



Peace & Justice Update
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UPDATE SOURCE ABBREVIATIONS

AfricaFocus	=	AfricaFocus - www.africanfocus.org
AI	=	Amnesty International - www.amnesty.org
AllAfrica	=	AllAfrica Global Media - www.allAfrica.com
AP	=	Associated Press - www.ap.org
B92	=	B92 - www.freeb92.net/english
BBC	=	British Broadcasting Corporation - http://news.bbc.co.uk
BBC Monitoring	=	BBC Monitoring International Reports - www.monitor.bbc.co.uk
Colombo Page	=	Sri Lankan Online News - www.colombopage.com
Daily News	=	Sri Lanka Daily News - www.dailynews.lk
Daily Times	=	DailyTimes - www.dailytimes.com
EAS	=	East African Standard - www.eastandard.net
EU	=	European Union - www.europa.eu.int
Guardian	=	Guardian Unlimited Network - www.guardian.co.uk
GAO	=	General Accountability Office - www.gao.gov
HRW	=	Human Rights Watch News - www.hrw.org
ICC	=	International Criminal Court - www.icc-cpi.int
ICG	=	International Crisis Group - www.crisisweb.org
ICTR	=	International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda - www.ictr.org
Independent	=	The Independent - www.independent.co.uk
IRIN	=	Integrated Regional Information Network - www.irinnews.org
Kansas City	=	Kansas City - www.kansascity.com
Kathmandu Post	=	The Kathmandu Post - www.nepalnews.com.np
Kazinform	=	Kazinform - www.kazinform.org
La Hora	=	La Hora - www.lahora.com
Prensa Libre	=	La Prensa Libre - www.prensalibre.com
LA Times	=	Los Angeles Times - www.latimes.com
Monitor	=	The Monitor - www.monitor.co.ug
MONUC	=	MONUC - www.monuc.org
Nepal News	=	Nepal News.Com - www.nepalnews.com
Nepali Times	=	Nepali Times - www.nepalitimes.com
News.com.au	=	News.com.au - www.news.com.au
New Vision	=	New Vision - www.newvision.co.ug
News 24	=	News 24 - www.news24.com
NPT	=	Nuclear Proliferation Treaty www.un.org/events/npt2005
NYT	=	The New York Times - www.nytimes.com
Oxfam Great Britain	=	Oxfam - www.oxfam.org.uk
Prensa Libre	=	La Prensa Libre - www.prensalibre.com
ReliefWeb	=	ReliefWeb - www.reliefweb.int
RWB	=	Reporters Without Borders www.rsf.org
Reuters	=	Reuters - www.reuters.com
Siglo XXI	=	Siglo XXI - www.sigloxxi.com
Terra	=	Terra - www.terra.com.gt
UN News	=	UN News Center Homepage - www.un.org
UNHCHR	=	UN High Commissioner for Human Rights - www.unhcr.ch
UNICEF	=	UN Children's Fund - www.unicef.org
UNIFEM	=	UN Development Fund for Women - www.unifem.org
VOA	=	Voice of America - www.voanews.com
Xinhua	=	Xinhua News Agency - www.xinhuanet.com/english/index.htm
WP	=	Washington Post - www.washingtonpost.com
Worldnews	=	World News - www.worldnews.com

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BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia refers case to Bosnian court: The case of Radovan Stankovic, who stands accused of the rape of Bosniak women in 1992 in Foca, Bosnia, was to be handed over to a Bosnia war crimes court. If all goes well, this would be the first case transferred to local authorities by the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY), a court established to prosecute war crimes from the 1992-1995 Bosnian war. The transfer of cases to local courts is a response to the need for the court to finish its tenure by 2010. Head of the Special War Crimes Chamber to the Court of BiH Vaso Marinkovic expects Stankovic's case to be in court by mid September. His lawyers, however, are protesting the transfer and will have the opportunity to take the case to the Appeals Chamber where it will be reviewed and a decision made on the trial's location. Stanovic, a member of the Foca Tactical Brigade during the war, was arrested by the Stabilization Force in Bosnia and Herzegovina (SFOR) and transferred to the ICTY on June 9, 2002. (BBC, FENA, May 18, 2005)

