched in 2000, approximately 118,000 Eritrean refugees have returned after 30 years of exile; an estimated 200,000 Eritrean refugees remained in Sudan. According to a 2002 UNHCR announcement, Eritreans would lose refugee status after 2002 since reasons for fleeing Eritrea no longer existed. Approximately 35,000 signed up for the voluntary repatriation program to return to Eritrea this year. (IRIN, March 12; ReliefWeb, March 11, 2004)

SOMALIA

Final phase of peace talks begins: Foreign ministers from member states of the Inter-governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) met March 12 to assess the progress of the Somali peace talks. Ministers declared the second phase of talks complete, and the Somalia National Reconciliation Conference moved into the third and final negotiation phase of power-sharing issues. Several faction leaders remained absent since their February 23 request for a postponement of the talks was denied, and have been conducting independent meetings in the town of Jowhar. IGAD ministers and the Arab League urged the absent leaders to consolidate the peace talks and adhere to the January 29 agreement signed between the Transitional National Government and Somali leaders. The peace talks were expected to establish an all-inclusive interim government and end the 14-year armed conflict in Somalia. (IRIN, March 15, 16; Xinhua, March 12, 2004)

SUDAN

Government agrees to Darfur peace talks: The government of Sudan agreed March 18 to meet with Darfur rebels and discuss the possibility of reconciliation. According to a European Union official, the talks were to take place in Chad under the facilitation of neutral, international parties. Conflict between the Sudanese government and two Darfur rebel groups, the Sudan's Liberation Army and the Justice and Equality Movement, erupted February 2003 after the rebels accused the government of neglecting the black African population in the region. Arab pro-government militias launched attacks against Sudanese civilians in retaliation for the rebellion. Fighting in the Darfur region of western Sudan intensified as peace talks to end the Sudanese 20-year civil war continued in Kenya. (BBC, March 23; IRIN, March 18, 24, 2004)

UN official declares Darfur world's greatest humanitarian crisis: Mukesh Kapila, the UN Humanitarian Coordinator for Sudan, reported March 19 that the Darfur conflict was the greatest humanitarian crisis in the world. According to the BBC, Arab paramilitary forces February 27 killed approximately 75 civilians in the town of Tawilah, raped more than 100 women, and abducted an estimated 350 women and children in systematic attacks. The escalation of violence between pro-government militias and Darfur-based rebel groups has displaced approximately 800,000 civilians since conflict broke out one-year ago. According to Kapila, approximately one million people have been affected by the conflict. (BBC, March 19, 21; IRIN, March 22, 2004)

Government fuels militia attacks: Amnesty International (AI) criticized the government of Sudan March 16 for neglecting to protect the Darfur region from continued attacks by paramilitary forces, and for encouraging militias to raid civilian villages. The Janjawid, a pro-government militia, attacked at least 10 villages in the district of Tawilah between February 27 and 29. Forces killed an estimated 15 villagers in the capital of western Darfur March 6, and 12 people were killed March 8 in a village near the border of Chad. According to AI, tens of thousands of people remained in need of humanitarian aid that was restricted by the Sudanese government. (IRIN, March 16, 17, 2004)

Chadian troops enter Darfur: According to UN sources, soldiers from Chad entered the Darfur region to rescue cattle stolen by the Sudanese paramilitary group, Janjawid. The Janjawid militia roamed areas surrounding Darfur, including daily attacks in Chadian territory to steal livestock from Sudanese refugees. Thirty-five men stole approximately 100 cattle from two border sites March 7. An agreement between Chadian President Idriss Deby and Sudan's President Omar al-Bashir allowed troops from Chad to enter Sudanese territory to pursue rebel groups; instead, Chadian troops used the agreement to chase away Sudanese pro-government militia. (IRIN, March 16, 2004)

INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS

Prisoners report on massacre: Three newly released Guantanamo Bay detainees confirmed reports of a massacre in Shebargan, Afghanistan November 2001. The detainees provided detailed accounts of the events that led to their capture by American forces. They claimed to be among the Afghans who were arrested by the U.S.-backed Northern Alliance forces in October 2001. They added that under the order of General Adurrashid Dostum, who was in charge of the Northern Alliance at the time, they along with other prisoners were placed in sealed truck containers. The three testified that although many of the prisoners suffocated, they survived due to bullet holes in the truck containers. The detainees' account verified the findings of a UN commissioned team of American pathologists, who exposed a mass grave outside of Shebargan January 2002. It is believed that 15 exhumed bodies were those of the suffocated Afghans captured by General Dostum. The U.S. made an alliance with the Northern Alliance in 2001 when it began a military campaign against the Taliban. (Guardian, March 21, 2004)

UN condemns Yassin's assassination: The UN Human Rights Commission adopted a resolution condemning Israel for the assassination of Palestinian Hamas leader Sheikh Ahmed Yassin March 24. The resolution sponsored by Pakistan and other Muslim countries was adopted by 31 countries. The U.S. and Australia were the only countries that voted against the resolution. Ireland, which holds the presidency of the European Union, stated that the resolution did not support Hamas attacks on Israel and maintained that Israel has a right to defend itself against terrorism. However, the Israeli representative accused the Council of hypocrisy and was "outraged" by the condemnation. (AFP, March 25, 2004)

NEPAL

Maoist attack results in deadly clash: The Maoist attack on Beni Bazar, the district headquarters of Myagdi in western Nepal, was the deadliest clash since the insurgency began in 1996. Nearly 2,000 Maoists coordinated their attacks on a state bank, government buildings, and a jail freeing 32 prisoners. The fighting lasted for 12 hours after Nepalese army troops arrived at the scene. The government claimed that more than 500 Maoists might have died whereas the insurgents said the number of deaths were no more than 40. Prime Minister Kamal Thapa visited Beni Bazar afterwards and said that any chance of peace talks has been diminished. Meanwhile, the Maoist leader Prachanda promised more raids until “a progressive political solution” had been reached. The Maoists have strived to end the monarchy since 1996. More than 9,000 people have been killed in the eight-year civil war. (AFP, March 21; BBC, DPA, March 22, 2004)