



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)
Arabic News	=	Arabic News (www.arabicnews.com)
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

BOSNIA

EU takes over peacekeeping: The European Union (EU) and NATO announced that the EU would take over international peacekeeping duties in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The EU was to deploy a British-led 7,000 member force in Fall 2004, with troop commitments from most EU member states. The force would have a larger and more complex mandate than current missions, including the authorization to arrest suspected war criminals that have been indicted by the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia at The Hague. The U.S. would also be involved in an advisory capacity through its involvement in NATO. The ultimate goal of the new mission was to establish a peaceful, multiethnic state that would eventually join the EU. International peacekeeping troops have been in Bosnia since 1995, as part of the multinational Implementation Force called for in the Dayton Peace Accords. The Accords ended three years of ethnic warfare between Serbs, Bosnian Muslims and Croats. (FT, April 27, 2004)

MACEDONIA

Crvenkovski wins run-off election: Prime Minister Branko Crvenkovski won Macedonia's run-off election for the office of president April 28, with 62.66 percent of the votes cast. Crvenkovski and his opponent Sasko Kedev were the candidates who had received the most votes in the first round of elections April 14. There had been concerns that the elections would be invalidated because of low voter turnout, but roughly 53 percent of the electorate cast ballots. Macedonian law required the president to be elected by a majority of 50 percent or more. International observers reported that overall the voting took place in a fair and democratic manner although there were some instances of ballot box stuffing and intimidation. The elections were held to find a successor to President Boris Trajkovski, who died in a plane crash February 26. Although largely a ceremonial post, filling the presidency was considered crucial to maintaining ethnic peace and stability within Macedonia, which had a large Albanian majority. Officials were concerned that Albanians would not participate in the vote, since their candidates had been eliminated in the first round of elections. Nevertheless, Crvenkovski and Kedev had publicly urged widespread participation from all sectors, and Crvenkovski gained the backing of a key Albanian party, the Democratic Union for Integration. (BBC, April 29; WP, April 28, 2004)

GENDER AND PEACE

NGOs hold gender conference: A two-day conference on the protection of the rights of women and children began April 23 in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan. The conference was sponsored by UNICEF, the International Organization for Migration and the Turkmen Ministry of Justice. Participants came primarily from countries in Central Asia and the Middle East, including Pakistan, India, China, Afghanistan, Turkey, Russia and United Arab Emirates. Attendees were to discuss irregular migration, labor migration and human trafficking at the legislative and policy level. Conference organizers hoped to draft recommendations for future initiatives to improve protection of women and children's rights—both at international and national levels—particularly in regards to

preventing and combating human trafficking. Turkmenistan's human trafficking problem was not as extensive as other countries', but officials were concerned that economic development and relaxed visa regulations might foster growth in the shadow industry. (IRIN, April 23, 2004)

WFP launches "Food-for-training" program in Afghanistan: The UN's World Food Program (WFP) launched a "food-for-training" project to teach sustainable skills to more than 1,000 rural women in Afghanistan. The initiative focused on educating women through classes in horticulture, embroidery, and other traditional skills, in order to make them more self-reliant. In return, participants received a monthly food ration including wheat and oil. Rural communities in Afghanistan remained the most conservative areas of the country, and many women and girls were still prevented from attending schools. The vocational training, promoted by the WFP, aimed to encourage communities to let women participate in social activities outside their homes. WFP officials hoped that food would become a key tool for greater female participation in both rural and urban areas. (IRIN, April 21, 2004)

GREAT LAKES

BURUNDI

Rebels announce a cease-fire: The Forces for National Liberation (FNL) announced April 22 that it would stop its military campaign against the Burundian transitional government. The FNL also said that it would initiate peace talks with the government if the international community was committed to listening to its grievances. In a press release the following day, Pasteur Habimana, a spokesperson for the Burundian government, stated that government forces would take no military offensive measures as long as the FNL complied with the cease-fire agreement. Hutu insurgents fought the Tutsi-dominated army for 11 years until the Arusha peace accords 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, April 23, 2004)

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO (DRC)

Rwandan troops enter the DRC: The UN Observer Mission for the DRC (MONUC) noted April 21 the presence of the Rwandan army in the Bunagana area of the DRC. The incursion of the Rwandan army was reportedly due to MONUC's failure to fulfill its mandate of uncovering DRC-based Hutu insurgents from Rwanda. In Kinshasa, Antoine Ghonda, the DRC Foreign Minister, told the press April 27 that the DRC government considered the recent entrance of Rwandan troops into the DRC as a violation of the 2002 Pretoria Peace Accord, as well as a threat to the bilateral relations between the two countries. However, Rwanda denied that its army had crossed into the DRC and criticized MONUC for making "baseless" allegations. During a five-year civil war in the DRC, Rwanda sent troops and provided military aid to the Congolese Rally for Democracy to oust then President Laurent Kabila, who allegedly supported the DRC-based Hutu rebels. Under the Pretoria Peace Accord signed in July 2003, Rwanda officially withdrew its troops from the DRC in exchange for President Joseph Kabila's

pledge to dismantle Rwandan insurgents. (AP, April 24, 27; FT, April 27; IRIN, April 26; Los Angeles Times, April 25, 2004)