BURUNDI

Last rebel group signs cease-fire: The leader of the last remaining rebel group, Forces for National Liberation (FNL)'s Agathon Rwasa, met with Burundian President Domitien Ndayizeye May 15 and agreed to end hostilities and work towards lasting peace. The face-to-face meeting was the first ever between the two leaders, as the government had broken off all contact with the FNL after the rebels took responsibility for a massacre of more than 160 Congolese Tutsi refugees at Gatumba refugee camp northwest of the capital, Bujumbura, August 2004. After 16 hours of talks May 15 the two parties declared an immediate end to hostilities and decided to set up a technical team within a month to start working out the details for further negotiations and implementation of the cease-fire. The two parties also declared their commitment not to disrupt the ongoing electoral process that is meant to provide for democratic elections to take place in August. The election is to be the final step in ending an 11-year civil war between the minority Tutsi army and rebels from the majority Hutu community. The conflict claimed at least 300,000 lives and displaced hundreds of thousands of people. (AllAfrica, May 13, 14; CNN, May 15; IRIN, May 16, 2005)

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO (DRC)

Parliament adopts new constitution: The DRC's parliament adopted a draft constitution May 13, which was presented by President Joseph Kabila May 16, as he urged all Congolese to rally in support for democracy. Kabila also stated, "The process is really irreversible and the elections in the DRC will certainly take place." The adoption of the constitution paves the way for democratic elections in the DRC in the latter half of 2005. However the constitution still needs to be prepared for a referendum on it within six months. UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan welcomed the adoption of the draft constitution and called on all parties to work towards holding elections in the country. He also reiterated the UN commitment to assist the transitional authorities in completing the transitional process. Elections were initially planned for June 30, but leaders of warring parties expressed concerns that they were not ready to hold a poll and the Independent Electoral Commission asked parliament to delay elections. The former Belgian colony possesses enormous mineral wealth and has the potential to be the richest nation on the African continent. But the DRC has experienced conflicts since its independence in 1960, witnessing sporadic uprisings and riots including assassinations of three heads of state and

constant ethnic conflicts, causing the deaths of millions of people. (AllAfrica, May 15; IRIN, UN News, May 16, 2005)

One peacekeeper killed and five wounded in attack; On May 12 three UN Bangladeshi peacekeepers were injured when an armored vehicle overturned, and three others were wounded by gunfire southeast of Bunia, the main town in the troubled northeastern district of Ituri. Of the three shot, one was critically wounded and later died, reported the UN Organization Mission in the DRC (MONUC). The injuries were sustained when about 20 “armed elements” ambushed a convoy transporting 40 UN troops through the Geti region in Ituri, a region traditionally under the control of the rebel group Patriotic Resistance Front of Ituri (FRPI). Two weeks ago MONUC had intervened and assisted the Congolese army in a confrontation with the FRPI in the same area. On the same day MONUC captured seven former Union of Congolese Patriots members after an exchange of fire northeast of Bunia. The Congolese army and MONUC are currently trying to disarm the militias in Ituri to stop the fighting between the ethnic Hema and Lendu groups in the region. The conflict between the Hema and the Lendu has taken at least 50,000 lives and displaced hundreds of thousands of people during the last six years. (IRIN, May 13, MONUC, May 14, UN News, May 12, 2005)

