



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 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

AFP	=	Agence France Presse (www.afp.com)
AP	=	Associated Press (www.ap.org)
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/)
BCR	=	Balkan Crisis Group (http://www.iwpr.net)
CDC News	=	Center for Disease Control News (www.thebody.com)
Channel NewsAsia	=	Channel NewsAsia (www.channelnewsasia.com)
CNN	=	Cable News Network (www.cnn.com)
CPJ	=	Committee to Protect Journalists (www.cpj.org)
DPA	=	Deutsche Presse-Agentur (www.dpa.com)
ERIO	=	European Roma Information Office (www.erionet.org)
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)
ICC	=	International Criminal Court (http://www.icc-cpi.int/php/index.php).
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 .)
Los Angeles Times	=	Los Angeles Times (www.latimes.com .)
M2 Presswire	=	M2.COM (http://m2.com/M2/M2Web.nsf .)
NCN	=	New Congo Net (www.marekinc.com/NCN.html)
NYT	=	The New York Times (www.nytimes.com)
PANA	=	Pan African News Agency (www.panapress.com)
Reuters	=	Reuters (www.reuters.com)
RSF	=	Reporters Sans Frontières (www.rsf.org).
TASS	=	ITAR-TASS News Agency (www.itar-tass.com/english/)
UN News Center	=	UN New Center Homepage (www.un.org)
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)
WWP	=	Women Waging Peace (www.womenwagingpeace.net)
Xinhua	=	Xinhua News Agency (www.xinhuanet.com/english/index.htm)

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BALKANS

CROATIA

Country becomes candidate for EU membership: The European Commission voted April 21 to give Croatia formal candidate status to join the European Union (EU). The recommendation came as Croatia was judged to have successfully completed the political and economic reforms required for admission, including cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia at The Hague (ICTY). The EU was to vote in June 2004 on whether to approve the Commission's decision. Formal candidate status would put Croatia in line to join the EU in May 2007, along with Romania and Bulgaria. However there could be barriers, including the fact that the Croatian government has not yet handed over indicted war criminal Ante Gotovina to the ICTY. Gotovina was suspected to still reside within the country, but the government claimed to not know his whereabouts. If Croatia successfully joined the ICTY in 2007, it would be the second former Yugoslav republic to do so, after Slovenia, which was to join in May 2004. (BBC, April 21, 2004)

KOSOVO

Province seeks unilateral split: Prime Minister Bajram Rexhepi announced April 19 that Kosovo would seek a unilateral split from Serbia in September 2005 if the UN had not made "substantive progress" on the province's future. In an interview with the Financial Times, Prime Minister Rexhepi said his preference was for a progressive transition to autonomy as called for in UN Resolution 1244. However, he expressed his mounting concern at the international community's reluctance to move toward a final resolution on the matter. Rexhepi proposed two years of supervised independence to allow the current provisional government to take full control under strict international scrutiny. The Serbian government recently published an alternate plan, calling for self-rule for ethnic minority communities within an autonomous—but not independent—Kosovo. The region has been under the control of the UN and NATO since 1999, when international forces intervened to stop Serb oppression of Kosovar Albanians. Ethnic violence within the province flared again in mid-March when ethnic Albanians rose up against Serb civilians. Nineteen people died, hundreds were wounded and thousands of people were displaced due to the attacks. (FT, April 19, 2004)

SERBIA

UN tribunal expands definition of genocide: In a ground-breaking ruling April 19, the ICTY significantly expanded the definition of genocide to apply to the 1995 Srebrenica massacre. The declaration came at the trial of Bosnian Serb General Radislav Krstic, who was sentenced to 46 years in jail for aiding and abetting genocide in the deaths of 7,000 Muslim men and boys. Krstic's lawyers had attempted to assert that 7,000 deaths was not a high enough number to be labeled as genocide. In rejecting this argument, presiding justice Theodor Meron said that the crime should "be called by its proper name: genocide." Observers immediately hailed the ruling as likely to set an international legal precedent, and many noted that the ruling would likely affect the trial of former Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic, who was on trial at the ICTY for his role in the Balkan wars of the 1990s. In addition to charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity,

Milosevic was charged with genocide in connection with the Srebrenica killings. The 1948 Genocide Convention defined genocide as “acts committed with the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group.” (BBC, April 19, 2004)