RWANDA

Government on alert for potential rebel attacks: In anticipation of possible attacks from Hutu rebels, the Rwandan army amassed troops on its border with Burundi and the DRC. Colonel Patrick Karegeya, a Rwandan military spokesman, said April 26 that rebels' communication sources indicated that the DRC-based Interhamwe Hutu would use Burundi's Kibira forest as a base to attack Rwanda. The increased deployment led to a sharp rise in tension between the governments of Rwanda and Burundi. Following an April 22 incursion of the Rwandan army into Burundi, the Burundian government sent a letter of protest to the Rwandan military, warning that it would not tolerate any act which would lead to the deterioration of bilateral relations between the two countries. A Rwandan army spokesman apologized the following day, and claimed that the incursion was unintentional. Interhamwe, a civilian militia force that carried out most of the 1994 genocide killings, had continued fighting against the current Rwandan government in an attempt to reinstate Hutu control. Some of the Interhamwe militiamen left their bases in the DRC, and moved through the northern Burundi forests to attack Rwanda's southern provinces since December 2003. (AP, CNN April 24, 27; FT, April 27; IRIN, April 26; Los Angeles Times, April 25, 2004)

HORN OF AFRICA

ETHIOPIA-ERITREA

Landmine explosion alarms the UN: A newly laid landmine exploded April 17 outside the Temporary Security Zone between the border of Eritrea and Ethiopia, injuring one civilian. According to Phil Lewis, head of the UN's Mine Action Coordination Centre, this incident was the first to occur from a newly laid mine since July 2003. The UN expressed concern over the explosion and hoped it would not start a new phase of similar incidents. A cease-fire agreement had been in effect in the estimated 15-mile wide buffer zone since the two-year border war between Eritrea and Ethiopia ended in 2000. Eritrea and Ethiopia remain two of the world's most heavily mine-contaminated countries; approximately 2 million mines in Ethiopia and 1.5 million mines in Eritrea remained undetonated. (IRIN, April 26, 2004)

SUDAN

Rebel leader to rejoin talks: John Garang, the leader of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A), was expected to return to the Sudanese peace talks in Kenya following his April 23 departure. Garang's expected return followed that of Sudan's Vice President Ali Uthman Muhammad Taha April 25, who had left the talks to consult with the government of Sudan on the next phase of the negotiations. The government insisted that an earlier agreement be implemented which stipulated that Shari'a law operate in the Islamic North. The SPLM/A argued that Khartoum presented a special case, as it represented the entire Sudan, and should be exempt from the agreement. The Sudanese government and SPLM/A had previously made progress on issues of security arrangements and wealth-sharing that were to be applied after the final

peace deal. Issues on power-sharing, regional disputes, and the application of Shari'a law remained unsettled. (IRIN, April 23, 26, 2004)

Parties sign agreement: The Sudanese government and Darfur rebel groups signed an agreement April 26 to form joint commissions to monitor the April 8 cease-fire. The new agreement promised to observe the cessation of hostilities, allow humanitarian access into the region, and committed the government of Sudan to disarming government-backed militias operating in Darfur. Peace talks on a political solution to the conflict began April 20 in Chad. The 14-month Darfur conflict erupted following rebel accusations that the government neglected black Africans of the region. (AP, April 26; BBC, IRIN, April 23, 2004)

U.S. criticizes Darfur resolution: A UN human rights committee adopted a resolution April 23 following an investigation by a UN team of alleged atrocities in the region. According to the BBC, although the resolution expressed concern over the Darfur situation, it did not provide detailed accounts of the targeted attacks on civilians, and did not mention the alleged rapes or forced removal of black communities by Arab militias. The United States, who voted against the resolution, claimed that the UN committee issued a "watered down" statement and failed to adopt a strong criticism of abuses committed by the Sudanese government. It called for a Special Session of the Commission on Human Rights on Sudan to investigate charges of "ethnic cleansing" throughout the region. The Darfur conflict was named the worst humanitarian crisis in the world March 19 by the UN Humanitarian Coordinator for Sudan. Approximately 700,000 civilians have been displaced by the conflict since it erupted in February 2003. (AllAfrica, April 23; BBC, April 23, 25, 2004)

INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS

UNICEF reports on African children: The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) said in a report April 23 that children in 53 African nations were victims of slavery, child soldiers and prostitution. The report claimed that children in these nations were more likely than women to become victims of trafficking due to collaboration from their family. The report urged African nations to adopt an action plan against such practices. (BBC, April 23, 2004)

Morocco creates commission for human rights: The Moroccan Human Rights Association (AMDH) reaffirmed its support April 28 for the creation of the Equity and Reconciliation Commission, which began operation in January. AMDH promised full cooperation with the Commission in settling past human rights abuses, and requested that sanctions be placed on authorities who might hinder the Commission's work. AMDH recommended that the Commission publicize its reports on past human rights issues in order to discourage old practices such as forced disappearance and arbitrary detention. The Equity and Reconciliation Commission has been in charge of the out-of-court settlement of human rights breaches dating back to the independence of Morocco in 1956. (Arabic News, April 28, 2004)

NEPAL

Government releases opposition leaders: After two weeks of detention by the government, 29 opposition leaders and members of political parties were released April 26. The detainees were imprisoned for violating a government ban on assemblies of more than five people after they participated in protests which occurred in Kathmandu. The political parties, which were the force behind the demonstrations, demanded a multi-party interim government and the reinstatement of the legislature, which the King suspended in 2002. The government stated that the ban was to be lifted in certain parts of Kathmandu, however opposition leaders announced that they would meet with the King only after all the detainees were released and the current government was dismissed. (BBC, April 26, 2004)