GENDER and PEACE

Kuwaiti women gain right to vote: In a surprising reversal, and despite strong opposition by conservative members of parliament, the Kuwaiti parliament passed a law May 17 allowing women to vote and run for parliament “Women have shown they are able partners to men in handling family and social responsibilities and serving the nation,” said Kuwait’s Crown Prince. The announcement was followed by a display of fireworks and dancing in the streets of Kuwait City. The U.S. State Department noted the transformation of election laws as beneficial to not only women but all of Kuwaiti society. “We think that this is an important step forward for Kuwait, for the women of Kuwait, and the nation as a whole,” said State Department spokesman Richard Boucher. The all-male parliament debated the bill for nine hours on Monday before approving it. The bill also contains stipulations added by conservatives that women must abide by Islamic law when voting or running for office. Therefore, women and men would vote in separate polling stations. Islamic conservatives defeated earlier efforts for women’s suffrage in 1999, asserting that participating in government would distract from a woman’s responsibility to care for her family. “We made it. This is history,” said women’s suffrage activist Roula Dashti. (BBC, NYT, May 17, 2005)

Sudanese women want more involvement in southern peace process: Women activists demanded more participation in the implementation of the southern Sudanese peace process. Attending a workshop entitled, “Inclusive Security-Sustainable Peace”, organized by the NGO International Alert (IA) and the UN Development Fund for Women, representatives shared their experiences on the conflict in the war-torn country. “Sixty-five percent of the people in the South are women. They need a voice in the new governing institutions, and in the wealth-sharing of resources,” said IA gender and peace building program manager Ancil Adrian-Paul. Delegates also noted the need for overall improvement in women’s lives. “They want to read and write, give birth in a clinic, have food on the table, be safe from sexual abuse, and be included in the decision-

making,” said UNIFEM regional program director Nyazadzai Gumbonzvanda. Fighting in the Sudan has killed at least 2 million people. (Reuters, May 17, 2005)

GUATEMALA

Murder of district attorney spurs reforms: District Attorney of the Public Ministry Erick Moisés Gálvez Miss was murdered by a group of unknown assassins in the Chiquimula district where he had worked two years. Gálvez Miss had recently begun informing his family about threats he was receiving. The murder comes three weeks after the death of Judge Victor Bautista Orozco who was believed to have been targeted for his involvement in narcotics and kidnapping cases. The death of Orozco was one of several incidents that pushed the Supreme Court of Justice to demand protection for judges and magistrates, and the recent death of Gálvez Miss has further pushed authorities to include lawyers in the plan for protection of judges and magistrates. Current talks about the plan involve the formation of a special police unit that would protect members of the judicial body, but authorities are still waiting for advice from Colombian experts on how to form this police body. (Prensa Libre, Terra, May 18, 2005)

INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS

UN makes progress in reforms: Deputy Secretary-General Louise Frechette spoke at a press conference May 17 about reforms the UN is undergoing to improve its management, an issue she states has been on the agenda since 1997. The reforms come in light of criticism surrounding the oil-for-food program, allegations of sexual abuse by peacekeepers, and Kofi Annan’s report In Larger Freedom, which discussed progress towards socio-economic goals and UN change and is to be the framework of a UN meeting scheduled for September. Reforms concern the development of committees and groups that investigate, report, and punish UN officials violating policies preventing corruption and sex abuse and exploitation. The UN Department of Management has begun a new review of the current system to ensure it will meet the highest global standards, and the review is expected to be completed next month. (UN News, May 18, 2005)

NEPAL

Dozens killed in violence: A significant number of people have died in fighting between soldiers and Maoist rebels in the eastern district of Udaipur. However, opposing sides have offered conflicting reports of the number of casualties. The government said 48 rebels and nine soldiers were killed, while the Maoists asserted that 35 soldiers and three rebels were killed. The fighting caused the highest number of casualties since King Gyanendra took power February 1, adding to the 11,000 dead from the 10 year-long Maoist insurgency. The violence came as Maoist rebels in western Nepal abducted 450 school children from the Palpa, Tanahun, and Baglung districts. The Maoists are known to kidnap children for indoctrination or to increase numbers in pro-Maoist rallies and the children are usually returned unharmed. The violence has also caused several aid organizations to suspend their operations. The beating of local staff members of the World Food Program, Britain’s Department for International Development, German Technical Cooperation (GTZ), and the Dutch aid agency SNV caused these organizations to suspend aid. “We regret

this deeply, but we cannot put our staff at further risk,” the donors said in a statement. The suspension will affect over 6,000 villagers in Nepal. Nepal receives about \$400 million in international aid annually, or about 30 percent of its budget. (Reuters, May 15, 2005)