High court suspends Indictees Law: Serbia’s Constitutional Court April 15 temporarily suspended a law that was to give benefits to alleged Serbian war criminals indicted and awaiting trial at the ICTY. The Indictees Law would have given 25 suspects compensation for lost salaries, legal fees, travel expenses for their families, and mail and phone bills. The Constitutional Court suspended the bill for 30 days, and directed parliament to reconsider the legislation. The law was originally adopted March 30 by a coalition of Slobodan Milosevic’s Socialist Party, the nationalist Radical Party and the Democratic Party of Serbia, who opposed the extradition of Serbian suspects to The Hague. Citizen’s groups, NGOs and opposition parties had condemned the law, and launched petitions in order to overturn it. (AFP, April 15, 2004)

GREAT LAKES

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO (DRC)

President refers alleged crimes to the ICC: The International Criminal Court (ICC) announced April 20 that it received a letter from President Joseph Kabila of the Democratic Republic of Congo. The letter asked the Court to investigate crimes falling within ICC jurisdiction, such as genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes, which had been committed in the DRC since July 1, 2002. The ICC announced July 2003 that it would closely follow the situation in the DRC after a number of individuals and NGOs asked it to probe alleged atrocities including rape, torture, and looting committed in the country. President Kabila’s letter, considered a formal follow-up to the announcement made by the ICC last year, seemed to indicate that the DRC transitional government was fully prepared to cooperate with the Court. (AFP, April 19; ICC, April 19; M2 Presswire, April 21, 2004)

RWANDA

Rebels reorganize troops: The UN Mission for the DRC (MONUC) said April 15 that at least 1,000 Rwandan insurgents based in eastern DRC had recently moved into forests near the DRC-Rwanda border to prepare for attacks on Rwanda. The insurgents included members of the former Rwandan Armed Forces and Interahamwe, the Hutu extremist militia who fled to the DRC after the 1994 genocide. In a press release, the Rwandan army accused MONUC of failing to secure the DRC-Rwanda border and of allowing the rebels to assemble and reorganize. Major General James Kabarebe, the Rwandan General Chief of Staff, said April 16 that should the situation remain unimproved, Rwanda had the right to send troops back into the DRC in pursuit of the rebels. During the civil war in the DRC, Rwanda sent troops and provided military aid to the Congolese Rally for Democracy in an attempt to oust then President Laurent Kabila, who allegedly supported the Hutu majority rebels. Under the Pretoria Peace Accord signed in South

Africa in July 2003, Rwanda withdrew its troops from the DRC. (AP, April 15; FT, April 16, 2004)

UGANDA

Security Council criticizes the LRA: The UN Security Council April 15 condemned the atrocities committed by the LRA. Alarmed by the continued abduction and forced recruitment of children by the LRA, Council members stated that the international community would not tolerate crimes targeting civilians and children and called on the LRA to halt all acts of violence against non-combatants. Also concerned over the large-scale displacement of civilians, the Security Council urged the Ugandan government to enhance its protection of internally displaced persons and to allow aid workers unrestricted access to those in need. The Security Council issued the statement after Jan Egeland, the Under Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordination, briefed the Security Council on the conflict in northern Uganda and declared it a major humanitarian emergency. The LRA's fighting against the Ugandan government, for the last 18 years, has displaced approximately 1.5 million people and resulted in the deaths of thousands of civilians. (AFP, April 16; PANA, April 15, 2004)

Embassy reopens in the DRC: Tom Butime, the Acting Foreign Minister of Uganda, announced April 16 that Uganda reopened its embassy in Kinshasa, capital of the DRC. The Ugandan government was to appoint an ambassador to the DRC once the renovation of the embassy was completed. The Ugandan embassy in the DRC closed down in 1998 when Uganda supported anti-government forces against the DRC government. (AllAfrica, April 19; Xinhua, April 16, 2004)

HORN OF AFRICA

SOMALIA

Stalled peace talks to reconvene: Somalia's Transitional National Government (TNG) was to meet April 21 to discuss the stalled peace talks. Negotiations on power-sharing issues between the TNG and Somali faction leaders resulted in a deadlock following disputes on the selection of parliament members. Awad Ashara, a spokesperson for the Somali Reconciliation and Restoration Council (SRRC), insisted that clarifications needed to be resolved before starting the final phase of the talks. The peace talks were expected to establish an all-inclusive Somali government, and end the 14-year armed conflict. (BBC Monitoring, April 21; IRIN, April 20, 2004)