RWANDA

Defense questions impartiality of expertise witness: Two of the defense lawyers in the trial of four former ministers challenged the expertise of Binaifer Nowrojee, a researcher with Human Rights Watch on sexual violence and crimes against women during the 1994 Rwandan genocide. The lawyers claimed that Nowrojee did not conduct her research neutrally because her report only contained interviews with forty Tutsi rape victims, sexually abused by militia and government soldiers. No interviews were conducted with victims of rapes by the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF). Nowrojee defended her work saying that she had been unable to get testimonies of the alleged rapes by RPA victims. The lawyers representing former Minister of Health, Casimir Bizimungu and former Minister of Commerce, Justin Mugenzi asked Nowrojee if her report should be considered impartial since she did not take any steps to “get the other side of the coin.” Nowrojee defended her work saying, “I have never said and I cannot say there were no rapes by the RPF. What I’m telling you is that I did not access testimonies on those crimes.” On the question of whether her work should be considered impartial she answered, “I would say it is one part of the full story that took place.” Bizimungu and Mugenzi are accused together with former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Jerome Bicamumpaka, and former Minister of Public Service, Prosper Mugiraneza, for their involvement in the Rwandan genocide. They each face six counts of genocide and crimes against humanity. Approximately 800,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus were killed in the genocide in Rwanda, 1994. (AllAfrica, May 16, 17, 2005)

SRI LANKA

Tsunami \$3 billion aid deal close: An agreement between the government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) on the controversial aid-sharing deal was close to fruition according to Jayantha Dhanapala, head of the government’s Peace Secretariat. “Now there is some kind of finality reached on establishing the post-tsunami administrative mechanism, a few more consultations need to take place and after that it will be signed,” said Dhanapala. However, earlier this month, the LTTE expressed fears that even if the aid mechanism were signed, the aid deal would not be implemented. The LTTE also asserted that any further breakdown in aid distribution could jeopardize the three-year truce between the Tigers and the government. Sri Lankan president Chandrika Kumaratunga responded to the LTTE fears, promising to continue fighting for a deal. “It does open many doors towards a final negotiated settlement, a final peace to the ethnic problem of Sri Lanka,” said Kumaratunga. However, the president faces opposition from within her own government. The coalition partner Marxist People’s Liberation Front (JVP) considers the LTTE terrorists and has threatened to withdraw its support from the government if an aid-sharing deal is reached. The JVP has enough seats in parliament to bring down the government if they carry out their threat. Three billion dollars have been pledged to rebuild the tsunami-devastated areas, double the amount originally expected, thanks to last week’s aid pledges by China and Japan. (Reuters, May 16, 17, 2005)

SUDAN

AU to hold donor conference: The African Union (AU) announced its plan to hold a conference for international donors to pledge financial support for the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS). The decision came following the announcement April 28 that the AU was to increase its force on the ground in Darfur from the current 2,309 troops to 7,700 by September with the potential for a further increase to 12,000 next year. Concern had been voiced by various human rights groups and the UN that the AU was not sufficiently equipped and would struggle to meet this target. The donor conference has been scheduled for May 28 and is planned to take a similar format to the donor conference held in Oslo last month, where donors pledged \$4.5 billion to aid the reconstruction of Southern Sudan. UN Secretary General Kofi Annan was to co-chair the conference with AU chair Alpha Oumar Konare, The AMIS was initially deployed in April 2004 to monitor a shaky ceasefire between the Government of Sudan and Darfur rebels. However the ceasefire has been repeatedly violated and it is now estimated that between 180,000 to 400,000 people have died due to violence in Darfur. A strengthened AU force has been considered the most effective way to bring an end to the atrocities. (IRIN, May 18, 2005)