SUDAN

Government and rebels resume talks: Darfur rebel groups arrived in Chad April 20 for the second round of peace talks. The Sudanese government, Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) and the Justice and Equality Movement were to negotiate political disputes pertaining to the regional conflict. The first round of talks focused on humanitarian issues and resulted in a 45-day cease-fire agreement April 8. However, the rebels had threatened to withdraw from the talks April 17 following reports of continued attacks on Darfur civilians. They accused the government of violating the terms of the

cease-fire agreement and of prohibiting regional access to humanitarian agencies. The Sudanese government denied the accusations, and responded by inviting a team from the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights April 21 to examine the situation. The five-member UN team was to investigate the alleged ethnic cleansing campaign by government and paramilitary militias against the region's black African population. The second round of peace talks between the rebels and the Khartoum government was expected to last four days. The Darfur conflict has displaced an estimated 700,000 civilians since it erupted in February 2003. (BBC Monitoring, April 17; IRIN, April 21; UN News Service, April 21, 2004)

SUDAN-UGANDA

Governments sign agreement: Sudan and Uganda signed a "framework cooperation agreement" April 16 under the auspices of a joint ministerial commission. Agreements were signed on issues of agriculture, fisheries, animal resources and foreign cooperation; areas related to security, refugees, immigration and trade remained disputed. Contentions on Sudan's alleged support for Uganda's rebel Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) were to be addressed in a separate forum. The two-day meeting of the commission, last convened in 1990, was expected to improve bilateral relations between Sudan and Uganda. Relations between the two countries deteriorated following accusations that each had backed rebel groups retaliating against the other's government. (AFP, April 15, 16; BBC Monitoring, April 18, 2004)

INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS

Gaddafi calls for a revolution in Libyan law: Colonel Muammar Gaddafi announced a major law reform April 19, which included the abolition of a revolutionary court, criticized by human rights groups for violating the legal rights of political defendants; an end to arbitrary arrests; and the ratification of international anti-torture conventions. The announcement came following Amnesty International's first visit to Libya in 15 years. In addition last September, Gaddafi announced that he would end Libya's weapons of mass destruction program and compensate the families of the victims of the 1988 Lockerbie plane bombing. (BBC, April 19, 2004)

UN members vote against draft resolution: The UN Human Rights Commission, for the second year, voted against a draft resolution which condemned the Zimbabwean government for human rights violations. Twenty-four countries including European and Latin American nations, and the U.S. supported the draft resolution, but 27 largely African and Asian members opposed it. The Zimbabwean government declared the vote a victory for all developing countries that have stood against human rights abuses while resisting manipulation by the West. The European Union expressed concerns over what it claimed were continuing rights abuses such as politically motivated killings, torture, sexual abuse of women, and arbitrary arrests. (IRIN, April 16, 2004)

NEPAL

Demonstrations escalate: After nineteen days of peaceful protests, demonstrations in Kathmandu became violent April 19 following the arrest of Nepali Congress leader Narhari Acharya and several other political party members. Some demonstrators were injured by the police, and a few engaged in vandalism of a government motorcycle. The demonstrations were carried out against the King's 2002 assumption of executive powers and dismissal of the parliament and elected cabinet. (Kantipur Online, April 19, 2004)

Court orders government to justify arrests: Nepal's Supreme Court ruled April 19 that the government must justify the arrests of 21 political activists or release them within 72 hours of detention. The activists were arrested as a result of a ban imposed by the government April 8 on assemblies of more than five people. The government said the ban was meant to deter the threat of Maoist infiltration, but the detainees denied any involvement with the Maoists. After the beginning of demonstrations April 1, the authorities carried out mass arrests of opposition activists and observers most of whom were released after several hours. But some, including the 21 activists, remained in detention for approximately six days. The government claimed that the activists were held under the Public Security Act against threats to national security which allowed 90 days detention without trial. (BBC, April 19, 2004)

Prime Minister regrets use of force: In a statement issued April 19, Prime Minister Surya Thapa apologized for the use of force against journalists during recent demonstrations. He added that the government was aware of its obligations towards journalists' rights, but said that the journalists were expected to maintain certain standards in cooperation with the government. The statement came after journalists demanded a public apology by the government. The President of the Federation of Nepalese Journalists said that the ongoing protest by the press would continue until the Minister for Home, Communication and Information, Kamal Thapa, was dismissed. (Kantipur Online, April 19, 2004)